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Positive Effects of Corporate Social Responsibility on Youth Development
A Case Study of the Royal Swazi Sugar Corporation in Swaziland

A Capstone Paper

By

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POL 495

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Introduction

What is corporate social responsibility (CSR)? How does it directly affect the youth in the areas where corporations come in to set up factories or farms? When one thinks of corporations operating in Africa, only those examples from the news come to mind, and they are all negative. One example is the recent strikes at the Marikana Mines in the Gauteng province of South Africa due to unfair wages and sanitation issues in the camps where employees live. I intend in this capstone to paint a picture of a corporation in Africa that strives to work towards best practices, and to talk about the youth who benefit from their measures. While living in one of these communities, I gained a rare insight that one cannot report with a mere visit.

The Royal Swazi Sugar Corporation (RSSC) is a company that has been operating in the lowveld¹ of the Kingdom of Swaziland for almost 30 years. What you may find on a drive through the country in winter may shock you. The estate of Simunye is located on the main road between the capitals of Swaziland and Mozambique, Mbabane and Maputo respectively. Most of the way is dusty red, with barren trees, but not Simunye. Like an oasis in a red desert, the lawns are perfectly manicured year round. You see teenagers walking around in fashionable clothing, and signs directing you to a country club. You would not imagine that you were in rural Africa, but you are.

The RSSC maintains Simunye, Mhlume, and several other villages, known as estates, in the northeast corner of Swaziland. Its hands extend into everything from employment to community development to education. In 2012, the three RSSC high schools were ranked in the top 10 for results of form 5 (American equivalent of grade 12), the Swazi equivalent of grade 12 (Times of Swaziland 2013). One would think that this meant that many Swazi youths finish form

¹ A lowveld (also known as a bushveld) is an area of low altitude in eastern Swaziland (Collins English Dictionary 2012). The country is divided into three velds from east to west; low, mid, and high. The highveld is much higher altitude and mountainous, not sustainable for growing sugar cane the way the humid lowveld is.

5, and go on to tertiary education² and good jobs. The RSSC would surely hope so. It invests a lot in the students who go attend the schools in the area hoping for them to succeed, using them as a potential employment pool for future leaders of the company.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Who does CSR benefit the most? One can argue that it is mutually beneficial between the company and the stakeholders. The definition of a stakeholder is “a party that has an interest in an enterprise or project. The primary stakeholders in a typical corporation are its investors, employees, customers, and suppliers. However, modern theory goes beyond this conventional notion to embrace additional stakeholders such as the community, government, and trade associations” (Investopedia 2013). Companies may pursue CSR policies that contribute to development, because in the end it can generate more profit for them, help them to enter markets that they would otherwise have trouble entering, and give them a competitive edge (Idemudia 2011). It is the stakeholders who legitimize the field of CSR, for whom without, there would be no judge of the responsibility that the corporation is taking (Avetisyan and Ferrary 2013).

Some use CSR as a way to rebrand a tarnished image or just keep their good image to the public. Some theorize that having a good CSR record can protect a company in case of negative publicity (Vanhamme and Grobben 2009). In the cases of environmental disasters, corporations are compelled to at least claim that they are doing damage control so that they will not lose business. One example of an organization maintaining a good image is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and all of the charities that it donates to and sponsor globally. This helps keep up the image of Microsoft, as Bill Gates is the figurehead of the company.

² Tertiary education is British English for “taking place after secondary school, such as at university, college, etc”. Tertiary comes from Latin meaning “third” (Cambridge Dictionary Online, 2014).

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Skeptics only see “the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B” when considering the usefulness of CSR (Kerr 1975). This theory suggests that employers who believe they can buy their employees’ hard work by rewarding them before they even do it is a foolhardy idea. This model of business states that instead of incentivizing good work, the managers must be hard on employees; they must succeed, and then be rewarded after they do so. This is the capitalist spirit, that in which the work place is merely a place of work, and corporations are not responsible to employees for anything. In fact, skeptical managers believe that profit is minimized while providing for employee “happiness,” which truly cannot be quantified. In the end, skeptics believe that a business will always choose profitability over CSR when the budget is strained, or cannot be made up for in profits (Idemudia 2011).

