



Spirit
In
Action

Micro Grants
Major Change

Spring & Summer Newsletter 2025

Spirit in Action

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Reach Girls Opens New Tailoring Center



Above: Tanya visiting Reach Girls in 2023.

Below: Tiba (Reach Girls Director) meeting with key community leaders; these meetings are necessary first steps to getting buy-in and support for a project.



works with traditional leaders, teachers, and health promoters to **identify young mothers** who have dropped out of school and who are **eager to learn new skills** to support their babies. For their first piece of clothing, they sewed a child's dress!

"Start with what you have" is a piece of advice that SIA Founder Del Anderson often shared. This year, Reach Girls, on the shores of Lake Malawi, is embracing this philosophy.

They noticed that the nearby Chipoka Health Facility had **three sewing machines**, previously donated by the United Nations Population Fund. These machines **were sitting unused** because the local government lacked the resources to purchase cloth or hire a tailor to conduct training workshops for the interested girls.

With a Spirit in Action grant to hire a trainer and buy cloth, Reach Girls is using these machines along with the existing classroom to start a new tailoring training center in Chipoka.

Classes began in February and will run through May.

Fourteen teenage girls are already starting to learn tailoring, business skills, and financial

literacy. Reach Girls

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Set up your one-time or recurring donation at www.spiritinaction.org/donate
SIA is a 501(c)(3), tax-exempt, charitable foundation. Tax ID# 93-1207351.

SIA Office Reflections

Elizabeth Stanley starts her third year as SIA Operations Manager



As I mark two years with Spirit in Action, I find myself reflecting on what makes this organization so meaningful to me. These past two years have given me more than I could ever give in return. With each task, each conversation, and each challenge, I continue to learn.

Every time our board convenes, we begin with prayer, inviting God's presence and guidance into our decisions. This simple yet profound practice reminds us that our work is more than simply strategy and funding. It is built on faith, trust, and a shared commitment to uplifting communities.

Our partners truly embody the essence of Spirit in Action. Through their perseverance, love, and grace, they have shown me what true dedication looks like.

The relationships I've built with many of our partners go beyond my administrative role. I have been welcomed into their communities, invited to celebrate their successes, and trusted to walk alongside them through challenges.

SIA donors are the heart of our organization, enabling our work through their unwavering generosity and commitment. In a world filled with countless appeals for support,

deciding where to give can be overwhelming. Yet, year after year, our donors remain steadfast in their dedication to our mission. Their kindness is a reflection of God's Spirit in action, and it is a blessing to witness the impact that unfolds when people unite with a shared purpose.

The greatest lesson from my time with Spirit in Action so far is that being of service is one of the deepest acts of self-love. When we give of ourselves—our time, talent, and resources—we open our hearts to the fullness

of God's love in our own lives. A small act of kindness, when combined, has the power to transform the world.

We're glad to have you on the SIA Team, Elizabeth!



Left: One morning this January, Elizabeth woke up early in New Jersey to celebrate via Zoom as 43 young women graduated from the CAP-AIDS Home of Hope skills training program in Uganda! She shared words of encouragement as the women headed off to start their own tailoring businesses.

The Light of God is in Everyone

Adapted from Del Anderson, SIA Founder

Dear Ones: We are learning that we cannot reverse world conditions, wars, hunger, violence, poverty, greed, etc., by only changing structures, laws, forms of government, etc. God needs transformed hearts. God needs the lives of people of all ages joined together as centers of light in this world.

Are we, as Spirit in Action world-wide, willing to be used by God to be Light, Yeast, Salt; that through us, God's love and justice will be brought here as it is in heaven?

The Light of God is in every member of God's family. Our Creator did not create any defective child.

God created men and women, black and white, poor and rich, educated and uneducated, equal in quality and potential.

Each of us is an important piece in God's beautiful mosaic, and God's vision is not complete until every one of us is transformed into a likeness of Love.

~ Del

The Dignity of a Home

Building a thriving rural community in Ryansoro, Burundi

When Flaming Chalice International (FCI) leaders noticed that youth were leaving rural Ryansoro to find work in the city, they applied to SIA to start a small business development and mentoring program for young entrepreneurs.

This year, they are working with 37 youth organized into eight cooperative business groups. The young people have established farms, a pharmacy, convenience stores, and a veterinary technology business. With these bustling enterprises, the businesses are **successfully encouraging youth who grew up in the area to make Ryansoro their permanent home**. This is all part of FCI's vision for a thriving and well-connected rural community.

At the end of 2024, FCI coordinated a community effort to build a house for Daphrose, a fellow community member and single mother of five children. Unlike most Burundians, who know where their ancestors have lived for

generations, Daphrose came to Ryansoro with her mother but did not know where her extended family lived. When Daphrose's mother died and the landlords evicted Daphrose and her five children from their rented home, **they found themselves in the precarious position of being homeless and landless** (which is abundant in the rural area), and without a family compound to which they could return.

