



CII Spotlight: Rachel Fowler

Program Assistant
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Q: What is your role at USAID?

A: I joined the Center for Accelerating Innovation and Impact (CII) as a Program Assistant about one year ago. My role is to support both the Innovation and Market Access teams, so I work on different projects ranging from human-centered design (HCD) to innovative finance to Grand Challenges. I also coordinate CII's communication channels, such as this newsletter, and I perform literature review and support writing and editing CII's publications.

Q: How did you end up at USAID?

A: I have always been passionate about global health, and when I studied abroad in Jordan a few years ago to learn about healthcare and international development, I heard about USAID's role in health and became interested in the many opportunities it offered. I received my Bachelor's in Business Administration and my minor in Health Policy at Carnegie Mellon University, with a concentration in finance and business technology, so CII was a perfect fit for my interests and background! I can apply business-minded thinking and my tech and health background to support the introduction and scale-up of health solutions.

Q: What makes you passionate about your job?

A: At CII, I'm surrounded by an intelligent, driven, and fun team who deeply cares about their work and constantly looks for more innovative, cost-effective ways to bring critical health interventions to market in low- and middle-income countries. I'm passionate about this type of work because it brings a different lens to traditional global health to amplify USAID's efforts. I'm learning about not only different health areas like HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases but also different ways of thinking, like HCD. These complementary approaches are important given the fact that even the "perfect" global health product can face barriers getting to market, so we need to challenge ourselves to think in strategic and creative ways to address those barriers.

Q: What topic(s) in global health interest(s) you the most and why?

A: I'm very interested in the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in global health. Most people don't think of development when they hear about UAVs, but there are exciting, potentially high-impact opportunities in this space. I love that USAID, including CII, and other global health actors are thinking about how to shape this market, because it is going to move forward with or without us, so it's important that we play a role in the direction it takes to utilize its potential.