One of the major expectations of governments on corporations in terms of CSR is that those corporations care for the environment that is affected by their work. Coincidentally, this is also the expectation of multi-national corporations (MNCs) on the government (Idemudia 2011). In smaller companies, owners feel responsible for their surroundings, and are more likely to make sure that the environment around the workplace is safe both for living and working (Demuijnck and Ngnodjom 2013). In larger corporations, where they feel disconnected from the communities and environment, polluting is a bigger problem.

Another form of CSR is community development. MNCs build infrastructure in developing countries that help themselves as much as they help the communities. One example is the case in Nigeria of oil MNCs building roads, hospitals, and community centers (Idemudia 2011). An issue here though is that infrastructure is only kept up at the discretion of the companies, and local governments are often unable or unwilling to share the burden of upkeep. Many of the roads built in developing countries are built for the purpose of transporting goods out

of them. While some MNCs who are directly involved in local areas take care of the infrastructure matters on their own, some larger companies such as Walmart also feel that they can ignore CSR policies, because the in-country small producers who sell to them should have to shoulder that burden (Idemudia 2011).

In the past couple of decades, there have been many cases of corporations which claim to engage in CSR, but do not. The case in south Durban, South Africa, of the petrochemical refineries, and other industries that are pollution intensive, have shown corporations do little to protect those in nearby neighborhoods. Even after negotiating the Good Neighborhood Agreement (GNA) which stated that pollution from the refineries were found to cause a higher than usual prevalence of leukemia among children, corporations continued with business ignoring the warnings. It claimed in the media that it was helping people, when in fact few were receiving compensation for their health issues (Lund-Thomsen 2005). Another case is the British Petroleum oil spill, where the company has set up the British Petroleum Compensation Fund to those affected by the spill, but now it is denying help to those affected, stating that these claim are fraudulent (Sky News 2013).

But do all corporations who are involved in CSR only think of the bigger picture? Culture and history can often have an influence in the way the business responds to stakeholders. In Brazil, some say that Catholicism is the moral driver for corporations engaging in development. The Christian Association of Business Executives (ACDE) is also pushing forward the agenda for sustainable development. In South Africa, the need for social justice in a post-apartheid government is pushing some corporations to have a conscience and to fight for others who may not have the voice to fight for them (Idemudia 2011).

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the need for an emergence of CSR in the “Global South” is due to companies focusing all efforts on the North because that is where the money is, and also the people with the loudest voices to stand up for their rights.³ This leaves countries in the South to experience a much lower standard of living as corporations are forced to stop exploiting in their own backyards, and move their operations to the South. There is growing literature on the interactions between multinational corporations and communities, but few that deal with domestic corporations. Initiatives between MNCs and communities often fall short, because corporations provide what they think the people need, rather than asking them what would benefit their communities. The structural and policy issues dealing with underdevelopment are not discussed (Idemudia 2011). What people need in the United States and Europe may not exactly be what people need in the developing world. One example is an anecdote that a friend told me that he experienced as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia. There was a situation in his village where an NGO came in and built taps for all the families so they would not have to go down to the river, and carry back 25 liter jugs of water on their heads. The NGO had good intentions, but the project was pointless. It turned out all of the women still went to the river daily to collect their water, because it was their time to socialize. Using taps at their houses made them feel like less of a community. Thus, studies must be conducted to evaluate whether local corporations who grow up in the same environment as those they are serving are doing a better job or not to provide for the stakeholders of their companies.

Corporate social responsibility is an initiative that Swaziland is taking seriously to improve the standard of living for employees of Swazi companies. There is a national competition among businesses for CSR initiatives in Swaziland. In 2013, the RSSC succeeded in

³ Global South is the new politically correct term for what used to be called a third-world country. While many of these countries are still above the equator, the direction of south is referring to south of Europe and the United States, excluding Australia and New Zealand.

winning that award. Also in 2013, the global student business competition Junior Achievement (JA) added a category requiring each JA company to complete a CSR project, which allowed Swazi high schoolers competing to experience what CSR is. The idea is that students would be taught to give back to the communities in which they are creating businesses.

In most developing countries, youth neither know what CSR is nor feel its benefits. Like with the examples of refineries in south Durban or BP oil spills off of the Gulf Coast, children are often either directly or indirectly harmed by corporations. In some cases, they are used for labor such as child mining or farming. They are often left behind in rural areas while their parents seek work in larger cities, unable to take their children due to bad living conditions and little time to raise their children. This leaves large populations of youth without parents to learn from.

