



[GAIA] global health

Annual Report  
2024



# Building Trust

For 25 years, in every aspect of our work, GAIA has been recognized as a partner to be trusted. By villagers seeking healthcare, by wary young women considering nursing school, by local governments co-funding our work, **GAIA can be trusted.**

In GAIA's early days, gaining trust was job #1. We had to overcome widespread stigma and fear before any clinical work could begin. In recent years, though, the priority is leveraging our hard-earned trustworthiness for ever greater impact. This year, for example, our successful **Mobile Health Clinic** partnership with Mangochi District attracted new private funding to deliver prenatal and postnatal care to mothers and their babies. Within the first week, lines of clients awaited our teams' arrival to their villages, as our reputation for reliability preceded us, even in villages where we'd not worked previously.

Similarly, the remarkable cost-effectiveness of our **Nursing Scholars and Fellows Program** caught the attention of a donor building the health workforce in neighboring Zambia. Today, GAIA is replicating the Malawi model across the border!

You will read about these and other examples of GAIA's progress towards fully staffing the nursing workforce in Africa (nearly 600 graduates to date!) and delivering primary care at the Far End of the Road (more than 3 million mobile clinic client visits to date!) in this report. The trust that we've built is apparent.

**But hard-won trust can also be squandered.** In the early days of 2025, for example, GAIA learned that our two USAID-funded programs would no longer be supported, leaving nursing scholars and fellows to wonder if they'd find the means to complete their programs.

GAIA stood firm to its commitments in the crisis, our generous donors stepped into the void, and Malawi was reminded: **GAIA can be trusted.**

I hope the progress we have made together – in the face of raging epidemics, climate crises, and financial disasters – inspires your continued support for the team in Malawi. What we've built will endure, thanks to you.



Todd Schafer, Executive Director



# Advancing GAIA Initiatives in Malawi... and Zambia!

## Expanding GAIA's Health Workforce Development Program in Zambia

In late 2024, with support from Health Carousel Foundation, GAIA proudly launched the Health Workforce Program in Zambia, a step in addressing critical healthcare gaps in the region. **Zambia's healthcare system faces a significant shortage of nurse-midwives, with just 19 nurses for every 10,000 people, compared to 50 in South Africa and 157 in the United States.** And because midwifery is a separate specialization after a nursing degree in Zambia, many health facilities lack the skilled workforce needed for maternal and neonatal healthcare.

With the support of our partners, including the Lusaka College of Nursing and Catholic Relief Services, we will offer nursing scholarships to nurses pursuing an advanced diploma in midwifery as well as fellowships to skilled nurse-midwives deployed at underserved medical facilities, ultimately improving health outcomes and access to quality, specialized care.



*In November, the GAIA Malawi team traveled to Zambia to meet with partners and discuss the full implementation of the program.*

**We are excited to achieve this piece of our strategic plan to expand into a new country and look forward to the new partnerships and the positive impact we will make in neighboring Zambia!**

## Transforming the Health Landscape for Rural Women in Malawi

2024 was also a milestone year for our Mobile Health Clinics and the women who comprise the majority of our clients. With new funding from a ViiV Healthcare Positive Action Program grant, Gilead Sciences and a private donor, GAIA mobile clinics are now **bringing quality antenatal and postnatal care to 15 hard-to-reach community sites in Mangochi district each week** – sites that are on average 13 kilometers from the nearest health facility.

We added a third clinic in this large rural district and a strengthened suite of antenatal and postnatal services – including a portable ultrasound that is providing critical diagnostic help to clinicians and reassurance to clients. In its first year, our teams have provided **more than 3,000 antenatal visits**, making it easier for rural women to access antenatal care early and regularly in their pregnancies, improving health outcomes for women and their babies.

## APA Program Recap

GAIA is proud of its role in the recently completed Ana Patsogolo program. Launched through a USAID grant in 2020, the Ana Patsogolo Activity (APA), which translates to “Children Ahead,” aimed to prevent new HIV infections and reduce vulnerability to HIV among orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and adolescent girls and young women in high HIV burden districts of southern Malawi. Recipients of APA services included children and adolescents living with HIV, HIV exposed infants, survivors of sexual violence, and children of female sex workers.