FCI bought a small piece of land, and its staff rallied community members to help form and stack the bricks, so Daphrose and her family could have a new place to call home and set down roots.

The walls and roof are finished, and this year they will complete the project by adding the doors, windows, and cement floor. Daphrose looks forward to living in a good and comfortable home, just like her neighbors!

SIA provides support for **FCI's salaries so that they can employ steady, dedicated Burundian staff** to coordinate their efforts in building a thriving community.



Above: High school students volunteered on Daphrose's home project during their vacation and received school books in exchange for their efforts. **Below:** Daphrose visits her nearly complete home. In the meantime, she is living with another family in the village in exchange for helping them in their fields.



Vincent received mentorship and a small grant from FCI to open his vet tech shop. He studied veterinary science at university and is happy to return home and assist neighbors in caring for their animals.



Read our blog for more Grant Partner updates! <http://spiritinaction.org/news>
See a list of our 2025 grants: www.spiritinaction.org/current-grant-partners

SIA Partners in Action

Grants supporting women



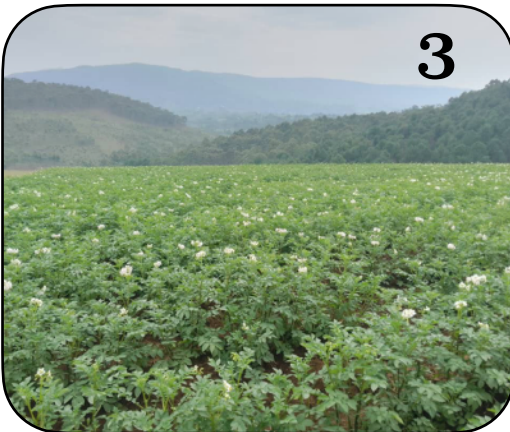
1

1. Happy Customer. (Kenya) Lilian dropped by the Transformers Mathare sewing school and dress shop to get an outfit made for her brother's wedding. Norine, who is learning tailoring skills, measured her and sewed the dress to meet Lilian's specifications. Lilian is very pleased with the outcome and paid about \$38 USD for the custom dress. SIA supports Transformers to buy sewing machines and materials to train women in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Kenya.



2

2. Girls Need Education, Not Circumcision. (Kenya) Last year, CIFORD Kenya held workshops for over 700 girls who were at risk of undergoing female circumcision. CIFORD's programs share health information and life skills and always end with an alternative rite of passage where they parade through the streets proclaiming their rights!



3

3. Field of Potatoes. (Burundi) At the end of last year, Tubunganire Women collectively planted many hectares of potatoes. Once they harvest them, they will store and sell the seed potatoes to members and neighboring communities. This will increase food security and generate income. Currently, the women have to travel very far to buy potato seeds.

4. Reducing Stigma Through Learning Together.

(Burundi) This year, CESAPH was awarded a SIA grant to start a sewing training program for 25 women, including a mix of physically disabled and non-disabled women. They will learn about tailoring, peaceful conflict resolution, entrepreneurship, and human rights laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities. The photo below shows the group with 15 new sewing machines. The goal is for all women to be financially independent and thriving.



4

5. Blessed Hands Seedlings. (Kenya)

Blessed Hands is SIA's newest Grant Partner. This group consists of 15 university-educated women who have been unable to find formal employment. Instead, they

are taking the initiative to learn

about farming and establish a nursery for coffee, orange, and passion fruit seedlings. Their mission is to "empower, support, and create a community of strong women who lift each other up."



5

In An Emergency, SIA Partners Take Action

Supporting Kenyans living with HIV/AIDS

The reality of being a community-based organization (CBO) is that when international funders withdraw from humanitarian efforts, CBOs still feel responsible for figuring out how to assist their neighbors in need.

Last month, Tai CBO (tai means eagle in Swahili), a SIA Grant Partner in rural Kenya, met with staff at Maua Methodist Hospital. The hospital lost funding when President Trump cut the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program earlier this year. Along with other community organizations and Community Health Promoters, Tai CBO is working to support the 2,500 people in their region who had been enrolled in the PEPFAR program.



Uganda Trivia

-  Uganda is about the same size as Oregon.
-  The official languages are English and Kiswahili. There are 56 other local languages spoken in Uganda.
-  48% of the population is aged 0-15 years old. Only 2.5% of the population is 65+.
-  The equator crosses Uganda.
-  The three largest exports from Uganda to the US are coffee, vanilla, & casein (milk) protein.

“Despite some exemptions being in place, this will increase the spread of HIV infections and deaths from opportunistic infections among our community members,” says Jonathan Hamisi, Director of Tai.

In 2020, in response to the global COVID pandemic, the SIA Board established the Emergency Grant Fund to respond rapidly to natural and man-made disasters like this. This fund supports our grassroots partners to “do the needful” - a phrase I often hear from our Grant Partners - and take action with whatever resources they are able to mobilize.

