THE BUSINESS RESPONSE TO HIV/AIDS: Innovation & Partnership

Extracts
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Please note that the profiles mentioned in the text are not included in these extracts from 'The Business Response to HIV/AIDS: Innovation & Partnership'. The profiles are available in the print version of the report and on the Forum's Database of Socially Responsible Business Practice (www.pwblf.org)
Introduction

Worldwide, business has reacted to the threat of HIV/AIDS, as have the public and non-profit sectors. Some companies, for instance, have introduced preventive measures to protect their employees and care for those who are infected. Others have undertaken cause-related marketing activities, worked with suppliers and local communities and made philanthropic contributions to support awareness-raising and education efforts. With a few exceptions, however, corporations have not been at the forefront of the fight against AIDS.

Yet business has a vital role to play in the worldwide campaign on HIV/AIDS. The work will only be fully effective when business makes its unique contribution locally, nationally and globally in helping stop the spread of the disease. The time is ripe for business to join in strategic partnerships with the public and non-profit sectors, to make low-cost and effective interventions that support, expand and amplify work started in the other sectors.

The Business Response to HIV/AIDS: Innovation and Partnership is a first attempt to draw together the global experience of business in fighting the epidemic. In doing so, it seeks to give a new perspective on how business, on its own account and in partnership with others, can better achieve its goals in, and make a more effective contribution to, the wider campaign against HIV/AIDS. The report is structured in four sections:

1. A brief review of the nature, impact and spread of HIV/AIDS and the public and non-profit sector response to date
2. A summary of what is known of the corporate response to HIV/AIDS
3. An examination of how the corporate contribution can be developed and linked into the work of the other sectors
4. A number of profiles that supplement the information on the corporate responses and partnership building.
A stakeholder is usually defined as a group that has an interest in a company’s business. The definition includes investors (who are not discussed here), and employees, customers, and suppliers. Government has a general interest in the impact of HIV/AIDS on all stakeholder groups, and while it is not discussed as a distinct stakeholder, it is an audience for a company’s involvement in HIV/AIDS work.

Some companies in the industrialised world, and increasingly in the developing world, have also contributed to community initiatives to address the spread of HIV/AIDS. These initiatives target employees and the local communities where companies are located and the wider society.

As the epidemic has developed, a pattern of corporate action has emerged that has stressed immediate action in respect of employees. In contrast, initiatives with customers and suppliers have been much less frequent, as have those impacting local and more distant communities. However, companies can benefit to varying degrees from supporting HIV/AIDS prevention work with all its stakeholders, since in various ways, they can contribute to the success of the business.

Around the world, the corporate response to the emergence of HIV/AIDS has varied widely depending on a number of factors. For example, large companies with professional human resources and healthcare staff have been able to mount a swift and comprehensive response, while smaller companies have found this more difficult. Major multinationals have had the additional challenge of facing the emergence of the disease in multiple cultures and localities, often concurrently.

The corporate contribution to preventive HIV/AIDS partnerships can be local, national or international in scope, as shown in Figure 7. Small companies may only be active locally in one country, while multinational companies may work locally and nationally in a number of countries simultaneously, as well as collaborate with global agencies on transnational programmes. IBM, for one, has offered philanthropic programmes across the US, contributed resources to work in several African countries and provided US$1.5 million’s worth of equipment to WHO in Geneva. For global brands, some programmes targeted at customers may also transcend local and national boundaries and become global themes.

From its research, UNAIDS has identified four broad types of company responses to HIV/AIDS:

1. Safeguarding direct commercial interests
2. Contributing to the protection of other stakeholders
3. Acting philanthropically
4. Adopting a leadership role.

1. SAFEGUARDING DIRECT COMMERCIAL INTERESTS

Of the minority of companies around the world that have acknowledged the threat of the disease, most have developed a defensive response. They have done what they thought necessary to both protect their employees and their families, and avoid unnecessary training of replacement workers and other costs imposed by the disease. In addition, those companies whose customers are directly threatened by the disease have acted to protect their commercial interests. The following section discusses the protection of employees and their families, and the defence of special business interests.
**A. Protecting Employees and Their Families**

In a UNAIDS-commissioned survey of corporate responses to HIV/AIDS by 203 companies in 14 countries, the US-based business organisation The Conference Board found that the dominant motives for corporate action were the welfare of infected employees and the protection and safety of all other employees, as Figure 8 shows.

Companies care for their employees and, in addition, want to avoid losing trained staff and paying healthcare and other costs that the disease imposes. They often respond to the threat through corporate healthcare plans that both benefit employees and support productivity. In 1996 in the US, where AIDS is a leading cause of death for American men between the ages of 25 and 44, a group that represents more than half of the workforce, the Centers for Disease Control published a survey showing that 43% of work sites with more than 50 employees had a healthcare policy covering employees with a disability or life-threatening illness including HIV/AIDS. Large firms tend to have substantial policies.

In developed countries, progress has been made in educating workers and their families about HIV/AIDS and creating codes of conduct that protect the employment rights of those who are HIV-positive. In the US, about 16% of all firms provide some form of employee education on the topic. Work remains to be done in the US to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS in the workplace, however. The developing world has even greater need, especially in countries like Jamaica, Ghana and India where HIV is well established but the first AIDS cases are just emerging and where employers' associations, professional bodies such as institutes of personnel management and even leading companies are only now finalising their employment policies and initiating employee education programmes.

In high-infection countries such as Zimbabwe, early action like that by Rio Tinto has been decisive in reducing the spread of infection. Profile 4 discusses the work of the Confederation of Indian Industry in communicating information about HIV/AIDS to its members, in part with multinational support. Profile 5 examines the role of the Thailand Business Coalition on AIDS in helping companies protect their employees.

Multinational companies can significantly help this process in high-risk countries by sharing their experience from their home locations and from other countries in a region. There is little evidence of this happening to date. The Confederation of Indian Industry did receive financial support from the UK’s United Distillers company to help create its “AIDS in the Workplace” training package (see Profile 4). However, most multinational companies are unwilling for a number of reasons to take a lead, even within business circles (see Page 10, “Barriers to Corporate Action”).

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**FIGURE 7 Levels of corporate activity on HIV/AIDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of company</th>
<th>Examples of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERNATIONAL</strong></td>
<td>Collaborating with UNAIDS/WHO to spread HIV/AIDS awareness across national boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATIONAL</strong></td>
<td>Supporting national HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns with public and customers; developing national policy for the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL</strong></td>
<td>Implementing workplace programmes and extending them to community and suppliers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: David Logan

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**TABLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Company</th>
<th>Examples of Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multinationals and major regional companies</td>
<td>Collaborating with UNAIDS/WHO to spread HIV/AIDS awareness across national boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous companies and local affiliates of multinationals</td>
<td>Supporting national HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns with public and customers; developing national policy for the workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small firms and operating units of national and international companies</td>
<td>Implementing workplace programmes and extending them to community and suppliers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: David Logan
B. Defending Special Business Interests

The need to protect employees affects all companies equally. However, another group of companies has special business interests in HIV/AIDS. For example, Glaxo Wellcome, Merck, Hoffman La Roche and other pharmaceutical companies have acted individually and collectively to develop policies on the issues and initiate action within the community (see Profile 8 on the work of Glaxo Wellcome).

