



SOUTHERN AFRICA CONFERENCE ON
VOLUNTEER ACTION
for **DEVELOPMENT**
17-19 October 2011 Johannesburg

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17-19
OCTOBER
2011

Johannesburg, South Africa
FNB Conference and Learning Centre

How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?

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for the
Southern African Conference on Volunteer Action for Development
17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg, South Africa

supported by
United Nations Volunteers Programme

Note: This paper is a work in progress. It is based on desk research and available information. Comments and corrections are welcome and will be taken into account before we finalise the paper for publication.

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Recommended citation

VOSESA (2011) "How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?"
Paper prepared for the Southern African Conference on Volunteer Action for Development, 17-19
October 2011, Johannesburg, South Africa



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Acronyms

CSO	civil society organisation
BITC	Business in the Community
CSI	corporate social investment
CSO	civil society organisation
CSR	corporate social responsibility
EVP	employee volunteer programme
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
NBI	National Business Initiative
NPO	non-profit organisation

Abstract

This paper aims to map out the approaches and issues associated with corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region. It discusses what companies do to foster volunteering spirit, and thus briefly addresses the shape of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the region. To make a case for corporate support for volunteering, benefits and barriers to involvement are sketched. Based on case studies from the SADC region, different models and manifestations of corporate support for volunteer action are conceptualised; these range from donations to employee volunteering programmes and corporate partnerships. The paper draws conclusions on how to enhance further development, and identifies key issues for discussion and further research. Note: The conference discussion will be captured, adding shared understanding and identifying both opportunities and threats. As a result a position paper could be produced that will inform strategy and enable corporations and businesses to take advantage of volunteering to meet the needs of their business, their employees, and their communities.

1 Introduction and rationale

There is a growing realisation that socio-economic problems are becoming more complex, exceeding the capacity of individual actors in society. Changes are needed to achieve sustainable development, which is driven by the encouragement of sustained engagement between all stakeholders. Society's search for sustainable solutions has involved looking beyond the straightjackets of sectoral approaches and finding innovative ideas that provide space for the engagement of different stakeholders, including the corporate sector.

Businesses in the SADC region are increasingly seeking ways to address the rising expectation of corporate citizenship and respond to pressure from various stakeholders (consumers, employees, shareholders, government, and communities) to act more responsibly in relation to societal issues. For example, when governments do not deliver services effectively (in health, education or other sectors), companies, alongside non-governmental and community-based organisations that attempt to fill these gaps in the context of poverty and inequality, have an important role to play in the development of the region. This is a deficit situation however. There are many more positive roles that companies can play to create inclusive business models that link the productive capacity of poor communities to the corporate value chain, increase the capacity of small business, and foster innovation and social entrepreneurship. This repositions the business of business directly in relation to the welfare, stability and wellbeing of society.

A perspective on business and society

Most CSR activity is about business *in society* and involves a commitment to contribute to the economic, environmental and social sustainability of communities through the on-going engagement of stakeholders, the active participation of communities impacted by company activities and the public reporting of company policies and performance in the economic, environmental and social arenas.

Corporate social investment (CSI) is a core element of CSR but is informed by a vision of business *and society*. It embraces a holistic concept of local communities, recognising that in any society there are organisations, institutions and individuals that are more effective agents of social change at the grassroots level than business could ever be.

While much of CSR is business led, CSI is different. In CSI the role of business is a supportive one and is primarily about backing the initiative of others.

- CSI is not an extension of the marketing budget that directs spend to promote the company's image in impoverished communities not usually targeted in PR campaigns.
- CSI is not a subset of work done by those corporate departments responsible for community engagement or government relations.
- CSI is not an element of the corporate safety, health and environmental programmes that impact on communities. It is also not a form of procurement where services are secured in return for contributions made.

All of the above are regular business activities that involve community interactions of one kind or another. CSI should be aligned to and supportive of any or all of these interventions. However, it remains a unique activity informed first and foremost by development principles that primarily aim to benefit communities at large.

– **Tracey Henry**
CEO, Tshikululu Social Investments, South Africa

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) “refers to the accountability of companies, to both shareholders and stakeholders, for their utilisation of resources, for their means of production, for their treatment of workers and consumers, for their impact on the social and ecological environment in which they operate and for the way in which they exercise their legislative and fiduciary duties.” (GTZ 2009:8)

Corporate social investment (CSI) “refers to the way in which companies care for the well-being of the social and ecological environment of the communities in which they operate. To this end they invest, in a variety of ways, in the advancement of certain socially and/or environmentally defined needs, projects or causes extraneous to their regular business activities.” (GTZ 2009:8)

Broadly speaking, CSR supporters have used four arguments to make their case:

- morality (CSR is the ‘right thing to do’),
- obligation (companies as good citizens),
- sustainability (referring to the triple bottom line),
- licence to operate (identify social issues that matter to the community), and
- reputation (strategic benefit).

Porter and Kramer (2006:4), however, argue that, “All four schools of thought share the same weakness: They focus on the tension between business and society rather than on their interdependence.” Interdependence here refers to a dynamic where both companies and civil society organisations (CSOs) share a common set of principles and values and are mutually responsible. Business thrives where societies thrive. Stability of communities, on the other hand, influences the stability of markets, hence the growth of market opportunities. Interdependence does not imply that business and society depend on each other. In light of poverty and inequality – which results in civil society organisations having to fight for financial resources to survive, be it from companies (CSI) or government – how can this concept be applied to the African context?

A focus on interdependence rather than dependence has the potential to shift the power relations between these stakeholders. Thus companies need to become more strategic in their efforts to support both their business goals *and* the communities in which they operate. In order to do so, companies must identify the social issues that matter most – to *both* stakeholders – creating shared value in this way. HIV/AIDS, for example, is a social issue that affects companies as it does communities, particularly in the SADC region. The closer these issues are matched, the greater the opportunity to leverage company resources *and* benefit society.

“When a well-run business applies its vast resources, expertise, and management talent to problems that it understands and in which it has a stake, it can have a greater impact on social good than any other institution or philanthropic organization” (Porter & Kramer 2006:14).

As is evident from the steady increase in private sector initiatives, corporate donation alone is no longer enough. Subsequently, the relationship between the corporate and volunteer sectors has evolved from being dominated by resource donation, including money and gifts in kind, to being driven by volunteer action and strategic partnerships that benefit *all* parties. It is vital that these partnerships are underpinned by sound principles and values, such as trust, reciprocity, mutual respect, and integrity.

Choosing corporate support for volunteering is usually based on the ideologies of helping others, being socially responsible, and contributing to a public good. Other values that play a

role here include religious and cultural values (which often encourage pro-social behaviour and elevate altruistic thinking) as well as political values and democratic principles. Halman (2003), for example, finds that at individual level, there does not seem to be a relation between support for democratic principles and the number of activities for which people volunteer. At aggregate level, however, he suggests that the broader the support for democratic principles in a society, the higher the volunteer rate. On the other hand, volunteering may also have an impact on the values in a society. Examples given in Putnam's work on democracy in Italian regions (Putnam 1993) suggest that in those parts of Italy where civic engagement is higher, democratic values are also more widespread among the people, and democracy performs better.

Can a similar conclusion be drawn for the SADC region, given the fact that the socio-economic and political situations in Southern African countries vary from stable democracies and sound economic growth (South Africa, Botswana and Namibia) to rather unstable political and difficult socio-economic conditions (Angola, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia and Lesotho)?

A traditional African concept supporting the idea of volunteering in Africa is the philosophy of *ubuntu*, which encompasses peoples' relations with each other and the fact that all people are connected. Through *ubuntu* caring for others becomes an integral part of being human and an extension of the 'African way of life'. How can caring for others become an integral part of company values?

What can we learn from individual characteristics of volunteers? Reed and Selbee (2003:102f) investigated if people who volunteer have a distinct ethos – including a specific set of values. They conclude that while some volunteers have a specific ethos, not all do.

“Our analysis indicates that (1) the full ethos consists of both a limited set of strongly differentiating values and beliefs and a large number of mildly differentiating values, but that (2) this ethos is characterized principally by people who manifest a higher or more generalized level of prosociality. While little difference in values was found between volunteers and non-volunteers, substantial differences were found between active (i.e., frequent) volunteers and non-volunteers, and between formal and direct helping volunteers, and people who were neither. [...] values continued to have clear and significant effects in differentiating volunteers from non-volunteers. Arguably, the presence of this ethos among individuals who are higher-frequency (i.e., more strongly committed) volunteers and who also engage in direct personal acts of caring and helping is indicative of something more than just prosociality – of a syndrome of generosity mixed with civic engagement and concern for the common good” (Reed & Selbee 2003:102f).