A \$1,000 grant will assist Tai in their efforts. Last year, the SIA Emergency Fund helped communities in Kenya, Uganda, and Burundi that experienced flooding and drought.

SIA Visits Uganda this July!

Join Tanya, Naomi, & Kathleen on Zoom, July 12th.

On July 1st, Tanya Cothran and North American Board President Kathleen King will travel to Uganda for a two-week trip. African Advisory Board member Naomi Ayot Oyaro will guide them as they meet with **seven of SIA's grant partners** to see the impact of their work in the community. These visits are **mutually beneficial**, deepening the understanding and trust between the grant-giver and the program implementer.

Tanya, Kathleen and Naomi will share stories from Kampala on Saturday, July 12th at 10:00am PDT (1:00pm EDT). Visit www.spiritinaction.org/zoom-ug2025 for more information!



Kathleen and Tanya in Uganda in 2022, on their way to visit Kakuuto Development Initiative's pineapple plantation, with driver Michael.

Thank you to our generous supporters!

We gratefully acknowledge those who have contributed to SIA from Sept 12, 2024, to April 10, 2025.

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Support Beyond the Check

What it means to be a partner

Part of SIA's commitment to Trust-Based Philanthropy is "Support Beyond the Check," meaning that in addition to grant funds we give to our 28 Grant Partner organizations, **we also provide training, encouragement, and letters of recommendation.** This is one of the ways we build a partnership that goes beyond a typical donor-recipient relationship.

In the last 12 months, Tai CBO (Kenya) received **two grants from All the Sky Foundation** for their tailoring and agriculture projects. Matungu Community Development Charity (a past SIA partner in Kenya) received a **grant from the 1% Fund in Geneva to build a training center.**

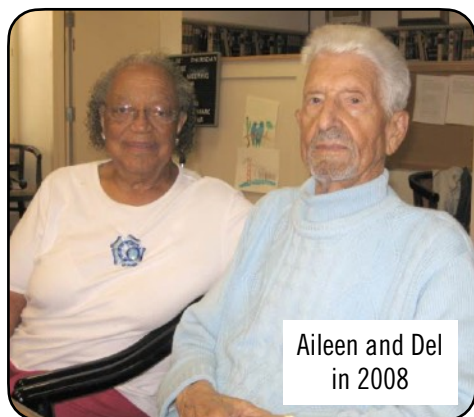
CESAPH (Burundi) was awarded **\$5,000 from The Giving Exchange** for their tailoring program.

Congratulations to these organizations who have been able to grow their funding since partnering with SIA!

The SIA Staff and African Advisory Board have **hosted workshops via Zoom** on Financial Reporting, Accounting for Income-Generating Activities, Photography for Social Media, and Asana (a free project management software). These opportunities help Grant Partner organizations **expand their skills and improve their operations.**

Remembering Aileen Gillem

1920-2025



Aileen and Del
in 2008

Aileen Gillem peacefully departed this world on January 20, 2025, at the remarkable age of 104. Aileen was one of Spirit in Action's most dedicated volunteers, and for many years, she helped Del Anderson (SIA Founder) keep his office and papers in order (quite a feat!). After Del passed, Aileen continued to collect seeds from a local nursery and send them to SIA friends in East Africa.

In 2005, after visiting SIA partners in Kenya, she wrote the following reflection for the SIA newsletter: "I am overwhelmed by the graciousness from all the people I met on this trip. There is a role for each of us to play in making this world a better place by trying to make a change for people who don't have what we have. **We are connected – more than we realize – by circumstances and, most importantly, by our various needs and wants – and by basic human dignity.**"

We honor Aileen's generous heart and long life of service!

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Refugees Helping Refugees

Computer skills training in Uganda

Uganda is home to over 1.6 million refugees and asylum seekers fleeing violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, and other African countries. While refugees arriving in Uganda find safety, they **often face discrimination** when seeking employment or operating businesses.

The leaders of Bridge of Solidarity (BoS) understand these challenges intimately; **they are refugees from Burundi who fled to Uganda to escape political violence**, and they are striving to create more opportunities for others in their refugee community in Kampala.

BoS leadership recognized that even when humanitarian organizations recommended scholarship opportunities to refugees who graduated from high school, the potential applicants still **lacked the digital skills needed to apply** and gain a competitive advantage.

This March, the SIA grant helped BoS establish a computer training center. **Forty refugees are registered for classes** to learn basic computer skills, the use of printers, and online marketing through social media.

BoS also hosts work sessions where **refugees can use the computers to apply for academic scholarships**, jobs, and other opportunities. To sustain the program, they offer printing, scanning, typing, and photocopy services to community members for a small fee. BoS is a wonderful example of the vision and generosity of SIA Grant Partners!



The Bridge of Solidarity leadership team in their newly opened computer lab.



SPRING & SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER

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