

Corporate social responsibility in public health: A case-study on HIV/AIDS epidemic by Johnson & Johnson company in Africa

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Abstract

HIV/AIDS has claimed millions of lives in the global workforce and continues to remain a threat to many businesses. An estimated 36.5 million of working people are living with HIV; the global workforce has lost 28 million people from AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic. In the absence of access to treatment, this number could grow to 74 million by 2015. The epidemic continues to affect the working population through absenteeism, sickness and death. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is an obligation that corporates have toward their employees, community and society. A review and documentation of one such CSR by Johnson & Johnson (a multinational company) for HIV/AIDS in Africa is presented here. Johnson & Johnson Company is involved in numerous projects around the world to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The company is working to fight the spread of the disease and improve the quality of life for those living with the illness through various donations of its products and sponsorship of local programs. This case study also highlights different categories of CSR activities such as Cause Promotion, Cause related Marketing, Corporate Philanthropy, Corporate Social Marketing, Corporate Volunteering and Socially responsible business practices, which are discussed with specific examples from different countries in Africa. **Conclusions:** CSR of any business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical & discretionary expectation placed on the organization by society at a given point of time. CSR is therefore the obligation that corporations have toward their stakeholders and society in general which horizons beyond what is prescribed by law or union contracts. Johnson & Johnson has a proved history of being committed to caring for people and a good example of a company with a long history of citizenship and sustainability.

Key words: Corporate social responsibility, cause promotion, corporate volunteering, HIV/AIDS, Johnson & Johnson, philanthropy, social marketing

Key Messages: HIV epidemic has a tremendous affect on labor, setting back economic activity and social development. Majority of the people living with HIV worldwide are between 15 and 49 years in the prime of their working lives. Corporates should protect and improve the welfare of its employees and society along with its own interests on making profits. Satisfying and responding to society's needs and expectations will lead to successful business

INTRODUCTION

HIV/AIDS has claimed millions of lives in the global workforce and continues to remain a threat to businesses. An estimated 36.5 million of working people are living with HIV; the global labor force has lost 28 million people from AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic. In the absence of access to treatment, this number could grow to 48 million by 2010 and 74 million by 2015.^[1] The epidemic continues to affect the working population through absenteeism, sickness and death. Corporate Social Responsibility can be defined or understood simply as a process in which the corporates contribute for the improvement of the community through their different methods or ways of business practices and by providing the resources.^[2] It is also defined as “Operating a business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal commercial and public expectations that society has of business.”

Basically CSR is a common platform and an interaction for the corporates or companies and its stakeholders. To state it rightly CSR is an obligation that corporates have toward their employees, community and society. Since the social contribution of corporates includes broader expectations the society, they effect both the external and internal environment of the employees and their working conditions. If a corporation takes proper care and sensitive enough to address the issues of environment, then it is more likely to be labeled as a “socially responsible.”

Johnson & Johnson Company is involved in numerous projects around the world to combat the HIV/AIDS

epidemic. The company is working to fight the spread of the disease and improve the quality of life for those living with the illness through various donations of its products, and sponsorship of local programs. The company has various units over the globe which is operated under a decentralized management approach. Johnson & Johnson is broadly based in human health care and with a Credo with foundation of character, ethics and values which guides to be “responsible to our employees, the men and women who work with us throughout the world.”^[3]

The company has partnerships with different corporations and NGOs to bring a great impact on health. It has also emphasized the importance of contribution of Small & Medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in the supply chain and has taken many initiatives to empower them and assist them in HIV/AIDS prevention activities by^[4]:

1. Directly supporting work place program set-up.
2. Enabling workplace program set-up.
3. Leverage influence with enabling institutions.
4. Leverage influence directly with SMEs.

CASE REPORT

Johnson & Johnson^[3] Company (J&J) has taken the initiative to emphasize its role in attacking the NTDs (neglected Tropical diseases) through its global partnerships in Africa and Asia. The company is continuously conscious of the impact on the environment and has taken variety of initiatives to reduce waste and advocate environment

friendly products. The priority for the Company is to invest in health, safety and well-being of the employees. The company has very strong commitment for social responsibility and done a significant work in the area of HIV/AIDS especially in Africa.

J&J supports the efforts in more than 25 countries in Africa (Botswana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Cameroon, Liberia, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Cape Verde, Malawi, Somalia, DRC, Morocco, South Africa, Egypt, Mozambique, Sudan, Eritrea, Namibia, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda) in different projects in health and development sector.^[5] It partners with different National and International NGOs that have interventions in Africa focusing on health issues mainly on HIV/AIDS, MCH, Capacity building, Stigma, etc.