However, these ideologies of philanthropy and moral obligation usually do not 'create shared value'¹ (Porter & Kramer 2006) and can thus not be sustainable – neither can companies' self interest for enhanced reputation.

1 Creating shared value is a concept that was first introduced in a 2006 *Harvard Business Review* article entitled *Strategy & Society: The Link between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility* (Porter & Kramer 2006). The concept was further expanded in a 2011 *Harvard Business Review* piece entitled *Creating Shared Value: Redefining Capitalism and the Role of the Corporation in Society* (Porter & Kramer 2011).

How can shared value be created? The central premise behind creating shared value is that the competitiveness of a company and the health of the communities around it are mutually dependent (Porter & Kramer 2011). Creating shared value focuses more on the opportunities for a company's competitive advantage from building a social value proposition into the corporate strategy.²

How can corporate support for volunteering address both the business goals of companies and community needs? How can volunteering help companies and communities to engage more actively and meaningfully? How can corporate support for volunteer action contribute to social change? What are the terms of engagement between the stakeholders involved? What enabling and constraining factors are at play in the African context that could be different from corporate/community engagement in first world countries? These and other questions need to be asked when discussing corporate support for volunteering.

2 How do companies in the SADC region support a spirit of volunteering?

In the SADC region the corporate sector has not paid much attention to volunteering as a form of corporate citizenship, or there has been little documentation of any such efforts. Recent efforts – including company reports, conferences, and the establishment of volunteer organisations – have mainly been driven by larger companies in the South African corporate sector and multinational. Although there is evidence of corporate support for volunteering in South Africa, there is hardly any evidence of similar support in other SADC countries; there also do not seem to be any empirical studies on public awareness and corporate support for volunteering in the region.

There is, however, some data available describing the shape of the CSR sector in general:

- Private international enterprise the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), which specialises in technical cooperation for development, produced a report in 2009 (GTZ 2009) assessing sub-Saharan companies' motivation and potential to incorporate CSR into their regular business activities.
- A number of Trialogue's publications³ contain information on CSI in South Africa. Consulting, publishing and research organisation specialising in sustainable business and CSI, **Trialogue** publishes annual industry handbooks and customised client reports and offer specialised consulting services. See for instance the 2011 Trialogue report (Triologue 2011) commissioned by the National Business Initiative (NBI), in which the organisation concludes that support for education seems to be very popular within the South African CSI sector.
- On a global scale, information on charitable behaviour is compiled by the **Charities Aid Foundation**, based on data from the Gallup WorldView World Poll⁴, an ongoing research project carried out in 153 countries, known as the World Giving Index.⁵ The information includes statistics on financial contributions/donations and time volunteered and spent helping strangers. Findings for sub-Saharan Africa indicate that

² For more information, please refer to Porter and Kramer (2011).

³ <http://www.csimatters.co.za/home.html>

⁴ worldview.gallup.com

⁵ <http://www.cafindia.org/World%20Giving%20Index%20Final%20Report.pdf>

people are generally more likely to offer help to a stranger than donate money to an organisation. In fact, at 49 per cent, sub-Saharan Africa has the fifth-highest helping propensity of all regions. How can the corporate sector leverage this positive behaviour?

3 Why should companies and employees support volunteering?

Various benefits can be achieved when relationships between companies and CSOs are well managed. As part of CSR and corporate citizenship strategy, corporate support for volunteering has the potential to create a significant positive impact for the business itself, its employees and the communities they serve. External research studies and company evaluations of CSR programmes (e.g. Business in the Community (BITC)⁶, Roffey Park Institute⁷, Volunteering England⁸, and Volunteering WA⁹), predominantly conducted in the US and Europe, have documented the benefits. These are briefly summarised below.

Benefits in the SADC region are expected to be very similar. Nevertheless, more research is needed to explore the full impact, particularly for small business initiatives in resource-limited settings. Research is also needed to document benefits of volunteer activities that go beyond employee volunteer programmes (EVPs).

Well-managed partnerships can result in one or all of the benefits listed below. Individual programmes need to be evaluated, however, to identify the context-specific benefits, particularly within the African context. It would also be interesting to establish the circumstances that need to be in place for these benefits to occur.

Benefits of involvement

- **How can companies benefit?** Among others, recorded benefits to the company include human resource development (increased teamwork, employee wellness, leadership, staff morale, skills training, flexibility, staff satisfaction, retention, productivity and work performance)¹⁰; improved community profile and image (including awareness and acceptance), hence enhanced company reputation, credibility and brand health; as well as improved relationships with stakeholders (e.g. local community, consumers, and employees). Relationships improve as local strategic partners are more likely to welcome these companies to their area, existing partners want to work with them, consumers feel good about buying from them, potential investors want to invest in them, employees are proud to work for them and are more likely to recommend them, and potential employees want to join them. Overall, it is considered to be a high impact way to invest in a healthier company, community and trading environment – making companies stronger and more competitive.¹¹

⁶ <http://www.bitc.org.uk/>

⁷ Volunteering for a Successful Business available [online] at URL:

<http://www.roffeypark.com/whatweoffer/Research/reports/Pages/VolunteeringforaSuccessfulBusiness.aspx>

⁸ [http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6F8366C1-D496-4CEC-8B52-](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6F8366C1-D496-4CEC-8B52-DFEB2B45596B/0/The_business_case_for_employer_supported_volunteering.doc)

[DFEB2B45596B/0/The_business_case_for_employer_supported_volunteering.doc](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6F8366C1-D496-4CEC-8B52-DFEB2B45596B/0/The_business_case_for_employer_supported_volunteering.doc)

⁹ <http://www.volunteeringwa.org.au/Volunteers/Corporate-Volunteering.aspx>

¹⁰ See Corporate Citizenship Company's 2003 study "Good Companies, Better Employees" Available [online] at URL: www.corporate-citizenship.co.uk/employees

¹¹ For more information, please also refer to Holroyd and Silver (2001:6).

- **How can employees benefit?** There are several advantages for employees involved in employer supported volunteer programmes. Benefits to individual employees generally entail skills development (e.g. enhanced communication, coaching, teamwork, presentation, and time management skills – which might also help overcome individual insecurities and build confidence in the workplace); opportunities to work in new environments and contribute to issues that they really care about; and exposure to a wide range of tasks and communities, peers, and colleagues from other departments (which might help to combat social exclusion). Volunteering England evaluations suggest that volunteer activities provide “an extra dimension to life by providing new experiences outside the usual work and social environment”¹², resulting in attitudinal changes and increased satisfaction. A 2011 Deloitte (US) IMPACT survey¹³ reveals that employees who frequently participate in workplace volunteer activities are “far more likely to be proud, loyal and satisfied employees compared to those who rarely or never volunteer”. In the SADC context, however, employees deal with a different set of circumstances (e.g. high levels of inequality and poverty, which are in many cases historically and structurally determined) than their peers in the US or UK, so benefits are likely to vary. Benefits related to personal skills (e.g. caring, listening), as well as attitudinal changes related to increased social contact, awareness, interest, as well as a sense of community and social obligations might, collectively, also contribute to empathy in a wider social context beyond individual benefits, and have the potential to enhance social cohesion (Gillette 2003).
- **How can the community benefit?** Corporate involvement in communities can help CSOs and the wider community in various ways and beyond the intended aim of community welfare and development. Successful implementation of corporate support for volunteering has the potential to promote understanding and public awareness; enhance social cohesion and participation (Gillette 2003); and increase access to resources, including financial resources, ‘new’ volunteers, and (business) skills (e.g. fundraising, developing a business plan for CSOs, public relations and marketing, strategy consulting, information technology training). Volunteer action can also lead to further partnerships, which might help CSOs to extend their services and take on new projects (Sekete 2001). In this way, companies become a vital component in broader programmes and contribute to a wider network of development practitioners.

As mentioned above, one or all of these benefits might be achieved. Conditions under which these partnerships and programmes occur are vital. Research is needed to identify country- and context-specific circumstances under which mutual benefits can be achieved. Specific aspects to be included in such research include control issues, power relations between companies and community organisations, levels of trust and respect, meeting community needs, volunteer readiness, etc.

