

Report on the Africa Shared Value Leadership eSummit

On the occasion of the Africa Shared Value Leadership eSummit 2020
02 – 05 June 2020

Day 1: Creating Shared Value in a Time of Crisis

Day 2: Transforming Healthcare in Africa

Day 3: Young Entrepreneurs Shaping Africa's Future

Day 4: Unlocking the Power of Innovation

Report By

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Introduction and Context

Shared Value is a business concept that focuses on solving pressing societal problems through business solutions, all whilst being profitable. The lines between business and society are getting more blurred as we become more sensitive to the needs of mankind with the expectation that business can no longer take a back seat in driving societal change. This report highlights the importance of the Shared Value concept that was discussed over the course of four days during the Africa Shared Value Initiative eSummit held between 2nd – 5th June 2020. Businesses currently find themselves at the crossroads of changes in their business strategies due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report will discuss the impacts the pandemic has had in shifting these business mindsets. Topics covered in this report include: leadership in a time of crisis, transformation of healthcare, entrepreneurship driven by the youth and the power of innovation.

Day 1 – Creating Shared Value in a Time of Crisis

Overview

The world finds itself in unprecedented times with COVID-19 and the drastic impact it has had on businesses and society. The devastating effects of the pandemic on economies worldwide were far from predicted and the effects it has had on livelihoods will be felt for years to come. Now, more than ever, communities and businesses need to pull together for the post COVID-19 recovery efforts. Prof. Mark Kramer's Keynote stressed the urgency for economic recovery plans which should involve the private sector in order to ensure job creation is on the agenda. He further points out that society and the impact that businesses have on them need to be re-analysed. Benefit to society will need to be at the forefront of business strategies.

Financial inclusion has always posed as an important building block to development and Shared Value. Financial inclusion will hold an important role in the economic recovery of nations post COVID-19. Financial services have been inaccessible to the vast majority of societies in Africa which has spurred innovations such as M-Pesa to attempt to bridge this financial inclusion gap as Ojiambo indicates. Post COVID-19, traditional financial institutions will need to re-strategize in order to become more accessible for those who have been significantly hit

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financially by this crisis. As Nethengwe stresses, the barriers to entry will need to be reduced. Adopting Shared Value principles will be paramount to the success of financial inclusion in a post pandemic world.

The question that leaders across the continent at the CEOs Virtual Lunch are asking themselves is “do we focus on the economy or on healthcare?”. Ndegwa states that it cannot be one or the other, rather the economy needs to be kept ticking along whilst we ensure the safety and health of the people. Kallner and Ruzibiza indicate that flexibility in leadership to pivot based on the ever-evolving situation is vital. One common thought amongst leaders is that disaster preparedness will be necessary going forward to ensure that future economic risks from such pandemics are mitigated.

Way Forward

The post COVID-19 world will never be the same again and a number of recommendations for a more inclusive society have been shared. Collaboration and communication is vital across organisations and industries as Williamson points out. Working together across sectors and industries will take countries a step closer to economic recovery across the continent and the world. Financial inclusion needs to be on the agenda and improving financial literacy for those at the bottom of the pyramid will be vital to ensure they can sustain themselves in future crises. Full details of the two discussion sessions can be found in the Session Reports titled “Virtual CEO Lunch: Reflections on Purpose-Driven Leadership During a Time of Crisis” and “Financial Inclusion after COVID-19”.

Day 2 – Transforming Healthcare in Africa

Overview

Healthcare has never been more vital than in the current times we find ourselves in. With the COVID-19 pandemic hitting countries across the world, Gonzalez places a spotlight on the delivery of healthcare in a rapidly evolving pandemic. African countries in particular have been put under pressure to analyse their healthcare services in order to keep this pandemic at bay. The world will never be the same in the aftermath of COVID-19 and the transformation of healthcare is paramount in order to ensure we are equipped with the tools in advance of the

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next pandemic. Furthermore, the structural gaps that the pandemic has highlighted provides an opportunity for African countries to work towards mitigating them.

A constant theme that has been highlighted is the need for cross-sector collaboration. Beverly indicates that we can only achieve universal health coverage through cross-sector collaboration. She further highlights the importance of partnerships and business transformation as fundamental ways to address serious health and social issues. This is further supported by Broomberg and Ihekweazu who stress the importance of radically changing the way we finance healthcare with cross-sector partnerships at the centre of successful transformation. Broomberg cites the Solidarity Fund in the Western Cape, South Africa, through which the private sector provided vital financial support to the government to tackle COVID-19.

One of the shining examples of a successful practical implementation of healthcare transformation is the case of decentralisation in Rwanda. Both Gonzalez and Ngamiye who is the Rwandan Minister of Health detail how a community first response has led to increased accessibility of healthcare services for the Rwandan masses. The development of healthcare infrastructure at a local level and improved financial management are key to the sustainable delivery of quality healthcare with prevention at the centre of the agenda. Sanders and Wandera detailed the approach Abbott is using to create health posts in an attempt to bring the services to the communities with the aim of being accessible within 30 minutes.

