

The Ugandan 'Company to Community' HIV/AIDS Treatment Initiative: Engaging the Private Sector for Improved Access to Health Services

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What is going on in Ugandan Industry?

- 43% of employers have HIV prevention programs
- 27% explicitly offer Voluntary Counseling and Testing
- 32% offer Anti-retrovirals (ARVs)
- Human resource department and company international links key to HIV/AIDS program
- Few insurance companies cover HIV/AIDS
- Many companies do take an interest in the health of their workers and their family members, and are willing to take active steps to address issues such as HIV/AIDS and STD prevention and treatment.

Costs per Worker Lost to HIV/AIDS in Uganda

	Estimate
Absenteeism	\$205
Death Benefits	\$250
Medical Care	\$165
Reduced Productivity	\$2,130
Train Replacement	\$175
Supervisor Time	\$825
TOTAL	\$3,750

Source: Adapted from Feeley et al. "The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Productivity and Labor Costs in Two Ugandan Corporations", October, 2004



Participants at a VCT event at Royal Van Zanten Flowers in Nambo, Mukono

Project Description:

The Health Initiatives for the Private Sector (HIPS) Project is a new private sector project in Uganda. The Project, funded for a period of 3 years by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), works with the Ugandan business community to find cost-effective ways to ensure access to and utilization of vital health services for company employees, their dependents and the surrounding community members. Many companies in Uganda have successful HIV/AIDS programs that can be expanded to cover communities surrounding workplaces. The USAID funded HIPS (Health Initiatives for the Private Sector) Project, managed by Emerging Markets Group is working with over 70 companies to expand HIV/AIDS, TB, RH and Malaria workplace programs. This project is building on the success of an earlier program, Business PART (Preventing AIDS and Accelerating Access to Antiretroviral Treatment).

1. If a company can make profit in a resource poor environment, it can handle the challenges of implementing an HIV/AIDS treatment program in a rural setting.
2. Getting the company's Human Resource Manager on board is important for the success of the program.
3. When negotiating with a company representative, take an interest in what the company makes and regular consultations are needed.
4. Companies generally have a good idea of the detrimental financial effects of HIV/AIDS: what they really want to know is how much it will cost to do something about it. Many employers perceive the provision of AIDS treatment as daunting; however, if the companies are able to join a partnership in which responsibility is shared with the government and donor sector, a sustainable system of care can be established.
5. The Health Fair concept is appreciated by the community as judged by the number of people that attend and congregate at the different information and service tents. Health Fairs are a more comprehensive way of sensitizing and educating communities and at the same time offering entertainment. Thus, it is clear that Health Fairs can be utilized to offer more than just VCT services.



"HIPS is about creating win-win situations. By extending quality health services, companies will be able to profit from a healthier and thus more productive workforce and employees, their families and surrounding communities will have access to high-quality health services."

*Barbara Addy,
HIPS Project Chief of Party*

Situation Analysis:

The Ugandan private sector has emerged as an important player in the countries' health sector in recent years, providing health services both to their employees and communities within which they work. HIPS will work in collaboration with Ugandan companies to design and implement comprehensive health workplace programs in the area of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), Malaria, Reproductive Health and Family Planning and support to Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC). The prime objective of the project is to expand health services in the private sector through public-private partnerships.

HIPS Menu of Services

HIV/AIDS	Tuberculosis	Malaria	Family Planning / Reproductive Health
Peer Education	Health Fairs	Advocacy	Commodities
VCT	IEC Material	Subsidized Nets	Peer Education
IEC Material	Lab Equipment	IEC Material	Training
Accreditation	Peer Education	Lab Equipment	IEC Material
Use of ARVs	CB DOTS	Peer Education	Long Term Methods
Palliative Care	Diagnosis & Treatment	ACT Drugs	
Counselling Skills			



The Chief of Party of the HIPS project and the USAID Mission Director showing the location of the Sunavant Clinic during the launch of the HIPS project at Lugogo, on 22nd April 2008

Approach and Methodology:

The Project serves as a broker between the Ugandan private sector and the Ministry of Health to expand the provision of ART. In this partnership:

1. The company is encouraged to open up its clinical facility to the surrounding community for AIDS treatment. Through this partnership companies like Nile Breweries, Royal Van Zanten, James Finlay's, Kinyara Sugar works, Roofings Limited, Kasese Cobalt Limited, etc have opened up their clinics to their neighbouring communities to enable them access free AIDS Treatment.
2. The company pays lab tests including CD4+ and drugs for opportunistic infections.
3. The Ministry of Health and The Global fund provide ARVs. HIPS provides clinical AIDS treatment training, peer education training, program monitoring and marketing support.
4. HIPS and companies share costs for VCT and Health days.

Through this initiative over 1,500 people have been put on ARVs, while 17,000 have accessed VCT services.

The HIPS Project is undertaking activities in the areas of prevention, treatment, and training, to ensure that access to health programs are improved and expanded via the private sector. For example, in partnership with companies, HIPS is developing health information materials and peer education programs for employees and surrounding community members to increase knowledge and to encourage healthier behaviours (lifestyle). The project plans to train 1500 peer educators. In addition to the peer education, the project also conducts health fairs. Health Fairs are being used as an integrated entertainment education format for employees and community sensitization using the Uganda Health Marketing Group's established communication platform 'The Good Life at Work' (which positions health in a holistic way and is not just the absence of disease). Technical interventions include: employee education seminars; lunch break video shows; interactive community drama with forum theatre approaches and live, Good Life game show events. HIPS facilitates the events and brings together partners who offer varying services during the Health Fairs.



HIPS staff providing health information to employees, staff and communities at JICA on 18th May 2008

HIPS also works closely with two major Ugandan business associations:

1. Federation of Ugandan Employers (FUE) and
2. Uganda Manufacturers Association (UMA), to strengthen their member services through involvement in national health policy issues and capacity in workplace health programs.

In its first year of operation, HIPS seeks to reach more than 200,000 Ugandans with prevention and treatment messages on HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and Reproductive Health. The project will also facilitate access for 1,500 people to free Anti-retroviral drugs provided by the Ministry of Health, and train 350 healthcare providers in AIDS Treatment, as well as TB and HIV-related palliative care. The project targets to enroll 3,500 people on ART by year 3.

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EMG is part of The Cardno Group, a global multidisciplinary professional services organization that improves physical and social infrastructure which underpins communities around the world. Integration into Cardno aligns EMG's mission of applying business expertise to promote social and economic development to create better futures.

With nearly 25 years of development consulting experience in financial, private and public sector development, agribusiness, healthcare and tourism, EMG joins Cardno to manage nearly \$500 million in technical assistance projects with donor clients such as USAID, DFID, EuropeAid, AusAid, The Global Fund, MCC, Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. As part of Cardno, EMG has expanded physical and social infrastructure capabilities with access to nearly 2500 international staff who have lived or worked in over 100 countries and speak more than 40 languages.

Emerging Markets Group leads the HIPS project, with partners Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Mildmay Centre and O'Brien and Associates International, Uganda Health Marketing Group, and the Straighttalk Foundation. HIPS builds on the successes of the predecessor project, the Business PART (Preventing AIDS and Accelerating Access to Antiretroviral Treatment) Project, also implemented by Emerging Markets Group.