Corporations Serving in Africa

Arabs were the first to establish trade routes across Africa on their route to the East. Along the route, they tried to convert many Africans to Islam. The need to spread Christianity instead of Islam throughout Africa was used by Europeans as one of the main reasons for entering and eventually colonizing Africa (Khapoya 1998, p.112). Exploitation of Sub-Saharan Africa began by the Portuguese in the fifteenth century as a stop along the trade route between Europe and India. Seeing the opportunities at hand, Britain, Denmark, France, and the Netherlands were soon to follow. They traded various goods from Asia and Europe in exchange for African slaves (Irele and Jeyifo 2010, p.267). At first, the European powers were only interested in trade, but by the nineteenth century, European nations began chopping and dividing parts of Africa to be their own colonies. In 1885, the Berlin Conference officially drew the lines

between the new colonies of Europe, most of which were owned by the British, French, and Portuguese (Khapoya 1998, p.115).

The colonial powers wasted no time to begin exploiting Africa for its natural resources. They saw the land as rich in resources and the people as a source of cheap labor. Food crops were neglected to make space to grow more cash crops to be exported onwards to Europe, India, and America. At that time, they were not building factories there, because they wanted factories to stay in Europe. It was made plain that the European powers did not want the continent to become industrialized at that time (Khapoya 1998, p.134).

Africa was literally rich in opportunities. Copper, cocoa, cotton, diamonds, rubber, palm oil, tea, and tin were among the raw products that were grown or mined in Africa that couldn't be reproduced at the time in Europe (Hunt 2009). Most of these were state-led enterprises. The discovery of gold and diamond deposits in what is now the Republic of South Africa soon led to the introduction of corporations into the area. One of the first was the De Beers Mining Company, owned by Cecil Rhodes. The state of Rhodesia—now Zimbabwe—was named after him (Hunt 2009).

The modern industries in Africa such as sugar, mining, cocoa, and timber emerged during colonial times, but remain even now. Many of these industries have had issues with compliance to environmental and health standards. In 2012, the miners at the Marikana mines protested for increased wages due to national inflation, and again in 2013 for better sanitation in the informal settlements they live in bordering the mines (Seshoka and Ikalafeng 2013). In places such as Cameroon, logging companies pay the fines for illegal logging, because it is cheap to do it illegally and pay the fines than if they only logged on legal lands or complied with the legal amount of cutting (Demuijnck and Ngnodjom 2013). While Tanzanian law prohibits the use of

child labor in gold mining, it turns its head when corporations do it. There is an estimated one million children worldwide working in the mining industry, according to International Labor Organization (Coursen-Neff 2013).

Sugar cane was originally from Southeast Asia, and was brought to other parts of the world originally by Arab traders. An ideal growing climate, sugar cane was brought by European colonial powers first to Mauritius, and then spread to the mainland. By the 1930s, much of Southern Africa was producing sugar cane. Some of these countries by the names they are now called are the Kwa-Zulu Natal province of South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. With decolonization came many issues to the sugar business, such as funding for operations and civil wars. Apartheid in South Africa, which began in the 1960s, led to it becoming internationally isolated by governments who wanted them to reverse their racial policies. At this time, many sugar cane operations became nationalized (Richardson 2010).

With the end of formalized apartheid in 1994, South African businesses decided to take over the sugar market with aggressive expansion.

“Illovo Sugar emerged as a major force in the late 1990s when it was created out of the ‘unbundling’ of the South African group Barlow’s and quickly acquired majority ownership shares of the privatized operations in Malawi, Mauritius, Swaziland and Zambia. Alongside this investment, Illovo and two long-standing sugar firms – Tongaat Hulett of South Africa and Companhia de Sena – also targeted the rundown, state-owned industries of Mozambique and Tanzania for rehabilitation. By 2008, these three companies accounted for two-thirds of sugar production on the southern African mainland. Such was the scale of expansion that, in the case of Illovo, its non-South African operations actually contributed over 80 percent of its profits” (Illovo 2009).

To this day, South Africa remains the production heavyweight of the region (Richardson 2010).

