Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance

Providing 10 years of basic health services, targeting prevention, care, and support in communities affected by HIV, AIDS, TB and malaria in Africa

2010 ANNUAL REPORT
The Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance is founded and incorporated in San Francisco, CA to deliver HIV-related health services in resource-poor countries.
Dear Friends,

**TEN YEARS AGO** the people of All Saints Church in Pasadena heard a novel idea to convey urgently needed HIV prevention and care interventions to rural African villages through mosques and churches. They gave the funds to start this work. They have wonderfully persisted and have since been joined by others in Southern California, the Bay Area, and eventually throughout the U.S. to help some of the poorest people in the world.

We have gone where the need was greatest, centering upon Malawi, an impoverished country even by African standards. Here we work in rural villages, the neediest areas. Our emphasis is on women and children, the most vulnerable people, though we serve everyone.

In 2000 there were no anti-HIV medications in Malawi. Now many who need these get them, though not yet all. This is a profound change, but a danger looms that international funding for these will be insufficient to meet the need. We may have to purchase a lot more medications ourselves.

These ten years our donors have enabled us to deliver urgently needed health services in well over 100 villages, to deploy three Mobile Health Clinics to remote areas, to enroll 256 young Malawi women in nursing school, to issue microloans to more than 1,000 women, to construct “safe birthing” maternity blocks, and to cut into malaria rates by distributing insecticide-treated bed nets. There is more, much more. But these are the main achievements of all of us together.

Recently we signed an agreement with USAID to enroll more nursing scholarship students and over five years train 400 Malawi nurses in basic emergency obstetrical and neonatal care, HIV counseling, testing, treatment, and triage. Our mission was broadened again, “to provide basic health services, targeting prevention, care, and support in communities affected by HIV, AIDS, TB and malaria in Africa.”

We have grown. We grow. We will grow. **We cannot thank our donors enough.**

**And to our sisters and brothers a world away: We will not fail you.**

William Rankin
GAIA Co-Founder, President and CEO
GAIA’s Board of Trustees narrows the focus to Malawi, central Africa.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awards GAIA a 3-year $1 million grant to empower women to bring life-saving services to their villages.
In 2010, GAIA received a $1.7 million five-year grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to help develop the health care workforce in Malawi. With the funding, GAIA will add another 44 nursing scholars to our Nursing Scholarship Program. The first group of students supported with this grant begin their studies in January 2011. Four of them, in preparation for a nursing school faculty assignment, will pursue a master’s degree. The funding will also support enhanced training of both nursing students and practicing nurses in the key areas of emergency obstetrical care, antiretroviral therapy, and basic triage, thereby helping to reduce maternal and infant mortality, provide treatment to HIV-positive patients, and enable clinics to function more effectively and efficiently.

GAIA initiated its Nursing Scholarship Program in 2005, shortly after receiving a compelling proposal from the dean of Malawi’s premier nurse training institution, Kamuzu College of Nursing, in the southern city of Blantyre. After describing the dire shortage of nurses in Malawi, with many either emigrating to other countries for better paying jobs and working conditions or themselves succumbing to the HIV epidemic, the dean said that she could build a corps of nurses if GAIA could provide scholarships. There were many qualified women who wanted to be nurses but could not afford the tuition, she said. Many were orphaned by AIDS and were working odd jobs to support younger siblings. With a generous donation from the Gruber Family Foundation, GAIA responded to their need.

Since its inception, the Nursing Scholarship Program has graduated 70 nurses, who, as a part of the scholarship agreement, serve as nurses in hospitals and clinics in Malawi. As of the beginning of 2011, 186 scholars were in training. We continue this work because the nurses are the primary providers of health care in Malawi and their diminishing number adversely affects the already fragile medical infrastructure in the country. Additionally, educating women helps to empower them and allows them to become agents of change and role models. Strengthening women has obvious positive implications for families and communities at every societal level.

“GAIA does excellent work in rural areas of Malawi to deliver HIV-related basic health care to all, but particularly to support women and girls.”
- Helene Gayle, President of CARE USA, GAIA Medical Advisory Board
The Gates Foundation-funded project is expanded to 12 additional villages and later replicated to become a signature intervention, the GAIA Villages project.

The Nursing Scholarship Fund is launched with the support of the Gruber Family Foundation when 40 young Malawian women begin nursing school.
With the success of the Village by Village Campaign to Save Lives, GAIA funded an additional 40 villages in the three-year GAIA Villages intervention in the district of Mulanje in southern Malawi. A total of 117 villages have now been reached by this intervention. In 2010 alone, GAIA Villages was operating in 60 villages, with the total population reaching nearly 90,000.