The insurance industry also has a direct commercial interest in the progress of the disease, because its business is about risk assessment of the likelihood of a policyholder’s early death. Profile 6 on the insurance company CIMAS in Zimbabwe and Profile 7 on the insurance industry’s Center for Corporate Public Involvement in the US give examples of different approaches to the issues.

Additionally, companies in the food, hotel, tourism and travel industries have paid special attention to the problems that the emergence of HIV/AIDS might raise for their employees and customers.

2. CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROTECTION OF OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Although corporate initiatives to educate customers and suppliers and work with the local community have been much less frequent, they can have significant impact on the course of HIV/AIDS. These relationships can also benefit business in the long term.

A. Educating Customers

Some companies in the insurance and other industries have acted to protect their clients and thereby their direct commercial interests. Less directly, a number of alcohol drinks companies have been concerned about HIV/AIDS issues, because they are aware that risky sexual behaviours may take place in association with bars and beer halls in other countries around the world. They have promoted safe-sex messages and helped distribute condoms. Some companies with a strong presence in the entertainment and media industry in industrialised countries have been active in promoting customer and wider community awareness about HIV/AIDS - for example, by providing free publicity for public health messages.

In contrast, most consumer goods companies, such as those selling soft drinks, soap and personal hygiene items, have taken little action to help their customers, in the developing world in particular, understand the risks they face from the disease. Brand-name companies are often reluctant to associate themselves in a high-profile way with HIV/AIDS prevention, despite having some of the most engaging and widely disseminated customer education and product information programmes.
Such companies as Coca-Cola, Hindustan Lever, Colgate, Sony, Gillette and Avon are the world’s masters of communication, demand creation and the distribution of low-cost items for personal use. It is precisely these skills that are needed to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. Hindustan Lever, for example, has an excellent reputation for its rural education programme in India, which includes work on personal hygiene. Likewise, after the collapse of communism in Romania, Colgate supported initiatives in schools on personal and dental hygiene.

In the developing world, customers for these and many other products face death from HIV/AIDS, because they have not yet heard or understood messages about how to protect themselves. In some areas of east Africa, for example, up to 40% of women attending antenatal clinics are now diagnosed as HIV-positive. These same women shop for heavily promoted brand-name products in local markets and stores. Local and international businesses that benefit from their custom need to take a much more active interest in their survival.

Workers in the transport industry are another vulnerable group. Multinational and national oil companies need to see the connection between the spread of the disease and their customers. Truckers using oil-company garages and truck stops are one of the main vectors for spreading the disease. Some of them use the services of commercial sex workers at the truck stops, and then pass the disease on to their wives and local communities. Oil and automotive companies often have good records in road safety promotion, and this concern for preventive education measures on the road needs to be applied to the spread of HIV/AIDS at rest and refuelling stops.

Market-based initiatives are vital in not only the developing world. Profile 9 describes United Distillers’ highly successful cause-related marketing initiative on HIV/AIDS in the United States. Profile 10 looks at how Levi Strauss and Co. cooperated in the adaptation of a mainstream advertisement for HIV/AIDS prevention in Scotland. Other companies involve customers in HIV/AIDS activities at the point of sale (see Page 7, “Acting Philanthropically”).

Not only do mass-marketing companies have extraordinary communications capacities that can help get out the message about HIV/AIDS, but they also command extremely effective distribution systems. Coca-Cola can get its products into small villages that public health officials find extraordinarily difficult to service. The company played a leading role in setting up the small-kiosk retail system that emerged after the collapse of communism in Romania; more than 25,000 kiosks now sell its products. In India, Hindustan Lever is able to distribute its products to more 300,000 retailers. These and other such channels could be used for condom distribution in the developing world.

B. Educating Suppliers

These “forward” linkages that companies have to the mass consumer market are vital. However, they also have “backward” linkages to large supplier chains. Again, there is little evidence of companies expanding their employee education and other programmes to their suppliers. While companies regularly communicate with suppliers about quality and other business issues, they rarely raise social issues like HIV/AIDS, which are seen as the suppliers’ responsibility.

Companies producing manufactured parts for assembly, contract workers such as truck drivers, cleaners and security guards working for small firms are examples of suppliers. These people are very rarely included in an enlightened company’s HIV/AIDS programme, in part because no direct financial benefit accrues to the company. Supplier employees are not covered by the major company’s healthcare programme; nor would the company want them to be.

The benefits to suppliers of HIV/AIDS work are potentially immense, however. Table 2 estimates the size of supplier networks based on the probability that every direct job in auto manufacturing requires approximately three supplier jobs. When the families of direct and supplier workforces are included, some large companies have populations dependent on them for their livelihood that are much greater than the populations of many nation states. Companies can begin to work on HIV/AIDS with their suppliers in the same way that they have taken on quality and environmental issues. HIV/AIDS work does not imply the acceptance of wider responsibilities, but rather, support for the success of a valued business partner. Profile 11 discusses The Body Shop’s support of two of its suppliers in India and Nepal.

Company relationships with suppliers are especially important in the developing world. Access to HIV/AIDS information and protective condoms is restricted, and small businesses often look to their
C. Working in the Local Community

Some companies have realised that their ability to protect their employees is limited if education and outreach efforts are not extended to the communities close to their facilities. The disease is easily passed from the wider community to employees and their families. Chevron has accepted these arguments and has had a sustained involvement in a range of community initiatives to confront HIV/AIDS in San Francisco (see Profile 13). Similarly, it has distributed disposable syringes in Angola to help reduce the spread of HIV through medical injections in communities close to its production and refining facilities.

Companies are also aware that the disease can greatly add to the bill for public services, which may lead to an increase in taxes and further costs. It can also be detrimental to the reputation of the community as a good place to live and do business. In localities of importance to companies where the risk of infection is high, companies have engaged in “social investment” programmes to confront the disease. In social investment, companies make a long-term commitment to work on the issues and are looking to see a real “return” to both the community and the business, in terms of a reduced employee infection rate and thereby lower healthcare and other costs. In New York and San Francisco, in Nairobi and Johannesburg, and in Bangkok and Bombay, companies have provided sustained funding, products, technical assistance and other contributions to help fight the disease, most often in partnership with the public sector and NGOs. Profile 8 discusses how the Anglo American Corporation in South Africa has approached the issue of working with the communities around its mines.

The benefits to the business of social investment initiatives are less immediate and somewhat less measurable than actions designed to protect employees; nevertheless, they can be substantial. Sustained involvement not only helps reduce the risk to employees, but also promotes a healthy community, which in turn can enhance the company’s reputation for social responsibility with public officials, local customers and other community members.
3. ACTING PHILANTHROPICALLY

Some companies around the world have extended their work with local community stakeholders to support a variety of initiatives in the larger society. Many have made philanthropic gifts to HIV/AIDS education and care projects. While these actions might be of indirect benefit to the business, they are not aimed at protecting the company’s bottom-line profits. Neither are they the same as investing in long-term activities to protect customers, suppliers and local communities near to company facilities, although the latter category of activity is often considered to be similar to philanthropy.

Philanthropic gifts can provide significant benefit to poor and socially disenfranchised populations such as street children. These people can barely afford a soft drink and will probably never be employed by a local business, let alone a multinational. There is little “return” to the business, except in terms of a reputation for good corporate citizenship. In addition, these gifts give practical and moral support to those working on the disease first-hand.

