

ESTHER MELLO

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic and results-driven Finance & Administration Director with over 22 years of progressive leadership in multi-country financial oversight, grant lifecycle management, and risk mitigation across complex humanitarian operations. Proven track record directing \$25M+ annual portfolios funded by USAID, EU, ECHO, UNICEF, WFP, UNOCHA, and FCDO, consistently securing 100% clean audit outcomes and establishing enterprise-wide risk frameworks. Highly skilled in virtual financial management, remote cross-functional team governance, ERP platforms (Cost Point, Cognos, TM1), and advanced financial analytics to oversee distributed operations, treasury functions, and sub-grantee compliance seamlessly. Eager to leverage this deep expertise in multi-entity financial leadership, remote operational oversight, and strategic compliance to drive fiscal integrity and operational excellence as a Finance and Administration Director in a dynamic global organization.

SKILLS

Financial Modeling, Donor Compliance, Grant Management, Risk Management, Treasury Management, Budget Analysis, Statutory Reporting, Audit Readiness, Cash Flow, Expenditure Tracking, Variance Analysis, Payroll Processing, Tax Compliance, Subaward Monitoring, Fraud Mitigation, Fund Accounting, Financial Governance, Cost Control, Remote Operations, Procurement Oversight.

EXPERIENCE

Director of Finance And Administration (Somalia Mission)

International Medical Corps | Mogadishu, Somalia | Feb 2018 – Apr 2026

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Directed a \$25M annual humanitarian portfolio by aligning multi-donor regulations with localized financial frameworks, sustaining a 98% reduction in compliance breaches across all field missions.
- Administered financial reporting and treasury management for fully virtual cross-border operations, accelerating reporting turnaround times by 34% while ensuring seamless liquidity for multi-currency disbursements.
- Pioneered the implementation of comprehensive Aid Diversion standard operating procedures to safeguard funding streams, reducing audit query rates by 41% during stringent external audits.
- Orchestrated end-to-end grant lifecycle management by developing accurate proposal budgets and donor narratives, ensuring continuous alignment between programmatic goals and financial realities.
- Institutionalized robust expenditure monitoring frameworks and monthly budget-versus-actual analyses, enabling identification of variances and swift execution of corrective financial measures.
- Formulated and deployed enterprise risk management protocols across regional sub-grantees, embedding governance and transparency standards throughout the procurement.

Director of Finance And Administration - Kenya

International Medical Corps | Nairobi, Kenya | Aug 2013 – Jan 2018

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Overhauled cash and banking standard operating procedures by integrating MPESA online payment systems, accelerating payment processing efficiency by 37% and establishing robust threshold analyses.
- Administered real-time portfolio visibility by maintaining a comprehensive grant tracker across distributed teams, boosting virtual collaboration and proactive decision-making by 28% for multi-million-dollar funding streams.
- Guided strategic financial planning for the five-year mission strategy as a key Senior Management Team representative, elevating donor credibility and budget approval rates by 42% through superior compliance standards.
- Fortified sub-grantee management protocols through rigorous quarterly review visits, targeted training programs, and comprehensive spot checks to guarantee strict programmatic and financial alignment.
- Coordinated full-cycle financial administration for prime and sub-awardees, overseeing proposal budgeting, expenditure tracking, and statutory filings for regulatory compliance.
- Directed comprehensive cash-flow planning and field office disbursements while cultivating strategic banking relationships to preserve operational liquidity across all mission sites.

Finance Manager

International Medical Corps | Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo | Oct 2012 – Mar 2013

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Streamlined regional accounting operations in volatile, high-risk operating environments by delivering comprehensive ACCPAC platform training to national finance personnel.
- Established mission-critical banking infrastructure and operational accounts to guarantee uninterrupted program funding and operational liquidity.
- Executed thorough financial voucher reviews across field offices, identifying compliance gaps and implementing accounting best practices.
- Coordinated month-end financial closing procedures and field disbursements to ensure strict adherence to internal controls and donor guidelines.
- Strengthened national staff capacity in fiscal reporting and risk mitigation to maintain operational integrity during crisis interventions.

Finance Manager | International Medical Corps | Nairobi, Kenya | Jun 2008 – Jul 2013

Roles And Responsibilities:

- Stabilized crisis-affected field operations by institutionalizing standardized month-end accounting procedures across remote field sites.
- Delivered intensive finance manual refresher courses and procurement policy training sessions for emergency field personnel.
- Facilitated rapid cash flow management and field disbursements, maintaining operational readiness during acute crisis conditions.

OTHER EXPERIENCES

- **Finance Manager** | International Medical Corps | Juba, South Sudan | Jul 2011 – Sep 2011
- **Finance Manager** | International Medical Corps | Nairobi, Kenya | Jun 2008 – Jul 2013
- **Finance Assistant** | International Medical Corps | Nairobi, Kenya | Jan 2004 – May 2008

EDUCATION

- ❖ **Bachelor of Commerce in Finance** | University of Nairobi | 2018
- ❖ **Diploma in Business Management** | University of Nairobi
- ❖ **Certified Public Accountant (CPA II, Section 3)** | Visions Institute of Professionals
- ❖ **Kenya Accounting Technical Certificate (KATC I & II)** | Kenya College of Accountancy

CERTIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

- ❖ **USAID Budgeting Workshop Certificate** | USAID | Mar 2015
- ❖ **Strategic Employment Seminar Certificate** | International Medical Corps | Aug 2014
- ❖ **USAID Subaward Management Workshop Certificate** | USAID | May 2014
- ❖ **Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) Certification** | International Medical Corps | Jun 2013
- ❖ **Grants Compliance and Management of European Commission Funds** | International Medical Corps | May 2013
- ❖ **HACT Certification** | University of Nairobi | Jun 2013
- ❖ **Tax Compliance for NGOs** | International Medical Corps | May 2012
- ❖ **Anti-Fraud Awareness Training** | Tax Compliance for NGOs | Mar 2011
- ❖ **Human Capital Tax Planning & Compliance Certification** | International Medical Corps | Mar 2009
- ❖ **USAID Rules and Regulations Workshop Certificate** | International Medical Corps | Feb 2009

TOOLS

Deltek Costpoint, IBM Cognos, IBM TM1, Microsoft Excel, Sage ACCPAC, Mpesa Online, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Slack, SharePoint, Oracle NetSuite, Power BI, QuickBooks Online, Asana.

LANGUAGES

- ❖ English - Fluent
- ❖ Swahili - Native

REFEREES

Available upon request.