The 4-year program reached an average of 48,000 OVCs each year with services and support that varied depending on the child's risk category.

- **Children Living with HIV:** Almost 12,000 Children Living with HIV were supported in a variety of ways, but most importantly in transitioning on to antiretroviral therapy – support that continued until they were stable and virally suppressed.
- **HIV Exposed Infants:** Almost 9,000 HIV Exposed Infants received support including HIV testing at 6 weeks, 12 months, and 24 months.
- **Older Children:** Older children, including orphans and children of parents living with HIV, received educational and household support.

About 7,500 children (including 2,165 Children Living with HIV) were transitioned to a follow up program.

APA was made possible through partnership with Bantwana, World Education Inc., and the Malawian government.





# GAIA Mobile Health Clinics

*Community-based quality health care for rural Malawians*



In April of 2024, GAIA provided its **3 millionth mobile health clinic** visit since the program launched in 2008 **with funding from The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation!** These life-saving and life-changing clinic visits have provided vital primary healthcare to rural Malawians living far from government health facilities, reducing morbidity and mortality from preventable and treatable conditions including malaria, pneumonia, hypertension, and HIV.

A hallmark of mobile clinics has always been their flexibility and responsiveness to changing public health needs. In 2024, responding to Malawi's stubbornly high rates of maternal and neonatal mortality, GAIA enhanced perinatal health services in our Mangochi clinics.

Mobile clinics are also adapting to changing HIV prevention and testing needs as Malawi nears epidemic control, expanding outreach clinics for high-risk populations (female sex workers, men, and youth), and for the first time, in 2024 we added the critical prevention tool PrEP (Pre-exposure Prophylaxis) to our services.

Reaching the most rural and remote parts of southern Malawi, GAIA mobile clinics are an integral part of Malawi's healthcare infrastructure.



## 2024 Mobile Health Clinic Achievements

**272,942** clinic visits

most common visits

**75,686** visits for respiratory conditions

**45,845** malaria cases

**27,866** sexual reproductive health visits





## Stories from the Field: Esther's Story

Receiving antenatal care early in pregnancy is critical for women and infants' health, laying a sound foundation for a healthy pregnancy and ensuring early detection and treatment of complications. But for rural women in Malawi, the cost and time required to travel to care often prevents them from accessing care early.

Expanded perinatal services at GAIA mobile clinics are filling this gap as illustrated by Esther, one of our Mangochi clients. Esther lives 15 kilometers from the nearest government health facility and for her two previous pregnancies, she did not receive antenatal care until her sixth and seventh month of pregnancy because it was too expensive to travel to the health center. But now in her third pregnancy, Esther received her first antenatal visit in her first trimester, thanks to the arrival of a GAIA mobile clinic near her village.

During this visit, the gestational age of her pregnancy was unclear after a physical examination, but with the help of the clinic's newly purchased portable ultrasound, the clinician was able to determine the accurate gestation age, greatly reassuring Esther.

*"Now I don't need to travel long distances to the health facility and I go back home in time to carry out other household chores.*

*I'm so excited to receive such wonderful quality service right here in the community."*

**129,893** clients – **40% of whom** were children under 13

**495** visits for pneumonia in children under age 5, a key driver of under-five mortality

**3,348** HIV tests conducted – with **2% testing positive** and linked to lifesaving treatment

**156,826** attendees at health education talks on malaria, cholera, and HIV and other topics







# GAIA Health Workforce Development

*Building a well-trained and resilient health workforce*

In a low-income country like Malawi, nurses form the backbone of health service delivery. With fewer than 7 nurses per 10,000 people and public sector nurse vacancy rates of 54%, Malawi has a chronic nursing shortage – straining health systems, particularly in rural areas, where 82% of the population lives. GAIA's Health Workforce Development Program (HWDP) builds long-term health infrastructure by funding the next generation of frontline health workers through nursing scholarships and fellowships.

