

Social entrepreneurship key to maternal and child health in Africa

NAIROBI, Kenya - The Healthymagination Mother and Child Programme, launched in March 2011 by GE and Santa Clara University's Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship to address maternal and child mortality - by supporting African social entrepreneurs operating in the health sector - has taken the first big step toward achieving its objective: selecting the first group of social enterprises that will receive training and mentoring.



Image by 123RF

After a rigorous evaluation process, 17 social entrepreneurs from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia, were selected to be in the programme's first cohort and attend a three-day, in-person workshop in Nairobi, Kenya.

This event packs core business lessons into a powerful three-day event facilitated by senior-level Miller Center mentors and GE business leaders. It is designed to help the social entrepreneurs acquire business fundamentals, improve their strategic thought processes, and articulate a business plan that demonstrates impact, growth and long-term financial sustainability.

“Social innovations and entrepreneurs in the health sector have in recent years yielded sustainable solutions to some of the world's biggest health challenges,” said Jay Ireland, GE Africa president and CEO. “It is for this reason that the healthymagination Mother and Child programme is focusing on training and mentoring social entrepreneurs working on increasing the quality, access and affordability of maternal and child health in sub-Saharan Africa, thereby enabling more women and children to experience better health.”

Thane Kreiner, executive director, Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship, said, “Despite major gains made globally in maternal and child mortality, the levels in sub-Saharan Africa remain unacceptably high. The GE and Miller Center collaboration takes an innovative and highly practical approach to combating this challenge, by providing African social entrepreneurs with the skills and resources they need to expand the positive impact of their interventions.”

“We are excited to work with our first cohort of social entrepreneurs to improve mother and child care in Sub-Saharan Africa. This program builds on GE’s strong track record in bringing innovation to emerging markets while increasing positive health outcomes,” said Robert Wells, executive director of strategy for GE’s healthymagination commitment.

The initial workshop will be followed by a six-month, online accelerator programme, where mentorship will be provided by high-profile Silicon Valley-based executives who have themselves undergone mentorship training by Miller Center. This accelerator and mentorship programme will culminate in a “Premier Pitch” event in Africa where the 17 participants will present their respective enterprises to an audience of potential investors.

Here are the social enterprises selected for the healthymagination Mother and Child programme, along with the countries in which they operate and the social entrepreneurs leading them: Access Afya, Kenya (Dr Daphne Ngunjiri); ayzh, Kenya (Habib Anwar and Zubaida Bai); Health-E-Net, Kenya (Pratap Kumar); Hewa Tele, Kenya (Steve Alfred Adudans); LifeNet International, Uganda, Burundi and DRC (Stefanie Weiland); Live Well Social Enterprise Business, Zambia (Charles Kalonga); Lwala Community Alliance, Kenya (Julius Mbeya and Ash Lauren Rogers); Nurture Africa, Uganda (Brian Iredale); Outreach Medical Services, Niger (Dr Segun Ebitanmi); Peach Health, Ghana (Cobby Amoah); PurpleSource Healthcare, Nigeria (Olufemi Sunmonu); SaferMom, Nigeria (Adeloye Olanrewaju); Telemed Medical Services, Ethiopia (Yohans Emiru); The Shanti Uganda Society, Uganda (Natalie Angell-Besseling); Tulivu Imaging, Kenya (Matthew Rehrig); and Village Hopecore International, Kenya (Anne Gildea).

More information on the [programme](#).

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