Sharing the Gift. Paying it forward. Blessings others as you have been blessed. These concepts are woven throughout all that we do at Spirit in Action. They are part of the SIA ripple effect; when we help one family it ripples out to others in the community.

In Malawi, Sharing the Gift is deeply embedded in the culture of the Manyamula COMSIP Cooperative (formerly called MAVISALO). The cooperative consists of 167 members who can access low-interest loans and savings accounts. The membership is divided into eight zones. The zone groups invite members to connect and seek advice between the monthly COMSIP meetings.

As Sharing the Gift, the group also invests in pigs. Each zone received two piglets from the cooperative and they are charged with raising them. The zone members collectively care for the pigs, including vaccinating them and feeding them high quality food.

After two months, the pigs will go to the poorest family among the zone members. And, eventually, every zone member will benefit. Working together for the benefit of the vulnerable members of the cooperative is a way of paying it forward, so that everyone advances. It reflects Sharing the Gift, and their motto: “Together we grow.”
I am so excited to share Spirit in Action’s new logo! This is an opportunity to capture the spirit of our work in an image and continue to put our best foot forward.

We started the logo design process by defining the core of our work:

- Spirit in Action is supportive and relationship-focused.
- Spirit in Action is compassionate, encouraging, empowering.
- Spirit in Action is community-oriented.

We wanted the logo to represent both our approach to grantmaking AND the actual SIA programs. And I think the new logo blends those perfectly!

- The hands show the relationship focus, and they also represent the leadership by our partners in Africa.
- The leaf expresses our passion for sustainable agriculture, and represents our grants that support training and farmers.
- The water droplet is about drinking and irrigation water and also represents that our grants are drops that fall into a greater ocean. Our drops ripple out and multiply – spreading through cooperation, empowered communities and Sharing the Gift (see page 1). We reach many more people than are touched by the first drop.

Marsha Johnson, SIA Advisory member also adds:

**The expanding energy of the new Spirit in Action logo also relates to prayer.** YOU ARE INVITED to be part of Spirit in Action's prayer circle. As our prayers join together, the power of love flows and expands. Together, let us be prayerful:

- Giving thanks for God's love flowing through SIA
- Blessing Tanya's vital work as SIA's administrator
- Uplifting SIA's inspiring, committed co-workers in Africa
- Affirming the SIA board members and their prayerful discernment
- Celebrating SIA's supporters

Thank you for being part of Spirit in Action's prayer circle.

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**Honoring and Remembering Lucile Anderson**

A memory from Hope Farr:

“I remember seeing her for the first time at a regional CFO meeting. She was wearing a bright yellow suit and with her beautiful white hair she was stunning! So, the gift throughout the years was one of beauty — of herself and her surroundings — and one of absolute commitment. She served as a role model for me which I still follow and appreciate. Magnifying beauty, I think, is a reflection and appreciation of the incredible beauty in the world, and certainly is a gift to others as well as to self.”

Lucile (1921-2015) was the wife of Del Anderson, SIA Founder (1906-2008)
I don't need to make things happen. My part is to let go my fix-it efforts and focus my attention on God, His/Her divine grace activity, energy, and let God’s abundance and health, harmony and wholeness come forth in, through, and as me.

Let the All-presence, All-power, All-wisdom, All goodness, and All-love of God flow in me and through me. Thus we are co-creators with the Infinite One. I am a part of God and as I trust God and trust the life process and identify with Spirit, I express the wholeness of God.

“Be still and know that I am God.” Not all of God, but one with God’s Allness.

My part is to become God’s peacemaker. “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons (and daughters) of God.”

Be/do less; rest and listen more. Flowers don’t toil. Limbs attached to fruit trees don’t struggle. The fruit comes forth; it blooms.

Our part is to let go and let God’s grace, energy flow. When we wholly desire and will to will to do God’s will, and act as if we believe it, we are released in God’s love. “The joy of the Lord is my strength.”

For more from Del, visit: http://spiritinaction.org/del
It’s not often that I get to write about SIA millionaires! Let me introduce you to Mquweni Mpumulo, of Malawi, entrepreneur extraordinaire.

Mquweni was born to the second wife of his father and so he was teased horribly by his siblings. In 2005 he left his family compound and moved to Manyamula Village.

In August, 2006 Canaan Gondwe, local coordinator of SIA’s Small Business Fund (SBF) program in Malawi, recruited Mquweni to join SBF and start a business. With the small grant from SIA, the group bought farm produce in bulk and resold it in the market.

After working tirelessly for a year at Manyamula Trading Centre, the business group decided to relocate to a village 35km away, which had a larger market. There, Mquweni added another business of collecting second-hand shoes, selling them to a shoemaking company in Lilongwe (Malawi’s capital city) for remanufacturing. The resulting contract (in addition to his produce business) brought stability and a firm economic base.

In 2010, after doing some market research, Mquweni began a third business of buying kitchen pots and pans in Zambia and Tanzania and selling them to government schoolteachers. School teachers are some of the few people in Malawi that receive regular salaries and so are reliable customers!

Mquweni now sells cookware to more than 200 teachers in more than 50 schools, who pay in monthly installments. He even employs four people who help the business group to deliver and collect funds on monthly basis.