Despite the larger operations of South Africa, today the RSSC produce two-thirds of Swaziland’s sugar and a significant quantity of ethanol. The company manages 15,607 hectares of irrigated sugar cane on two estates leased from the Swazi Nation, and outsources a further

5,018 hectares on behalf of from independent farmers, which collectively deliver approximately 2.3 metric tons of cane per season to the Group's two sugar mills. Since property ownership does not exist in Swaziland, as all property belongs to the King, the company must continuously lease the land that they are using. All of these operations collectively produce about 450,000 tons of sugar per season.

Swaziland is always being compared to South Africa, its much bigger brother without whom its GDP would be a fraction of what it is today (Forbes.com 2013). There are many differences in the ways South Africa and Swaziland developed socially in the twentieth century, and a lot of that is in part to the apartheid regime in South Africa. Swaziland was a British colony until 1968, at which time it was granted independence and returned leadership back to the King Sobhuza. Swaziland did not face many of the race issues that South Africa did, and Waterford Kamhlaba College just outside the capital Mbabane was the first high school in Southern Africa to accept a multiracial student body (Waterford.sz 2013).

Corporate social responsibility is not mandatory by law in either South Africa or Swaziland. Even though it is not a law, when corporations abuse their powers, governments step in and enforce CSR practices on the corporations. This is mostly in cases where the environment is being degraded and the quality of life of nearby neighborhoods is being destroyed.

Corporations have a history of building their factories in disenfranchised neighborhoods where they feel the people do not have a voice, and apartheid is a further element to the problem in South Africa. Governments in Africa can only go so far to make laws, but it is up to the morality of the corporation at the end of the day whether they will comply, or try to find the easy way out of a mess. Therefore, civil rights groups also exist in these areas to keep both governments and corporations in check, and they are the voice for those who do not have one. While not always

successful due to lack of numbers or funding, they continue to make sure that environmental standards are being complied with (Lund-Thomsen 2005).

Integration

In the academic world, the acronym IRB stands for “Institutional Review Board”, but in Peace Corps Land, it stands for “Intentional Relationship Building”. In Swaziland, I was a Youth Development volunteer. Peace Corps defined to Youth Development volunteers that the age range of “youth” would be from 0-25. This gave us a very wide range and ability of projects and people to reach out to. The information about the RSSC and sugar belt schools for this report was gathered through two methods. The first was by observing my community throughout the first year at site (between August 2012 to October 2013), and by talking to community members. The second was through personal interviews with RSSC staff at the two offices of Community Services and Public Affairs during the month of October 2013. Following that, I conducted my analysis by referencing the framework of the “40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents” conducted by the Search Institute.

Integration is the first three months of a volunteer’s time in his or her permanent site where they are just meant to get out there and meet their communities. My integration into the community of Ngomane was essential for me in learning about the issues and challenges that Swazi youth face for my job as a Youth Development volunteer. The recommendations of integration for volunteers begin with, but are not exclusive to Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) and Community HIV/AIDS Toolbox (CHAT). All of these methods we were taught about in pre-service training.

PACA includes:

- Community mapping
- Daily activity schedules
- Seasonal calendars

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- Appreciative inquiry

CHAT includes:

- Surveys
- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups
- Shadowing members of the community
- Attending community events
- Meeting your neighbors/Conducting a homestead census (survey)

Peace Corps encouraged most volunteers to begin their stay with homestead surveys, but both I and many of the other volunteers realized early on that that would not be the best way to get to know our communities. I decided the best way was to get to know the people who were interested in getting to know me. I began by shadowing teachers both at the primary school and the high school. Initially, the primary school was my main assignment, but I decided that there were many projects I could do at both schools. Not many of the teachers were receptive to my shadowing them, but I found that those who allowed me to shadow them became quick allies of mine.

Another way to meet people outside the school was to meet people around the community along the streets. The head teacher of the primary school took me around to meet the mayor, security chief, and several other important people in the estate on my first day. As a result of that and also just seeing me around, many people knew of my presence within a week of my arrival. I would go to the shops in the market areas, and introduce myself to the shop owners. I spent many hours just sitting at the shops, meeting people who came in. People had a lot of questions as to who I was and what I was doing in Ngomane. I had to make it clear to people that I came to volunteer my time and not my money. During my stay, people would often come knocking on my door, asking for a job from me. I had to explain that I was living in the same houses they were, and not in the rich part of the estate. I was not an RSSC boss, and thus could not provide them with jobs.