The 230 Community Caregivers GAIA employs provide day-to-day health care and support in these underserved areas. They offer life-saving HIV education and counseling, as well as referrals for testing and treatment. In addition, children within the villages can get involved in HIV-prevention youth clubs. Registered orphans receive food, blankets, and school clothing. For many orphans these small items are often enough incentive to enroll and stay in school throughout the time GAIA operates in the villages.

The GAIA Villages program, in cooperation with NetGain Malawi, has helped to reduce the rates of malaria in these rural villages since 2005. In 2010, GAIA acquired NetGain, allowing for a more efficient effort in preventing new malaria infections in the district, one with extremely high rates of malaria and HIV. Before the rainy season in 2010, the GAIA NetGain project distributed 4,600 bed nets in these villages to reduce the incidence of malaria for a projected 7,000 to 8,000 Malawians.

In 2011, GAIA will, as scheduled, leave the 20 villages in which they began their work in 2008. These villages will be given income-generating goats as part of the larger exit strategy designed by GAIA and explained to the village members over the past year. GAIA will be entering 20 new villages in Mulanje district in January 2011.

Gladys is 38 years old and has been paralyzed since she was 20. She attributes her paralysis to a bad fall, after which she was never able to regain the use of her legs and one arm. Unable to move about her home on her own, she depended entirely on her relatives for care. When they could not visit, she was utterly isolated.

Fortunately for Gladys, she lives in Namarutcha Village, one of 60 villages where the GAIA Village intervention operates. Four local women, trained and employed by GAIA to provide life-saving care in their village under this intervention, recognized immediately that Gladys needed help and enrolled her in the Home-Based Care (HBC) program. These Community Caregivers taught Gladys’ family members simple exercises to help prevent bedsores. They also gave Gladys an anti-mosquito bed net, training her and her family to use it properly. This bed net will reduce Gladys’ chances of contracting malaria by fifty percent.

The Caregivers visit Gladys daily, offering their assistance with vital household chores like collecting firewood and fetching water. With their assistance, Gladys is able to move to her front porch, where she interacts with her neighbors. Gladys’ family is so encouraged by her progress that they are requesting funds for a wheelchair so that she can move about the village freely. And it seems the village would definitely benefit from her increased presence: Gladys’ memory is so good, she often reminds village parents about their own children’s upcoming birthdays.
2 Mobile Health Clinics are deployed through the funding of the Elizabeth Taylor HIV/AIDS Foundation to bring services for testing and/or treatment of HIV and other diseases and perinatal care.

GAIA’s Mobile Clinic Nurse delivers health talks to community members in rural Mulanje district.
In the summer of 2010, we deployed GAIA’s third Mobile Health Clinic. Together, GAIA’s three clinics handled almost 48,000 patient visits over the past year in the remote rural areas of Malawi’s Mulanje District. The effectiveness of this program drew the attention of the organizers at the International AIDS Conference, who invited GAIA’s International Programs Director, Dr. Ellen Schell, PhD, to present our work at their 18th annual conference last July in Vienna.

We are proud of the success of the Mobile Health Clinics and thrilled to have added the latest clinic, which is funded by the Elizabeth Taylor HIV/AIDS Foundation, as well as donors to our major gifts campaign, including the Westly Foundation. In a recent letter to GAIA, Dame Taylor wrote, “I am so proud of the work being done by GAIA to bring HIV prevention and care services to impoverished areas of Malawi through the use of Mobile Medical Clinics. I wish them continued success in providing invaluable assistance to the wonderful people of Malawi.”

Our clinics tested nearly 4,200 people for HIV in 2010 alone. The fact that 18% of them were found positive proves to us the necessity of this program. Our team members referred these HIV-positive patients to government clinics for secondary testing and assessment for antiretroviral therapy. Our clinics also provided on-site treatment for clinical symptoms of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhea, as well as offering prenatal care and testing for tuberculosis and syphilis.

We are enormously grateful for the commitment of our generous donors and to Dame Elizabeth Taylor for her continued interest in our work.

“After visiting Malawi this year with GAIA, and seeing the Mobile Health Clinic in action, I know that our donations are being put to great use; seeing all the villagers come for medical care, and the compassion and respect given to them was heart-filling.”