Way Forward

A number of valuable recommendations were made with regards to the transformation of healthcare in Africa. Both Ngamiye and Gonzalez emphasised on effective decentralisation of healthcare with service delivery being driven by community health workers. Access to healthcare is also dependent on transforming how it is financed with Ihekweazu suggesting strategies for health insurance that are affordable and accessible such as tax-based methods. Cross-sector collaboration was supported by all speakers and it is paramount that lessons from pandemics such as COVID-19 and the Ebola outbreak are taken to chart a way forward that is not only inclusive of the public, private and third sector but also of countries across common regions. Full details of the discussion session can be found in the Session Report titled "Future Perspectives on Healthcare Transformation in Africa".

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Day 3 – Young Entrepreneurs Shaping Africa’s Future

Overview

As the youngest continent in the world, Africa’s future is set to be driven by the youth. Over the next few decades, a large proportion of the continent's workforce will be under 30 which poses both opportunities and challenges. Building a pipeline of future leaders has never been more vital than in a post COVID-19 world where economies have fallen and growth will need to be driven. Capacity building to ensure the youth of the future can take on the challenges of leading businesses and governments will be of utmost importance to ensure the sustainable future for Africa. Mwangi indicates that the future of national development sits in entrepreneurship which very well may be driven by the youth therefore restructuring of loans and financing will be significant to encourage successful entrepreneurship.

Youth-driven growth and development has already successfully occurred as Shyaka points out the case of Rwanda building herself up in the aftermath of the Genocide. This was predominantly driven by the Rwandan youth and currently, a large proportion of the Rwandan entrepreneurship landscape is made up of young entrepreneurs. Shyaka further highlights that government support given by the Rwandan government to the youth in order to prosper is a vital cornerstone of success. Mugabo focuses on detailing the opportunities that COVID-19 has presented the youth with, such as the space to innovate and take advantage of their ability to adapt to an ever-changing environment. Agricultural and Energy based businesses have been identified as key sectors for opportunity based on the needs of most African countries.

The Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offers a wide range of opportunities to involve the youth in the conversation. With the future of the continent being young, a seat at the table for the young is paramount. Gadzikwa highlights that the youth of every African nation must be involved to contribute to the implementation of the AfCFTA in order to ensure longevity and sustainability for this bold vision of an economically unified Africa.

Way Forward

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Recommendations by panelists focused around the capacity building of the youth. Shyaka suggests that more resources need to be invested in the youth in order for them to lead innovation and champion the concepts of sustainability and Shared Value. A sentiment echoed by Ndayishimiye. The future is young and it is already here, providing the opportunities and support for youth driven solutions to Africa's problems starts now and will continue in the aftermath of COVID-19. Full details of the discussion sessions can be found in the Session Reports titled "Can the Free Trade Area - AfCFTA - be the answer to Africa's Economic Recovery?", "How the Younger Generation Can Secure Our Future" and "Young Leaders Creating the Africa We Want".

Day 4 – Unlocking the Power of Innovation

Overview

The last decade has seen innovative leaps and bounds from the invention of the smartphone to self-driving cars. Technological advancements have opened up a world of opportunity for innovation to thrive. M-Kopa represents a brilliant case that has been able to leverage both the advancements in digital payments as well as solar panel technology to create an innovative and unique offering to its customers. Damberger highlights how data and consumer behaviour can be analysed to better understand payment preferences which has led M-Kopa to create flexible micropayment schemes. According to Papetti, Enel Green Power has embedded the SDG13 Action to Combat Climate Change as part of their 2-year strategy.

Innovation can also be spurred by necessity such as during the COVID-19 crisis. This combination of technology and necessity has resulted in a tremendous increase in innovation across the globe whether it is innovations in how organisations operate, or new products and services to support societies dealing with the devastating economic and social effects of COVID-19. Noach highlights how during this pandemic, Discovery Limited began offering online services for consultation as well as promoting non-medical interventions. Nobanda of Nedbank discusses how they went as far as launching an App which connected people to service providers such as plumbers and grocery shops. These innovations were all spurred on by the barriers that were brought on by COVID-19 and were created to ease the lives of communities that were trapped in various states of lockdown and quarantine.

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Organisations that are purpose driven are well positioned to make a considerable impact on communities and the environment they exist in. Barnard, Loiseau and Stilten shared the Purpose Playbook which presents the three cornerstones of Strategy, Operations and People that organisations should focus on in order to be purpose driven. The Purpose Playbook lays out the steps an organisation can take in order to bring Shared Value to the core of an organization's business.

Way Forward

A number of exciting recommendations were shared by panelists to spur innovation, especially on the African continent. Collaboration between manufacturers was strongly supported as a way to boost productivity especially during times of crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. A mindset shift also needs to happen where innovation is core to every step of a business' operations. Adopting the Purpose Playbook developed by Barnard, Loiseau and Stilten would provide a basis on which organisations can begin to embed Shared Value principles into their strategy, operations and people. Full details of the discussion session can be found in the Session Report titled "Innovation Spurred by the COVID-19 Crisis".

Conclusion

It is incredibly evident that the COVID-19 pandemic has devastated economies and societies across the world. Now, more than ever, the Shared Value concept poses a way out in order to secure a sustainable future for businesses and individuals alike. Over the course of four days, two key recurring themes were identified: collaboration and adaptability. In order to achieve economic recovery as well as to prepare ourselves for future pandemics, collaborations across sectors and industries is vital. This should be in the form of collaboration across industries to secure businesses as well as collaboration across public and private sectors to effectively offer healthcare services. Adaptability to a changing environment has been proved necessary due to the unforeseen effects of COVID-19 and with a youthful future, Africa is poised to take on the challenges and opportunities.

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