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Right after arriving at my community, I found out that my primary school was going on a trip to Durban. The Peace Corps Country Director allowed me to go, since attending school trips was part of my duty as a volunteer. This trip turned out to be invaluable as both teachers and students (35 of them) were able to spend time and become comfortable with me. Staying in a room with the head teacher and six other female teachers allowed them to get to know me closely. I feel that integration with the primary school would not have been as easy had I not had such an opportunity upon first arriving. Even the students who I met during the trip came back, and told all of their classmates about me. I arrived in between the second and third term, but most of the students had already heard about me from their friends by that time.

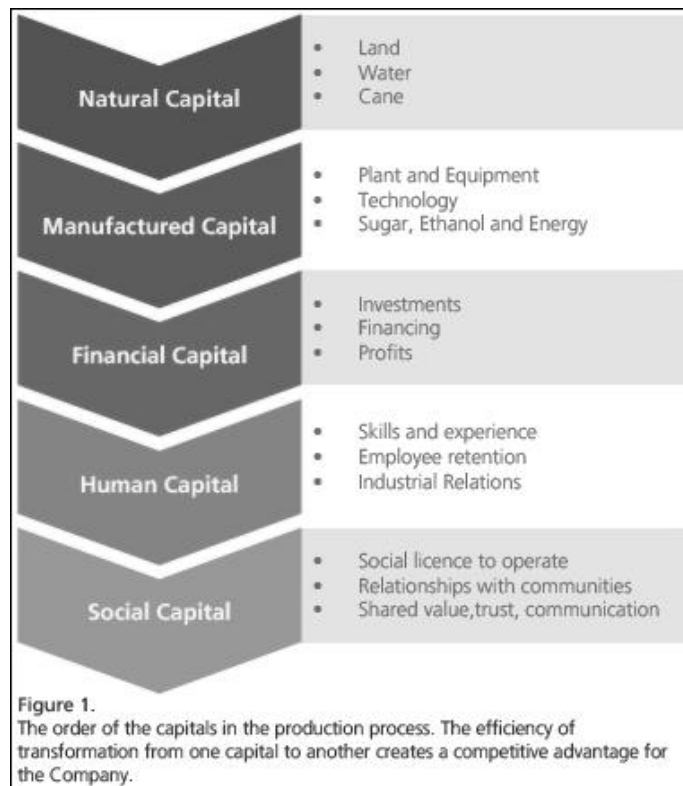
At the high school, I used common interests in music, movies, and dance to become close to the students. There are many talented students at Ngomane high school, and providing extra platforms for them to perform helped to get them to open up to me. I held a rap battle in October of 2012 in Ngomane, and there were ten rap performers, as well as several dancers who performed between rap acts. The event was popular enough with the students that we were able to hold a similar event in Simunye a month later, a larger sugar estate not far from ours.

I always had an open door for students to come to my house when they needed me. Students came to me for advice with their issues; help with homework, or to get movies or music from my laptop. The young ones enjoyed coming over to watch cartoons or to draw, since I kept crayons and coloring books for them. The day I knew I was integrated into my community was when a 19 year old boy I knew came to me in December of 2012, and trusted me enough to ask me to procure for him the morning after pill, which he gave me money to buy. It showed that he felt I was more open minded than most Swazi adults, and he could ask for my help in this sort of matter. Most of the things I have learned about my community, I learned from kids. Kids love to

talk, and they see everything. Through their eyes, I was able to experience the estate in a way that most adults still never have.

Areas of RSSC Involvement in Communities

Shortly after moving to Ngomane, I noticed how involved the RSSC was in the daily lives of all of the people on its estates. Implementation of CSR began formally in the RSSC estates in the late 1990s and continues on through today. Five percent of the company’s budget is allocated to CSR initiatives and projects. The RSSC objective is to “create an enabling work environment for viability and sustainability of business” (Motsa 2013). It also has CSR initiatives that include the neighboring areas to care for communities displaced to make room for sugar cane growing. This allows the RSSC to maintain a good relationship with the region. The graphic titled Figure 1 from the RSSC 2013 Integrated Report shows all of the aspects that the company values, and feels they are responsible for.



“2013 Integrated Report”. RSSC.

The company considers this responsibility not to be a drain on resources, but an investment in the future of the company and stakeholders. According to its own research, the company has found that CSR policies help an organization to obtain new business. There is a higher percent of customer retention due to the business' reputation. Offering a good living standard allows the RSSC to be an employer of choice as it can attract, retain, and maintain a happy workforce. Innovation and learning is generated and enhanced when people are enjoying their work (Motsa 2013).

