



**Spirit
In
Action**

Micro Grants
Major Change

Spring & Summer Newsletter 2018

Spirit in Action

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We need more light
about each other.

Light creates
understanding,
understanding
creates love,
love creates patience,
and patience creates
unity. ~ Malcolm X

A Chicken House and Five Hens

by Lizette Gilday, Visionary Women's Centre



Florence (left) stands next to her newly built chicken house. Pictured with Benter, Centre Director.

Our Poultry Project, sponsored in part by a Spirit in Action grant, has been a great success! The 28 members of our Mother's Support Groups have completed their chicken houses and have each received their five chickens.

The women used their contacts within the community to find a robust local breed of hen. There are plenty of roosters strutting around and the women plan to

exchange roosters to keep the genetic pool strong. Our Poultry Expert, Elizabeth, visits the groups every two weeks to monitor and offer support and advice.

The chicken houses have caused quite a stir throughout the neighborhood! We have been contacted by four potential new groups, with a total of 62 women who are interested in raising poultry. We have told them that there are no guarantees that there will be more funds for chicken houses. Still, we will provide them with life skills, family planning, safe pregnancy and delivery information, and savings accounts. In addition, we will teach them how to grow a kitchen garden and provide them with seeds.

When we receive the five chickens as "payback/pay-it-forward" from the 28 members, we will sell the 140 chickens at twice the regular cost at the Christmas market. We will then reinvest these funds to sustain and expand the Poultry Project in the community.

The Poultry Project has given our members new confidence, hope and earning potential!



Listening is Love in Action

By Del Anderson

Since listening is one of the less developed areas in my own life, an article by Morton T. Kelsey has helped me greatly. Kelsey says, "There is no other way to learn to listen to God except by learning to listen to human beings." This was a "shocker" for me.

I ask myself, "What is listening?" **It is surely listening in a silent, active way, non-judgmental, sensitive and loving, with a caring heart and mind and a receptive, alive, awareness.** I am becoming aware now

that as I talk, I am not listening. In Scripture St. James says some very critical things about the lack of rational control of our tongues. Often this uncontrolled talk is to cover our shyness and insecurity.

Listening is love in action. It is one level of prayer. Listening assists me to penetrate through my human ego and "hear the Spirit of God which dwells in the heart of every person." **Real listening is a religious experience.** It is awesome; one method of worship.

A Note from Diana Halpenny, SIA Board President



Hello friends! I am honored to be the new President of Spirit in Action.

I know I speak for the entire board when I offer my deepest gratitude to Tish and John Bayer, who worked for so

many years as board members of SIA, and to Tish, who was our President for many years. I hope to live up to the leadership she provided. We wish them all the best as they continue to serve God in other ways.

This is a time in our world when the need for loving connections with people in other lands has never been greater. **Each grant we offer, and each small business we help get started, builds a bridge of love between those who have donated to SIA, and those who so gratefully receive our help.**

I am humbled and awed by what people are able to build from the small business grants we provide, and the resources they bring to their families and communities through the growth of those businesses. **The time and dedication that so many people**

commit to their volunteer work in their communities is truly inspiring. And the dedication of those who support SIA with their prayers and donations is the life-blood of this organization.

If you have not viewed the list of grants on our website, I encourage you to take a look. These are life-changing grants that all of you make possible. From the building of the changing rooms that allows girls to remain in school and finish their educations, to the educational programs that create inclusive environments for young people, to the grants to provide sewing machines to generate income, peoples' lives are made better because you cared enough to contribute.



Murals color the walls of the Samro School in Eldoret, Kenya.

With deep gratitude and love,

Diana Halpenny

See your support in action! Read our blog posts for success stories, photos, and inspiration! <http://spiritinaction.org>

It's easy to give monthly to SIA online! Set up your recurring donation now at <http://spiritinaction.org/donate>

New & Ongoing Grants

New grants are awarded every six months at SIA Board Meetings (*= new grants)



Caretakers Orphans Education Centre, Kenya (Training & Economic Development) Skills training workshops and supplies for 50 women to learn bead-working and carpet-making.

***CIFORD Kenya (Girls' Empowerment)** Anti-female genital mutilation (FGM) and youth empowerment workshops.

***Hope for Relief Malawi (Girls' Education)** Constructing girls changing room at a high school; buying seven sewing machines for sewing feminine hygiene pads. (See pg. 7)

***Manyamula Community Savings and Investment Promotion (COMSIP) Cooperative, Malawi**

(Organizational Development) Internet access and laptops for an income-generating internet cafe. Support for Cooperative administration positions.

Matungu Community Development Charity, Kenya (Economic Development) Formation of a table-banking cooperative with low-interest loans for small-scale farmers, and starting a poultry project.

Mt Elgon Peace Initiative, Kenya (Capacity Building) New organizational website for this grassroots group.

Pastoralist Child Foundation, Kenya (Economic Development) Construction funds for a curio/gift shop for a women's group to sell their crafts to tourists.