Since 2005, GAIA has provided **scholarships to 862 Malawian nursing students** (74% female; 41% lost one or both parents), with **576 graduates** to date. To bridge staffing gaps across Malawi's rural, public health facilities, GAIA has also deployed **342 graduate nurse fellows** since 2016.

In 2024, we continued to implement our five-year cooperative agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Since the launch of the program in 2021, GAIA has awarded **200** full scholarships (62% female) and supported **92** additional students at risk of school dropout due to an inability to pay school fees. We also deployed **90** nurse fellows under the USAID award in 2024, bringing the total number of fellows to **297**, far surpassing the target of 240 to be achieved by the end of the award in 2026.

With support from the University of California San Francisco's Global Action in Nursing (GAIN) program, GAIA continued support of students upgrading their qualifications, bringing **a new cohort of 11 upgrading scholars** in 2024.

In addition to our core scholarship and fellowship programs, **GAIA was selected by USAID in 2024 to spearhead the Nursing Leadership Initiative (NLI) in Malawi**. The NLI was launched by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and Malawi was one of only seven countries in Africa selected to participate. The Initiative aligned health workforce investments with country priorities and strategies to strengthen the national health workforce – critical for sustaining the HIV response.

**UPDATE:** In January 2025, GAIA received a Stop Work Order and Award Suspension Notice from the U.S. government, requiring a temporary halt to all project activities. These announcements were followed in February by a Notice of Award Termination, officially ending the five-year USAID-funded Cooperative Agreement.







## 2024 Key HWDP Achievements

- Increased the nursing workforce by **589 nurses** to date in Malawi (576) and Liberia (13).
- Awarded scholarships to **13 new students** in 2024.
- **Deployed 90 nurse fellows** to public health facilities in 2024 **across nine districts** through one-year fellowships, bringing our total fellows deployed to **342** to date.
- **Trained 62 fellows in priority health topics** like Antiretroviral Therapy; Maternal, Newborn and Child Health; and Integrated Management of Childhood Illness in 2024, bringing the total trained in partnership with USAID to **275** to date.
- At present, **95%** of scholars have **completed their academic programs**, with **99%** of scholars supported in Malawi **successfully licensed**.
- **98%** of all scholars **completed their post-graduation service commitments**, which require scholars to serve in the local workforce for the same number of years that they are sponsored, incentivizing qualified health workers to remain in-country.
- Overall, **96%** of all scholars in Malawi have been **employed**.
- **99%** of scholar graduates have **remained working in Malawi**.
- **78%** of deployed scholars are **employed in the public sector** serving the most vulnerable populations.
- **61%** of deployed scholars have held **leadership positions**, **11%** are working as **nurse educators**, and **19%** have pursued **advanced education or training**.

## Stories from the Field: Emmanuel's Story



Emmanuel Makoza is a dedicated nurse and healthcare advocate with a bachelor's degree in nursing and midwifery. He worked at Mzimba District Hospital under the GAIA Nursing Fellowship Program.

The fellowship equipped him with essential skills through mentorship, certifications in ART, MNH, and IMCI, and leadership opportunities. He served as deputy ward-in-charge in the antenatal ward and as president of the Mzimba South District Hospital fellows. He also successfully led a project to reduce hypothermia in newborns. This project exemplified GAIA's commitment to innovative healthcare solutions.

Emmanuel reflected on what GAIA's support meant to him and shared that the fellowship "enhanced my confidence, expanded my professional network, and enabled a successful transition into government employment as a Nursing Officer at Mchinji District Hospital." Emmanuel is deeply grateful to GAIA for shaping his career and inspiring him to serve with purpose.

*"I'm Empowered  
to Serve,  
Inspired to Lead."*



# Travel & Events

## Field Visits

In January, GAIA's Executive Director, **Todd Schafer**, traveled with GAIA's Finance Director, **Doug Bozick**, to meet with the team in person. This was Doug's first trip to Malawi with GAIA and his first trip back to Malawi since 1998. Doug was able to visit mobile health clinics in Mulanje and Phalombe as well as the Namunda school. It also enabled him to create connections with the finance team in Limbe.

