



HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund: Innovative Solutions for the Poor

Video Transcript

Moses Ndiritu: Afya Research Africa wanted to address the problem of access of care among people in the rural areas that are poorly served by primary health care. We pitched the idea of mobile-based clinics, which are called M-Afya kiosks, to provide primary health care and also offer drugs at an affordable price.

Sam Gwer: We are located in places that were previously neglected, not because they did not need those services, because nobody thought they were profitable.

Caroline Quijada: We know that there are many commercial enterprises out there, using new technologies, innovative platforms, new service offerings to reach the poor sustainably. The challenge for many of these enterprises is that they lack access to finance and capital to get many of their ideas up and running, or to achieve scale. With funding from the United States Agency for International Development and the U.K. agency for international development, DFID, the SHOPS project designed and launched a challenge fund. The HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund was designed to provide them with flexible financing as well as technical assistance and support, to help them achieve their dreams.

Faith Mugai: Jacaranda Health is trying to transform lives here in Kenya. We are building a chain of maternity hospitals, and we're working on developing a scalable, sustainable model, and providing low-cost, affordable, quality health services for mothers and children here in Kenya. Jacaranda Health was awarded the Health Enterprise Fund to actually expand our scope of service by expanding our facilities to offer an operating theater, and also to procure an emergency means of transportation. Since the receiving of our grant in 2013, we have been able to serve over 14,000 women and children in a variety of areas, in terms of antenatal care, postnatal care, family planning, child wellness care, normal deliveries, and C-sections.

Caroline Quijada: The HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund provides them with technical assistance to help them improve their businesses, refine their business models, support their efforts to achieve greater scale, and also, more importantly, create links with the overall health system, and to have access to individuals who can help them continue to grow their businesses beyond project support.

Sam Gwer: The Health Enterprise Fund provided us with more support than just the money. There was training on human resources, on finances, on accounting. In fact, the design of our health management information system was very much guided by the training that we got on finances and accounting.

Faith Mugai: The Health Enterprise technical assistance was really valuable in very many different ways. We've worked with cutting edge organizations, like the American College of Nurse-Midwives, who actually came here and assisted in rolling out trainings and building professional leadership.

Caroline Quijada: Capital is not enough. Had these enterprises only received grant financing, I don't think we would have seen as much as success as we have. Many still need support in terms of improving the HR structures, attract more customers, help keep costs low, improve their cost revenue-generating strategies. Who am I really trying to reach, and what is my message?

Michael Sombe: Afri-Can Trust developed low-cost sanitary towels, which are called I-Care pads. The use of sanitary towels, which then means that girls are able to access education and go to school throughout the whole year, without worrying about missing school or dropping out of schools as a result of a normal biological process, because they don't have sanitary towels. Comparing these pads to the disposable, or the conditional disposable pads, these pads are about 45 percent cheaper.

Caroline Quijada: We've been so excited, through the implementation of this fund. Our HANSHEP Health Enterprise Fund grantees introduced over 16 innovative and lifesaving technologies, products, and services, and were able to reach over 75,000 individuals.

Sam Gwer: Since we received the Health Enterprise Fund support from September 2013, we have seen massive impact in the communities that we target. We have served more than 13,000 clients in the various kiosks, and particularly, the people who have benefitted the most are mothers and children, who previously had difficulty accessing antenatal care services or postnatal care services.

Michael Sombe: The technical support we received resulted to a significant increase in our production capacity. Our production unit was producing about 100 to 170 pads per day. But with the support from the Health Enterprise Fund, we are currently able to produce over 250 pads with the same number of staff working in the production unit.

Faith Mugai: Since the introduction of emergency obstetric care services, we have seen our volumes go up. Currently, we're seeing over 60 patients a day in the outpatient setting, and we're conducting over deliveries a month in the inpatient setting. This truly has doubled what we were doing in our initial facilities.

Caroline Quijada: Our hope for the future, our hope for these grantees, and our hope for the fund itself, is that we can continue to identify and support small and medium-sized enterprises that are serving the poor in other countries, continue to create and network with our existing grantees, help them achieve greater scale, perhaps help them tie up with another enterprise in a different country, to replicate their business model, serve as mentors.

Sam Gwer: The Health Enterprise Fund really gave us an opportunity to showcase and trial our idea in a way we would never have been able to do without that support.