Most philanthropic grants tend to be “one-off” gifts not tied to measurable goals in which the company has an interest. This apparent limitation can be an advantage in certain circumstances. For example, companies may act in a “disinterested” way to help unpopular causes and marginalized groups, because they perceive some actions to be for the good of the whole community.

The contribution that corporate philanthropy makes to fighting HIV/AIDS is hard to assess precisely. For the developing world in 1990, the New York-based Funders Concerned About AIDS calculated the corporate contribution at about US$2.4 million, or 2% of the total effort. The figure gives an estimate only of corporate cash giving and the in-kind gifts of materials and labour that companies might offer to non-profits and other agencies, as exact amounts are difficult to calculate. It does not include funds companies might raise for HIV/AIDS causes in association with their employees and customers.

Many multinational companies already have extensive community programmes. For example, Table 3 shows that in 1995, the seven largest global oil companies report donating a total of US$222 million in cash to community causes around the world – a minimum of US$35 million, or 16%, of it dedicated to medical and humanitarian causes including some AIDS work. Multinational pharmaceutical companies similarly have extensive international giving programmes, many with support for HIV/AIDS initiatives. Companies indigenous to the developing world also participate in the wider society. For example, Tata Steel in India has acted to stem the spread of the disease not only in the local community through social investment, but also in more distant villages through purely philanthropic initiatives.

### TABLE 3 Size of global business and types of community spending of top seven multinational oil companies, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company ranked by revenue size</th>
<th>Business indicators*</th>
<th>Community spending</th>
<th>Priority programmes by category as % of spend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total revenues ($ millions)</td>
<td>Profits after tax ($ millions)</td>
<td>Direct employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Exxon</td>
<td>$110,009</td>
<td>$6,470</td>
<td>82,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Shell</td>
<td>109,833</td>
<td>6,904</td>
<td>104,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mobil</td>
<td>66,724</td>
<td>2,376</td>
<td>50,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. BP</td>
<td>56,981</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>56,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ELF</td>
<td>43,618</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>85,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Texaco</td>
<td>36,787</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>28,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Chevron</td>
<td>32,094</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>43,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$456,046</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20,066</strong></td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* To obtain consistency across currencies, figures were taken from Fortune magazine, July 1996. In Fortune, profits are shown after taxes and extraordinary charges, not before taxes, the usual way to calculate charitable giving. All figures in US dollars

**Average

SOURCE: David Logan. Corporate statistics from Fortune magazine, July 1994
The range of philanthropic activities on HIV/AIDS includes: cash grants and donations; sponsorship; point-of-sale activity; matched giving; in-kind giving; employee volunteers and loaned executives.

**A. Cash Grants and Donations**
Many companies have responded to the epidemic by giving donations and grants, some of them substantial, to HIV/AIDS organisations. For example, Chevron donates about US$200,000 a year in response to appeals for help from HIV/AIDS non-profits in the US (see Profile 13). Some companies have traditionally had a bar on giving to “single disease” campaigns of all kinds, but JP Morgan, the New York bank, exempted HIV/AIDS from this policy because of the need to stem the spread of the disease in the city. It now regularly supports local programmes from its philanthropic budgets. Levi Strauss and Co., is unusual for a US company, having made a grant of US$16,000 to help the Brazilian Centro de Controle Investigacao Immunologica launch an AIDS awareness programme in the slums of Sao Paulo, where 60% of the country’s cases are concentrated. Even a modest grant by US standards can have a significant impact in a developing country like Brazil, and the lack of international corporate grantmaking on HIV/AIDS issues is striking.

**B. Sponsorship**
Companies have clear marketing strategies and rarely build HIV/AIDS support into them, as United Distillers has done with Tanqueray Gin (see Profile 9). However, many will sponsor AIDS events and give their name as a supporter, thereby gaining some name recognition. Such support often comes from commercial budgets. While increased sales cannot usually be directly linked to this type of support, commercial managers treat such opportunities as worthwhile “sponsorships” because of the name recognition that can result.

**C. Point-of-Sale Activity**
Retailing offers another opportunity to raise money for HIV/AIDS causes. The Pilot Pen Corporation of America not only donates a small proportion of the revenue from the sale of each pen to AIDS research, but also includes AIDS awareness messages in its promotional literature and advertising. The Clairol Company has donated a proportion of sales revenue from certain products to HIV/AIDS causes, and additionally promoted the sale of AIDS awareness ribbons and T-shirts in hairdressing salons. The company has so far raised more than US$300,000 in this way. UK-based The Body Shop has sold ribbons in its shops and placed collecting tins at cash registers to facilitate customers’ donations to HIV/AIDS causes. Also in the UK, a new telephone company seeking to break into the market, ACC Long Distance UK, set up an incentive system for subscribers in which it paid 2% of national and 6% of international revenue to the Terrence Higgins Trust, a national AIDS agency.

**D. Matched Giving**
In the US, companies increasingly match the charitable gifts and fundraising efforts of their employees. Dayton Hudson in Minneapolis has matched both its employees and community members’ fundraising dollar for dollar in the city’s annual AIDS Walk, contributing nearly US$230,000 to various HIV/AIDS causes in this way in one year.

**E. In-Kind Giving**
Companies can give much more than money to HIV/AIDS programmes. For instance, the Avon Company printed HIV/AIDS information on some of its cosmetics packaging. Thai banks put similar information on account receipts from automatic teller machines. Apple Computers have donated close to US$1 million’s worth of computer equipment to HIV/AIDS agencies in the US. Companies can also donate used equipment and products like food.

The Polaroid company offers its in-house employee AIDS awareness programmes to local community groups, schools and churches, and additionally provides its own literature for use as well. In Brazil, several companies including Coca-Cola, Souza Cruz, Banco Itau and the Brazil Federation of Banks donated their advertising agencies’ time to help the national HIV/STD Control Programme develop its countrywide mass-media campaign.

This type of “non-cash” support can be invaluable to AIDS causes. It may also cost the company very little in time and effort.
The cases cited above show how companies can benefit local and national HIV/AIDS agencies and projects. Some leading international companies have helped international agencies concerned with HIV/AIDS also. For example:

- IBM has donated US$1.5 million’s worth of equipment, software and support service to the WHO’s Global Programme on AIDS, to speed the agency’s information gathering and communication between headquarters, regional offices and other agencies around the world.
- The Digital Equipment Corporation has also supported WHO with a donation of equipment worth US$600,000 to help with information collection and management.
- AT&T, the US long-distance phone company with an excellent record of local support for HIV/AIDS causes, has also supported a global networking initiative among AIDS research centres worldwide, providing equipment and videoconferencing capacity to improve the centres’ communication. The company has donated US$1.5 million in cash and in-kind help.

F. Employee Volunteers

When company employees are interested in helping with HIV/AIDS causes, support from the business can be vital. In Zimbabwe and Ghana, employees trained by the company as peer counsellors for fellow workers have taken their skills out to the surrounding community and worked in the markets and beer halls to alert their fellow citizens to the threat of the disease. Companies such as Rio Tinto in Zimbabwe (see Profile 1) have provided literature and access to condom distribution programmes to support their work. The trained employees of the Takaradi Port Authority in Ghana have been given time by management to help educate the truckers who drop off and pick up loads at the port.

In the US and increasingly in Europe, many employees are going as volunteers to work in local AIDS projects. Senior executives are also becoming involved. Lee Smith, the former president of Levi Strauss International, became chair of the National Leadership Coalition on AIDS board of directors, and Stephen Herbitz, an executive vice-president of Seagrams, served as chair and board member of the AIDS Action Council in Washington, D.C.

