



**Spirit
In
Action**

Micro Grants
Major Change

Spring & Summer Newsletter 2019

Spirit in Action

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**We are being asked
- deeply - to no longer
pretend that
apolitical, ahistorical,
technical approaches
to fighting poverty
will solve the
injustices that cause
it. - Jennifer Lentfer**

“It’s not glamorous...”

The Value of Supporting Operating Expenses

“It’s not glamorous, but it is necessary,” wrote Turinawe Samson, Director of Universal Love Alliance (ULA), in his grant application to SIA. ULA hosts workshops for faith leaders in Uganda about accepting that “each person represents the image of God regardless of the person’s background, skin color, or sexual orientation.” They had received funding from another organization for the workshop but those grants didn’t cover the basics like rent or electricity for internet usage.

Restricted grants can sometimes lead to frustrating gaps in coverage. This grant covers only food and meeting rooms. That one covers hiring outside trainers but not employing trainers as staff.

Part of Smart Risks Grantmaking practiced by Spirit in Action is to provide support for grassroots general operating budgets. This gives organizations the flexibility to respond to the reality on the ground. It also enables them to plan for the long-term work of the movement, rather than work from project to project.

“I’m proud of us for supporting this. It’s about time we support time,” said Margaret Arner, long-time SIA Board Member. Grants for specific projects often don’t allow funds to pay for skilled staff, which is sometimes labeled as “overhead,” and deemed extravagant. We have seen the benefit of enabling organizations to pay their staff adequately, in order to ensure sustainability of the organization and avoid staff burn-out.

We are also supporting administration costs for Manyamula COMSIP Cooperative in Malawi, which has helped it grow into a thriving organization with dedicated staff who are fairly compensated for the work they do for their community.



Sharon, Naomi, and Samson selfie together in Kampala. Sharon and Samson run ULA and Naomi is the SIA Small Business Fund Local Coordinator in Uganda.

The benefit of long-term partnerships

by Lizette Gilday, Founder, Visionary Women's Fund

Our Women's Poultry Project, now supporting 76 Kenyan women, has given the Visionary Women's Centre staff a sense of purpose that comes with clear goals and great potential.

It is very rewarding to build on the successes and lessons of the first year, now that we are in our second year.

The village elders and the chief were very impressed with the first year of this project, as were the husbands of the women who are



participating. This, in turn, has increased the credibility of the Visionary Women's Centre among the leaders of the community.

Marion and her granddaughter, who is part of the Women's Poultry Project.

In two years, the Visionary Women's Centre has trained 76 Kenyan women to raise poultry, helped them build coops, and given them each 10 chicks. The 28 members from the first group donated 140 hens to the new group members.

So many international projects are short-term and do not build roots and long-term commitment in the community. We are grateful to have the **opportunity to create viable, long-term contributions.**

As we enter the second year, we have now established contacts with the Ministry of Agriculture which will not only be useful right away but could bear fruit in the years to come.

The changes wrought by this project occur on many different levels: **mothers and grandmothers become more confident and prosperous, children benefit, husbands become more engaged, hope grows and with it realistic plans for financial improvement.**

Let us be "instruments of love and caring"

By Del Anderson

The world is in its present condition because we, the expressers and manifestors of God, have reversed God's process. How?

Humans, through the centuries, have ruled with the "trickle down" method, ruling from the top down, instead of **God's Way of "perking up from the bottom."** God's Way is actual political, economic, and social participation and decision-making involvement from informed and aware people.

We must realize we can *plan* a new world politically, economically, and socially on paper, but we have to *build* it with people. Thus, the spiritual and moral dimension of life - trusting

and obeying of God's Divine Plan and Will - is primary for success.

Frank Buchman, founder of Initiatives of Change, said, "Human nature can be changed. That is the root of the answer. National economics can be changed. That is the fruit of the answer. World history can be changed. That is the destiny of our age."

Well, what can SIA do about all this? We can, in balance, rhythm, and alignment with God, and in working with others, **open ourselves as instruments for God's symphony.** Let us be prayer-soaked members with hearts open wide to be used by God, instruments of love and caring.

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

A holistic approach girls' education

Hope for Relief in Malawi

You've probably seen the simple messaging. If you give \$xx amount per month, a girl in another country will get the gift of education. But it's not as easy as just money or desks or school buildings. The Malawian organization Hope for Relief, assisted by a Spirit in Action Community Grant, uses a holistic approach to girls' education in their community.

