



Women’s Empowerment through Microfinance and HIV Education & Prevention

Aim: to establish a microfinance pilot project and HIV education and prevention program in 5 Malawi villages in the Thyolo area – a place of high HIV prevalence, high food insecurity, and considerable poverty.

1. A proven form of women’s empowerment, microfinance improves the economic and social status of women and their households. Congregations will serve as the pool from which participants are selected to form microfinance groups of approximately 10-15 people. During the first year, 5 groups/village will be formed, totaling 25 groups and 250-300 people in all.
2. The training of the beneficiaries will take place in two stages: The first will consist of a four-day workshop with business management training, entrepreneurship development, and a focus on group formation and cohesion. The second stage will involve training in particular income-generating activities (IGAs) after the groups have been formed and their training needs identified (i.e. mushroom production, poultry raising, goat herding).
3. Loan disbursements of \$100 - \$300 will take place at group meetings. The loan period will be 6 months or more and repayments will be made monthly. The interest rate will not exceed 10% and there will be no charges for loan administration. The target repayment rate is 97-100%. Savings accounts will be encouraged.
4. Beneficiaries will participate in on-going HIV prevention and education workshops addressing HIV, voluntary counseling and testing (VCT), stigma, gender relations, and family planning. To increase dissemination of this information, beneficiaries will be encouraged to recruit friends and neighbors to attend the workshops.

The rationale for GAIA to launch this program is three-fold:

- 1) It furthers GAIA’s mission of working with religious organizations to provide HIV prevention services.
- 2) It falls within one of GAIA’s main program areas, women’s empowerment.
- 3) It develops self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Draft Program Management Budget (first 12 months) – subject to amendment by the Malawi Design Team

Project Director (part-time)	\$3,500
Assistant/bookkeeper	\$3,000
IGA monitors	\$4,000
Design Team sessions (all costs)	\$2,000
Training faculty (3)	\$ 600
Trainee per diem	\$ 500

Training supplies	\$ 250
Training site rental	\$ 300
Transport allowance	\$ 750
Office supplies	\$ 1500
Office furniture	\$ 1000
Office rent & utilities	\$1,500
Staff Transport Costs	\$ 500
Cost of two motorcycles	\$7000
Motorcycle running costs (3)	\$4722
Health Coordinator Salary	\$5280
Staff benefits	\$1842
Administration	\$1000
Admin Subtotal	\$39,244
Loan Fund: \$8,820/village x 5 villages	\$44,100
Project Grand Total	\$83,344