G. Loaned Executives

When corporate skills are needed in the fight against HIV/AIDS, a rare but valuable way is for the company to lend an executive to a public- or non-profit-sector initiative. In the US, Chase Manhattan Bank loaned a senior executive to the National AIDS Network. In these cases, the company meets the full salary and benefits costs of the executive while he or she works on HIV/AIDS issues.

4. ADOPTING A LEADERSHIP ROLE

Going beyond a concern for employees and responding to appeals for support from the community, a few international companies, such as Levi Strauss and Co. in the US and The Body Shop in Britain, have taken a high-profile and principled stance to help fight the disease on a worldwide basis (see Profiles 10 and 11). They seek to involve all aspects of the business and take various initiatives with employees, customers and communities around the world. Both Levi Strauss and Co. and The Body Shop have Chief Executives who have identified HIV/AIDS as a critical global issue. Their leadership has encouraged innovative responses worldwide. Other such companies exist in national and regional markets – for example, South Africa’s Anglo American Corporation (see Profile 12) – and their early and comprehensive responses to the threat have helped set standards for action by local and international companies. This group of companies has adapted to the threat that HIV/AIDS poses to their relationships with all stakeholders, not just employees. They are taking their knowledge of HIV/AIDS into a wider range of business contacts and helping their customers, suppliers and local communities to face the disease. Importantly, their efforts demonstrate how companies can expand action beyond the workplace to a broader group of stakeholders.

Generally speaking, the collaboration between business and the public and non-profit sectors on the HIV/AIDS issue has been valuable, though limited and uneven. The next section looks further at the part that companies can play to turn the tide in the fight against HIV/AIDS and discusses the formation of partnerships in more detail.

1 “Business Response to AIDS, BATA Program”, Centers for Disease Control, July 1996
Business: The New Partner in Stopping the Spread of HIV/AIDS

To date, and with a few specific exceptions such as pharmaceutical companies like Glaxo Wellcome, public health authorities and non-profit organisations have taken the leadership role in the work on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. However, these two sectors need support to make their efforts more effective. A new partnership is needed that deploys business resources and skills in the wider battle against the disease. The organisational and communications skills of business complement the medical resources and skills of the other sectors. By working together in partnership, the three sectors can produce a much greater global impact than if they work in isolation.

This section examines the background to the potential corporate contribution in different geographical contexts and identifies the key motivators for action by business, as well as the resources that can be employed in partnership. Specifically, it looks at:

1. The challenges of wider corporate action
2. A businesslike approach to action
3. Partnership in action.

1. THE CHALLENGES OF WIDER CORPORATE ACTION
Taking a more active role in HIV/AIDS work is not necessarily an easy route for a company to embark on, for a number of reasons. Barriers do exist, and need to be addressed. However, the benefits of becoming more involved are likely to outweigh the barriers, particularly through the development of cross-sector partnerships.

A. Barriers to Corporate Action
Until now, the corporate response to HIV/AIDS has been, and continues to be, a limited and largely defensive one. With a few exceptions, the business community generally around the world has not sought a leadership role in confronting the epidemic; it has primarily concentrated on protecting its employees, with some companies making philanthropic contributions to the wider society. Substantive reasons why business has been somewhat cautious include:

- Business people still lack information on the issues surrounding the disease. The business of business is business, not HIV/AIDS, and few in the business community have focused on the issue in depth, in part because they may well feel relatively safe from the threat. As a result, they have tended not to consider the broader role they could play in halting the disease.

- HIV/AIDS is a threatening disease that entails facing unpleasant realities in respect of suffering and death. It is largely transmitted by sexual intercourse and such socially unacceptable practices as needle sharing among drug users. Many in society generally, and in the business community specifically, may instinctively disapprove of those who contract the disease. In addition, businesses can be uneasy about associating their business or brand name with a potentially controversial social issue.

- In some countries, the leadership of the public and non-profit sectors has not necessarily created a climate of public opinion that encourages corporate involvement. Such circumstances make it difficult for a company to associate its name with a campaign on HIV/AIDS. Multinationals can feel especially vulnerable to such concerns, because some areas of the world still perceive HIV/AIDS as a “foreign” disease and may view foreign companies with suspicion.
THE BUSINESS RESPONSE TO HIV/AIDS: Innovation and Partnership

- Business is involved in other social issues, and HIV/AIDS work is competing with many good causes for corporate community involvement. In the developing world, other health issues such as child survival pursue the same corporate support. Companies are also unfamiliar with how to rate the relative importance of HIV/AIDS to social development generally.

- Finally, HIV/AIDS can be contained by good education and preventive measures; the key performance indicator is zero new cases. Such preventive work is often hard to measure and give companies appropriate credit for. The issue does not lend itself to easily visible community outcomes, such as new books for schools and clinic facilities.

These concerns are genuine and need to be recognised and then managed. A particularly valuable approach is for business to form partnerships with the public and non-profit sectors. Such partnerships maximise the application of a society's resources to fight the disease while reducing the risks of adverse publicity for all the participants. The corporate community has enormous communications and other resources that can quietly support the work on HIV/AIDS, if not lead it. Even if the public and non-profit sectors had more resources, they lack the critical skills and communications channels vital to delivering the necessary messages that will save millions of lives, especially in the developing world and emerging economies. Companies that have joined forces to work on the issues have also discovered the benefits of partnership.

B. Benefits of Corporate Action

Companies cannot be expected to do everything in the fight against HIV/AIDS. They will primarily be motivated to engage in activities that are close to, and grow out of, the identity of the business. HIV/AIDS activities will be more attractive to a company if they benefit the business. Most managers need to be able to demonstrate that their HIV/AIDS work also serves the interests of the company. Partnerships for action with the other sectors will emphasise activities that offer mutual benefit.

A company therefore has to assess the risks of HIV/AIDS to the business, its stakeholders and the wider society where it trades – worldwide if it is a multinational. It then needs to:

1. Ensure it has policies in place to help protect and provide for employees and, where appropriate, other vital commercial interests, as is the case with insurance companies.

2. Devise a strategy for supporting initiatives that help protect other key stakeholder groups – namely, customers, suppliers and local communities where facilities are based.

3. Consider philanthropic support for initiatives in the wider society that generally combat the disease and help marginalised communities.

4. Decide if it is able to, and is willing to, take a greater leadership role in HIV/AIDS work nationally, regionally or internationally.

Working with stakeholders other than employees does bring benefits to the company, but they are likely to be less direct than saving employees' lives and reducing healthcare costs. These initiatives can be considered an "investment", however, because they do have identifiable "returns" or benefits. They are more in line with business interests than philanthropic gifts that companies make to help fight the disease among socially disadvantaged groups. Steady and sustained commitment by companies to invest in action with customers, suppliers and their families, as well as local communities near major facilities, can support the long-term success of the business.

Business benefits can include:

- Building a relationship with customers who will appreciate a company's concern for their health and that of their families.

- Helping valued suppliers reduce their healthcare costs and even stay in business.

- Assisting communities where the business is based to stay healthy and avoid increased public costs. Such actions can contribute to a reputation as a good neighbour and corporate citizen, which may be of value when a business is looking to develop and protect its operations locally.