Barriers to involvement

Considering all these benefits, why wouldn't companies support volunteer action? BITC (Business in the Community 1998) outlines various factors that may inhibit companies, including the following:

- the ease of making financial donations compared to volunteering (e.g. it requires fewer resources),

¹² http://www.bitc.org.uk/northern_ireland/what_we_do/people/developing_skills/cares/cares_employee.html

¹³ http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_US/us/About/Community-Involvement/5243f30d90750310VgnVCM3000001c56f00aRCRD.htm

- lack of resources and infrastructure (e.g. volunteer management) within the companies and/or within the community organisation,
- lack of information about causes/organisations to support and implementation of volunteer action and lack of focused internal communication on volunteering (Forster 1997),
- lack of time available for volunteering compared to personal time (Coe 1994),
- lack of support from top management,
- inequality in treatment of staff members due to their volunteer engagement or lack thereof, and
- lack of enabling legislative environment and policy frameworks supporting volunteering.

There are also many barriers that stop employees from volunteering (see for instance Quirk 1998:19). Cronin, Graham, Muchemwa, Perold and Mang'ana (2010) detail the factors shaping employee volunteer involvement:

“According to VSO in the UK, employee volunteer involvement is shaped by the options companies present to employees for volunteering and whether or not they can draw on corporate resources. [...] Other factors to consider include the potential impact of the programme; issues of sustainability; the track-record of potential partners (where the involvement of external partners is necessary); potential for internal as well as external PR among others; opportunities for personal development; employer recognition and possibly the excitement and fun associated with volunteering” (Cronin et al. 2010)

Employers can help to remove these barriers and increase the chances of participation by making volunteer work more accessible and attractive.

These barriers need to be considered when planning corporate support for volunteering. Research is required to document additional barriers that may be specific to the SADC context (such as lack of transport; security and safety issues; language barriers; organisational differences; possible strained relationships between CSOs, the private sector, and government; lack of trust) and identify how to address/remove these barriers.

While many companies in Southern Africa are considering *whether* to become involved, the discussion needs to be taken further to explore *how* to get involved (Smith 2003). This aspect is addressed in the next section.

4 How can companies get involved?

Corporate support for volunteering can take a variety of forms. Halley (1999) and Lukka (2000), for example, distinguish between employee-led activities that are supported and recognised by the employer, and employer-initiated involvement. Volunteering Western Australia (Holroyd & Silver 2001), on the other hand, divides models of community involvement into three types: corporate partnerships/alliances, employee volunteering programmes, and donation models. The Centre for Corporate Public Affairs and the Business Council of Australia identified five areas of community corporate involvement (Suggett, Goodsir & Pryor 2000): corporate partnerships/alliances, employee centred or EVPs, donations (direct or via intermediaries), cause related marketing and sponsorship, as well as community access forums (such as Internet forums).

The following section focuses on corporate partnerships/alliances, employee-centred or EVPs/community involvement and donations as discussed by Halley (1999), Lukka (2000), and Holroyd and Silver (2001). While these divisions give some indication of the varied models for corporate support of volunteering, they are not mutually exclusive.

Corporate partnerships/alliances

A range of partnerships between different stakeholders – including corporate, CSOs, and government – play a role in the enhancement of volunteering. There are three types of partnerships that have the potential to foster volunteering:

- community business partnerships,
- public-private partnerships, and
- business associations.

Community business partnerships (or corporate community partnerships) refer to relationships between a company and one or multiple stakeholders such as CSOs (including volunteer associations) that share resources for the benefit of the company *and* the benefit of the community (Holroyd & Silver 2001:8). Partnering can involve donations and/or employee volunteering, and programmes can range from being flexible to highly structured.

Partnership models are largely determined by local needs and company strategic plan. Partnerships are usually formed with the intention of a lasting engagement. Given this long term commitment built on a financial and/or in-kind basis (combined with the joint running of a volunteer programme), partnerships yield the potential for sustained development, greater networking between the company and the community, more direct community feedback, and greater impact of activities.

These types of partnerships are able to address, or assist in addressing, societal issues and produce outcomes that governments, businesses and not-for-profit organisations cannot achieve by themselves (Centre for Corporate Public Affairs 2008).

Examples of community business partnerships:

- **Rally to Read**¹⁴ provides educational resources to rural schools in South Africa. Numerous companies¹⁵ (e.g. McCarthy, FirstRand Volunteers Programme, Accenture Foundation, Hollard Foundation, Mercedes Benz, Shell, Sanlam, Total) support this initiative through donations as well as volunteering time to deliver books, teaching aids, science kits, sports equipment, educational toys and other material to schools. In some regions, the Rallies are hosted by companies other than the organisers (e.g. the South African Sugar Association, FirstRand, Standard Bank, De Beers).
- **Food Bank**¹⁶ is a charitable non-profit organisation (NPO) that distributes mostly donated food to a wide variety of agencies that in turn feed the hungry. Food Bank receives financial and in-kind (food) donations from numerous companies. In addition, companies support Food Bank by volunteering, e.g. making sandwiches, distributing food parcels, etc. Food Bank has branches in a number of SADC countries.

¹⁴ <http://www.rallytoread.co.za/>

¹⁵ A full list of sponsors is available at http://www.rallytoread.co.za/pdf/RSPponsorshipsActiveYear-18_04_2011.pdf

¹⁶ <http://www.foodbank.org.za/>

- ***Africa Food for Thought***¹⁷ is a South African NPO run by volunteers. It equips and supplies school feeding programmes. Africa Food for Thought also supports other community initiatives, self-help/empowerment projects, shelters and half-way houses. Africa Food for Thought is supported by various organisations and corporates, such as TNS South Africa¹⁸, through board membership, donations, employee volunteering, and matched giving.
- ***Unite Against Hunger***¹⁹ is a Tiger Brands²⁰ CSI programme that focuses on providing food to more than 100 000 South Africans daily. Unite Against Hunger is a Section 21 company that is registered as a public benefit organisation, which allows the organisation to accept support from external organisations and to channel this support to those in need of assistance. Unite Against Hunger depends on a variety of sources of funding; it for instance receives an annual CSI contribution of 1 per cent of post-tax profits from Tiger Brands. Funding is also raised through celebrity endorsed events and direct contributions and partnerships formed with other NGOs and companies.
- ***Unilever Tea Tanzania***²¹ participates in a partnership that aims to provide voluntary counselling and testing as well as anti-retroviral treatment to its employees and families as part of the Tanzanian government's National HIV/AIDS Care and Treatment Plan. Partners include the PharmAccess Foundation, an NPO that supports quality health care including HIV/Aids care and treatment, Family Health International and CARE International, which provides technical support.
- ***Indigenous Trees for Life*** is a community-based conservation project that works with disadvantaged communities in KwaZulu-Natal to educate and provide poor children and parents with the tools to grow indigenous trees, which are then bartered for goods, thus providing a sustainable source of income and helping to improve their livelihoods. The programme is run by the Wildlands Conservation Trust²², a South African environmental NGO that was established in 2005. Unilever South Africa supports this programme financially. In addition, Unilever employees spend four weekends a year volunteering with so-called 'green teams'; activities during these weekends include recycling and tree-planting exercises.²³
- ***VSO in Zimbabwe*** links members of the Zimbabwe Business Council for HIV and AIDS to community organisations in order to create sustainable relationships that have good development outcomes.

The two other types of partnerships, *public-private partnerships* and *business associations/lobby groups*, have the potential to support large-scale systemic interventions with a view to bringing private sector expertise and government perspectives together to address macro development questions. The Business Trust, for example, has managed public-private partnerships to help the South African government in its efforts to streamline

¹⁷ <http://www.afft.org.za>

¹⁸ <http://www.tnsresearchsurveys.co.za/>

¹⁹ <http://www.uniteagainsthunger.co.za/>

²⁰ <http://www.tigerbrands.co.za>

²¹ http://www.unilever.com/sustainability/casestudies/employees/tanzanianationalhiv_aidscaresandtreatmentplanatunilevertanzania.aspx

²² <http://www.wildlands.co.za/home.aspx>

²³ <http://www.unilever.co.za/sustainability/casestudies/economic-development/tree-planting-in-deprived-communities.aspx>

the Extended Public Works Programme in order to increase its reach and effectiveness. As such it has produced interesting programmes that focus on creating inclusive market opportunities, i.e. ways of involving the poor in the mainstream economy. It has also been active in driving new solutions to the formation of commercial partnerships between private investors and rural communities who have had their land restored to them but don't have the skills or capital to use it productively. The Business Trust also has many Cabinet ministers serving on its board. Similarly, the NBI has played an important role in leveraging private sector resources, for example to improve the quality of schooling in South Africa's poorest schools. Considering their reach and influence, public-private partnerships and business associations can play a vital role in promoting corporate support for volunteer action.

