

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title: Maternal and Newborn Health Fellow

Location: Malawi, in one of these facilities: Kamuzu Central Hospital, Mzuzu Central Hospital or Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital

About us: Global nonprofit making surgery and anesthesia safer worldwide

Reporting to: Global Clean Cut Clinical lead

Key relationships: Global Clinical Director; Global Clean Cut Clinical lead; Clinical team; Program Team colleagues; communications & development staff and hospital team where the fellow will be based.

Time commitment: 2 days per week

Duration: 12 months (effective from January 19, 2026)

Number of fellows to be hired: 3 (1 from each of the facilities)

About Lifebox

Lifebox is a growing and dynamic global health non-profit founded by Dr Atul Gawande, dedicated to saving lives by improving the safety of surgery and anaesthesia around the world. Lifebox works to increase anaesthesia safety, reduce surgical infection rates, and strengthen operating room teamwork through tools, training, and partnerships. Since its founding in 2011, Lifebox has worked in over 116 countries and trained more than 14,000 healthcare providers. Lifebox is registered as a charity in Ethiopia, the UK, and US, with over 50 staff and affiliated faculty, and an operating budget of nearly \$4M supported by individual donors and foundations. To learn more, see: www.lifebox.org

Improving Maternal and Neonatal Surgical Safety in Malawi

Lifebox is starting a project to improve the quality and safety of maternal and neonatal surgical care in Malawi, where 85% of maternal deaths are linked to preventable healthcare worker factors and half occur post-cesarean section. The project will be implemented through the Beginning's Fund.

The project will be implemented using Lifebox's "S4" (Safer Surgical Systems Strengthening) methodology across 12 facilities using a "cascade" model to ensure program relevance, impact, and sustainability. Three central hospitals and Bwaila hospital will serve as mentor institutions, training 24 clinical champions who will then mentor, or "cascade" surgical safety improvement activities in eight district facilities. Champions will be trained and accompanied in the use of process mapping to identify and design solutions for perioperative quality

improvements tailored to their facility's needs. Core interventions will include: Lifebox's "Clean-CS" surgical infection prevention for cesarean sections, "Safe OR" surgical teamwork training and putting in place quality improvement systems.

Lifebox will collaborate directly with the Ministry of Health, Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Malawi, The Association of Malawian Midwives, Society of Anesthesiologists Malawi, Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, and Beginnings Fund consortium partners (CHAI, NEST360, Seed Global Health) to create a comprehensive approach addressing the full maternal-newborn health ecosystem. This evidence-based intervention builds on Lifebox's decade of experience and documented success in reducing surgical site infections by 35% through Clean Cut programs implemented across 46 hospitals in 11 countries.

The project aims to significantly reduce preventable maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality associated with surgical care in Malawi. Through strengthening perioperative systems in 12 facilities (4 mentor and 8 mentee facilities), the project will:

- Reduce surgical site infections by an estimated 35% in central hospitals;
- Improve compliance with key surgical safety practices (e.g., checklist use, infection control pillars, safe patient monitoring) across all participating facilities, with at least 80% of surgical teams trained in best practices;
- Transfer at least three improved practices from mentor to mentee facilities, ensuring sustainability and spread of quality care;
- Integrate maternal and neonatal surgical safety indicators into the national Health Information System (MaHIS), enabling long-term tracking of outcomes;
- Contribute to a reduction in maternal and neonatal deaths by addressing clinical gaps that account for over 80% of maternal mortality in Malawi (e.g., poor monitoring, delayed treatment, and incomplete assessment).

Ultimately, the project aims to create a replicable model for improving surgical safety that can be adopted nationally.

Roles and responsibilities of the Fellow

The fellow will coordinate, monitor and support the implementation of Lifebox's Maternal and Neonatal Surgical Safety Improvement project in Malawi and is expected to work closely with in country Beginnings fund project implementing partners (CHAI, NEST360, Seed Global Health, KUHeS,...) clinical and program teams of Lifebox working globally and to collaborate with other Lifebox staff on an ad-hoc basis in line with agreed project deliverables. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Lead perioperative system assessments, data analysis, and gap prioritization and support the implementation of tailored interventions based on identified needs at mentoring facilities (Kamuzu Central Hospital, Mzuzu Central Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital and Bwaila Hospital)

- Adapt existing Lifebox core programs and co-design new, context-specific interventions in collaboration with facility teams.
- Monitor the effectiveness of implemented changes, provide timely solutions to identified gaps, and offer continuous feedback for improvement.
- Actively participate in quarterly mentorship sessions with Lifebox's Innovation Clinical Lead and Global Clean Cut Lead and engage in regular coordination meetings with the Clean Cut clinical lead, Senior Innovation Lead, Senior Program Manager for East & Southern Africa, and Malawi Program Coordinator.
- Contribute to Lifebox's global maternal and neonatal health initiatives, focusing on surgical outcomes, quality improvement, and measurable safety advancements.
- Lead or support research and academic efforts to evaluate project impact, ensure sustainability, and contribute to knowledge sharing through presentations and reports.
- Serve as the liaison between hospital S4 implementation teams, hospital leadership, and Lifebox, addressing quality issues in real time.
- Lead Lifebox-led training sessions.
- Attend Lifebox's clinical team meetings and present relevant content as needed.
- Prepare, submit, and present project related research or quality improvement work, activity plans, reports and final fellowship reports based on set timeline.
- Notify Lifebox at least one week in advance of any planned absence.

The Fellow will get:

- Hands-on experience and training in quality improvement, program delivery, human-centred design, operations management, and research in surgery and anaesthesia, with a focus on low-resource settings.
- Comprehensive mentorship and technical support from Lifebox's global team, including senior clinical leaders, innovation experts, researchers, and program staff.
- Opportunities to contribute to impactful, publishable academic work and collaborate with an international network of clinicians, researchers, and global health stakeholders.
- Exposure to abstract submissions and presentation in a national or international conferences.
- Exposure to global health program development, implementation, training pedagogy, device distribution, and nonprofit operations.
- A structured support to develop leadership, project management, and communication skills.
- A 12-month monthly stipend of \$555 paid from Lifebox upon submission of an activity report and receiving approval from the Global Clean Cut Clinical Lead.

Position Requirement:

- Final year ObGyn resident or recent graduate or a Midwife with a master's degree currently working at Kamuzu Central Hospital, Mzuzu Central Hospital or Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital.
- Commitment to the duration of the project.
- Able to dedicate three days per week to the required activities.

Duration:

The position will last for 12 months from January 19, 2026, to January 18, 2027.

Accountability

Direct accountability is to the Lifebox Global Clean Cut clinical lead with close collaboration with Senior Program Manager for East & Southern Africa, Malawi based Program Coordinator and with collaboration across the program implementation team.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply please email your CV and a cover letter as a single document explaining your motivation and how you are best suited for this position to opportunities@lifebox.org.

Please note the following:

Correspondence will only be entered with candidates who have been shortlisted. If you have not received a reply within two weeks of the closing date, please consider your application unsuccessful.

Closing date: December 18, 2025

Lifebox is an equal opportunity employer and values diversity