

The Organisation of African First Ladies, GE & Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship Join Forces to Advance Health Care Goals in Africa
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Healthymagination Mother & Child program partners convene to discuss how social entrepreneurship can reduce healthcare disparities in Sub-Saharan Africa

The Organisation of African First Ladies Against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA) joined General Electric Company (GE) and Santa Clara University's Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship on June 9 to advance social entrepreneurship to improve maternal and child health outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa.

The First Ladies of Africa were introduced to the healthymagination Mother & Child program, and participated in a roundtable panel that addressed how countries can engage social enterprises to meet U.N. Sustainable Development Goals and improve health care for mothers and children.

In March, GE and Miller Center partnered to create the healthymagination Mother & Child program which trains and mentors social entrepreneurs working on maternal and child health innovations in sub-Saharan Africa. The program combines GE healthcare product expertise with Miller Center's proven Global Social Benefit Institute (GSBI) methodology for accelerating social enterprises.

"We are encouraged by the potential of social entrepreneurship, and the healthymagination program in particular, to help reduce maternal, newborn and child mortality rates in sub-Saharan Africa," said Her Excellency Madam Monica Geingos, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia. "The well-being of the mother is key to ensuring the survival of the child, because children who lose their mothers are less likely to celebrate their second birthdays. The mission and goals of this GE and Miller Center project align perfectly with the mission and goals of OAFLA."

"The healthymagination Mother & Child program is part of a multi-year global investment by GE to improve global health outcomes, foster regional economic development and develop local human capital," said Robert Wells, Executive Director of GE's healthymagination commitment. "We have always tried to stay close to new thinkers and partner with companies that have innovative ideas and move fast to solve major challenges of our time. We are proud to support the development of healthcare innovations and partner with the Miller Center and OAFLA to mentor the best minds to reach this goal."

"Miller Center has aligned our time-tested curriculum and successful track record in training, mentoring and accelerating social enterprises globally toward achieving as many of the 17 U.N. SDGs as possible—an approach we feel is the most direct path toward making a tangible difference in the lives of poor and underserved women and children in Africa and elsewhere," said Thane Kreiner, Ph.D., Executive Director of Miller Center for Entrepreneurship. "We are delighted to partner with GE healthymagination, and to continue interaction with OAFLA, as we all work to apply social entrepreneurship to our important shared goals."

Improving maternal and child health care in Africa, the world's second-most populous continent, is a critical global health priority. Over 450 women in Africa die every day from pregnancy-related complications, and children in sub-Saharan Africa are more than 14 times more likely to die before the age of 5 than children in developed regions. Social entrepreneurship, with its dual focus on positive social outcomes and solid business practices, is uniquely suited to address these issues.

Social entrepreneurship is considered a crucial catalytic factor in alleviating many social and environmental ills because it provides solutions in local contexts that enrich the communities where they are located; is sustainable; invests in human capital; and delivers a replicable, business-focused model that helps organizations to scale.

Participants in the New York luncheon included: Her Excellency Mrs. Ban Soon-Taek, spouse of UN Secretary General; Her Excellency, Mrs. Monica Geingos, First Lady of the Republic of Namibia; Her Excellency, Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou, First Lady of the Republic of Niger; Her Excellency Mrs. Dominique Ouattara-Folloroux, First Lady of the Republic of Cote D'Ivoire; Deborah Elam, president of The GE Foundation and Chief Diversity Officer for GE; Carol Evans, founder and former CEO of Working Mother Media; Dr Stefan Peterson, Director and Chief of the Health Section, UNICEF, Thane Kreiner, Ph.D.,

Executive Director of Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship; Katherine Lucey, CEO and founder of Solar Sister; Jennifer Reingold, senior editor at Fortune magazine and Robert Wells, Executive Director for GE's healthymagination commitment.

About the Organisation of First Ladies of Africa Against HIV/AIDS

The Organisation of African First Ladies against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA) is an organization established by African First Ladies in 2002 as a collective voice for Africa's most vulnerable people including women and children infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. OAFLA has since expanded its mission to work broadly for the health and empowerment of women, children and adolescents in Africa, including the improvement of maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services thereby supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About GE and its healthymagination Commitment

GE (NYSE:GE) is the world's Digital Industrial Company, transforming industry with software-defined machines and solutions that are connected, responsive and predictive. GE is organized around a global exchange of knowledge, the "GE Store," through which each business shares and accesses the same technology, markets, structure and intellect. GE's healthymagination commitment is about better health for more people. Through its healthymagination efforts, GE continuously develops and invests in innovations that deliver high-quality, more affordable healthcare to more people around the world. For more information about the GE healthymagination commitment, visit <http://healthymagination.gehealthcare.com/>

About Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship

Founded in 1997, Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship is one of three Centers of Distinction at Santa Clara University. Miller Center accelerates global, innovation-based entrepreneurship in service to humanity. Its strategic focus is on poverty eradication through its three areas of work: The Global Social Benefit Institute (GSBI), Impact Capital, and Education and Action Research. To learn more about the Center or any of its social entrepreneurship programs, visit www.scu.edu/MillerCenter.

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