In July, **Alina Aslanian**, Program & Grants Manager, joined Todd, **Molly Brostrom**, Program & Grants Manager, and **GAIA Board Chair Tim Mohan** for her first visit to Malawi. After months of weekly calls with the HWDP team, she was thrilled to finally meet everyone in person and observe the meaningful work done by GAIA on the ground. Alina especially enjoyed joining the GAIN team for clinic visits in Ndirande and Lirange, and accompanying the GAIA mobile clinic team to Mulanje to visit the Chikonde clinic.

**Nelson Khozomba**, GAIA Malawi's Programs Manager, traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, along with USAID, PEPFAR Coordination Office and partner organizations for the first in-person NLI meeting with all seven participating countries.

**Molly Brostrom** and **Chifundo Chomanika**, GAIA Malawi's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning Coordinator, traveled to Munich, Germany in July to attend the **25th International AIDS Conference**. Conference presentations elicited excitement around new long-acting preventive technologies and advances toward a possible cure, as well as warnings about the dangers to progress posed by pressure on funding mechanisms and the rise of anti-rights movements globally.



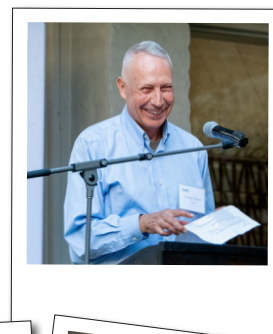
## Global Citizen Awards

GAIA hosted three events in 2024 honoring the work of key individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to global health efforts.

Our spring event in New York City honored both **The Houston Family Foundation** and former GAIA Board Chair **Geoffrey Peck**.

Recently retired GAIA Board Chair **Christine Simpson Brent** was honored at our summer event in Marin.

**Dr. Dean Winslow** was honored with GAIA's Global Citizen Award in September in Menlo Park.



**GAIA's fundraising events in 2024 raised over \$565,000 for our programs in Malawi!**





# Research and Advocacy

GAIA Trustee Ellen Schell represented GAIA at the **Association of Nurses in AIDS Care Conference (ANAC)** in Indianapolis in November 2024, where she presented GAIA's abstract *Community-Based Integrated Health Services for People Living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi's Southern Region*.

The presentation described the fantastic progress Malawi has made at keeping people with HIV alive and living longer, which has led to the current need for expanded access to healthcare for aging people with HIV who increasingly experience the dual burden of HIV and diseases of aging (such as hypertension, chronic respiratory infection, and diabetes). GAIA's mobile clinics are addressing this need, providing integrated care in rural communities to allow people living with HIV to achieve healthy aging.

**GAIA's GAIN Team attended and presented at the following conferences:**



**Consortium of Universities of Global Health (CUGH)** held in Los Angeles on March 7-10, 2024. The theme for this conference was Global Health Without Borders: Acting for Impact. Luseshelo Simwinda, GAIN Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Program Coordinator and former GAIA Nursing Scholar, presented a poster on *The Power of a Midwife's Advocacy during Global Climate Disasters*. Lusehshelo was also the speaker at the panel discussion on *Making Change: Creating Health Equity through Policy and Advocacy*. The panel discussion focused on diverse perspectives in the current global landscape threatening reproductive health for all, especially for black and brown communities, with a specific focus on the role of policy and advocacy.



**Africa Interdisciplinary Health Conference (AfIHC)** held in Johannesburg, South Africa at Wits University on August 21-23, 2024. The conference focused on the provision of health care services in Africa under the theme *Healthcare in Africa: Collaboration, Innovation and Sustainability*. Nelson Mwale, GAIN Project Officer, made an oral presentation entitled *Impact of Mentorship on Maternal Vital Signs Documentation in Blantyre, Malawi*, which was a comparative analysis of pre- and post-GAIN interventions.



**RESEARCH  
DISSEMINATION  
CONFERENCE**

**KUHeS Research  
Dissemination  
Conference** held

in Blantyre, Malawi on October 2-4, 2024. The conference focused on research and innovation geared towards achieving Malawi 2063 Vision under the theme Research and Innovation. Nelson Mwale made a poster presentation entitled *Increased Documentation of Maternal Vital Signs Following a Longitudinal Mentorship Intervention in Blantyre District, Malawi*.