***Samro Grade School, Kenya (Education)** Tuition for twelve students and room and board for six students.

Universal Love Ministries, Uganda (Human Rights) Workshops for high school students about LGBT awareness, tolerance and rights. Formation of Inclusivity Clubs to continue the work.

***Visionary Women's Centre, Kenya (Economic Development)** Poultry project for 28 women. (See front page.)



***SIA Small Business Fund** Funding for 15 new businesses in Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda in November 2017. (See back page.)

Read success stories and see photos: www.spiritinaction.org/news

Top Left: This farmer (pictured in the middle), a member of the Matungu Community Development Charity, is pictured with Tanya Cothran and Vincent Atitwa. He used a low-interest loan to grow trees and seedlings for sale. Above Right: CIFORD Kenya has 22 peer support groups that meet weekly to discuss entrepreneurship, food security, gardening, and also to pool their savings and make small loans. Bottom Left: A goat at the Megabridge farm in Meru, Kenya.

Smart Risks: a new wind blowing in international development

by Barbara Deal, SIA Board Member

Like many of you, I remember the time when most aid to developing nations given by nongovernmental agencies came from huge charities, nonsectarian ones like the Ford Foundation, for agriculture, the Rockefeller Foundation, for health care, and so many more. Other large charities, motivated by the Christian mandate to meet human need, like World Vision, Heifer International, and other denominational world service charities have provided opportunities for education, improved health, and peacemaking in war-torn areas.

Traditionally, such organizations work from a model of from the top down – that is, the administrative staff and directors based in the U.S. or Europe survey the needs of the areas they serve, and develop programs and personnel to meet those needs, often from an office in New York or Los Angeles or London.

There is a new wind blowing in international development. And Spirit in Action is on the forefront. This new wind turns upside down the sometimes smug assumption that West knows Best – that people in North America and Europe are somehow endowed with a better understanding of what is needed in Kakamega, Kenya, for instance, and how to accomplish meeting the need, than the people who live and work there.

This new vision holds that aid efforts can often be more effective when charities in developed nations seek out already established and functioning grassroots groups in developing nations, and

individuals with the vision and skills to bring forth that vision – and learn from them the needs that are most challenging in their communities. Charities then can support leaders - with funds, encouragement, training, and the gift of partnership - to find the most effective ways to improve the lives and opportunities of those around them who are in need.

Are we willing to tolerate enough uncertainty to fund projects that clearly would be helpful if they succeed, but appear to have a risk of failure that pushes our comfort level?

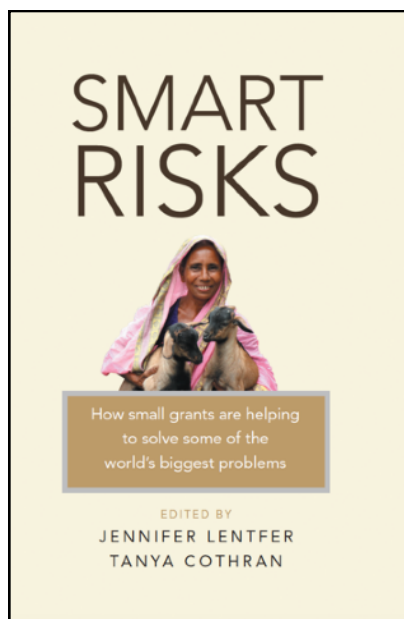
On first consideration, this new model is so different from previous methods as to seem risky. Do we trust people to discern the real needs around them? Do we trust them to use the funds as they were intended? Are we willing to tolerate enough uncertainty to fund projects that clearly would be helpful if they succeed, but appear to have a risk of failure that pushes our comfort level?

SMART RISKS: How small grants are helping to solve some of the world's biggest problems is a collection of short essays from people with personal experience in this new vision. Tanya Cothran is co-editor, with Jennifer Lentfer, of 30 brief essays addressing five commitments made by this new breed of small charities in wealthier countries who partner with grassroots groups and individuals in developing nations.

These five commitments include:

- Investing in local expertise
- Being non-prescriptive and flexible, with a long-term outlook
- Looking to the local grassroots for innovation
- Rethinking accountability; and
- Practicing vulnerability

(Continued on next page...)



Smart Risks, continued

The most successful programs prioritize holistic programming, and enable the local, grassroots organizations to remain flexible to meet needs as they arise.

One of the changes in grantmaking that SMART RISKS supports is that strong programs require strong operations. That can mean investing in support services, and buildings, at times investing in personnel, so leaders can focus their time on projects and still feed their families. That may have a little

“Sustainability is quite the buzzword these days. But when it comes to grassroots grant making, it’s the difference between charity and social change.” Charity might meet an immediate need, but when the grant is used up, and the outside help is gone, what then? Social change is the overarching need.

less emotional reward for donors than seeing a family build a business and be able to feed their children – but there are times when such investments pay off big in the long run, by having well-trained leaders to continue programs, and places for the work to happen.

