



## **GAIA Awarded \$5M USAID Grant to Strengthen Malawi's Health Service Delivery System**

LIMBE, Malawi – September 23, 2021 – The Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance (GAIA) in Malawi will lead a five-year Cooperative Agreement of \$5 million from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to strengthen Malawi's healthcare delivery system, focusing on nine priority districts - Blantyre, Chikwawa, Lilongwe, Mangochi, Mulanje, Mzimba, Phalombe, Thyolo and Zomba.

Falling under USAID's Human Resources for Health (HRH) programmatic focus areas, the **Leveraging Local Capacity to Strengthen Health Service Delivery** project aims to improve the quality and accessibility of healthcare services in Malawi – particularly in underserved, rural communities – through the provision of:

- Comprehensive scholarships for 260 nurses and midwives, prioritizing disadvantaged young women experiencing extreme financial hardship, who will commit to serving at Malawi healthcare facilities upon graduation;
- One-year paid fellowships for 240 newly graduated nurses and midwives to promote continued learning, skill building and clinical practice while new health workers await permanent deployment;
- Capacity building support to regulatory bodies, including the evaluation of standards and guidelines for nursing and midwifery education and the development of a national database to track the deployment and distribution of Malawi's health workforce; and,
- Clinical mentorship for four training institutions and eight teaching hospitals to improve the quality of teaching, training and transfer of life-saving clinical competencies.

Working in collaboration with key stakeholders including the Ministry of Health and Population (MoH), Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi (NMCM), training institutions, teaching hospitals, and the local government, this project will take a multi-partner, multi-faceted approach to addressing Malawi's chronic shortage of quality frontline healthcare providers.

"GAIA is thrilled to be partnering with USAID to support this important work to grow and strengthen Malawi's healthcare infrastructure." Said Joyce Jere, GAIA's Country Director. "Leveraging 20 years of healthcare delivery in Malawi, the USAID HRH project aligns with our strategy to improve health accessibility and quality of care, especially for the rural poor who suffer from a high prevalence of preventable and treatable diseases like HIV, malaria and tuberculosis."

In addition, the USAID HRH project directly aligns with Malawi's Health Sector Strategic Plan II (HSSP II 2017-2022) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, working to ensure health and well-being for all regardless of who you are or where you live.

### **About GAIA**

GAIA was founded to increase health equity globally and to bring life-saving HIV treatment to communities most impacted by the AIDS epidemic. GAIA has operated in Malawi since 2001 and became a locally registered nongovernmental organization in 2007. Its mission is to deliver healthcare programs through

innovative approaches that enable vulnerable populations in limited-resource communities affected by high disease burden and other health challenges to access services within their reach.

This USAID HRH project builds upon prior Nursing Scholarship Program funding by the Gruber Family Foundation and partnership with UCSF and USAID, as well as prior fellowship support by the Steward Family Foundation and The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation.

**About USAID:**

On behalf of the American people, USAID promotes and demonstrates democratic values abroad, and advances a free, peaceful, and prosperous world. In support of America's foreign policy, the U.S. Agency for International Development leads the U.S. Government's international development and disaster assistance through partnerships and investments that save lives, reduce poverty, strengthen democratic governance, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises and progress beyond assistance.