

SARAYA

Saving Lives through
Hand Hygiene in Uganda

Saraya, a Japanese manufacturer of sanitation and hygiene products, opened a local subsidiary in Uganda, East Africa, in 2012. Saraya aims to reduce hospital infection rates by manufacturing and selling alcohol-based hand rub, supplemented by education programs for hospital staff.

THE OPPORTUNITY

In Uganda hygiene is a key issue as postoperative infections are the primary cause of death in hospitals. The country also has a high maternal mortality rate, primarily due to incidences of post-caesarian sepsis, an infectious disease. Many hospitals in Uganda have limited access to water for hand washing. By providing hand sanitizer products and related education and training, the Japanese company *Saraya* works to reduce infections – particularly post-caesarian sepsis, acute diarrhea and nosocomial (hospital-acquired) infections.

Inclusive businesses address the 4.5 billion people in the world living at the base of the economic pyramid (BOP) by providing much-needed services and integrating them into their value chains. *Saraya* provides a necessary service by distributing critical health care products at an accessible price, while also providing jobs and sourcing raw materials locally.

THE INCLUSIVE BUSINESS APPROACH

Saraya's approach is to create an inclusive value chain in its manufacturing business, while promoting training and hand hygiene education in Uganda. *Saraya* contributes to local farmers' incomes by procuring bio-ethanol made from locally harvested sugar for its alcohol-based hand sanitizer. The company also trains university graduates as sanitation instructors who monitor use of hand rub in hospitals by healthcare workers. Over 200 hospitals and clinics are now using *Saraya* products. Forty percent of organizations who bought the products also requested Continuous Medical Education, which has prompted *Saraya* to expand its curriculum to include wider education on Infection Control and Prevention.

In Uganda, only 40 percent of hospitals and clinics currently implement hand hygiene practice as part of their standard operating procedures. *Saraya* is spearheading a "100% Hospital Hand Hygiene" project with the goal of best practices becoming part of organizational culture in all hospitals and clinics. *Saraya* is currently also expanding its business into the hospitality industry, where it will focus on improving hygiene in food production to reduce food-borne illnesses.

RESULTS & IMPACT

At Gombe Hospital, one of two pilot hospitals, prior to the project an average of five cases of post-caesarian sepsis and seven cases of infant acute diarrheal disease were reported every month. By November 2012, six months after the introduction of alcohol hand rub, attack rates of both diseases had reached zero. (Source: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2013/html/column/column03.html>)

Forty percent of new customers for hand sanitizer requested *Saraya's* Continuous Medical Education. Thus, *Saraya* plans to expand the CME curriculum to include the full spectrum of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).

Learn More:



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PARTNERING FOR GOOD

Saraya partnered with UNICEF in Uganda to launch the initiative “Wash a Million Hands!” in 2010 to promote handwashing and to reduce child and maternal mortality rates. This led the company to consider expanding into hospital hygiene and distributing their hand rub in East Africa. Together with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and local partners, the company conducted a pilot study in 2012 which found that bundling education with alcohol-based hand rub product distribution reduced cases of infection in hospitals. This study influenced the decision to establish a local subsidiary to make its products more affordable and accessible.

“BOP business does not differ in the basic principles from other business. If the local people need the product, it will sell well, and if they don't need it, it won't sell. We provide consumers with fair-priced products and services that we have put out into the world with confidence.”

Kazumasa Miyamoto, President of Saraya East Africa

RELATED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)



Provide access to affordable, high-quality healthcare through decentralized clinics and mobile health workers

Leverage IT-based solutions to avoid stock-outs of life-saving drugs in rural areas



Expand water & sewage infrastructure to unserved areas

Develop low-cost water filtration systems for end-customers or whole villages and informal settlements



Reduce post-harvest losses through improved value chain management in rural areas

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