1. Meetings with Parents Last year the team at Hope for Relief held two engagement meetings with parents, teachers, and committee members on girls' right to education. Part of the discussion was talking to parents about the challenges that girls face when they don't complete their primary and secondary education. Recently a young woman from the community was accepted to attend a nursing college!



2. Assisting with School Costs Hope for Relief also works with parents and the District Social Welfare Office to increase the number of girls receiving government scholarships. Elementary schools in Malawi are free, but high school costs around \$60 per year (or around \$185/year for boarding school). This is a lot when a family is just barely scraping by. Sixty-three girls in their region are now benefiting from the government scholarship program!



3. Providing Cloth Pads for Girls Women in the community have been busy sewing reusable sanitary pads and so far they have distributed 4,553 pads to 1,133 girls in both primary and secondary Schools in Rumphi District. Last year Tamika received five reusable sanitary pads from Hope for Relief. Before receiving them, she was using cotton and cloth pieces. Now, she feels safe and comfortable at school because no one knows when she is on her period. And she doesn't miss classes because of it either!

4. Changing Rooms at Schools A typical bathroom in this part of Malawi would be a simple pit toilet. Not ideal for sensitive feminine hygiene. Having overcome the hurdle of quality pads, the next practical challenge was to provide the girls with a place to change their pads while at school.

Above: "The reusable sanitary pads have transformed my performance in class as I don't miss classes during menstruation," says student Tabitha Mkandawire.

Top Right: Girls discussing about dangers of early marriages and pregnancy during school follow up visits.

The SIA grant last year paid for the construction of five more bathrooms at schools. These double as changing rooms for the girls who need to change their cloth pads and wash the used ones during the day.

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>

How are people Sharing the Gift?

There are many ways that Small Business Fund groups pay-it-forward

Small Business Fund groups receive training and \$150 grants to start a business of their choice. Instead of asking the entrepreneurs to pay us back, we ask them to pay-it-forward to help others. Here are some recent ways people are Sharing the Gift:



Christina Phiri (Malawi) shared some produce from her crops.

- **Bought **cooking pots** for a neighbor ~ Veta Nhine, Malawi
- **Paid **school fees** for needy child ~ Rebecca Shisia, Kenya
- **Gave **two chickens** to a friend ~ Flyness Chunga, Malawi
- **Shared **seedlings** with another family ~ Masida Shumba, Malawi
- **Gave **school materials** for a needy child ~ Patuli Nekesa, Kenya
- **Gave away a **pair of shoes** ~ Mutinda Kioko, Kenya



Seline Juma (Kenya) gave cash to a neighbor to help her start a business.



Wilson Nkosi (Malawi) shared tomato seeds and fertilizer with neighbors.



Nations Ngulube (Malawi) gave a woman a door panel and frame.

SIA GRANTS SINCE 2002

\$296,679 + \$136,420 = \$433,099

Community Grants	Small Business Fund	TOTAL
\$296,679	\$136,420	\$433,099

PHILIPPINES INDIA
NIGERIA DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
MALAWI KENYA RWANDA
ZAMBIA PERU
SRI LANKA UGANDA EL SALVADOR

Education
Gardens, Water & Agriculture
Micro-savings and Loans
Solar Cooking
Poultry, Goats, & Fish
Skills Trainings: Sewing, Cabinetry, Beading,
Beekeeping
Girls' and LGBT Rights

New & Ongoing Grants

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



***CIFORD Kenya (Girls' Empowerment)** Workshops for girls, boys and community leaders on the topic of anti-female genital mutilation (FGM) and youth empowerment.

Flaming Chalice, Rwanda (Refugee Support) Café/ community center run by 12 Burundian refugees in Rwanda.

Hope for Relief Malawi (Girls' Education) Constructing five more changing rooms at schools; seven sewing machines for sewing feminine hygiene pads; awareness meetings on girls' rights to education. (See page 3)

***Kimbo Amazing Women Group, Kenya (Micro-loans)**

Expanding the micro-credit program for women in the Githurai informal settlement - one of the poorest areas around Nairobi.

Manyamula Community Savings and Investment Promotion (COMSIP) Cooperative, Malawi (Agriculture, Organizational Development) Support for Cooperative administration and general operating budget. Peanut oil processing machine and storage room.

***Rebuilders Charity, Democratic Republic of Congo (Skills Development)** Sewing machines, training classes and start-up grants for 20 women.

Samro Grade School, Kenya (Education) Tuition for 73 students to finish the rest of the year at Samro School.

