

**Focus:** Education, Enterprise Development, Migration, Women

**Geographic Area of Impact:** Asia**Model:** Hybrid Non-Profit

**Number of Direct Beneficiaries:** 2,500 (2012)

**Annual Budget:** US\$ 300,000 (2012)

**Percentage Earned Revenue:** 50%

**Recognition:** Social Entrepreneur of the Year, Singapore, 2008

## **Background**

Migration is the world's oldest response to poverty. Currently over 200 million impoverished individuals live outside of their home countries, working to feed their families thousands of miles away. Rarely, however, does the migrant's remittance money do more than provide for the basics. For many families, the remittances are simply a stopgap, as the economic fundamentals do not change and their poverty is simply put on hold. But aidha aspires to end poverty. Launched in September 2006, aidha works with the hopeful poor to motivate impactful savings programmes, productive investment and entrepreneurial ventures.

## **Innovation and Activities**

aidha offers a variety of money management, confidence-building, computing and entrepreneurship courses, specifically designed for low-income migrant workers. Its teaching methodologies are based upon small group interaction, peer support and practical training. All courses are supported by supplemental coaching and business practicum experiences, allowing students to apply their nascent business and financial skills in an actual business setting.

Currently, aidha's annual student enrolment exceeds 500, while the total number of indirect beneficiaries extends beyond 2,000 each year. Additionally, more than 250 community and student volunteers provide invaluable support in the delivery of aidha's innovative club and workshop programmes.

An important aspect of aidha's action-oriented approach is scalability. Its programmes can be implemented at minimal incremental costs for low-income people throughout Asia and the world. aidha is now investing to significantly expand its programmes around Southeast Asia, particularly the extension of services to the non-migrant working poor.

**The Entrepreneur** Sarah Mavrinc is aidha's Founder and Director Emeritus, and a Harvard-trained academic and committed advocate of financial education. Prior to launching aidha, Mavrinc was a management professor, leading courses and conducting research at INSEAD, one of the world's leading global business schools. While serving on the INSEAD Singapore campus in 2005, Mavrinc joined the Executive Committee of UNIFEM Singapore, and was inspired by the concept of financial education for the socio-economic empowerment of women. She is currently the President of Cieo, a social enterprise that nurtures high-impact entrepreneurs, and a board member of Uberis Capital, an impact investment fund pioneering the new transition capital approach. She continues to actively contribute to setting aidha's strategy and global expansion efforts.