Broad categories of CSR responses of Johnson & Johnson

The company is actively involved in supporting ongoing health care, educational and cultural programs. The company is committed to healthy environment through a reduction in environmental impacts and participation in conservation projects. It has also ensured the high standards and safety to its employees and has worked with others in the community to share their knowledge in this area. The CSR activities of Johnson & Johnson can be broadly divided into three main categories depending upon the target of interventions as shown in Table 1 below.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and Johnson & Johnson

Initiative 1- cause promotion

Through this social initiative, J&J contributes for the following services:

Table 1: Social responsibilities & activities of Johnson & Johnson

Responsibilities for	Activities
Communities	Saving and improving life Ensuring safety Capacity building of health staff Emphasizing prevention & fighting against stigma and discrimination
Employees	Healthy habits for healthy life Workplace safety/ healthy working environment Protecting drivers Ergonomics Mental well-being Employee assistance program Resiliency training & energy management Healthy people
Environment	Paper and packaging Environmental literacy Biodiversity Waste reduction

1. Raising awareness and concern about a social cause.
2. Supporting fundraising activities.
3. By participation.
4. By recruiting volunteers.

This initiative is a common form of corporate giving along with philanthropy and employee volunteerism. The distinctive feature of cause promotion is that more emphasis is laid on promotional strategies without any linkage to the sales of products or consumer response.

DISCUSSION

Mothers2mothers is an NGO that works in few countries in Africa that is dedicated to impart knowledge and educate the positive mothers to prevent the mother to child transmission. As a result the educated mother will in turn mentor the others and these programs are implemented successfully in Swaziland, South Africa, Lesotho and Malawi. As per the statistics there are thousands of women who got educated and benefited from this program.

In Mozambique and South Africa (Soweto), Johnson & Johnson supports “International Humana People to People Movement” which is engaged in training the community leaders/workers to impart education about HIV to everyone exposed or living in the high risk areas. They started a door-to-door Total Control of the Epidemic (TCE) where they give 1:1 sessions and help to develop plans for local residents and prevent the spread of infection.

J&J supported “Society for Women Against AIDS in Africa” to build the capacity for preventing, controlling and address the problem of HIV epidemic by increasing the awareness about HIV and providing access to female condoms through the 40 network organizations in Ghana.

In many African countries including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Nigeria, J&J supports an NGO namely Global Fund for Women to support maternal & reproductive health care.

Initiative 2: Cause-related marketing (CRM)

In CRM, the corporate contributes by making a commitment to donate some percentage of revenues to a cause, which is linked to the sales of the product. This is again limited and specific for the product and duration and charity. Through this CRM, Johnson & Johnson contributes additionally which depends on the sales and consumer dynamics.

This initiative involves more promotion, paid advertising and often requires formal agreements and coordination with charity for advertising, tracing purchases, etc. Some examples from the field are:

1. In 2012, J&J joined hands with Save the Children to safeguard the lives of every baby and ensure to have a healthy start and future in their lives. This has reached over 40 million US households and triggered donation through Johnson's Baby CARE cards and has resulted in 3.44 million impressions.^[6]
2. J&J with its strong brand for the family products also has joined hands with Make a Wish where the whole family is made stronger through the granting of the wish. The J&J/March of Dimes partnership asked the users to commit to treasure their everyday experience with the children in their lives by taking an online pledge in addition to making an online donation/ contribution.
3. J&J has also joined hands with (RED) which is a group of global renowned brands like Coca Cola, *etc.* which committed to donate 50% of the profits to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This Cause marketing advertisement is on Pinterest and other social networking sites where Johnson & Johnson pays \$1 for "every like it, tweet it or pin it" to the Global Fund.

Social initiative 3: Corporate social marketing (CSM)

In this initiative, the main objective is to implement or support a behavior change campaign by the company. The area of work can be anything ranging from community health, education, and environment or introduce safe practices, *etc.* It is different from other social initiatives because the main expected outcome is change in behavior, which is not as simple or speedy as we think.

Examples:

1. J&J supports, HIVSA's home based care program reaches 30 CBOs (community based organizations) which cater services to 3500 households in Johannesburg.
2. PlaySoccer is a grassroots community program designed to serve the disadvantaged communities & vulnerable children. J&J supports this program in and around Johannesburg.
3. J&J supports Mothers2mothers an NGO which works in various countries of Africa namely Lesotho, South Africa, Malawi and Swaziland. The new HIV mothers are trained to mentor the others and they provide the information on treatment, nutrition, feeding with formula. Apart from that they also provide information on how to combat stigma, discrimination and pressures from the society.
4. J&J works with "Safety Kids Worldwide" to encourage parents to teach their children safety practices like wearing a seat belt or bicycle helmets that will reduce the prevalence of accidents.
5. In Zimbabwe, the Company also has a peer-counseling program for HIV positive industrial workers in its property in collaboration with Zimbabwe Hope Center.

