



## Hands and Hearts for Africa (HAHFA)



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[info@handsandheartsforafrica.ca](mailto:info@handsandheartsforafrica.ca)

[www.handsandheartsforafrica.ca](http://www.handsandheartsforafrica.ca)

Wellington Square United Church  
Burlington, ON L7R 1L7

[franniegray1@gmail.com](mailto:franniegray1@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION



**Malawi** is one of the poorest countries in the world. This inland country is located in the south-easterly portion of Africa and borders on a large lake. The economy is heavily based in agriculture, with a largely rural population. Of the approximately 18 million people, about 1 million are vulnerable children.

It is with many thanks to Anne Powell of St. Paul's Leaskdale Church that in May 2018, Hands and Hearts for Africa (HAHFA) learned of a unique blanket program that has been introduced to the country of Malawi with the administrative support of Paul and Helen Jones, Emmanuel International, Malawi (our partners) and by Rev. Steve Kamwana who oversees the Widows Welfare Program of EBCM (Evangelical Baptist Churches of Malawi).



It is these widows who assemble the squares into blankets and who choose the neediest children in their communities to receive the blankets.



It is important that the sewing groups 'have ownership' of this program, so they've given it a name that is meaningful to them. They chose the name **Tilere Ifa Ana Ovutika (TIAO)** which is Chichewa for **We Care for Needy Children**

The program is being greeted with great enthusiasm in Malawi. In an email, Steve said the following:

*"It was my prayer to see this project continues to grow. The project is really meeting the needs of poor children of blankets.*

*Many children in rural areas are suffering and the squares we receive from Helen help children to get blankets and we thank you for this work. We need more materials here in Malawi because the ministry has been welcomed by many people.*

*We want to reach many children as much as possible with the program. One day I shed tears when I saw three poor children sharing one cloth of one meter long as their blanket during cold season they sleeping near fire to keep them warm but this was very dangerous to the life of children. One epileptic woman has 3 children she got chance of getting one blanket from this ministry I saw a hand of God reaching this lady's children. Know that whatever you send here under this project is very precious to poor children."*

## **Hands And Hearts For Africa TIAO**

HAHFA has a TIAO group based at Wellington Square United Church, Burlington Ontario. This is one of the few opportunities we have to do 'hands-on' mission work right at home. Those who do not make squares can support the mission by donating postage funds, buying yarn for senior knitters on a budget, donating yarn, crochet hooks, scissors, wool sewing needles (large eye) which they have at home or go out and purchase to keep the widows' groups supplied with the things they need to assemble the blankets.

As a group we only meet a few times a year however those members who knit can bring in your squares to the Church and leave them in the office. Most of our knitters tell friends about the program and so we continue to grow. One of the best ways to 'spread the word' is to show people the Youtube video explaining the program which you can find at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBo83LqeTKE>



If you would like to connect with the HAHFA TIAO group at Wellington Square UC email us at [info@handsandheartsforafrica.ca](mailto:info@handsandheartsforafrica.ca)

## **If you want to set up your own TIAO group here's how to do it:**

Contact Emmanuel International Canada for information on an Africycle container to Malawi once a year leaving Uxbridge, ON

by email: <https://www.eicanada.org>

by post: Emmanuel international Canada  
P.O Box 4050  
Stouffville On  
L4A 8B6

or email [franniegray1@gmail.com](mailto:franniegray1@gmail.com) if you have any questions

## **MAKING SQUARES**

- We request knitted or crocheted squares 8 x 8" (20cm)
- YARNS - You can use different types of wool or wool blend yarns, or acrylic yarns. We recommend worsted weight (or you could perhaps double up lighter weight yarn such as 4 ply). Inexpensive yarns such as Red Heart or Bernat are perfect for these squares.



A pretty average tension should come out to 32 stitches on 5mm needles, using worsted weight yarn, produces an 8" square.

When crocheting, a foundation chain of 28 using a 5mm hook.

Making these squares is a great way to use up leftovers, and if you are dealing with small amounts, make stripes which look wonderful when sewn into a blanket.

Any stitch you prefer is fine. For knitted squares use, garter stitch or moss stitch, or if you have a pattern you like, that's fine too.

Crocheted squares can be done in single or double crochet and Granny squares are welcome too. (With grannies, reduce the chain stitches between clusters to one so the square is a fairly tight weave and not too holey)

Please sew in all ends except for the finishing corner. We ask that you leave a 20" (50 cm.) tail and butterfly it as follows:



NOTE: although worsted weight yarns are the most desirable, any yarn will do. If you have a large supply of baby yarn in your stash, using 3 strands together produces a warm square. If you have a supply of bulky yarn, that works too, but please try to send 35 squares (enough for an entire blanket) of the bulky weight for easier assembly in Malawi.

Are you stuck with drab colours in your stash? When made into stripes with some bright colours, these look great. Got a big stack of leftover black or navy? These colours really make the bright ones 'pop' so they are very welcome too.

In short, anything goes. Have fun with this, be creative and knit or crochet anything that makes you feel good!

Here are some squares for inspiration:



## SENDING SQUARES

1. If connected to Wellington Square United Church, deliver to the church office at 2121 Caroline Street, Burlington, Ontario
2. If doing your own T.I.A.O. group contact:

<https://www.eicanada.org>

Emmanuel International Canada office at:  
3967 Stouffville Road  
Stouffville, ON L4A 7X5

1-866-269-6312

3. For Information on an Africycle container leaving Uxbridge, Ontario once a year for Malawi, please write to:

Emmanuel International Canada  
P.O. Box 4050  
Stouffville, ON L4A 8B6