Dear ECFA,

Sower of Seeds International Ministries, Inc. (SOS) has been an ECFA member since 2012. During that time, we have appreciated ECFA's commitment to promoting financial accountability, transparency, and biblical stewardship within Christian ministries. For many of our donors, the ECFA seal provided confidence that SOS operated according to recognized standards of integrity and governance.

Because of that history, our decision to voluntarily discontinue our ECFA accreditation has not been made lightly.

The nonprofit landscape has changed significantly since we first joined ECFA. Today, ministries are subject to unprecedented levels of scrutiny and disclosure requests from donor-advised funds, grant-making organizations, financial institutions, charity watchdogs, journalists, online rating platforms, and members of the public. Independent audits, Form 990 filings, governance documents, financial statements, policies, procedures, leadership information, and other organizational records are routinely requested regardless of whether a ministry maintains ECFA accreditation.

In theory, accreditation should simplify this process by serving as a trusted verification of an organization's financial integrity and governance practices. In practice, we have found the opposite to be true. Despite maintaining ECFA accreditation and investing substantial time and donor resources to do so, SOS continues to receive the same requests for documentation, the same demands for verification, and the same scrutiny as organizations without ECFA membership. The seal no longer appears to reduce administrative burden, streamline due diligence, or provide meaningful protection against repetitive requests for information.

At the same time, the requirements associated with maintaining accreditation have continued to expand. While we recognize ECFA's desire to strengthen accountability standards, the cumulative effect has been an increasingly burdensome compliance process that consumes staff time, organizational resources, and donor dollars without providing a corresponding benefit to the ministry or to the donors we serve.

Our concern is not with the principles ECFA promotes. We remain firmly committed to transparency, accountability, strong governance, independent financial oversight, and responsible stewardship. We will continue to undergo annual independent audits, file Form 990s, maintain majority independent Board oversight, operate under established policies and procedures, and make key financial and organizational information available to donors and stakeholders.

We do not view this as solely an ECFA issue. The entire charitable sector is experiencing increasing demands for information and transparency. However, those realities make it even more important that accreditation organizations provide tangible value that justifies the cost of participation. After careful evaluation, we no longer believe ECFA accreditation accomplishes that objective for SOS.

We have concluded that the staff time, administrative effort, and financial resources required to maintain ECFA accreditation can be more effectively invested in carrying out our mission. We believe our donors are better served by directing those resources toward ministry programs while continuing to provide transparency directly through our own reporting practices and public disclosures.

SOS will continue to maintain the same standards of accountability that have guided our organization throughout our years of ECFA membership. We will continue to provide audited financial statements, publicly available tax filings, strong majority independent Board governance, and transparent communication with donors and stakeholders. We will also continue to participate in widely recognized nonprofit transparency platforms such as Charity Navigator and Candid.

We appreciate the role ECFA has played in the Christian nonprofit sector and the support it has provided over the years. At the same time, we believe the growing administrative burden and diminishing practical value of accreditation warrant a thoughtful reevaluation of ECFA's role in today's nonprofit environment. It is our hope that these observations may contribute to that conversation.

Respectfully,

The Sower of Seeds International Ministries, Inc. Board of Directors