Initiative 4: Johnson & Johnson's philanthropy

It is basically a contribution by a corporate body to a charity in various forms ranging from cash to services. The causes can be health, education or environment. Following options of giving are in practice by J&J over decades:

1. Donating cash.
2. Granting scholarships.
3. Providing some services or products.
4. Giving technical guidance or support.
5. Offering equipment.

Examples from Africa:

1. J&J supports the Hospital Leaders Program (HLP) which is started by partnership with UCT's Business School to build the capacities in Leadership & Managerial skills of health staff of South Africa. This program is similar to other J&J programs run in Europe, USA, South America & Asia.
2. J&J supports the SOS, which is an international NGO dedicated to care for orphans & abandoned children. It also runs the educational institutions and medical/health centers apart from skill training centers. It also fights for the rights of the child and J&J provides the general support & help the family strengthening projects in South Africa.
3. Joined hands with Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation on a long term commitment and pursued a comprehensive strategy to reduce the burden of HIV on Women & their families by strengthening community health systems, providing counseling services to the women and tackling the social issues like stigma, discrimination and other serious consequences.

In Africa, MDI (Management Development Institute) has resulted with the association of AMREF, Ghana Institute of Management & Public Administration, UCT & UCLA Anderson held annually at Kenya, Ghana & Cape Town for the HIV program leaders working in different organization with an objective to improve both the quality & quantity of the services catered for HIV/AIDS infected & affected groups. This innovative approach is supported by J&J Company.

In Partnership with Aga Khan Development Network, J&J has taken the issues of Nursing, community health and early childhood development and to raise their capabilities in East Africa namely Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

In Nigeria, J&J also supports American Jewish World Service for its two programs to teach the health workers religious leader and community workers on counseling skills, and to fight against the stigma & discrimination faced by PLHIV/AIDS.

In Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and South Africa, J&J supports sites of mothers2mothers (m2m) which has focused interventions for prevention of HIV infections. Till date thousands of women have taken part and benefited from this organization in different African countries where its presence is there.

Initiative 5: Community volunteering

It is a very good way for a corporate to get involved in the community development activities by encouraging their employees and franchise members to volunteer their time to support the cause. The type of projects can be any of those ranging from service to local communities to improving the health & safety and protecting the environment. In this regards J&J have taken various projects under community volunteering:

1. Community projects.
2. Health and Safety related projects.
3. Environmental volunteering.

The employees of the company in all the global locations are encouraged to take part in community development programs and in turn they are also paid for their volunteering.

J&J company has also done a research among its employees and found that there is a great correlation between community volunteering and employee engagement which has resulted in incorporating volunteering as a normal practice at the organization and empower the communities around.

It also provides the Medical Mission packs for the volunteer medical doctors who go on a mission to deliver the care services.

Initiative 6: Socially responsible business practices

These are certain initiatives taken by the corporates where they adapt and conduct different business practices to support community and save environment.

Some of the examples are:

1. Providing increased access for disabled populations.
2. Choosing manufacturing & packing materials that are environmental friendly.
3. Developing programs to support employee wellbeing.
4. Ensuring environment friendly and following the safety precautions.
5. Protecting the privacy of consumer information.

In Malawi, J&J supports AmeriCares which is an International NGO specialized in health and disaster relief working for the vulnerable women & children who are displaced refugees. J&J products like sutures and pain killers are vital for emergency obstetric care and AmeriCares purchases the products of J&J since 2004.

In Nigeria in 2005, J&J has initiated a new partnership to address the issues of gender based violence and HIV/AIDS. This partnership which is between UNIFEM, J&J and Global Coalition on Women and AIDS will sanction grants/awards for the CBOs to strengthen the linkages with the above mentioned theme.

Also in Botswana too, J&J supports the Department of Women's Affairs, Home Affairs and Home Affairs to support the HIV prevention programs.

CONCLUSIONS

CSR of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectation placed on the organization by society at a given point of time. CSR is therefore the obligation that corporations have toward their stakeholders and society in general which goes beyond what is prescribed by law or union contracts. Johnson & Johnson has a proved history of being committed to caring for people and a good example of a company with a long history of citizenship and sustainability. It has well demonstrated its social responsibility to improve human health and well-being, sustain the planet, support the communities thereby enhancing the greater economic opportunity and societal development.

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