Companies tend to work outward from their commercial interests to wider, more philanthropic initiatives. These latter contributions are immensely valuable and help build the reputation of the business, even if they do not contribute to the bottom line as directly as do the more commercially based initiatives.
Figure 9 summarises the levels of motivation for corporate action. Many companies are active in protecting their direct commercial interests, and some have offered philanthropic support to the wider society. The development of targeted initiatives to protect customers, suppliers and key local communities, particularly in the developing world, is the new challenge.

**FIGURE 9 Categories of corporate actions on HIV/AIDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of action</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTING PHILANTHROPICALLY</td>
<td>Responding to requests for support from public agencies and NGOs doing HIV/AIDS work in the wider community. While philanthropy comes from a sense of social responsibility, it enhances the reputation of the business as a good corporate citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRIBUTING TO PROTECTION OF OTHER STAKEHOLDERS</td>
<td>Addressing the needs and interests of key stakeholders, particularly customers, suppliers and local communities. These are relationships in which the business has long-term interests and from which it expects long-term benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAFEGUARDING DIRECT COMMERCIAL INTERESTS</td>
<td>Protecting employees and their families threatened by the epidemic. All businesses need to take such actions. Some businesses, such as insurance and pharmaceutical companies, also have commercial interests in fighting HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: David Logan

2. A BUSINESSLIKE APPROACH TO ACTION

Business has a critical role to play in the realm of public education to prevent the spread of HIV, particularly in the developing world and emerging economies where governments are weak and lacking in resources. As Table 2 showed (see Page 6), some companies have annual revenues larger than the GDP (gross domestic product) of many countries. They are truly global organisations with a reach into almost all countries. Most importantly, they are the world’s great organisers, problems solvers and communicators, employing some of the best-educated, most creative, multilingual, multicultural people. Their contribution will add much greater power to the efforts to stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic in its tracks.

Once a company decides to take a more active role in HIV/AIDS education and prevention, it needs to assess its resources and decide how to measure the success of its work. Multinational corporations have a particular contribution to make.

A. The Diversity of Corporate Resources

In the work to contain the spread of HIV/AIDS, companies have three main types of resources – material assets (including financial), specialised skills and networks of contacts – that can support the work of the public and non-profit sectors. Figure 10 gives examples of the three resource types.

Figure 10 suggests also that different parts of a business such as marketing and manufacturing play different potential roles. Corporate headquarters is critical in setting overall policy, while manufacturing facilities are key in employee, supplier and local community initiatives. Marketing and staff functions, such as public affairs, can contribute to work with customers and the general public, as well as with local and national leaders.
B. Measures of Success

Corporate culture is performance driven. Unless companies can see a clear, measurable impact, or "output", from the inputs of resources they are asked to make, they will be reluctant to be involved in the work on HIV/AIDS. Most corporate initiatives on HIV/AIDS must have clear goals and performance indicators for success, to help ensure companies use their resources well. Goals include "social impact" and various forms of "business benefit" as well. Areas of mutual benefit to the business and society will receive most corporate attention.

The closer the threat of HIV/AIDS is to the commercial interests of the business, the more clearly measurable the business benefits will tend to be. In contrast, the more company activity moves through stakeholder-related initiatives to pure philanthropy, the less clearly measurable the business benefits will be, particularly if a company is practising its philanthropy in a low-key way and not seeking publicity for its gifts.

In some philanthropic activity, the benefit to the business may well be low, while the benefit to society is substantial. That situation does not automatically disqualify an initiative from corporate support. Some managers are motivated to make a contribution precisely because a small amount of effort on their part can achieve significant social benefit. Their involvement is made even easier if they can use "non-cash" resources that are not a direct charge to the bottom line. For example, a marketing department can advise public health officials how to position preventive healthcare messages so that the public is more likely to take notice. Low- or "no"-cost initiatives to get HIV/AIDS campaigns under way are valuable elements of partnerships between business and the public and non-profit sectors.

The matrix in Figure 11 briefly summarises example activities and indicates how corporate actions (the inputs) lead to both social impact and business benefits (the outputs). It does not detail the costs of working in partnership with the other two sectors, but they should not be high. In addition, the public and non-profit sectors are often ready to work for no charge with business, and to help protect its employees. For example, the non-profit Ghana Social Marketing Foundation subsidises its HIV/AIDS education work with company employees in commercial premises. The company only has to give its employees time off work to attend the training sessions while the foundation conducts the educational work for free.

In the "investment in stakeholders" category, public sector and non-profit agencies are already picking up substantial costs in working with customers, suppliers and local communities. The corporate contribution may be virtually nil in cash terms, but be invaluable in other ways - for example, the use of corporate communications channels such as newspapers for employees and promotional leaflets for customers, or access to service station forecourts for education meetings with customers. Employee volunteers, often trained by their company, can make excellent peer counsellors in the community.
A number of corporate chief executives have understood that these small, low-cost initiatives on HIV/AIDS education are an investment of real value. As MacAllister Booth, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Polaroid Corporation, says: “At Polaroid, we initiated a comprehensive AIDS education and prevention plan in 1987, and made it company policy that AIDS/HIV will be treated like any other long-term, life-threatening disease. Employees with AIDS are entitled to the full range of benefits, to work accommodations, and to continued employment.

“Our plan includes AIDS education for all employees, including supervisors and managers, and for members of employee families. Many of our employees have children who are teenagers or young adults – two groups gravely at risk. They are the work force of tomorrow – Polaroid’s future employees and America’s future employees.

“Polaroid has also turned out philanthropic efforts to support AIDS service organisations. And hundreds of Polaroid employees have given their time to such groups with the assistance of our volunteer placement service. These policies benefit everyone...

“...What does it cost to run a programme like this? A better question might be: What does it cost not to run such a programme? Our entire effort at Polaroid, which is quite extensive, is one-fifth the cost of treating a single case of AIDS.

“As leaders, we must persuade the ablest people in our communities, our nation, and our world to take responsibility for confronting and defeating this public health crisis. Our goal must be clear and unambiguous: we must rid the world of AIDS.”

---

**FIGURE 11 Summary of scope and impact of corporate HIV/AIDS/STD work**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY OF ACTIVITY</th>
<th>EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITY</th>
<th>COMPANY INPUTS</th>
<th>OUTPUTS Business benefit</th>
<th>Social impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protecting commercial interests</td>
<td>Employee education on HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Costs of training and possibly condom distribution in developing countries, and treatment of STDs in company clinics</td>
<td>• Reduced costs of healthcare, and replacement and training of new employees • Employee appreciation</td>
<td>Employees and their families protected from HIV/AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to protection of other stakeholders</td>
<td>Cause-related marketing sponsorship of events or NGOs</td>
<td>Costs of grants to charity and event publicity</td>
<td>• Greater brand recognition among customers and public • Greater brand loyalty from customers • Increased sales</td>
<td>• Increased public awareness of issues • Funds raised for good causes • New NGO members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Customers</td>
<td>Training of human resource and other supplier managers in managing the risk of HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Time to train managers/doctors or grants to NGOs to do the work</td>
<td>• Reduced supplier costs/efficiencies • Strengthened business relationships</td>
<td>Extensive network of supplier workers and families contacted - eg. truck drivers at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Suppliers</td>
<td>Support for local community-based HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and work to educate local people</td>
<td>Small share of cash costs with public sector/NGOs and distribution of messages through company volunteers</td>
<td>• Reduced health risk to employees and their families • Better community to live and work in • Lower taxes • Enhanced reputation</td>
<td>Wider circle of individuals and families given advice in communities near company facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Local communities</td>
<td>Support for NGO work with marginalised groups such as IV drug users and commercial sex workers</td>
<td>Small cash and equipment grants</td>
<td>• Reputation for caring • Appreciation from national and local opinion formers</td>
<td>• High-risk marginalised groups given greater attention and assistance in reducing spread of HIV • Reduced risk to general community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** David Logan
C. The Special Role of Multinational Companies

Some companies are global businesses, while others in specific regions such as Asia are international. Fortune magazine’s “Global 500” listing in 1996 indicated the leadership of the world’s corporate community to be based in Europe, the US and Japan, as Figure 12 shows. These multinational companies may have knowledge of the disease in many localities and cultures, and have a unique opportunity to help individual countries and communities face up to the global challenge of HIV/AIDS.