As a result of Mquweni’s many businesses, he now has a capital base of over seven million Malawian Kwacha ($15,600)!

This means that Mquweni’s family is now living comfortably. In a country where most rural people have dirt floors and two-room houses, Mquweni’s family has build a five-room house. They are also able to pay for school fees and medication. He told Canaan that his family “could afford medical treatment without challenges.” (How many of us in the US also wish we could say this?)

Mquweni also knows about Sharing the Gift. The business group has gifted kitchenware worth $25 to one of his faithful salespeople. Canaan is continuing to encourage Mquweni and to mentor him on more ways he can share the gift.

During my visit to Malawi, Canaan proudly told me Mquweni’s story and pointed out the photo of Mquweni on the SBF office wall. For Canaan, this is a shining example, a real testament, to what can be sparked by a $150 grant which helps people tap into that potential within them.

For more success stories, and to support the Small Business Fund, visit: www.spiritinaction.org
New & Ongoing Grants

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

*Community Mobilization Against Poverty (CMAP), Kenya (Sustainable Agriculture) Training 200 farmers in bio-intensive farming techniques and promoting farmer-to-farmer sharing.

Kakamega Tsindombela Women's Group, Kenya (Fish Farming; Economic Development) This group has over 500 fish in their three ponds. 28 widows and their families have benefited from this project so far. They have purchased fishing nets to protect the ponds.

*Pastoralist Child Foundation, Kenya (Girls Empowerment) Girls Empowerment Workshop in April, culminating with an alternative rite of passage, for 60 Samburu girls. (See page 3)

*Progressive Volunteers, Kenya (Community Volunteers for Urban Development) New dressmaking and sewing skills training center with seven sewing machines. (See back page)

*Samro Grade School, Kenya (Water; Education) The large, underground, water tank is part of the cycle of life between the school (where water is collected) and the school gardens (which use the water and then feed the students). The grant also provided tuition for four students, and tuition and boarding for six additional students.

Samro Polytechnic School, Kenya (Vocational Training) The sewing students received a commission for 110 school uniforms! They have three industrial sewing machines. An additional grant covered tuition and boarding for six polytechnic students.

Welfare Concern International, Zambia (Economic Development) In the last six months, 35 community women have been trained in business management and investment. 18 have also received small business loans.


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

(Top Left) Woman trained by Welfare Concern, with produce from her grocery stand. (Above Right) Ugandan savings group member tells how they have benefited from receiving the book, WHERE THERE IS NO DOCTOR. They did a skit about how to care for a child who has malaria.
Thank you to our generous supporters!

We gratefully acknowledge those who have contributed to SIA from September 5, 2014 to April 15, 2015.

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Honoring Del & Lucile Anderson
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Honoring Diana Halpenny
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FACES OF THE SMALL BUSINESS FUND

Left: Small business leader in Uganda offers a personalized SIA pot to Tanya. Each pot can sell for about $2 and they can make 20/day. The family is saving to build a new house and storefront.

Right and Below: Kondwani and his family reinvested in their business to grow winter maize, which sells for a higher profit. He has also has a photography business. I got to visit their new home (with iron sheets on the roof, rather than thatch). Their son showed me their solar panel, which provides light after the sun sets. Malawi is relatively close to the equator and the sun set around 6pm, year-round.

Small Business Fund grants come in two installments: An initial grant of $100 and then $50 after three months. Local coordinators provide business training and mentoring for a full year. $150 provides hope and real change!

In 2014...

29% of our mailing list donated to SIA
88% total income came from individuals (not institutions)
43 first-time donors

"Optimism is a strategy for making a better future. Because unless you believe that the future can be better, you are unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so." --Noam Chomsky

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

I would like to join the DREAMER’S CIRCLE by pledging a monthly/quarterly gift of $______

I would like more information about SIA to share with my church, club, or friends. _____

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

Donate online! www.spiritinaction.org/support
New dressmaking training center in Nairobi
Economic empowerment for vulnerable women

It is called a dream project – this dressmaking and tailoring training center in a very poor part of Nairobi, Kenya - “simply because the project aims at achieving long-term sustainable solutions to poverty and societal problems.”

With a SIA grant in January 2015 Progressive Volunteers, a Kenyan grassroots organization, made this dream a reality by purchasing three industrial and four traditional sewing machines.

They also secured a safe space to host the trainings and hired two skilled instructors for the training program. 42 women have been recruited to join the program, including 17 teenage girls, 13 widows, and 12 single mothers.

Rosemary Ochieng, age 19, is one of the trainees. “This is an opportunity for me to change my life,” says Rosemary. “I am happy for this life-time opportunity to gain embroidery and tailoring skills. I would like to specialize in school outfits like tracksuits and girls’ skirts.”

“In much of the work we do, it is clear that what local people need most are the skills and economic opportunities to better support themselves.” Jeremiah Mzee, Director of Progressive Volunteers

The industrial machines will help the women attain steady jobs and earn more money. Unskilled seamstresses are often paid only $2.50-3.50 per day and skilled seamstresses are paid around $6.40/day. So access to these machines and skilled instructors represent a significant potential benefit for the women and their families.

Watch the new video of our partners and work in Africa! www.spiritinaction.org/videos