Examples of public-private partnerships and business associations/lobby groups from South Africa:

- **Business Leadership South Africa**²⁴ (formerly known as South Africa Foundation) is an association of South Africa's largest corporations and major multinational companies with a significant presence in South Africa. Members are committed to the national goals of high growth, greater employment, inclusivity and the reduction of poverty. It is the forum for South Africa's business leaders to exchange ideas on matters that interest large South Africa companies. A core mission of Business Leadership South Africa is to facilitate an effective business dialogue with government.
- **Business Trust**²⁵ combines the resources of business and government to create jobs, build capacity and combat poverty. Resources are mobilised from companies operating in South Africa to support programmes that accelerate the achievement of agreed national objectives.
- The **NBI**²⁶ is a "voluntary group of leading national and multi-national companies, working together towards sustainable growth and development in South Africa through partnerships, practical programmes and policy engagement. [...] Since its establishment in 1995, the NBI has been an advocate for the collective role of business in support of a stable democracy, growing economy and healthy natural environment. As one of close to 60 global regional partners to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), the NBI provides a platform for business leadership and a vision of how companies can contribute to shaping and achieving a sustainable society."
- The **South African Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS**²⁷ aims to co-ordinate a private sector response to the HIV/Aids epidemic in South Africa. Established in 2000 by the South African Foundation, the coalition's founding members were Eskom, SABC, Transnet, Unilever, Standard Bank and Old Mutual. Its establishment was self funded through the membership fees of founding members. Current partners include, for example, CDC, GTZ, Mercedes-Benz, World Bank, BUSA, inWent, World Economic Forum, DED, USAID, JBIC, Global Business Coalition, DFID, SA Department of Health, HIV-911 Centre for HIV/AIDS Networking, South African National AIDS Council, NBI, Nelson Mandela Metropole Business Coalition, and the Pan African Business Coalition.

Examples from Africa and beyond:

²⁴ <http://www.businessleadership.org.za>

²⁵ <http://www.btrust.org.za>

²⁶ <http://www.nbi.org.za>

²⁷ <http://www.sabcoha.org/>

- The **Pan African Business Coalition on HIV**²⁸ mobilises and supports numerous African country business coalitions to take effective action on HIV/AIDS and other health issues. Activities include advocacy, networking, promotion and assisting national business coalitions to build capacity and access funding. Country coalitions from SADC include the following:
 - Botswana: Botswana Business Coalition on AIDS²⁹,
 - the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Comité Interentreprises de Lutte contre le VIH/SIDA,
 - Madagascar: Coalition d'entreprises citoyennes de Madagascar face aux IST/VIH/SIDA, la tuberculose et le paludisme,
 - Malawi: Malawi Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS,³⁰
 - Mozambique: Associação dos Empresários Contra o SIDA,
 - Namibia: Namibia Business Coalition on AIDS,
 - South Africa: South African Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS³¹,
 - Swaziland: Swaziland Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS³²,
 - Tanzania: AIDS Business Coalition Tanzania³³,
 - Zambia: Zambia Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, and
 - Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe Business Council on AIDS.

- **Business Action for Africa**³⁴ is an international network of businesses and business organisations from Africa and elsewhere, coming together to support three objectives:
 - to positively influence policies needed for growth and poverty reduction,
 - to promote a more balanced view of Africa, and
 - develop and showcase good business practice.

Business Action for Africa was launched at the G8 Business Action for Africa Summit in 2005 with the support of six companies: Anglo American, De Beers, GlaxoSmithKline, Royal Dutch Shell, SABMiller, and Unilever.³⁵ The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum was and continues to be the largest sponsor of Business Action for Africa, providing support in the form of staff time and use of their office facilities. Since its inception, Business Action for Africa's has received sponsorship from the UK government in the form of financial support from the Department for International Development, and in-kind staff support from the Joint International Unit of the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Education and Skills. To date, more than 150 companies, business organisations, multilateral and bilateral donors, government departments, NGOs and academics have joined this effort. Eighty per cent are from the business sector – ranging from small businesses to large multinational corporations, and from national chambers of commerce to international business organisations.³⁶

²⁸ <http://www.pabcnetwork.org/>

²⁹ <http://www.bbca.org.bw/>

³⁰ www.mbcamw.org

³¹ www.sabcoha.org/

³² <http://www.swabcha.org.sz/>

³³ <http://www.abctz.org/>

³⁴ <http://businessactionforafrica.org/>

³⁵ <http://www.debeersgroup.com/en/Sustainability/Ethics/ethical-initiatives/Business-Action-for-Africa/>

³⁶ Sponsor profiles: <http://businessactionforafrica.org/sponsors/>*

- **International Business Leaders Forum**³⁷ is an independent global not-for-profit organisation working with companies on the responsible business and sustainability agenda.
- The **UN Global Compact Network**³⁸ is a strategic policy initiative for businesses that are committed to aligning their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. With more than 8 700 corporate participants and other stakeholders from more than 130 countries, it is the largest voluntary corporate responsibility initiative in the world. The UN Global Compact supports the *Importance of Voluntarism*.³⁹ The concepts of volunteering underpin the missions, advocacy and initiatives of the UN Global Compact since its founding in 2000. The following businesses and business associations are active members from the SADC region:
 - South Africa: Good Hope Meat Hyper, Pax South Africa, C and G AIR CC, Cape Town International Convention Centre Company (Pty) Ltd., Columbit (Pty) Ltd., Pick n Pay, Richards Bay Coal Terminal Company Limited, Sappi Limited, National Business Initiative.
 - Mozambique: Kudumba Investments, Ltd., Motorcare Mozambique.
 - Mauritius: ToughStuff International, External Solutions Ltd., Centre International De Development Clinique LTEE Group, Service Bureau Ltd., TNT Document Services, Mauritius Duty Free Paradise Co Ltd.
 - Madagascar: Ingenosya.
 - Namibia: FNB Namibia Holdings Ltd., Swaco Industries Namibia (Pty) Ltd.
 - Zambia: Zambia Coffee Growers' Association Ltd.

Employee-centred or employee volunteer programmes/employee community involvement

EVPs/employee community involvement (ECI) is probably the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about corporate support for volunteering. EVP usually refers to employer led programmes that encourage and support employees to get involved as volunteers in the company or the community, i.e. by volunteering their time and/or skills (Quirk 1998:4). Note: employees can also get involved without the support or even knowledge of their employers. It can be argued that those activities are also employee volunteering i.e. utilising skills acquired at the workplace (Lukka 2000). However, this paper refers to corporate support for volunteer action.

Corporate (or employee) volunteering (or ECI) generally refers to businesses encouraging and supporting their employees to get involved in the community, i.e. by volunteering their time and/or skills (Quirk 1998:4). Lukka (2000:4), however, argues that employee volunteering also includes volunteering that an employee is engaged in independent of the corporate involvement and without the support or even the knowledge of the employer. It can be argued, nevertheless, that participation in volunteering outside the workplace does not necessarily refer to that person's formal employment status.

³⁷ <http://www.iblf.org/>

³⁸ <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/index.html>

³⁹ http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/about_the_gc/Voluntarism_Importance.pdf and http://www.unglobalcompact.org/HowToParticipate/Business_Participation/the_importance_of_voluntarism.html

Corporate (or employer) supported volunteering (or corporate community involvement) covers a whole a range of approaches, which are not limited to staff participation/employee engagement but also include other activities such as donations and corporate partnerships. Employer supported volunteering is usually developed, financed and/or managed by the corporate.

Employees are often also members of the particular community these programmes aim to support (Wilkinson-Maposa, Fowler, Oliver-Evans & Mulenga 2005; Wilkinson-Maposa & Fowler 2009), so it becomes vital for employees to play a leading role in the planning and implementation of volunteer activities. Employees become ambassadors for their company within their own community, in this way building positive relationships between all stakeholders. These relationships are vital for the success of programmes as they have the potential to raise awareness and acceptance within the community and therefore enhance the company's image and possibly attract future investors.

As mentioned above, employees working towards the development of their communities enjoy far reaching benefits, including skills development and positive changes in attitude.

The table below outlines some of the most common models used to implement EVPs (Lukka 2000; Holroyd & Silver 2001). Note: these models are not mutually exclusive but often refer to similar principles. They describe ways in which employees allocate their time and skills; these range from once-off and short term action to sustained long-term engagement. EVPs are usually conducted during working hours (and employees are paid for their time) but can also happen outside working hours, i.e. during weekends and evenings. The time and type of activity/cause can influence employee motivation. All programmes need to be managed carefully to ensure they meet company, employee, and community needs and objectives.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Characteristics of a successful programme are discussed in the next section.

