mothers2mothers Announces Reduction of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV to 2.1% among Programme Participants: Peer Mentor Approach Effective and Transferable Across Health Issues

DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA, 18 July 2016 – On the occasion of the 21st International AIDS Conference in Durban, South Africa, mothers2mothers (m2m) announces that its Peer Mentor Approach is an effective intervention in virtually eliminating mother-to-child-transmission (MTCT) of HIV*, reducing the average rate among its clients to 2.1% in 2015. m2m also significantly improved uptake of Early Infant Diagnosis, a critical area of global underperformance. Mothers with two or more m2m visits are over seven times more likely to test their babies for HIV at six weeks in the six countries where m2m operated in 2015, compared to women with just one visit. m2m clients are also more likely to test compared to national testing rates. Furthermore, the model has been seen to be effective in addressing other health challenges, including reproductive health and family planning, nutrition, and TB and malaria screening. The m2m model aligns with current global health priorities to end the HIV epidemic, helping to achieve the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets and six of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“Ending paediatric AIDS is within our reach,” says Frank Beadle de Palomo, President & Chief Executive Officer of mothers2mothers. “We keep adolescent girls and young women in care along the prevention of mother-to-child-transmission cascade through our facility-to-community platform. Our model at mothers2mothers has been proven to prevent future generations from being born with HIV.”

m2m’s latest initiative is integrated adolescent health through its Peer Mentors who promote HIV counselling, testing, and education, in support of the goals of the DREAMS initiative, launched by the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Recent years have seen a significant expansion of m2m’s reach, with the organisation serving more than one-in-four HIV-positive pregnant women across South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Swaziland, Lesotho and Uganda. In 2015, m2m reached an estimated 860,500 women, infants, children, adolescent girls and young women, and men. Its success can be attributed, in large part, to m2m’s expanded facility-to-community platform, which allows them to reach a broader, more diverse
group of clients. Furthermore, m2m’s model has been shown to save significant money in averted treatment costs.

"I congratulate mothers2mothers for their outstanding results. mothers2mothers is an example of community engagement at its best. The mothers2mothers social and entrepreneurial business model empowers women living with HIV by helping them have HIV-free children while at the same time helping other mothers," applauds UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibe.

The facility-to-community platform trains, employs, and empowers local mothers living with HIV as frontline healthcare workers in understaffed health centres and communities. These “Mentor Mothers” provide essential health education and support to other HIV-positive women in one-on-one and group sessions, enabling women to protect their babies from HIV and keep their families healthy. m2m’s programmatic effectiveness can be attributed to the quality of care and its foundational elements: programme design, supportive supervision, programme management, routine monitoring, and evaluation.

m2m will be exploring the unique challenges facing adolescents from 17:00 – 19:00, Monday, 18 July at AIDS 2016 at Lives Changed on the Way to Zero: A Candid Conversation with Zolani, Teens and Their HIV-Positive Mothers, jointly sponsored by mothers2mothers and Johnson & Johnson.

Full schedule of m2m activities at AIDS 2016

* * *

About mothers2mothers
mothers2mothers (m2m) is an Africa-based NGO, which leads global efforts to end paediatric AIDS and create healthy families and communities by training, employing, and empowering HIV-positive mothers to be frontline healthcare workers. Since its founding in 2001, m2m has reached almost 1.5 million HIV-positive mothers in nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa with its scalable, high-impact peer approach.

Join us by visiting www.m2m.org or follow us on: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

CONTACT: Carolyn McEwen, Senior Communications Manager, mothers2mothers
E: carolyn.mcewen@m2m.org
T: +1 310 699 9800
SA Mobile: +27 (0)83 668 8294

*UN Global Plan guidelines

###