



LGT Impact Fellowship

Testimonial



Interview with Chileshe Chilangwa, Country Director at mothers2mothers (m2m) in Lilongwe, Malawi.

Chileshe has more than 20 years of experience in the development sector and has been with m2m Malawi for more than three years. In 2019/2020, Fellow Diana Quintero from Colombia supported the team of m2m as a Community Health Fellow.

**Why did you decide to participate in the Fellowship?
What were your expectations?**

"I had a few tasks on my list, which I realized were important, but I didn't have the bandwidth for. When I received the CVs, I was expecting to find someone who fits the job description we had prepared for the Fellowship team and whom I had confidence in to deliver the required results."

What is the value of an LGT Impact Fellow?

"The value of a Fellow lies particularly in the opportunity to get fresh perspectives and support our organization in showing us where we can do things differently."

What tasks and responsibilities were you able to delegate to the Fellow?

"A whole range – and that was the beauty of it! We worked together very closely, sat together often and operated in an iterative manner. I was able to delegate mundane tasks to her ranging from structural policy themes to HR tasks, which she was able to drive and keep together."

What results did you achieve together?

"Diana took the lead in organizing a staff retreat, which we didn't have in four years. She did an excellent job in determining the terms of support with an external facilitator and bring the entire team of 50 people together for 1.5 days. This meeting helped the team to bond and gain confidence. Diana was also highly involved in setting up the Country Operational Plan, which we are currently finalizing and is even expected to be leveraged by other countries. Furthermore, I had been looking into ways to grant benefits to our employees in addition to their salaries for a long time. Diana was a driving force in materializing these ideas and as a result setting up various employee wellness programs and activities. These include for example financial literacy trainings or a corporate saving plan for employees. Finally, Diana has also initiated the weekly round-up meeting featuring team news such as birthdays or babies born. The meeting is a great tool to engage our team members and is highly appreciated."

Did the Fellow have an influence on your organization? Which one?

"Yes. She has definitely left her mark. When hiring people, there is always some degree of uncertainty involved, because not only technical ability matters, but also flexibility and the fit into the organization. Diana was really embracing, which made it extremely easy for her to get involved. Another attribute that made Diana so successful was her persistent attitude – she was like a "dog with a bone" – everybody knew that things will get done. Her influence on the organization was most of all through her achievements. Diana helped us in clearly seeing the gaps at m2m and she was eager to close them. Moreover, the Back to School program Diana has revamped, will have a long-term impact and is truly changing the lives of Mentor Mothers, who complete their secondary school education. The Ministry of Health has great interest in recruiting those women and Diana has greatly contributed to setting the foundation for our collaboration with the Ministry of Health. She has been a true source for fresh perspectives."

Would you recommend this program to others and why?

"Definitely. I have actually recommended the program to my colleagues at m2m Mozambique, who have now already hired a Fellow starting in August 2020."

mothers2mothers, Lilongwe, Malawi



Problem

In parts of Africa, up to 75% of babies born to HIV+ mothers stand to lose their mothers to AIDS-related illnesses. Lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS and fear of stigma prevent mothers living with HIV/AIDS from searching the right kind of support to prevent transmission and learning to live with HIV/AIDS.

Solution

- m2m hires HIV+ mothers to educate and support new HIV+ mothers to learn how to live with HIV/AIDS
- Education and empowerment tools prevent mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV/AIDS during and after pregnancy, combat stigma within families and communities, support a mother's adherence to medical treatment, and reduce the likelihood of AIDS orphans
- m2m's enhanced program model (EPM) provides reproductive, maternal, newborn, child health (RMNCH) to HIV+ and HIV- women and their families to improve overall health
- Since 2012, m2m has decreased the number of sites it is directly working at and has focused more on capacity building for governments to include the mentor mother model into their health facilities
- m2m's "exit strategy" is for local host governments to take over the treatment of mothers

Impact

Impact m2m	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
# of new HIV+ women clients enrolled (in '000s)	97	140	74	68	186	No longer used; patients reached: 901
# of sites (supported by m2m)	350	321	309	267	317	317
# of active countries	6	6	7	8	8	9