Employee-centred or Employee Volunteer Programmes/Employee Community Involvement

	Description of model	Positive features	Challenges	Recommendation	Example
Matching	Match employee with job that is needed in community. Time period varies, compared to other models	Skills acquired in the workplace can be used in a different setting. Programmes can be employee or corporate driven	Employee might need to take time off or help outside working hours. Finding the right opportunities might be difficult	Conduct community assessment to identify needs. Start skills database for interested employees, incl. time available	NGO requires information technology support. Design marketing materials
Released time/ time banks	Agreed allocations of company time for community volunteering (released time). Often linked to equal amount of employee's own time commitment (time bank)	Strong indicator of employers' commitment. Likely to make employee's decision to participate easier. Easy way of setting employee's own time commitment	Requires management (keeping track of hours). May not be taken up in all departments	Track time with timesheets (on both sides). Ensure commitment by all departments. Ensure an exit date and/or periodic review and reporting procedure	Paid time off – a fixed number of hours per year for each employee to volunteer
Volunteering outside working hours	Employees volunteer outside working hours but with the support of their employers	Strong indicator of employee commitment	Finding employees that commit their own time after hours (weekends and holiday)	Volunteer awards to get some sort of recognition by the employer. Corporate leadership involvement	<i>Project Siyakhula Deloitte</i>
Loaned personnel	Company makes employees available to an organisation for a specific period of time or a specific event	Flexible approach – includes development assignment, team development assignment, secondment etc.	Might be expensive to the company, depending on personnel and time period allocated		
Development assignment	Short placement in organisation, around 100 hours, usually on a clearly defined project.	Intensive skills development. Easy to integrate into overall human resources	Can be highly demanding. Only suitable for participants who are self-motivated and committed	Ideally suited to employees seeking promotion to managerial or professional roles or those already	Management or strategy consulting. Develop business plan. Support organisational

How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?

	Description of model	Positive features	Challenges	Recommendation	Example
	Flexible time scales: a block of 2-3 weeks or 1 day a week for 12-13 weeks	framework. Highly motivational	to their personal development. Difficult to maintain during 'busy times'	employed in these areas. Plan in advance (as far as possible) to accommodate 'busy times', i.e. deadlines	development
Team development assignment	Practical projects defined to meet teambuilding needs. 3-4 days incl. planning, skills training, debrief	Positive teambuilding as part of human resources strategy. Provides a practical 'challenge'	Needs commitment and presence of whole team to be effective	Supported by project management and team working training. Junior member of team could lead initiative	Yearly team building exercise paid by employer, organised by employees. <i>Nedbank Group Team Challenge</i>
Secondment	Usually full-time placement in an organisation, for a long period (between 6 and 24 months). Often during company restructuring process	Positive way of restructuring, less stress for employee. Employee skills development	Requires careful planning as it is a long-term commitment. Can create dissatisfaction if expectations are not met. Takes employee out of company for a long time		
Trustees and board membership	Employees commit themselves to serve as trustees or board members on the management committees of organisations	Provides good visibility in the community. Good experience of managing an organisation, and developing strategies and policy. Interaction with other members	Limited positions available. Selection might take long. Great intervals of board meetings. Specialised skills required		<i>Heartbeat Deloitte</i>
Mentoring	One-on-one relationship between mentee and mentor. Tool for personal	Effective method of developing coaching and interpersonal skills. Working with an individual	Requires mentor training. Mentee might require more support than mentor is able to provide	Match mentor and mentee carefully (background, language, etc.). Clearly outline scope, time,	Matriculants – help with career planning and study choice. <i>Accenture's Mentoring</i>

How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?

	Description of model	Positive features	Challenges	Recommendation	Example
	development and empowerment	can be highly rewarding	Legal aspects of working with children	and purpose. Contact schools and universities	<i>Programme for Scholarship students</i>
<i>(Local) once-off event</i>	Event that involves part or all of the local workforce	Good team building exercise. Can include employees' family and friends	Once-off: not sustainable. Needs planning and management	Organise through intermediary organisation. Align event with company operational goals	Painting a community centre
<i>Targeted programme</i>	Activities targeted at one specific cause that has been identified as a priority	Entire volunteer effort and activities are focused on the chosen area	Singular focus. Might not be seen as priority by all employees	Ensure that selection process to determine priority is open, participative, and led by employees	Support fight against HIV/AIDS
<i>Charity of the year</i>	Prompted by employees, employer commits to supporting a specific organisation	Maximum benefit to the organisation. Builds a long-term relationship	Only supports one organisation. Might be difficult to choose one organisation	Ensure that selection process is open, participative, and led by employees	
<i>International corporate volunteering</i>	Engages employees in service projects in countries outside a company's headquarters country for 1 to 12 months	Provides international experience	Employees might be away from their families for a long time. Requires high commitment from employee. Might involve pay cut	Especially recommended for young employees with limited family commitments	<i>Accenture's Voluntary Services Overseas</i>

Table 1: Employee centred programmes (adapted from Lukka 2000; Holroyd & Silver 2001)

Many companies, South African and multinational ones in particular, have demonstrated their commitment to volunteering and social change. The following examples briefly describe some of the EVPs in the SADC region.

- The **FirstRand Volunteers Programme**⁴¹ aims to facilitate and support its employees' community building efforts across all divisions of the group (First National Bank, Rand Merchant Bank, WesBank, RMB Private Bank and FirstRand). The programme is run by a committee that offers "ongoing support, innovative group drives, matched funding and an annual awards programme" and has a volunteer website that enables employees to "share experiences, ideas and challenges and to motivate and encourage other employees to become volunteers". Activities range from raising funds to mentoring to building homes in communities, to planting "veggie tunnels"⁴² and establishing wormeries for income generation in poor communities. The programme also runs leadership workshops for NPOs, as well as life skills and mentorship programmes. Since the programme was launched in 2003, more than R15.4 million has been donated in both time and money, and FirstRand matched this with a further R15.4 million. The FirstRand Volunteers Programme, including FNB and RMB volunteer initiatives, won the 2010 award for the Best Corporate Community Involvement Programme at the Investing in the Future and Drivers of Change Awards. 22 per cent of the total staff employed by the FirstRand Group (38 000) are involved in the programme. Desiree Storey, Manager of the FirstRand Volunteers Programme, published an interesting article entitled "Staff volunteer programmes: what works, what doesn't"⁴³ on the Tshikululu website. The article focuses on management support, procedures, buy-in and involvement.
- **Deloitte Foundation South Africa's⁴⁴ Project Siyakhula**⁴⁵ is run by Deloitte trainee accountants across South Africa. It is an accounting and mathematics programme aimed at disadvantaged Grade 10, 11, and 12 learners and their teachers. Classes are offered at the Deloitte offices in Johannesburg (holiday programme), Pretoria (holiday programme), Cape Town (weekends), Durban (weekends) and Port Elizabeth (holiday programme). In 2010, the programme involved 410 learners and 210 Deloitte volunteers. Volunteering time outside working hours is not paid, but employees receive an award for their 'commitment to society'. The programme includes an evaluation component, measuring the number of learners and volunteers, time spent on the project, student progress, and other benefits.
- **Nedbank Group Staff Volunteerism Programme**⁴⁶ involves numerous activities such as:
 - The Team Challenge, which gives initial seed funding to teams to get their own charity programmes off the ground. These programmes support different NGOs in South Africa. Teams can elect to undertake the ten-month challenge or do one or more seven-day challenges.

⁴¹ <http://www.firststrandvolunteers.co.za/>

⁴² <http://www.firststrandvolunteers.co.za>

⁴³ <http://www.tshikululu.org.za/thought-leadership/staff-volunteer-programmes-what-works-and-what-doesn%E2%80%99t/>

⁴⁴ [http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-](http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SouthAfrica/Local%20Assets/Documents/Section4g%20CorpSocialInvestment%281%29.pdf)

[SouthAfrica/Local%20Assets/Documents/Section4g%20CorpSocialInvestment%281%29.pdf](http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_ZA/za/about/3762ba9afabf4210VgnVCM200000bb42f00aRCRD.htm)

http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_ZA/za/about/3762ba9afabf4210VgnVCM200000bb42f00aRCRD.htm

⁴⁵ Thanks go to Mr Samuel Payne (Corporate Citizenship Manager) for providing valuable information on Project Siyakhula.

