

**A Little Pebbles Ministries' Project**  
**Director: Verena R. Brooks**



# SEWING FOR HOPE

*Empowering Women Through Career Training*



## ABOUT SEWING FOR HOPE

Sewing for Hope was born out of a need for career training for young widows in Guatemala. These widows are members of AVITRANSP, a government-recognized organization that cares for widows whose husbands have been murdered, victims of the extreme violence against public transportation workers. Upon the deaths of their husbands, these women were thrown into a life of extreme poverty. Not having the skills to support themselves and their orphaned children, they reached out to AVITRANSP for help.

Because orphans and widows are at the very heart of Little Pebbles Ministries, we first decided to help by sending clothing and shoes for the children. But we wanted to do more!

Immediately, we recognized great potential in these women. They were eager to learn a trade and to make sacrifices to get out of their impoverished situation. Their desire for a better life for their children filled us with hope.

When we started to discuss what kind of skills they were interested in learning, most women expressed an interest in sewing and making clothes. In response, we began discussions about how feasible it was for us to put together a sewing and tailoring class that would fit into our budget.

The most challenging aspect of putting together this course was to find a teacher. We wanted somebody trustworthy that would have all the credentials and ample experience. We were also looking for someone that could share our same vision for the project.

A coordinator for AVITRANSP brought to our attention the work and accomplishments of a teacher who had previously helped in their organization by donating her time and resources. Once we interviewed Ana Maria Vasquez we knew that this project was going to be a great success.

By the end of this course the women that have enrolled in our first class will have acquired all the necessary skills to launch themselves into a profitable career and thus make a living for themselves and their children.



*Sewing for Hope  
Inauguration Ceremony*

“IT FEELS GOOD AND RIGHT TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN. THE SEWING FOR HOPE PROJECT OPENS JUST ONE SMALL DOOR. WHEN THESE WOMEN ARE READY TO WALK THROUGH IT AND INTO THE WORLD WITH THE SKILLS PROVIDED TODAY, THEY WILL IMPACT THEIR COMMUNITIES AND BRING ABOUT POSITIVE CHANGE.”

YARITZA GELLO

## Teacher Ana Maria Vasquez Davila

Ana Maria Vasquez has been a God-send for the Sewing for Hope Project. At 66 years old she still follows her passion for sewing in so much that she has agreed to be the teacher for our project. She has committed to us by signing a one-year contract with Little Pebbles Ministries.

Ana Maria graduated from the University of Guatemala in the year 1968 with a Sewing and Design Degree. Her resume includes, among other positions, working as a fabric manager at Confecciones Dacarett in Guatemala City, and at Adelas' Fashion House in Los Angeles, California from 1976-1986.

Maria implements the curriculum with great love and oversees the overall progress of each individual student in a way that is both encouraging and supporting.



## Little Pebbles Ministries' Directors in Guatemala

Working alongside Ana Maria are Jorje and Thelma Paiz, Little Pebbles Ministries Directors in Guatemala. Jorje and Thelma manage the budget for the project and keep the financial records up-to-date.

Jorje is a graduate from San Carlos de Guatemala University with a degree in Agronomy and a Bachelor's in Business Administration. His extensive resume includes, among other accomplishments, more than fifteen years' experience in the field of rural development and a leading position as an auditor for companies such as EUREPGAP (SGE Consultors) and BPA'S of Uruguay.