Another key to success: Invest in best.

Identify those already existing grassroots groups that were so moved by a need in their community that



Left: Mutinda Kioko is a Small Business Fund “smart risks” grant recipient in Nairobi, Kenya. “I used to sell shoes. I received a grant and expanded my business. I’m happy because I can take care of all my needs and feed my kids. I buy and resell shoes. My kids dress well, I can pay rent and the landlord doesn’t bother me anymore. I’ve taught more than 10 people how to sell shoes with a small amount of money. I take them around to sell them and I teach them about pricing.”



Above: Twenty-eight women received chickens and built chicken houses with a “Smart Risks” grant from SIA to the Visionary Women’s Fund in Kenya. In December, the women will each give back the five original hens, as well as two hens to give away to needy members in the community. This is part of Sharing the Gift.

they put themselves and their resources into meeting the need. Partner with them.

Balance breadth with depth. To send a girl to school is a wonderful thing. But if she has to drop out because of inadequate medical care, or the lack of sanitary supplies, or because her parents need her to work to help feed the younger children, the broader issues need to be addressed. Grassroots organizations know these broader needs and are positioned to meet them.

From the Conclusion:

“The challenge before us now is to become willing to dream big – as grantmakers...Those with access to resources can take immediate, paradigm-challenging action that put power back in the hands of marginalized people and communities. When matched with the vision, resolve, and ingenuity of those coming together all over the world, this model is a proven formula for lasting change.”

THESE ARE SMART RISKS.

Thank you to our generous supporters!

We gratefully acknowledge those who have contributed to SIA from Sept. 22, 2017 to April 12, 2018.

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Hope for Relief Organization Keeping Girls in Schools



Created by Ashley Fivash
from Noun Project

So far in 2018, in Malawi,
1203 reusable sanitary
pads made
and given to
401 girls
in **7** schools.



Created by Mimi Sene
from Noun Project



Created by Ben Davis
from Noun Project

7 sewing
machines distributed to
mother groups
to make pads.



Created by Bureau Braganti
from Noun Project

63 mothers mentored on
hand sewing of reusable
sanitary pads.



Created by antonio adams
from Noun Project

4 communities passed by-
laws ending child marriages.

New Partnership in Kenya: Women of Change

Women of Change is an opportunity for a fresh start for women in Eldoret, Kenya. The business training program, a brainchild of Samuel Teimuge, is tailored for women who want to get out of their current work making and selling illicit alcohol.

The Spirit in Action Small Business Fund has partnered with Women of Change to provide the newly-trained women with start-up grants of \$150. Peris, pictured below, is one of the first five women to receive grants. Her son is helping to fill in her business plan.



Thank you, Dennis Johnson

for hosting three benefit recitals!

Thank you Johann Johnson

for your help in updating our database!

Our Mission: SPIRIT IN ACTION is a network of committed people world-wide who are serving God by empowering others. SIA is a 501(c)(3), tax-exempt, charitable foundation. We appreciate your prayers, comments, questions, and tax-deductible contributions. Tax ID# 93-1207351

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Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Please send my donation receipt by email _____

I would like to receive weekly blog posts _____

_____ \$20 _____ \$100

_____ \$35 _____ \$150

_____ \$50 _____ other

I would like my gift to remain anonymous _____

I make my gift in honor / memory of:

I would like to join the **DREAMER'S CIRCLE**
by pledging a monthly/quarterly gift of \$ _____

Please mail your contribution to:

Spirit in Action

PO Box 3384

Santa Cruz CA 95063

Donate online!

www.spiritinaction.org/donate

In the midst of uncertainty, a business thrives in Kenya

by Wambui Nguyo, Small Business Fund Coordinator

Everyone thought that the contentious election was finally settled. Then, on September 1, Kenya's Supreme Court nullified the August 8 elections, in which the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) had declared President Uhuru Kenyatta the winner. Fresh elections were scheduled for October.

This began a long period of insecurity and animosity between and within communities. It was not easy to access the Korogocho neighborhood during this period. Any meetings were perceived to be suspicious and could trigger more violence. We did not meet with the new Small Business Fund groups until we were sure



David Muriuki is one of the latest Small Business Fund grant recipients in Korogocho, Kenya. His shop is busy and growing!

the situation was favorable for me to go to Korogocho and hold our trainings or meetings.

The grants have finally reached the beneficiaries! David Muriuki, age 28, is very grateful. He had an existing business of a small shop without much stock. After receiving the \$100 cash grant, he bought a few things like maize flour, salt, and kerosene. These are goods that most of the people in the neighborhood buy regularly. He had the right market and the number of customers steadily increased.

The business has expanded compared to the past few months and he has been reinvesting the profit back to the shop. He is really thankful to Spirit in Action because his life has changed.



SPRING & SUMMER 2018 NEWSLETTER

Tanya Cothran, Executive Director

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