Multinational companies can help transfer knowledge and good practice from one locality to another extremely rapidly. For example, an oil company operating in such countries as Vietnam or Papua New Guinea, where HIV/AIDS is at an early stage of development, can work with health officials and NGOs to monitor risk and also share experience and best practice from other regions where the company operates. Public-health and NGO staff find it hard to access such international experience and can waste valuable time reinventing the wheel locally. Companies can help them move rapidly up the learning curve and adapt best practice to local conditions.

So what have multinational companies done to share their knowledge of HIV/AIDS? Chevron and Levi Strauss and Co. are headquartered in San Francisco, which experienced the initial impact of the disease in the early 1980s. Both companies have developed a worldwide policy for company employee protection and community action on HIV/AIDS (see Profile 14 on Levi Strauss and Co.). They help to set standards for good practice in countries and communities where the disease is new and much less well understood. Likewise, UK-based United Distillers was the main financial backer for the Confederation of Indian Industry’s “Programme on Prevention and Care of HIV/AIDS” policy development seminar and training materials for use by companies throughout the country (see Profile 4). The Body Shop moved quickly to help two leading suppliers in Nepal and southern India develop local HIV/AIDS awareness programmes among the truckers who were spreading the disease from ports and larger cities to their families and local communities (see Profile 11).

FIGURE 13 Seven questions for multinationals on HIV/AIDS policy and programming

1. Do you know what HIV/AIDS levels and risks are in other countries and how they correlate with the distribution of your employees, assets and sales?
2. Is your policy for employees in the home country equal to:
   a) local best practice?
   b) international best practice?
3. Have you ensured that country managers apply local best practice, and international best practice where applicable, in respect of HIV/AIDS and employees?
4. Is there an HIV/AIDS coordinator at corporate headquarters to facilitate the networking of information on a worldwide basis, for both employee needs and wider community-based activities?
5. Does the company encourage investment in customers, suppliers and community-based partnership activities around the world with equal concern?
6. Does the company empower/encourage country managers to take the initiative and make a wider philanthropic contribution to HIV/AIDS work?
7. Does management regularly review international HIV/AIDS issues and report actions to employees and the wider community?

SOURCE: David Logan
Unfortunately, this degree of vision and foresight is uncommon, and most multinationals leave their country managers to deal with the issue as it arises. Some support might be available from the corporate centre on employment policy issues, but even that is not guaranteed. The idea of treating the disease as a global threat requiring a coordinated global response by all aspects of the business - corporate headquarters, manufacturing and marketing - is a long way from being generally accepted.

In addition, little is known about how Japanese and Korean multinationals are responding to the epidemic. Both are based in currently low-infection countries, making it likely that their managements will place less importance on the disease. In addition, multinationals from these countries are latecomers to the internationalisation of their production facilities. They have grown primarily by exporting and are not major investors in many countries overseas, particularly in the developing world. The pattern is changing, however, with Japanese companies investing massively in China and especially Southeast Asia where, along with Korean companies, they face a massive surge in the spread of the disease.

An increased global approach to HIV/AIDS by multinational companies could result with remarkably little effort, and to the advantage of everyone. Figure 13 lists seven questions for multinationals to consider in evaluating whether their HIV/AIDS policy and practice, if indeed they have established these, could become more comprehensive and far-reaching.

3. PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

Most line managers in business do not necessarily know much about HIV/AIDS, but if they work for large multinationals or local companies, they will have full-time medical staff at headquarters and in major operations such as mines and plantations. If companies lack these resources, managers can buy in the expertise to protect its employees and their families against the threat of the disease.

However, this option is not available for the large majority of medium-sized and small companies, especially in the developing world. Furthermore, if large companies want to invest in the wellbeing of their customers, suppliers and communities, and also support HIV/AIDS work in the wider community, they need to work in partnership with the public and non-profit/NGO sectors. Partnership permits the partners to:

A. Pool complementary resources, to ensure that more effective campaigns can be mounted both within and outside the business

B. Share the risks of action.

A. Pooling Complementary Resources

Corporate motives for action and special resources that companies can deploy in community-based initiatives to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS need to be effectively blended with the distinctive contributions of the other two sectors – not always an easy task.

i. The public sector. Among this sector’s potential strengths is its overview of local and national trends. Its senior officials are often linked into international agencies, such as the World Bank and UNAIDS, which can provide a view of global trends. Such information is vital for risk analysis.

Along with private healthcare providers, the public sector provides care for the infected and sets the legal framework in such areas as blood screening and the treatment in the workplace of those with HIV/AIDS. It may run its own, frequently countrywide HIV/STD prevention programmes, which may be available to companies, and may also have some capacity for large-scale HIV/AIDS monitoring and evaluation.

The Government of Argentina, for example, has recently borrowed US$15 million from the World Bank, matching US$15 million of its own money, to expand its HIV/AIDS work. About 42% of the US$30 million will be spent on mass communications about the issues, including school-based programmes, while 24% is targeted for prevention programmes with high-risk groups, such as drug users, commercial sex workers, truck drivers, soldiers and prisoners. Some 22% will go on diagnosis and treatment and 6% on monitoring evaluation and research, with the rest (about 6%) on administration. Companies could potentially play an important role in mass communication preventive education work, as well as help with the monitoring and evaluation.
ii. Not-for-profits/NGOs. In terms of cash resources and full-time employees, not-for-profit organisations or NGOs are smaller than their public- and private-sector counterparts. However, they are public-interest organisations with considerable social and political influence, if not power. They have the credibility that comes from working closely with those most affected by the epidemic. NGOs often best understand the conditions and social attitudes that lead to the spread of the disease, and in many parts of the world, have led the campaign to draw public attention to HIV/AIDS issues in the community and the workplace. They also play a part in providing services and care to people with HIV/AIDS or at risk of acquiring the disease.

In the US, for example, non-profits have been influential in shaping the drug approval policy of the Federal Drug Administration. In India, NGOs – not government officials or truck-stop owners – have researched and publicised the connection between commercial sex workers and the spread of HIV at truck stops. In Cameroon, Population Services International, an international NGO, has led the movement to convince commercial sex workers of the need to ensure their clients use condoms. CARE, the US-based NGO, has acted as a subcontractor to both the Thailand Government and the private company American International Assurances, to get the message across in the many factories where employees covered by private health insurance are working (see PROFILE 15 for a discussion of the project).