- Shirley Hagey, HRH Foundation
GAIA credit clerk Douglas with Women Entrepreneurs in Thyolo district. In 2010, 1251 women received loans to build their businesses.

2008 GAIA’s Board of Trustees grows to include East Coast members.
2009 Construction completed on a maternity ward at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Ludzi and a safe birthing clinic in the Nkhata Bay area.
With her chest forward and head held high, Rosina described in a resounding voice the impact of GAIA’s Microfinance Project: “We feel, as women, that the loans have helped us because we don’t go cup in hand to our husbands asking for money.”

In Malawi, where women have a higher rate of HIV infection and lower educational attainment than men, financial dependence can be devastating. Wives can be abandoned or stripped of their possessions upon the death of their husbands. These types of disparities make women more vulnerable to disease and poverty than men.

The Microfinance Project provides $70 start-up loans and intensive training in accounting, savings, and business management. To qualify for the program, a woman must first save ten percent of the loan amount and be approved by a prospective group of fellow borrowers, typically fifteen women. Before other women can receive loans, the preceding group of women must first repay their outstanding debt over an average loan cycle of six to eight months. Stunningly, in the last two loan cycles, the repayment rate has been 100 percent and 95 percent. All funds are reinvested in the program. In 2010, 1,251 women received loans.

Receiving these loans can, understandably, be overwhelming at first. These women have never seen so much money before. Some even doubt that they can use all the funds. But soon they are growing their fruits and vegetables, and taking them to the open farmer’s market 200 miles away to sell their produce, sleeping there with their nursing babies, if necessary. Then they see for themselves how empowering financial independence can be. Indeed, as one woman said, “We are more beautiful to our daughters now.”

Through the generous support of individuals, foundations, and congregations, GAIA raised $2 million for the Village by Village Campaign to Save Lives, which closed in the third quarter of 2010. The proceeds will fund a three-year GAIA Villages intervention in 40 additional villages and the deployment of a third Mobile Heath Clinic, providing more children, women, and men in Malawi’s most remote areas access to health care and education, as well as basic necessities such as food and clothing. Over 40,000 children, women, and men have benefited from these services.

The campaign, co-chaired by trustees David Gilmour and Michael Gottlieb, began in early 2009 amid a global recession. The GAIA Board of Trustees and leadership committee, despite their initial reservations, were emboldened by the advice of seasoned fundraisers and donors to stay the course. As GAIA’s president aptly noted, the economic turmoil would hurt countries like Malawi, which relies heavily on foreign aid. They could ill afford to wait out the recession.

We thank the Gruber Family Foundation and the Elizabeth Taylor HIV/AIDS Foundation for launching this effort with their leadership gifts. We also thank St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Darien, C.T.; St. Matthew’s Church in Pacific Palisades, C.A.; Paradise Foods; the Westly Foundation; and over 350 other generous donors.

Many Women Entrepreneurs sell produce such as tomatoes at open-air farmer’s markets.

The Major Gifts Campaign helped to fund a third Mobile Health Clinic and expand GAIA’s Village intervention into 40 more villages in Malawi, reaching over 40,000 people.
2009  
- GAIA Malawi headquarters building opens in Limbe.

2010  
- 70 nursing students matriculated and 1,251 rural village women operate businesses.
- 230 village women provide over 3050 orphans with food, blankets, clothing, toiletries, and school supplies and uniforms.
GAIA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS WITH EVENTS ACROSS THE U.S.

Malawi Milestones, San Francisco, California

On Thursday, April 29, GAIA raised over half a million dollars at its 10th anniversary celebration. Actors Martin Sheen (The West Wing) and Jane Kaczmarek (Malcolm in the Middle) emceed the dinner event, which featured a keynote address by Dr. Jay A. Levy, co-discoverer of HIV, on the search for an AIDS vaccine.

David Gilmour, the owner of Paradise Foods, chaired the event, which drew nearly 500 guests to The Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. Among those honored for their work on behalf of GAIA were Doctors Charles Wilson and William Rankin, co-founders of the organization; Jones Laviwa, GAIA’s director in Malawi; GAIA’s Medical Advisory Board members, including Helene Gayle, the president of CARE USA, as well as Sir Richard Feachem, the founding executive director of the UN Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and others. First Lady of California Maria Shriver attended the reception to congratulate GAIA’s supporters and trustees for their work. Dame Elizabeth Taylor sent her congratulations in a written statement.