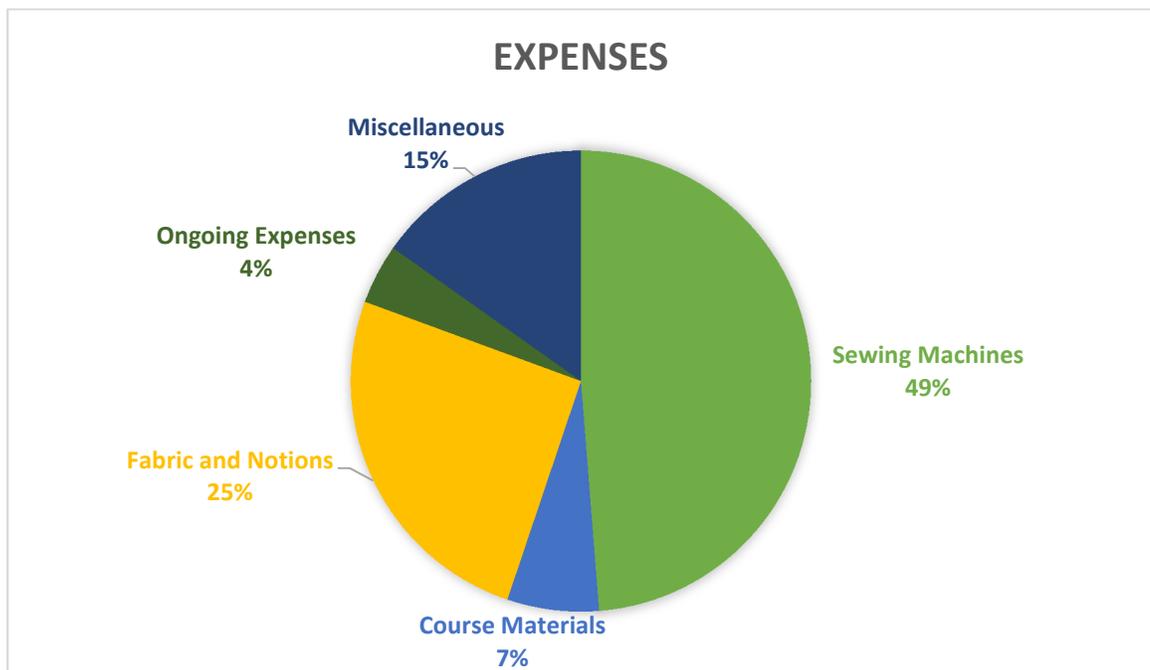
Thelma is also a graduate from San Carlos University with a degree in Philosophy and Literature. She is one of the coordinators for AVITRANSP and organizes activities and events for a group of forty widows. Both Jorje and Thelma are well respected, active leaders in their church.

Little Pebbles Ministries wouldn't be as effective as it is today if it were not for the team-work of Jorje and Thelma. Their excellent leadership skills are a true gift to our organization.



# Project's Budget: \$1500.00

Sewing Machine		Expense
Janome Sewing Machines 4@		\$443.77
Baby Overlock Machine 1@		\$287.35
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$731.12</b>
Course materials		Expense
Sewing curriculum, paper, scissors, measuring tape.		\$96.59
<b>Fabric and sewing notions</b>		<b>\$381.18</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$477.77</b>
Ongoing Expenses		Expense
Teachers salary		\$50.00
Utility Bill		\$13.06
<i>*Fabric and sewing notions will be added to the ongoing expenses in the second phase of our project.</i>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$63.06</b>
Miscellaneous Expense		Expense
Plastic Tables 2@		\$99.05
Iron and Board 1@		\$129.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$228.05</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		Total
		<b>\$1,500.00</b>



## WHAT IS THE SEWING FOR HOPE PROJECT?

Sewing for Hope is a **sewing and tailoring course** that provides young widows with the skills necessary to make children's clothing and sell them at fair market prices.

Upon completion of the one-year course the students will be able to fully operate a sewing and serge machine, to design and execute sewing patterns, and to make high quality children's clothing.

**Twelve widows** have enrolled in this first phase of the project with unmatched enthusiasm. Books and materials have been provided for each one of them as well as scissors, rulers, measuring tape, and other sewing notions.

Apart from learning a trade that will result in an important source of income, there are other benefits of being together in a course like this. The course provides:

- A safe place to meet each Friday
- A healthy snack at the end of each session
- Encouragement and support
- Tips and techniques on how to build a successful sewing business
- Planning and strategizing for future business opportunities

These women are gaining the confidence and the strength to launch themselves into a profitable career. Their willingness to learn something new is an inspiration to us working at Little Pebbles Ministries.

The course is being funded through the donations of generous men, women, and organizations on and off Fishers Island.



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*"If only one of these women is able to break free from poverty by applying the skills learned in this course, it will mean one more child rescued from street violence and criminal behavior. A skilled mother will surely provide a better future for her children."*

Verena R. Brooks

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**Sewing for Hope is a Little Pebbles  
Ministries' Project**

Little Pebbles Ministries is a (501)  
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