



International Organization for Migration (IOM)



Voices of the Diaspora – Mariam (Tanzania)

Even before coming to the UK, I was always passionate about working in the community and helping others.

As a firstborn, I assumed many family responsibilities from an early age which gave me a strong sense of leadership and determination.

I came to the UK in 1997 to study Business and Legal Studies, starting my career in local government shortly after. I settled into UK life, got married and had two girls. After my children were born here, I began to think about how they could better connect with their heritage country and understand their roots while being raised in the UK. I started using my free time outside of work to get into the community and connect with the Tanzanian diaspora.

Having many friends from various countries here, I see how organised they are in terms of contributing to the development of their home country. I have done a lot to really engage with my community. I am the secretary of the Tanzanian Women Association and the deputy secretary of the Tanzania UK Diaspora Organisation.

The video conference events between us and the government here at IOM have been very useful. Since President Jakaya Kikwete has come into power in Tanzania, he has been at the forefront of engaging with the diaspora and he's trying to bring the diaspora experience back home. We are very grateful for this.

We are also very appreciative to the IOM for helping both the government and the diaspora to start that process of dialogue and supporting us throughout. Moving forward, we really want to see the results of these conversations. There is work that the diaspora must do, and work the government must do.

As the diaspora, we need to organise ourselves better in order to be able to deliver to our home country.

The government, on the other hand, needs to help us address the issues we face that are barriers to our ability to deliver.

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IOM in the United Kingdom

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