⁴⁶ <http://www.nedbankgroup.co.za/sustainabilityCSIVolunteer.asp>

- The Local Hero Programme, which recognises individual employees who volunteer through projects or organisations involved in community upliftment. Successful applicants receive a R10 000 donation towards the organisation they support.
- The Payroll Giving project, which supports the SA Children's Charity Trust, which in turn support a variety of organisations, including Choc, Cotlands, the Red Cross, Reach for a Dream, Ithemba Charities and the QuadPara Association of South Africa.
- **Standard Bank Wellness Champions** are peer educators who raise awareness and provide advisory support to both bank staff and the broader community about HIV/AIDS and other health and wellness issues. The bank has over 700 Wellness Champions in the 17 African countries in which it conducts business. In addition to being available internally, the champions work in the community through schools, church groups and community organisations. This work is in addition to their normal work assignments.
- **Standard Chartered Bank** employees in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Kenya have recorded a high number of employee volunteering days (Allen, Galiano & Hayes 2011).
- **Sanlam Namibia**⁴⁷ supports several community involvement programmes, such as the Sanlam Namibia Future Business Leaders Programme that aims to expose high school learners to entrepreneurship skills, as well as the Sanlam Namibia Schools Debating tournament that empowers learners with presentation and communication skills.
- **IBM's On Demand Community (ODC) programme** "is a sophisticated, multicountry, local service model that leverages significant IBM assets and skills, while at the same time showcasing IBM's technology solutions in an easily accessible environment. A global program with local management, ODC features a Web-based portal that helps IBM manage its global volunteering efforts. It provides a portfolio of technology solutions that can assist employees in their local volunteering efforts" (Hills & Mahmud 2007:29)
- **Barclays** has active volunteer efforts in a half a dozen countries in Africa. Their annual 'Make A Difference Day' works with children living on the street in Ghana; involves family, friends and customers as well as employees in Mauritius; and features mentoring, befriending and renovation projects in Zambia. In Botswana, Barclays provides each employee 16 hours of released time annually for volunteering. Volunteer teams in both Mozambique and South Africa participate in the company's V Day by creating their own volunteer projects (Allen et al. 2011).
- **Hollard Insurance**⁴⁸ and **Hollard Foundation**⁴⁹ business units have each adopted a CSI project that they support. These include for example school sports days, painting and maintenance of various facilities, planting vegetables and trees, skills transfer (computer training, curriculum vitae writing and interviewing skills) and caring for special needs children.

⁴⁷ http://www.sanlam.co.za/wps/wcm/connect/sanlam_en/Sanlam/Sanlam+Businesses/Sanlam+Namibia/Corporate+Social+Involvement/

⁴⁸ <http://www.hollard.co.za/who-we-are-corporate-social-investment>

⁴⁹ <http://www.hollardfoundation.co.za/>

- The **MTN Group** encourages volunteering throughout the organisation through its 21 Days of Y'ello Care programme, conducted over 21 days in May and June each year. Based in South Africa, the multinational mobile telecommunications company hosts activities in 14 countries in Africa and has the single greatest corporate volunteer reach in the region. The Group President and CEO Y'ello Care Award is presented to the operation with the highest percentage of staff volunteers and the greatest community impact. The winner holds the trophy for a year and receives US\$100,000 to support community initiatives (Allen et al. 2011).
- **Accenture's Voluntary Services Overseas/Business Partnership Scheme (VBP)** sends consultants from 16 Accenture offices around the world to work with NGOs and governments on business, management, and technology issues. Accenture employees with more than two years' experience take unpaid leave for between one and twelve months and receive a financial subsidy from Accenture and a local salary from Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), the non-profit volunteering intermediary that processes placements and manages travel and logistics. In early 2007, Accenture had more than 20 individuals in VSO programmes. Accenture's programme embodies skills-based volunteering. As Accenture Human Performance Manager Cecile Walton says, "All of the volunteers are utilizing their skills from their work at Accenture. Accenture volunteers provide high-value services that have the potential for significant social impact, including change management, financial management, market analysis, or other business services. A London-based Accenture manager, for example, volunteered in Africa as part of the VBP program. Working for the Vocational Education Authority in Tanzania, she used her consulting skills to research and analyze the formal and informal labor market to ensure that both college students and the wider community could receive the relevant training required to get jobs or improve their livelihoods." (Hills & Mahmud 2007:25)
- **Vodacom Change the World**⁵⁰ places volunteers in community organisations, and these placements are supported by Vodacom employee volunteers.
- Some **Deloitte Foundation South Africa**⁵¹ staff members serve on the boards of community organisations. For example, an audit partner in the Deloitte Pretoria office is on the board of Heartbeat, an organisation which provides after care to children affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. Heartbeat cares for almost 6 000 orphans and vulnerable children in 13 communities in Gauteng and the Limpopo Province.

Donations

Donations are probably the simplest way to support community development. Donations can be channelled directly to the community (e.g. CSOs) or via an intermediary who distributes/allocates donated items. Companies can donate money, time (of their employees), and/or other in-kind contributions. Donations are not limited to supporting volunteer action. The following table outlines some of the most common donation models.

50 www.vodacom.com/ctw_main.php

51 <http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SouthAfrica/Local%20Assets/Documents/Section4g%20CorpSocialInvestment%281%29.pdf>

http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_ZA/za/about/3762ba9afabf4210VgnVCM200000bb42f00aRCRD.htm

How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?

Donations

	Description of model	Positive features	Negative features	Recommendations	Example
Financial contribution	CSI – often linked to company profit	Might be a large contribution, real resource to volunteer organisations	Might vary depending on company's profit. Requires planning to allocate resources. Might not involve employees	Integrate support for volunteering in CSI strategy. Involve employees in the decision making, combine with other activities. Organise distribution of resources through intermediary	<i>Annual CSI contribution of 1 per cent of post-tax profits from Tiger Brands to Unite Against Hunger</i>
Give-as-you earn scheme	Contributions are deducted at intervals from employees' pay	Regular contributions	Employee might not be able to decide how money is spent	Involve employee in decision making process	<i>Helping Hands Deloitte</i>
Matched giving	Employer makes contribution to match employee funds raised through events or donations	Visible and real resource to volunteer organisations. Popular with employees	If not monitored, the 'giving' can exceed budgets in the wake of extra-successful fundraising efforts	Policy should include 'ceiling' per employee	Sporting events <i>TNS to support Africa Food for Thought</i>
Contribution in-kind	In-kind donations include: skills (EVP), products/ services, equipment, premises, other (e.g. food, blankets)	Can easily be combined with other activities	If community needs are not understood, this risks being seen as a dumping ground for old equipment. Technological capacity of receiving organisation and cost of distribution needs to be considered	Assess community needs and capacity carefully and plan for distribution costs	Winter blanket drive. Donate furniture, company car <i>Microsoft donating computers</i>
Pro-bono assistance	Company provides free assistance to an organisation in a specific area	Usually long-term commitment to support one more organisations	Does not always include entire work force. Often limited to employees with professional skills		Free legal, tax, accounting advice

Table 2: Donations (adapted from Lukka 2000; Holroyd & Silver 2001)

The following section briefly describes some examples of companies and / or employees efforts with regard to donations.

- **Deloitte Foundation South Africa**⁵² supports various organisations with grants and in-kind donations (e.g. desktop computers). Beneficiaries include Sparrow School, LEAP, Jumpstart, ACFS Community Education and Feeding Scheme, Bokamoso Education Trust, Teach SA, and Kgosi Neighbourhood Foundation. In addition, Deloitte runs a give-as-you-earn scheme and matched giving programme. Helping Hands is the Deloitte staff voluntary giving programme that allows employees to give money to charitable causes. For every rand employees donate, the Deloitte Foundation will match that donation. The Charities Aid Foundation of Southern Africa is Deloitte's partner in the Helping Hands scheme and administers and distributes the contributions to the beneficiaries.
- **Internet Solutions (IS) South Africa**⁵³ supports CIDA City Campus⁵⁴, a university for disadvantaged students in Johannesburg, South Africa, by providing information technology infrastructure, assisting with the day-to-day administration, supporting the development of an information technology curriculum and learning material, and lecturing CIDA students on the IT 2 Internet Literacy course (employee volunteering).
- **Kaelo Stories of Hope**⁵⁵ is a media platform (including television, radio, book, newspaper supplement, and web) developed by Kaelo Worldwide Media to showcase and promote social development initiatives of organisations and businesses in South Africa. The television programme *Kaelo Stories of Hope* is usually broadcast at 5.30pm on Tuesdays on eTV. The 22 August 2011 episode focused on volunteering. Sponsors include ABSA and MTN, as well as Transnet, KFC, Nedbank, Old Mutual, TigerBrands, and Sanofi Aventis.

⁵² [http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-](http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-SouthAfrica/Local%20Assets/Documents/Section4g%20CorpSocialInvestment%281%29.pdf)

[SouthAfrica/Local%20Assets/Documents/Section4g%20CorpSocialInvestment%281%29.pdf](http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_ZA/za/about/3762ba9afabf4210VgnVCM200000bb42f00aRCRD.htm)
http://www.deloitte.com/view/en_ZA/za/about/3762ba9afabf4210VgnVCM200000bb42f00aRCRD.htm

⁵³ <http://www.is.co.za/AboutUs/Pages/SocialResponsibility.aspx>

⁵⁴ <http://www.cida.co.za/>

⁵⁵ <http://www.kaelosa.com/>

Other forms

Other forms of corporate support for volunteering usually refer to organising and recognising volunteer efforts.