Public and Private Schools in the Sugar Belt

There are four public primary schools, three public high schools, numerous preschools, one private primary for lower grades (1-3), one private primary for higher grades (4-7), and several private preschools in the sugar belt area. Despite being government schools, the standard of the schools is quite high. A former biology teacher at Ngomane High School explained to me that had he not worked for a high school of such a high caliber, he would not have had the opportunity to go on to do his MBA in Taiwan as he is currently doing. Both Mhlume and Ngomane high school public speaking teams are invited to competitions with top private and public high schools, most of which are from the two largest cities in the country, Mbabane and Manzini. This is an honor, as the schools who send the invitations only choose other schools that they feel are worthy of competing against them, and not just on the basis of having a public speaking team.

It is difficult for any other school in the country, rural or urban, to compete with the best one. That is Waterford. Waterford has existed for 50 years, and even during times of apartheid, wealthy families escaping South Africa would send their children to this school. It has a long reputation of excellence. Any student who completes the two year International Baccalaureate

(IB) program is awarded an automatic scholarship to study at colleges in the United States (www.waterford.sz, 2013). I personally know students who have completed their education in sugar belt schools, and then wrote scholarship exams well enough to attend the IB program at Waterford on full scholarship.

The RSSC does its best to motivate students at their schools to excel. The RSSC provides form 5 students with career fairs and school fairs so that they can see what awaits them after graduation. They also throw an annual awards ceremony for students who complete their tests well in Math and Sciences. Form 5 students are taken on a subsidized trip to Cape Town in South Africa for a chance to experience life in a big city for a week. Schools in other rural areas have nowhere near as many machines in the offices, such as computers and scanners. The school library is larger than most in the country with over 2000 books. In 2012, at the form 5 prom, the key note speaker was the human resources manager for the RSSC. The company has even campaigned to the American government organization Peace Corps to place four volunteers in the region to work with the students, and 2012 was the first year the company convinced it to put volunteers in the sugar belt.

Math and science is prized by the RSSC, because it believes that it can use students who excel in these areas in the future. The RSSC schools push their students to compete in the science fair every year. In 2013, Ngomane High School walked away with half of the 16 prizes awarded in the Lubombo region science fair. One of the students even went on to win in the national science fair with her research project about the positive effects of lemongrass. Also in 2013, the RSSC for the first time held an award ceremony for all of the form 3 (American equivalent of grade 10) and form 5 students from the three high schools who received a B or higher in their external exams the previous year. The awards included a small monetary reward. Upon hearing

this at school, the current form 5s took this as further motivation to work hard and achieve those grades.

The RSSC is a sponsor of Junior Achievement in Swaziland. All three of the RSSC high schools participated in JA in the 2013 school year. The RSSC gave a grant to all three high schools to help them meet the start-up capital goals to work on their projects. In the end, Ngomane High School won first place in the national competition for their business which



Me with the Ngomane High School Junior Achievement Team after they won first place.

involved making door tags for schools and businesses. They also won the prize for Best Corporate Social Responsibility Project by teaching agricultural methods to five child-headed households⁴ in a village just outside of the sugar belt. Lusoti High School won Most Innovative Product and Mhlume High School won the award for Best Bookkeeping at the 2013 Swaziland Junior Achievement Expo as well. In 2010 and 2011,

Lusoti won first place at the Expo, and in 2011 their product went even as far as to win the 2011 Africa Expo. To quote the Public Affairs Manager during the liquidation event for the companies, “Working with JA is a strategic initiative to attain sustainability. The kids are the future leaders of the company” (Nyembe 2013).

Many of the youths still spend multiple years after completion of school doing nothing. Others still are repeating their high schooling for a second time in hopes of better form 5 results. The RSSC is trying to bridge this gap by offering students concrete options for what to do after

⁴ Households run by the oldest of a group of children, due to parents and/or grandparents either having died or left to find work.

graduation. Since 2011, it began sending form 5 students from the RSSC schools to a career fair to give students an idea of what they can do after finishing school. Guidance counselors in the schools are trained to also do career guidance for students. At the 2012 Ngomane High School prom, the Human Resources manager agreed to come to be the guest speaker. She spoke about certification and degree programs both in Swaziland and South Africa that would help students to get hired in various departments of the company.

