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PRESS RELEASE

Participatory Collaboration:
Migration and Technology Monitor (MTM)
Fellows Select New Cohort of Colleagues-on-the-Move

06 May 2024

MTM
Fellows
2024

Grace Gichanga
Kenya/South Africa

Mathew Lubari
South Sudan/Uganda

Mona Shtaya
Occupied Palestinian
Territories

Gamil
Sudan/Egypt

**Mariana Rangel and
Judith Cabrera**
Mexico

The Migration and Technology Monitor (MTM) announces our second cohort of fellows. Five people with lived experiences of migration or occupation receive a stipend for projects regarding the use of technology in migration. The first cohort played a crucial role during the selection process.

Five professionals with lived experiences of migration and/or occupation have been selected for the 2024/25 cohort of the MTM Fellowship, receiving a stipend of US $ 30,000:

1. **Grace Gichanga** - A lawyer and migrant from Kenya in South-Africa, using technology to facilitate communications between people-on-the-move and state institutions;
2. **Matthew Lubari** - A South-Sudanese refugee in Uganda who teaches ICT and repair skills to other refugees;
3. **Mona Shtaya** - A Palestinian researcher looking into technologies that were tested in Occupied Palestinian Territories and then sold to foreign countries;
4. **Gamil** - A digital expert from Sudan, who lives as a refugee in Egypt, developing educational programs on digital security for vulnerable refugees (*for Gamil's security, we are using a pseudonym*);
5. **Mariana Rangel** and **Judith Cabrera**- Mexico, part of the Borderline Crisis Team in Mexico, an organization that support asylum seekers at the US-Mexico border with the digital hurdles they are facing such as the CBP One facial recognition application.

<u>Financial Aid and a Social Experience</u>

Repair activist and Open-Tech educator Mathew Lubari is happy to get financial support for his project, but also counts on the community benefits that the Migration and Technology Monitor offers: **"I expect the MTM fellowship to be a transformative experience that will not only enhance my professional skills but also expand my network."** As a long-time project manager, he underlines how hard it is to get funding**: "The primary hurdles stemmed from the limited access to resources and a network of potential investors. There is also a general hesitancy to invest in projects for individuals in conflict-affected areas, which often puts projects like mine at a disadvantage."**

Human rights lawyer and tech savant Grace Gichanga also experiences difficulties when it comes to funding: **"It's no secret that the funding gap for Black women in tech is significant, we are the most underrepresented group of founders and innovators. Personally, my biggest challenge when it comes to accessing funding is not my immigration status but rather my decision to seek funding for innovations that increase access to justice through technology."** She appreciates the MTM Fellowship, because **"it creates a safe space for new voices, new ideas, and new critics in the migration conversation. The approach to support has also been fundamentally unconventional especially given the multidisciplinary choice of fellows and the open opportunity to create impact my way."**

<u>Radical Participatory Approach</u>

The new cohort was selected by the [2023/24 MTM fellows](#), who spent hours discussing projects and candidates and voted on the final five. **"Being part of the selection process made me think about how this is not just a one-year fellowship in which we talk about migration and technology issues, but rather a conversation in which we will continue to participate for years,"** says 2023/24 fellow Veronica Martinez, a journalist from Mexico. As a field reporter, she is hoping that the way we talk about people on the move will eventually change: **"We still talk about immigration as a phenomenon completely unaffiliated to ourselves, as something that happens to someone else. I think it must be clear that we need to start shifting the way that we talk about migration.**

MTM Director Petra Molnar is seeking to set new standards with the MTM Fellowship, also by involving the fellows into crucial processes, such as the selection of the new cohort: **"We are trying out new ways of collaborating, focusing on radical participatory techniques and resource redistribution. It can be a challenge to pursue a real bottom-up approach, because you need to break out of established patterns that define how we talk about problems and think up solutions."** But despite the challenges, Molnar underlines the mutual benefits of the participatory approach: **"It forces you to be self-critical and self-observant. This way, you see your own work through a new lens. You begin to look at things differently and this exactly is urgently needed in the migration space."**

<u>The Migration and Technology Monitor (MTM)</u>

With a focus on migration, technology, and human rights, the MTM actively interrogates tech experiments on people crossing borders. Our mission is to monitor surveillance technologies, automation, and the use of Artificial Intelligence to screen, track, and make decisions about people on the move. [With a platform in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish](#), the Monitor's aim is to highlight the far-reaching impacts that these procedures have on peoples' rights and lives, and to support communities doing work on these issues. In 2023 we launched our first fellowship and are happy to keep the program going hopefully for many years to come. Our fellows will also have access to various learning opportunities on issues like project management, digital security, or public outreach.

Do you have questions about the MTM? Do you want to get in touch with our fellows? Or do you want to talk to our experts about Migration and Technology? Please send an email to our media contact and fellowship coordinator **Florian Schmitz** at **migrationtechmonitor@proton.me**

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