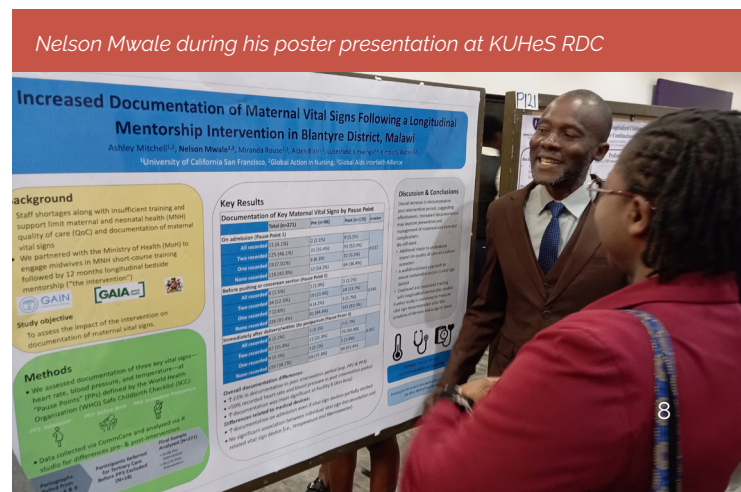
GAIA is a member of the Community Health Impact Coalition (CHIC) aiming to make professionalized community health workers the norm worldwide by changing guidelines, funding, and policy.



GAIA works together with the Coalition and its members to urge greater and more strategic US and multilateral investments in frontline health workers in low- and middle-income countries as a cost-effective way to save lives.



Luseshelo Simwinda during her poster presentation at CUGH



Nelson Mwale during his poster presentation at KUHeS RDC



# Our Partners

## Program Partners



## Corporate Partners



## Family Foundations

Gruber Family Foundation • HRH Foundation  
The Houston Family Foundation • Haughton Family Fund  
Uplift Malawi • Haskell Fund • Barbara Jones Memorial Fund  
Mirnahill Foundation • Falconhead Foundation

## GAIA Legacy Circle

Thank you to our committed supporters who have designated GAIA in their Planned Giving:

Stephen R. and Barbara M. Billings • Diana Kissil and John Cullison • Jennifer Fitzmorris • William and Nancy Grove • Winnifred Holzman and Paul Dooley • Jane Houston • Cathy Johnson • James Hayes and Catherine Keig • Daniel Warner King • Kimberly Baltzell and John Maine • Geoff Peck • Frances Petrocelli and Charles Wilson • Bill and Sally Rankin • Heidi Wells • Amy and Chris Rankin-Williams • Elizabeth Suna • Anonymous • Anonymous • Anonymous