Because NGOs are often at the leading edge of HIV/AIDS issues, which can be controversial, they may be subject to criticism and suspicion from both government and business. In Malaysia, the prime minister's daughter, Marina Mahathir, is president of the Malaysian AIDS Council, an NGO. When asked by Asiaweek magazine what was the most frustrating aspect of working for an NGO, she said: "I think bureaucracy is the most frustrating thing. The other thing is the really, really negative attitude towards NGOs... this idea that NGOs are only out to smear the image of the country. I think this is unjust and uncalled for. NGOs are basically doing what they are doing because they love the country." 2

The three sectors have very different needs and interests, and bring different skills and resources to the table. Also, conditions vary widely from country to country, and there can be no hard and fast rules on how partnerships should be initiated, structured and operated. Companies may take the lead, but so might government or NGOs.

The Ghana Social Marketing Foundation, an NGO, took the initiative to contact the Ghana Employers Association and ask to be invited to its annual conference, to speak on the development of HIV/AIDS and its effects on the workforce. It is to the credit of the association that it acceded to the request. The resulting partnership with association member companies has paved the way for a campaign of HIV/AIDS education and condom distribution in the mines, factories and plantations of Ghana. The foundation provides services to companies and also has their support in a range of wider community initiatives.

B. Sharing Risks

Some companies are willing and able to associate their brand with raising funds for HIV/AIDS causes. Schieffelin and Somerset, a United Distillers subsidiary, linked Tanqueray Gin with financial backing for the California AIDS Ride (see Profile 9). Levi Strauss and Co. donated the use of a company advertisement customised to help with an HIV/AIDS awareness campaign in Scotland (see Profile 10).

Such action is unusual, however, especially in many parts of the developing world, where there is still a lot of public ambivalence about how to tackle the issues and how to treat the infected at work and in society. In these circumstances, most companies will want to make a low-profile contribution. A partnership with the public sector can reassure a company that work on HIV/AIDS issues has the support of a country's political leadership. While NGOs are willing to adopt a higher profile in tackling difficult issues, and like government officials, will deal with controversy as it arises, companies can remain in the background if they wish. On the other side of the coin, business support gives added credibility to public- and NGO-sector campaigns, providing third-party endorsement of the seriousness of the issues and the efforts of the other sectors to confront it.

There is no single answer to the many questions involved in setting up a particular working partnership on HIV/AIDS. Circumstances will vary from country to country and company to company. However, some general principles, set out in Figure 14 will help the success of local, national and international partnerships. Experience to date demonstrates that the approach works well and that the blending of resources and sharing of risks can benefit each of the partners, as well as the whole society.
1. **KEEP YOUR OWN IDENTITY.** Some activities business, government and NGOs can do together and some activities they cannot. Each party needs to stay true to its basic mission and find the common ground where collaboration is possible. A partnership is a negotiated relationship, based on clear ground rules and understanding, in which each contributor makes a distinctive contribution to the common goal. Business people should avoid viewing the partnership activity as “charity work”, where the normal business disciplines of managing inputs and outputs for measured improvement do not apply. Part of the business contribution is to help ensure that activity is managed in a businesslike way.

2. **TREAT YOUR PARTNERS WITH RESPECT.** Each partner has its own strengths and weaknesses in addressing HIV/AIDS issues (the NGO sector in particular is invariably underfunded and understaffed). Differences in perceived motives, size, resources, management style and programme priorities can be minimised by treating each partner with respect and being willing to listen and learn. The three sectors work together infrequently, and tend to speak different “languages” when addressing issues – this potential weakness in a partnership needs to be turned into a strength.

3. **LOOK FOR MUTUAL BENEFITS.** At times, companies may want to make a philanthropic gift to a worthwhile project and seek no other involvement in it. When projects are aimed at customers, suppliers and local communities, however, the companies need to be a more active participant while gaining some benefit from their endeavours. Likewise for the other partners – a partnership works best when it provides mutual benefits for all parties. While a business benefit is important to companies, a social impact is equally vital to all parties.

4. **BE TRANSPARENT.** Because business, government and NGOs rarely work together and may not share a common language, discussions should be open and transparent. Sharing information and reaching common understandings are particularly important when dealing with a socially sensitive issue such as HIV/AIDS. Some information under discussion may be confidential, but in a climate of trust, can be shared on a restricted basis. This will help a partnership achieve its goals more effectively while reinforcing the quality of the working relationship.

5. **BE PERFORMANCE DRIVEN.** Partnerships exist for a purpose, not for the sake of having a partnership. When that purpose is achieved, the partnership may well be dissolved. Defining the partnership’s goals – short-, medium- or long-term – and then deploying the resources of each partner to achieve them in a cost-efficient way are essential to a performance orientation. A key measure of the partnership’s success is the speed and effectiveness with which it reaches its goals, not how many meetings it holds.

6. **MEASURE SUCCESS.** If companies are to find partnerships to fight HIV/AIDS worthwhile and effective, they need to be able to demonstrate their success. Careful measurement of the performance of a partnership programme will help arguments for both private- and public-sector resources to flow to activities that are effectively combatting the disease. When deploying resources to protect stakeholders, companies must identify measures of success both for society and the business, put them in place, monitor performance and report the results to senior executives.

7. **IF IN TROUBLE, GET HELP.** Setting up partnerships between three or more parties can be difficult, with significant management time spent on the types of issues outlined above. Partnership members may be able to work through most of the issues unaided. Should they be unable to do so, particularly if a number of people from the different sectors are involved, an independent facilitator can help a lot. If necessary, bring one in and quickly.

Source: Adapted from *What is Partnership?*, by Ros Tennyson et al., The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, 1994.
A FINAL THOUGHT ON PARTNERSHIP

After observing that HIV/AIDS was likely to absorb up to 75% of the Republic of South Africa’s healthcare budget by 2005 and would therefore have a seriously detrimental effect on economic growth, President Nelson Mandela summed up the global situation on HIV/AIDS and the need for a partnership approach in facing the challenge as follows: “The severity of the economic impact of the disease is directly related to the fact that most infected persons are in the peak productive and reproductive age groups. AIDS kills those on whom society relies to grow the crops, work in the mines and factories, run the schools and hospitals and govern nations and countries, thus increasing the number of dependent persons. It creates new pockets of poverty when parents and breadwinners die and children leave school earlier to support the remaining children.

“The epidemic is fuelled by other evils which afflict our world – open conflict and low-intensity war cause population movements and social dislocation which promote the spread of infection. With cruel irony, even our achievements in improving communications networks and transportation systems, and the building of regional economic blocs, influence the attitudes and behaviour patterns of people in ways that sometimes accelerate the spread of the disease.

“These are well-known facts. If we recall them now, it is to underline the scale and the multifaceted nature of the problem. The health sector cannot meet this challenge on its own. Nor can government.

“All sectors and all spheres of society have to be involved as equal partners. We have to join hands to develop programmes and share information and research that will halt the spread of this disease and help develop support networks for those who are affected.”

The profiles show what can be done. Around the world there are some excellent examples of how companies and business organisations have successfully taken the challenge of HIV/AIDS to a wider arena, either in a low-key way or as part of a high-profile strategy.

No one sector can conquer this disease on its own. Without such partnerships, HIV/AIDS will continue to grow rapidly, in the developing world in particular. The success of future campaigns against the spread of HIV will depend on the three sectors working in partnership, leveraging each other’s resources to increase the total impact of preventive measures in an effective and businesslike manner. In this way, the global epidemic will be contained, and in the future potentially eradicated.