Set Her Free, Uganda (Economic Development) Poultry project and skills training for vulnerable girls.

***Sonkoyo Nailepu Women's Group, Kenya (Economic Development)** 10 bulls and 20 lambs for this cooperative of Maasai women.

***Universal Love Ministries, Uganda (Human Rights, Organizational Development)** Administrative support for general operations. (See front page)

Visionary Women's Centre, Kenya (Economic Development) Poultry project for 80 women. (See pg. 2)



***SIA Small Business Fund** Funding for 40 new businesses in Kenya, Malawi, and Uganda between Nov 2018 and March 2019. (See pg. 5)

Read success stories and see photos:

www.spiritinaction.org/news



Top: Alice filling a jerry can with water from her tank. She will use the water for her potato crop. She received a Small Business Fund grant last year and it is helping to support 10 people in her family. (Eldoret, Kenya). Middle: Changing room built by Hope for Relief. Left: Two members of the Kimbo Amazing Women group in Kenya. 20 members received loans of \$100 to start their own small enterprises.

Thank you to our generous supporters!

We gratefully acknowledge those who have contributed to SIA from September 18, 2018 - April 15, 2019.

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Millie Millar

Join the Legacy Circle

Have you considered adding Spirit in Action to your will or legacy planning?

Testimony from a SIA Board Member who is part of the Del Anderson Legacy Circle:

“Over the years, Bob and I were thrilled to see the power of the Spirit in Action small grants to enable people to begin successful small businesses. As we learned more about individual projects, and the families whose lives have been lifted from poverty to self-sufficiency, we wanted to provide support beyond monthly contributions, and be part of this amazingly effective development work long into the future.

“We discussed with our financial planner and attorney about leaving a percentage of our family trust to Spirit in Action. They not only encouraged this decision, but suggested that in addition to a percentage, we also name Spirit in Action the Residual Beneficiary, to receive any balance of the Trust that could not be distributed as we had designated. **It is a blessing to be part of the Legacy Circle, knowing that generations to come will continue to better provide for their families, and strengthen their communities.**”

For more information, visit:

<https://spiritinaction.org/support-sia/legacy>

**“No matter where you are,
you deserve the best”**

**Inspiration from Turinawe Samson,
Universal Love Alliance, Uganda**

Human beings are inwardly alike. Each of us aspires to joy, happiness and freedom, to knowledge and light. And we all experience suffering in the same way.

When we see this, we begin to realize that it is only on the outside that we are different. We realize that we are wearing different masks, like the members of a theatre company on stage, but in real life we are great friends. In real life we are all human beings.

No matter where you are, where you come from, you skin colour, gay or heterosexual, refugees or citizens of a particular nation, poor or rich, religious or non-religious, we deserve the best on this planet simply because we are born free and equal!



Yes! I want to support families in Africa with a gift to Spirit in Action.

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 \$ _____

I would like info about including SIA in my will _____

Please mail your contribution to:
Spirit in Action * PO Box 3384 * Santa Cruz CA 95063

Donate online!

www.spiritinaction.org/donate

Africa Trip 2019: Site Visits, Connection, Fellowship

In just one month, at the end of May, I'll be heading back to Uganda, Kenya, and Malawi to visit our partners and see their work in action!

During this five-week trip, I also will reconnect with our Small Business Fund coordinators. These volunteers have become the eyes and ears (and cheerleaders) for SIA in their countries and they have been invaluable to me in terms of finding new grant partners and understanding the real context of their work.

This time, I will also be visiting a new area in Uganda. Aboke District is one of the areas that was terrorized by the Lord's Resistance Army in the 1990s and people there are still



Samuel and Rhoda Teimuge, Tanya, and Dennis Kiprop in Eldoret, Kenya in 2017.

struggling to rebuild their lives and move towards sustainable lives and prosperity. With Naomi Ayot and Mrs. Santa we have been investing in this community with our SIA Small Business Fund grants since early 2016.

Traveling with me this time will be Board Members **Barbara Deal** (in Uganda and Kenya) and **Kathleen King** (in Malawi). They have

both been serving on the Board for many years and are eager to put faces to the names they have heard so much about over the years.

We welcome your prayers for safety, health, and meaningful connection. Please follow along on our blog and social media!



SPRING & SUMMER 2019 NEWSLETTER

Tanya Cothran, Executive Director
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Follow my site visits in Africa, end of May-June
on Facebook and Instagram! @spiritinactionintl