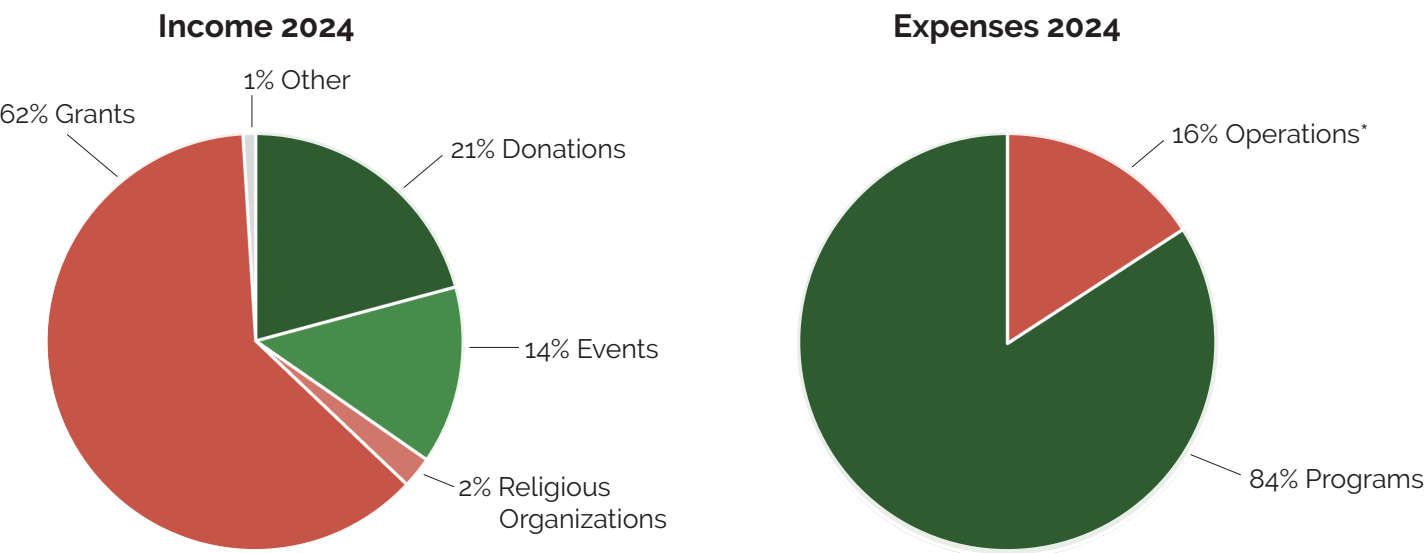
If you have questions about adding GAIA to your will and would like to join GAIA's Legacy Circle, please contact Cristin Klein: [Cristin@gaiaglobalhealth.com](mailto:Cristin@gaiaglobalhealth.com) | 415-461-7196.





# 2024 Financials

In 2024, GAIA's income totaled approximately \$4.08M and expenses totaled \$4.01M (unaudited). GAIA has an annual independent audit each fiscal year. The 2024 audit report will be available at [www.gaiaglobalhealth.org](http://www.gaiaglobalhealth.org) later in 2025.



\* Operations includes administrative, fundraising, and related staff costs.

## GAIA Staff and Trustees

**Malawi Leadership Team:** Joyce Jere, Country Director • Nelson Khozomba, Program Manager • Adalireni Manyungwa Nkhata, Finance & Administration Manager • Billy Kandoje, Deputy Finance and Administration Manager • Lucy Munthali, APA Program Manager

*GAIA currently employs 69 Malawi-based staff*

**U.S. Staff:** Todd Schafer, Executive Director • Molly Brostrom, Program & Grants Manager • Alina Aslanian, Program & Grants Manager • Cristin Klein, Director of Development & Communications • Doug Bozick, Director of Finance • Shruthi Reddy, Development & Communications Officer • Hannah Graykowski, Event & Operations Coordinator

**Malawi Trustees:** Joseph Chidya Mayani, Chair • Dorothy Mercy Zimba • Eunice Ndingo • Nanzen Kaphagawani • George Chagaluka • Phindile Chitsulo • Jones Masiye • Alfred Marcolino Nhlema • Ivan Weinberg

**U.S. Trustees:** Philip Arscott • Jim Cashel • Bob Daily • Lisa Deal • Erin Fish • Kaboni Gondwe • Joel Goldman • Galym Imanbayev • Zander Macquitty • Nina Kola • Tim Mohan (Chair) • Timi Most (Vice Chair) • Melanie Norris • Ashley Paff • Andy Pflaum • Ellen Schell • Azmat Siddiqi • Ivan Weinberg

**Medical Advisory Board:** Thomas J. Coates, Ph.D. • Sir Richard G.A. Feachem, Ph.D., D. Sci. • Helene D. Gayle, M.D. • Michael Gottlieb, M.D. • William L. Holzemer, Ph.D. • Jay A. Levy, M.D. • Nancy S. Padian, Ph.D. • Jean L. Richardson, DrPH • Paul Volberding, M.D., Ph.D. • A. Eugene Washington, M.D. • Dean Winslow, M.D.

**Congratulations to Adalireni Manyungwa Nkhata on her retirement as Finance and Administration Manager in the GAIA Malawi team! Her dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment over her 18 years of service have made a lasting impact on the organization. We wish her all the best in this exciting new chapter of her life!**