	Description of model	Positive features	Negative features	Recommendations	Example
Volunteering coordinators and/or committees	Individual employees are identified to co-ordinate volunteer action and allowed use of company premises and resources	Can be a good development role for both individuals and committee	Time consuming. As programme develops, number of volunteers may fall, affecting motivation of coordinator	Rotate role of volunteering coordinator to avoid de-motivation. Reward volunteer coordinators	Coordinate community involvement, generate internal publicity, organise challenges and recruit volunteers
Volunteer awards	Usually annual celebrations of employee volunteer achievements	Highly motivational. Good way to showcase company's commitment. Way to identify employees' engagement	Selection needs to be open and participative to avoid claims of favouritism	Collect nominations from all employees in an open manner. Give award to nominated individuals or teams	Rewards can involve certificate, time off, financial incentive or presents

Table 3: Other programmes (adapted from Lukka 2000; Holroyd & Silver 2001)

The **BITC annual International Award for Excellence** sponsored by Coffey International⁵⁶, for example, recognises companies for their contributions towards the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Companies that have earned a BITC 'Big Tick' or have won the BITC International Award for Excellence include Anglo American, Barclays, Cemex, Cisco, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, GSK, IBM, KPMG, SAB Miller, Tata Consultancy Services, Thomson Reuters, and Unilever among others.

At the programme level not all models developed in 'northern' countries will be relevant in the SADC region as they have to be tailored to the needs of the local community. However, a large number of these models are transferable and could operate in the Southern African context. Each model must be assessed on its own merits and in relation to the context in which it is intended to function.

5 What are the key characteristics of successful corporate support for volunteering?

Success is determined by various components, including how well the programme is planned, implemented, managed, and evaluated (Volunteering UK; Holroyd & Silver 2001). The key to sustainable support for volunteering is that it benefits *all* stakeholders involved (company, employees, and community) (Quirk 1998:18).

As noted before, it needs to be considered that in the SADC context a different set of circumstances (e.g. high levels of inequality and poverty, which are in many cases historically and structurally determined) needs to be dealt with than pertains in the US or UK. Mutual benefits are only derived from partnerships that are led by common interest in social development and common values that look beyond materialistic and individualistic drivers.

The GTZ has published several reports and case studies (e.g. GTZ 2007; GTZ and the Bertelsmann Stiftung 2007; GTZ and NBI 2007; Van der Walt 2007; GTZ 2009) on CSR in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Ghana, South Africa, Malawi and Mozambique.

The GTZ 2009 report, for example, contributes to understanding companies' motivations and potential to incorporate CSR activities into their regular businesses in Africa. It explores factors that promote or hinder success in CSR project management and delivery, and recommends enabling instruments that can strengthen CSR in the region. The following key themes can be identified in this report:

- **Leadership and governance:** the extent to which executives and senior managers have a vision for, take the lead and are themselves committed and supportive of the CSR cause in a company
- **Policy framework:** the extent or not to which CSR policies are available and aligned with corporate objectives, value systems and core business considerations
- **Project management:** the extent or not to which CSR practitioners have effective structures and they and their support staff are skilled enough to understand and effectively manage the development and implementation of CSR initiatives
- **Monitoring, evaluation and reporting:** the extent or not to which systems for monitoring, evaluation and reporting are available and CSR practitioners and their stakeholders/partners and beneficiaries are committed to do it and utilise **the benefits thereof**

⁵⁶ http://www.bitc.org.uk/awards_for_excellence/categories/coffey_international.html

- **Stakeholder engagement:** the extent or not to which CSR practitioners and their support structures are able to involve and constructively engage with relevant stakeholders and/or partners in the process of CSR intervention development and implementation
- **Staff engagement:** the extent or not to which staff are committed to, supportive of and participate in CSR relevant initiatives
- **Government:** the extent to which governments create conducive environments for CSR development and implementation, or do not
- **Beneficiation:** the extent or not to which beneficiaries' needs are properly identified, the alignment thereof with company **CSR policy is justified** and beneficiary ownership and cooperation with corporate CSR initiatives can be maintained
- **Funding:** the extent or not to which and the manner in which funding is made available and well managed" (GTZ 2009:10).

Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) Southern Africa CEO Colleen du Toit (CAF 2010) adds the following:

- good community consultation: including needs assessments in potential host organisations, checking volunteer readiness, and capacity building where necessary; and
- a code of volunteering practice to which employee volunteers must commit.

Deciding on a model largely depends on company priorities and resources available, as well as the needs of employer, employee, and community. Factors that should be kept in mind include the following:

- **Meeting business priorities.** A programme that is in line with the overall company CSI strategy and priority areas can bring tangible benefits to the company and will enjoy continuing support. It is, therefore, important to determine how the support for volunteering will contribute to organisational values and company objectives. For example, SAB Miller has developed a so-called 'Alcohol Framework' that is aligned with the company principles. As part of this framework the company runs a programme encouraging responsible drinking.⁵⁷
- **Reflecting employee interests and skills.** This is particularly important when choosing EVPs. Community involvement can make a real difference to how employees feel about themselves and their employer. Conducting an employee survey and developing an employee skills and interest database (including time availability) can identify the potential.
- **Addressing community needs.** Companies can play an important part solving community problems. However, they are often not well placed to determine community needs. Research that is conducted within the community can be helpful. In addition, employees can play a vital role in identifying particular needs within their communities. Community needs could include fighting HIV/Aids, and supporting youth participation and education.

Based on these needs and interests, a volunteer programme can be developed, with a detailed proposal outlining the purpose of the programme and the issues that need addressing. Other aspects that can be included in the proposal include:

- structure and management of volunteer efforts;

⁵⁷ <http://www.sabmiller.com/index.asp?pageid=1636>

- resources needed;
- length of the programme;
- corporate commitment;
- employee recognition strategy;
- corporate culture and environmental factors;
- written corporate policies (e.g. regarding health and safety issues, terms and conditions);
- and an evaluation strategy.

This process should be supported by a working group as well as a cross-functional team of key stakeholders including corporate representatives, employees, and members of the community/volunteer centre.

The evaluation of programmes is vital but often forgotten. Monitoring and evaluations provide valuable feedback to establish if goals have been reached and values upheld, to determine the impact of programmes and to help future volunteer efforts. Results can be published in local media, which also provide a good marketing tool for the company. Holroyd and Silver (2001:14f) give detailed recommendations regarding planning, implementation, and evaluation of corporate volunteering programmes.

Infrastructure to support volunteering

Structured corporate support for volunteering is relatively new in the SADC region. The few practitioners in this region are typically affiliates of multinationals and/or large South African companies (see case studies). Corporate support for volunteering can be promoted by raising public awareness and investing in a sound infrastructure that is able to direct and manage volunteering efforts. A key to the infrastructure is a specialised organisation, such as BITC (UK)⁵⁸ and the Points of Light Foundation (US)⁵⁹.

The three main organisations in Southern Africa that provide structured programmes to promote corporate support for volunteering are CAF Southern Africa⁶⁰, the Volunteer Centre Cape Town⁶¹, and VSO International⁶² (working in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Tanzania). They provide the following services:

- promoting the benefits of corporate support for volunteering,
- showcasing achievements of employee volunteers (e.g. during the Employee Volunteer Week)⁶³,
- assisting businesses to source community partners and determine community needs,
- explaining different models of involvement, and
- communicating principles of best practice.

As mentioned before, government involvement and public-private partnerships also need to be considered here. Governments could, for example, create tax incentives for companies to participate in volunteer activities, and also utilise the taxes to enhance the developmental work and role played by the private sector. Government could also play a facilitating role by

⁵⁸ <http://www.bitc.org.uk/>

⁵⁹ <http://www.pointsoflight.org/>

⁶⁰ <http://www.cafsouthernafrica.org/>

⁶¹ <http://www.volcent.co.za/>

⁶² <http://www.vsointernational.org/where-we-work/>

⁶³ <http://www.cafsouthernafrica.org/services-evw.htm>

matching CSO needs, gaps in service delivery, and CSR processes.