1 Speech by I MacAllister Booth, Chairman and CEO of the Polaroid Corporation, to the New England Corporate Consortium for AIDS Education. Adapted and published by Business and Society Review, No. 85, p 21, Spring 1993.


Examples of Company Actions on HIV/AIDS

The profiles represent diverse approaches and resources used by a wide range of companies in the industrialised and developing worlds. They are examples of responses that reflect the different motives for corporate action, which fall into four broad groupings:

- Safeguarding direct commercial interests
- Contributing to the protection of other stakeholders
- Acting philanthropically to help HIV/AIDS causes in the wider community
- Adopting a leadership role.

The first grouping has been expanded to show how companies can work together in protecting their commercial interests, and a fifth category, “Working in partnership with NGOs”, is included to indicate the potential for partnership with the public and non-profit/NGO sectors.

Where possible, the profiles show correlation between the impact of corporate resources and the benefits accrued to both business and society. Statistical information of this type in social investment and philanthropic initiatives is rare, however.

The sources for the profiles comprise the companies themselves, business organisations and non-profits working with business. Where appropriate, the sources are acknowledged.
# Examples of Company Actions on HIV/AIDS

## Safeguarding Direct Commercial Interests

**Employees**
- **Profile 1** Protecting Employees
  - Rio Tinto plc, Zimbabwe
- **Profile 2** Protecting Employees
  - Villares, Brazil
- **Profile 3** Protecting Employees
  - TELEPAR, Brazil

**Companies Working Together on Employee Protection**
- **Profile 4** Mobilising the Industrial Sector
  - Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
- **Profile 5** Mobilising the Industrial Sector
  - Thailand Business Coalition on AIDS

**Other Direct Interests**
- **Profile 6** Clarifying HIV/AIDS Policies in the Insurance Industry
  - Commercial and Industrial Medical Aid Society (CIMAS), Zimbabwe
- **Profile 7** Demonstrating Corporate Responsibility in the Insurance Industry
  - Center for Corporate Public Involvement – INSURE Foundation, USA
- **Profile 8** Demonstrating Corporate Responsibility in the Pharmaceutical Industry
  - Glaxo Wellcome plc, Worldwide

## Contributing to the Protection of Other Stakeholders

**Customers - Marketing**
- **Profile 9** Conducting Successful Cause-Related Marketing
  - United Distillers – Tanqueray Gin, USA
- **Profile 10** Using Marketing Resources for HIV/AIDS Awareness
  - Levi Strauss and Co., Europe

**Suppliers**
- **Profile 11** Supporting Suppliers
  - The Body Shop, India and Nepal

**Local Communities**
- **Profile 12** Extending Workplace Activity to the Local Community
  - Anglo American Corporation, South Africa

## Acting Philanthropically
- **Profile 13** Contributing Philanthropically to the Wider Community
  - Chevron Corporation, USA

## Adopting a Leadership Role
- **Profile 14** Globalising a Company HIV/AIDS Strategy
  - Levi Strauss and Co., Worldwide

## Working in Partnership with NGOs
- **Profile 15** Preventing AIDS Among Industrial Workers
  - CARE, American International Assurances (AIA) Thailand and the Thailand Ministry of Public Health
- **Profile 16** Preventing HIV/AIDS in the Workplace
  - Family Health International
- **Profile 17** Working With Youth Globally
  - Rotary International
The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was established in January 1996. UNAIDS brings together the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Bank. It is the first programme of its kind in the UN system: a small initiative with a large outreach capacity and the potential to leverage significant resources and action through the creation of strategic partnerships.

The co-sponsors of UNAIDS provide complementary mandates and multisectoral expertise ranging from education and socioeconomic development to women's reproductive health. They are committed to joint planning and action, giving UNAIDS a 'cooperative advantage' that translates into greater synergy and efficiency. Benefits include more effective advocacy, more efficient use of UN system resources through the sharing of costs, and greater coherence in UN support for national and transnational AIDS programmes.

The UNAIDS mission states: 'As the main advocate for global action on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS will lead, strengthen and support an expanded response aimed at preventing the transmission of HIV, providing care and support, reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the impact of the epidemic.'

To achieve its mission, UNAIDS supports the principles of:

- **A long-term response.** HIV/AIDS requires a long-term sustainable response, including providing a coping capacity on the part of individuals and communities. UNAIDS helps to strengthen national capacity for action, ranging from prevention and care to impact alleviation.

- **Participation and partnership.** A multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS can best be achieved through partnership that includes the private sector and civil society organisations.

- **Complementary.** Rather than undertaking what can be or is already being done by others, UNAIDS attempts to facilitate those efforts and to fill gaps in action and research.

In the context of these principles, promoting the involvement of private companies in fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS is a major priority for UNAIDS. Companies and business organisations at all levels have their own interests in confronting the epidemic. They have unique resources and talents to be deployed in partnership with the public and non-profit sectors. Their contribution will greatly strengthen the global response to HIV/AIDS.

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Around the world thousands of people, including children, become infected with HIV every day, resulting in millions of deaths and enormous costs to society. The global spread of HIV/AIDS is challenging all countries and population groups, including the workforces, consumers and communities upon which business relies for its survival. The private sector therefore has an important stake in helping to tackle the epidemic at local, national and international levels. It also has valuable expertise and resources to offer which can help to support and expand the efforts already being undertaken by the public and non-profit sectors.

The Business Response to HIV/AIDS: Innovation and Partnership draws together some of the leading global experience of business in fighting the epidemic. It briefly reviews the nature, impact and spread of HIV/AIDS and the public, non-profit and corporate responses to-date, before examining how the corporate contribution can be developed and expanded, especially in partnership with other sectors. The report includes profiles drawn from a variety of companies and industry sectors in Africa, Asia, Europe, the United States and Latin America. These illustrate some of the ways in which the business sector is responding to HIV/AIDS by safeguarding direct commercial interests, contributing to the protection of stakeholders other than employees, for example customers, suppliers and local communities, acting philanthropically, adopting a global leadership role, and working in partnership with non governmental organisations.

Whilst the examples illustrate the innovative and collaborative approaches that business can adopt in the fight against HIV/AIDS, the report emphasises the need for increased action and cross-sector cooperation by the private sector. The Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS has been established to meet this need. It will draw together some of the world’s leading companies characterised by their commitment to HIV/AIDS causes, their reputations as successful businesses and corporate citizens, and their ability to mobilise and inspire their peers, with the aim of scaling-up the corporate contribution to awareness-raising, prevention and care. This report offers a global perspective on some of the corporate good practice that is currently being undertaken and points to the positive role that business could play in future – both by acting alone and in partnership with others.

The challenge of HIV/AIDS can be overcome if we work together as a global community. All sectors and spheres of society have to be involved as equal partners. We have to join hands to develop programmes and share information and research that will halt the spread of the disease and help develop support networks for those who are affected.

President Nelson Mandela, Honorary President of the Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS

An effective global programme of prevention and care requires a new solution, a novel public health approach that builds on partnerships between public and private sectors at national and international levels. There is a clear role for businesses to play in these partnerships. Much more than just providing financial support, the business community, with its marketing and organisational skills, can bring a commercial efficiency to the delivery of health promotion messages to targeted audiences, whether they be young people in industrialised countries, or urban workers in emerging markets.


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