



Patricia



János

Entrepreneur: Patricia Sichali, 40

Patricia Sichali's success story is inspiring, to say the least. A single mother of two boys, Patricia returned to Malawi from England in 2005, and within a year found herself in unfortunate personal circumstances. From such inauspicious beginnings Patricia built up Nyacha Enterprises, a microbusiness that traded small goods like soap, drinks, cosmetics and textiles. As she states, the experience has taught her vital lessons about business, about others, and about herself. From her very first sales, her business has expanded its scope and today is profiting from the sales of exports from all over the world. Patricia learned about Grow in 2012, through whom she was put in touch with her consultant, János.

Consultant: János Moldavy, 36

János lives in Hamburg, and is married with a young daughter. He has a background in Computer Science and Economics, and gained his MBA working as a Lead Scientist for an internet startup, with a focus on data and business analytics. János came to Grow wanting to collaborate with entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa, to understand their challenges and work together to find solutions.

Business challenges and objectives of the project

Finding the starting capital has been hard, and often Patricia has seen profits immediately wiped out by bad luck and the devaluation of the Malawian currency. The kind of larger purchases Nyacha Enterprises had hoped to sell in order to expand were made difficult by their

higher pricetags. Together with János, Patricia needed to learn valuable business strategies and methods to structure her finances, what type of goods and products were profitable options, as well as implementing lessons about the various ways to single-handedly manage a small business.

The results

Today, Patricia has a much clearer vision for Nyacha Enterprises. Through effective business management, financial planning and analysis, she has been able to withstand the ups and downs the business has faced and carve out her direction for the future. Although it hasn't been easy, Patricia says she has seen things turn around and start to look favourable once more.

The Impact on Patricia

"Business is hard in Malawi, especially now. It's like a chessboard... it's hard. But don't give up - keep trying. [The experience] has changed me. I don't depend on anyone else. When I have a problem, I deal with it."

The Impact on János

"The overall experience was amazing! It was a lot of fun and really interesting working with my client. I am definitely planning to take on another project as soon as I have a little more time." And János adds by way of advice to fellow consultants: "Make sure you have the full commitment of your client and try your best to be seen as an equal partner rather than someone who tells the client what to do. Avoid saying, 'you should do xyz,' rather than, 'it might make sense to do xyz, but of course, it's your decision to make.'"

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