During the live fund-a-need appeal, Jane Kaczmarek, quoting Marian Wright Edelman, said, “Service is the rent we pay for being.” We could not agree more and will continue in our effort to deliver HIV-related health services and empowerment programs to the people of Malawi. We thank our supporters for our great success thus far.

Jazz at Castle Green, Pasadena, California

The Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance’s invaluable Southern California Resource Group hosted a benefit concert at Pasadena’s historic Castle Green on Sunday, September 16, raising over $135,000.

Emceed by actress and GAIA supporter Jane Kaczmarek, the program opened with Malawian expatriate and trustee Eva Banda and her friends singing to the 150 guests, among whom was Bill Bogaard, the mayor of Pasadena. Vocalist Arnold McCuller and violinist Lesa Terry performed lively music from the African Diaspora, from jazz standards to a Brazilian-influenced piece. In a nod to GAIA’s 10th anniversary, founding volunteers Kitty Dillavou, Cynthia Jones, and Don Thomas were honored for their commitment to the organization.

Following the fund-a-need auction, guests bid on jewelry donated by Mary Regas and Asanti jewelers, as well as hand-carved artworks brought from Malawi by trustee Agnes Grohs. Various Pasadena vendors donated gourmet appetizers and wine to the event, which was chaired by a committee led by Justin F. McNeill, Jr.

We thank our many supporters and volunteers, including youth from Polytechnic and Mayfield Senior schools in Pasadena.
2010 3 mobile health clinics make circuits through rural villages to daily see over 100 patients each.
GAIA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS WITH EVENTS ACROSS THE U.S.

East Bay for Africa, Alamo, California

At GAIA's East Bay for Africa event on Sunday, September 26, Sir Richard G.A. Feachem, a professor in the School of Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley, described how small and large organizations have helped the treatment revolution for HIV-positive people in impoverished countries.

Sir Richard was recently named the executive director of UCSF Global Health Sciences. From 2002 to 2007 he served as the under secretary general of the United Nations, as well as the founding executive director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Author Anne Lamott led the night's program, challenging the guests to make meaningful contributions during the fund-a-need appeal, while GAIA trustee Eva Banda gave a firsthand account of the impact of AIDS in Malawi, sharing stories of her own family there. Trustee David Gilmour chaired the event.

Over $115,000 was raised, concluding GAIA's $2 million Village by Village Campaign to Save Lives in Malawi. This funds our expansion into 40 new rural Malawi villages and a third Mobile Health Clinic.

“...The truth is that our anxiety won’t be relieved by trying to get it all back. It will be relieved by giving, by being willing to feel terrible because of the suffering of others, and to breathe in how deeply vulnerable they are. It is in our own vulnerability and spirit of generosity that we become strong and full.”

-Anne Lamott
Author of
Imperfect Birds,
Operating Instructions,
and other works
2010

86% of budget spent on programs; 14% on administration and fundraising.
**GAIA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS WITH EVENTS ACROSS THE U.S.**

**An Evening at the Ballpark, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

Phillies pitcher Cole Hamels and his wife and co-founder of The Hamels Foundation, Heidi Hamels, served as master and mistress of ceremonies for An Evening at the Ballpark, GAIA’s first East Coast event, on November 5 at Citizens Bank Park in Philadelphia.

The benefit, chaired by trustee Susan Brodesser, raised more than $50,000 and featured Kaboni Gondwe, a Malawian nurse and Fulbright scholar, who, as a young child, lost her parents to AIDS. Kaboni was in the first cohort of GAIA Nursing Scholars, graduating the program in 2008.

After leading the fund-a-need appeal, the Hamels auctioned off some of Cole’s own sports gear, delighting many of the baseball fans among the 150 guests, who were also given a tour of the ballpark.


The AIDS pandemic still overwhelms us, and I think our church would feel somewhat paralyzed by the enormity of the need if it weren’t for GAIA. Now we can focus on one country, even one village, empowering the burden-bearers and slowly turning things around.”

- The Rev. Dr. Mary Graves
  Senior Pastor,
  Trinity Presbyterian Church,
  San Carlos, CA

![Heidi and Cole Hamels auctioned off Cole Hamels’ sports gear at the Nov 5th event](image-url)
In 2010, GAIA’s income totaled $2,796,000 and expenses totaled $2,308,000. Funds raised in excess of current year expenditures include pledged income for the Village by Village Campaign and funds reserved for specific future program funding.
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We are grateful to all our wonderful volunteers who have worked tirelessly on behalf of GAIA.

Thank you.