

# WWD

## Cartier Philanthropy Shares Testimonial From International NGO

The brand invested \$45 million into the charitable foundation in five years.

By [Sharon Edelson](#) on November 14, 2018



Cartier Philanthropy's executive director Pascale de la Fregonniere and Frank Beadle de Palomo, ceo of Mothers2Mothers

**Cartier Philanthropy** on Monday celebrated its fifth anniversary at the brand's Fifth Avenue mansion by highlighting one of the partner organizations it supports, Mothers2Mothers, an international nonprofit working to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

Prior to the formation of **Cartier** Philanthropy, the Parisian jeweler's charitable efforts were managed regionally and included auctions and sales to charity, in addition to monetary donations. "The idea of founding **Cartier** Philanthropy was to make giving more professional and strategic," said Pascale de la Frégonnière, executive director of the nonprofit organization, whose mission is to improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable.

Cartier Philanthropy, a grant-making foundation, was established in Geneva and is exclusively funded by Maison Cartier, which invested \$45 million into the foundation over the past five years, supporting 30 organizations in 20 countries.

**Mercedes Abramo**, president and chief executive officer of Cartier North America, introduced Frégonnière, but made a point of distancing the business from the charity.

De la Fregonniere, who spent 20 years on the ground, working in Africa and the Middle East, including Somalia, Lebanon and Iraq before taking her current post, said, “I was happy to bring those experiences to Cartier. Going to the countries is the most important part of the job. It gives you a sense of the complexities you’re facing.”

Women, who are marginalized in some parts of the world, are a focus. “We have a girl’s education program in India. And women from the slums of India are being trained to be taxi drivers,” Frégonnière said. “They’re being given respect.”

Frank Beadle de Palomo, ceo of Mothers2Mothers, said the HIV epidemic of 2000-01 is still impacting sub-Saharan Africa. The organization identifies HIV-positive women, educates them on how to take care of themselves so they deliver healthy babies, then professionalizes and pays them to be peer-to-peer mentors to other infected mothers.

“In the past, 40 percent of all women transmitted HIV to their babies. Now, the rate is 1.6 percent,” Beadle de Palomo said, adding that Mothers2Mothers has a network of 3,000 mentors in eight countries.

One of those mentors, Irene Nkosi, told her story. She got pregnant when she was 16 and was diagnosed with the HIV virus. When she told her family, they made her eat and sleep outside. Although her baby was born HIV-negative, it died at a day-care facility for infants. Nkosi believes the baby was neglected because it was assumed to be HIV-positive based on her own status.

Nkosi’s life improved when she joined Mothers2Mothers. She’s now a mentor and site coordinator. “I’m passionate about pediatric AIDS,” said Nkosi, who seemed comfortable speaking to an audience and likely had a lot of experience as one of People Magazine’s 25 Women Changing the World in 2017. “This fight is personal to me because I’m HIV-positive. I went back to finish my high schooling and bought a small piece of land. I studied to be a nail technician and opened a nail salon. I have two daughters. I was once a victim. Now, I’m not only surviving, I’m thriving.”