Quirk (1998:42ff) provides several recommendations on introducing infrastructure to develop corporate support for volunteering in New Zealand:

"An infrastructure that accelerates, manages, and directs Corporate Volunteering needs to fill the following functions:

- **Campaigning and Promoting** – raising awareness of the potential benefits [of volunteering] through proactive campaigning. Promoting successes of early adopters [...] helps to illustrate the business case for involvement [in promoting volunteer action]. It also provides an opportunity to reward companies for being leaders. The tools that could be relevant for campaigning here are: awards for excellence in employee involvement, [...], case studies, and a specialised publication.
- **Advice** – it is not enough to raise awareness. Businesses interested in initiating programmes need support in a number of areas, e.g. what is needed in the community, what will employees want to do, how should they evaluate their programme, etc. This requires expertise that shares principles of good practice. This resource base includes material on overseas programmes, self-help manuals, and an advisory service. [Support is provided, for example, by Charities Aid Foundation Southern Africa.]
- **Brokering** – in many cases, participation is easier through a community broker that sources community projects and partners. A broker can assist businesses to see what opportunities are available and to find something matched to their needs. A broker also gives a fairer chance to smaller groups that have less public profile.
- **Developing replicable programmes models** – Structured programmes require careful planning, piloting, evaluation and refining. Programmes can be developed for sharing.
- **Providing an understanding of the non-profit sector** – To be involved, businesses need to have an understanding of the community and non-profit sector. A catalyst must be firmly rooted in the community so they can assist understanding on issues such as culture and values of the sector, community needs, networks, and key people.
- **Networking** – Linking business leaders through forums to share common interests can share ideas, best practices, and grow enthusiasm.
- **Leaders** – There is a need for leaders who are prepared to take a risk and become role models for those who follow. [...]
- **Training** – In order to raise their ability to effectively use employee volunteers, community groups need training in volunteer management.
- **Funders** – An infrastructure [that supports companies and CSOs to create sustainable partnerships and well managed programmes] takes time and resources to develop. Funders can look to organisations such as BITC UK and Points of Light Foundation US [as well as CAF Southern Africa and VSO] to see that it is a wise investment. The ripples and energy catalysts created far outweigh the costs.
- **Identifying Social Need** – Businesses wanting to be involved in social issues need to have good information on which to base involvement decisions. Government needs to provide accessible information (i.e. not just for their own use) that outlines key issues such as what the current situation is, what the needs are, what the priorities are, where the gaps are. Government, both local and central invests a lot in research and community consultation to determine community priorities and need. Businesses may wish to use this information, and compliment it with its own

sources, to come up with creative solutions to serious social issues” (Quirk 1998:42ff).

Research is required in order to adapt these recommendations to country-specific contexts in the SADC region. This research could for instance include an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats taking existing infrastructure and gaps into account.

Tracey Henry, CEO of Tshikululu Social Investments, suggests that companies need to guard against the following:

1. Responding to personal needs of the volunteer and not the broader community needs.
2. Adopting a ‘shame’ approach, which is based on sentimentality and need alone.
3. One-off volunteer actions such as planting veggie gardens or painting schools without providing ongoing support or imparting the necessary skills.
4. ‘Look at me philanthropy’, which is all about the photo opportunity and not the long-term sustainability of the intervention.
5. A lack of accountability and reporting by volunteers.

6 Conclusions

An examination of corporate support for volunteering in the SADC region has shown that, although there are some networks (such as CAF Southern Africa), there is still a long way to go before support for volunteering is recognised and supported among local businesses in Southern Africa, not only in the corporate, but also in the public and volunteering sector. Among others the lack of substantial research on corporate support for volunteering undermines the development of good practice and policy. The following section outlines some key issues and areas for further discussion and research. Specific recommendations are not given as they will be discussed during the conference.

Key issues for further discussion⁶⁴

- ***Is it just a marketing tool?*** Unfortunately, the focus of some programmes is more on public relations than on people. However, those programmes do not tend to be sustainable as all stakeholders need to benefit. It is important to find a balance between making the company look good and actually benefitting its employees and creating lasting relationships with the community.
- ***Is it volunteering?*** Volunteering is generally defined as unpaid work, done voluntarily – through one’s own will. Now, employees are usually getting paid for their community involvement during working hours. Also, do employees really have a choice to get involved in employer-led programmes given the expectation by senior management and peer pressure? Should engagement in volunteering be included in performance appraisals? Volunteering requires intrinsic motivation – requiring community involvement as a duty can create resentment, which might result in opposite effects from the intended, i.e. loyalty and staff morale.
- ***Is corporate support for volunteering only for big businesses?*** More visible programmes are in large businesses (see case studies). How can some of the models discussed above be adapted to smaller companies? Who should manage these programmes, the HR

⁶⁴ See for example Quirk 1998:28f.

manager or an external specialist?

- ***How to identify key priority areas?*** As mentioned above, it is important that companies engage communities in the assessment of community needs as well as considering activities conducted by other companies in the area to identify key priority areas. Nevertheless, all too often companies choose social issues that are popular and yield positive public relations opportunities. How do we ensure companies tackle serious social issues? What are some of the key priority areas in the SADC region that require attention? HIV/Aids and youth participation are common themes. But how can regional integration be addressed?
- ***Are communities ready for volunteers?*** Managing volunteers costs money and requires significant planning before the volunteers start. This issue is serious as there is a lack of capacity and experience with volunteer management practice in the SADC region as a recent survey in South Africa has shown (VOSESA 2011). Infrastructure to support volunteering is required and needs special consideration (including budget/resources).

Areas for further research

- ***Evidence of corporate support for volunteering:*** In the US and Europe, corporate support for volunteering has a long tradition. In the SADC region, however, the corporate sector has not paid much attention to volunteering as a form of corporate citizenship; or at least it is not well documented. Recent efforts are mainly driven by larger companies, multinationals, and the South African corporate sector. Although some resources documenting corporate support for volunteering in South Africa exist, evidence from other countries in the SADC region is hardly available. Desk bound research and empirical studies are needed to document public awareness, methods and approaches used (best practice), and development potential of corporate supported volunteering efforts in the region.
- ***Impact of corporate support for volunteering:*** As part of CSR and corporate citizenship strategy, corporate support for volunteering has the potential to create a significant positive impact for the business itself, its employees and the communities they serve. Benefits are well documented especially in the US and Europe. Benefits in the SADC region are expected to be very similar. Nevertheless, more research is needed to explore the full impact, particularly for small businesses in resource-limited settings.⁶⁵ Research is also needed to explore benefits of volunteer activities that go beyond beyond EVPs.
- ***Government's role:*** While there is broad consensus that CSR and corporate support for volunteering has a business-driven approach and that the main focus of CSR development is the corporate sector, attention must also be paid to the development and application of CSR from a regional perspective within the framework of other stakeholders, such as governments (Albareda, Lozano, Tencati, Midttun & Perrini 2008). What is government's role in CSR and corporate support for volunteering? How can

⁶⁵ Please refer to Susan Wilkinson-Maposa and Ceri Oliver – Evans, “ Bottom Line or Bleeding Hearts” a chapter commissioned by Trust Africa for inclusion in an upcoming publication “ The State of Philanthropy in Africa” and “Small Businesses giving generously” Business Bulletin, 1 July 2009, pg 22

business, CSOs, and government work together to promote volunteer action towards community development?

- **Infrastructure:** There is a lack of public awareness and infrastructure to promote, direct and manage corporate support for volunteering in the SADC region. Research is needed to develop country-specific strategies to introduce such infrastructure. This research could include an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and should take existing infrastructure and gaps into account. Questions need to be asked about the purpose of this infrastructure, the costs, the parties responsible, the project plan and the time frame.
- **What would attract companies to support volunteering?** Corporate support for volunteering needs a business case.
- **How can costs and benefits be quantified?** In order to develop a business case for corporate support of volunteering, company and community-specific research is required to identify the costs and quantify the benefits (i.e. cost benefit analysis). Costs refer to direct costs (donations) as well as staff time and management costs. Benefits such as staff retention and skills training, as well as increased productivity and business performance, need to be quantified in monetary terms. A study conducted for IBM (US)⁶⁶, for example, found a positive correlation between community involvement and business performance.
- **What are the key ingredients of successful programmes?** Good practice models that work in the SADC context should be shared to derive lessons learnt (e.g. with regard to governance of ECI programmes) and help other companies and communities to design, implement, and evaluate programmes accordingly.
- **Trends in corporate support for volunteering:** Research is needed to explore the trends in corporate support for volunteering. It needs to be examined whether corporate support for volunteering has increased in the SADC region and what the possible reasons could be. Furthermore the implications for the field of volunteer management need to be studied. Questions need to be asked about the motivation of corporate and local businesses to support volunteering as part of their overall CSI efforts and how these trends can guide future practice and policy development.

⁶⁶ Lewin and Sabateur in Lukka (2000:5).

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