Students at all of the schools in Ngomane look forward to class trips that are both educational and fun. All of these trips are subsidized to make it affordable for students to experience. Preschoolers are treated to a trip to the Matsapha International Airport and Mpaka train station, the only functioning airport and train station in Swaziland respectively. This is to see what they are learning about in their transport unit at school. At the primary school, any student who can afford it, can go on a school trip to Durban. In Durban, they are able to see such things as museums and the Indian Ocean, which many of them have never seen before. The high school students receive the best deal of all, with a trip to Cape Town for the form 2s (American equivalent of grade 9) and form 5s. Known as the Mother City, the cultural richness and diversity of Cape Town provides a unique experience that most Swazis would never even have a chance to experience. Students see aquariums, parliament, various museums, the famed Table Mountain, and the Atlantic Ocean. They learn about Nelson Mandela, and his struggles during his internment at Robben Island prison. Upon returning to Swaziland, the high school students are given questionnaires to fill out by their teachers, which include questions relating to each subject they learn in school.

Teachers from any of the RSSC schools who choose to send their children to these schools receive a substantial discount. For Thembelisha Preparatory, the private school in the

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sugar belt, teachers receive a 50 percent discount for their children, allowing them to get an even higher quality education at a reasonable price. At the public schools, the teachers also receive a discount, varying by school. This is a further incentive to attract quality teachers to the sugar belt schools, so that those hiring would have plenty of options. Also, it relieves a burden for the teachers who do have children in the schools. Apart from school fees, teachers may live in the RSSC housing rent free. This includes everyone from preschool teachers up to the high school.

There are several situations in which the RSSC supports students financially, or finds organizations locally and internationally that would. OVC is a term that stands for orphaned and vulnerable children. This term covers children who have lost one or both parents, usually due to AIDS. The RSSC pays the school fees for many OVCs until the age of 18, who are living in the estates with extended family members. Others who face poverty, the RSSC helps them to find sponsors who will pay for their education. In Swaziland, one example of a sponsor program is Young Heroes, an organization that was actually started by a former Peace Corps volunteer, and it helps to pay for school fees and other things a child may need to grow.

Working with the schools was my primary area of involvement as a volunteer in Swaziland. Thus, as Youth Development volunteers, I considered myself and the other three volunteers in the sugar belt, to be extensions of the corporate social responsibility of the RSSC. I was involved in a wide variety of projects both formally and informally with the youth. I worked with the primary school, high school, one of the preschools, and also in my house.

In the high school, I did not teach any classes formally. I mostly worked with extracurricular activities and library duties. I coached the public speaking team, teaching everything from research skills to how to give an impromptu speech. There was another coach, but as she was the head of the English department, and often busy, I took charge of training the

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team. I also provided her with many resources about research skills and how to write a good speech. My other main extracurricular was Junior Achievement, which is done by form 4 students (American equivalent of grade 11). I assisted mostly with the creative process in the beginning, and public speaking for the presentation at the end of the year. In the library, I acted occasionally as librarian, but my main purpose was to teach library skills to the students. Even those in form 5 do not understand the basic organization of the library, so I realized in order to keep it managed well, the students need to understand that books are divided by fiction and non-fiction, and in alphabetical order. Also, I was able to procure a 400 book donation from the Country Club. The club had the books sitting in a dusty storage room, and I convinced them that those books would look much better in my library.

In the primary school, I did both teaching and extracurricular activities. I taught English using songs for grade one and two. The songs often had themes that teach phonics or other basic concepts in the English language. There was a library in my community, but students were never able to check books out before I arrived. After a long process, I finally got the permission from the head teacher and school committee. The last few months of my Peace Corps service were spent training the librarian to check books out. I also was teaching library skills to the students who didn't even know that books have an order in libraries. After school, I worked with the Girls' Empowerment Club launched by SWAGAA (Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse) on Tuesdays and an English Conversation Club on



Third grader Sanelsiwe showing off her diary, given to her by SWAGAA to record her thoughts.

Wednesdays. At the Girls' Club, the girls learned life skills and how to improve their self-efficacy.

My house was also utilized in many ways by the youth. Before the primary school allowed the youth to check books out, I had a box of primary school level books in my house that the students could come to take. During the months of December 2012 to February 2013, my living room served as a recording studio for several aspiring rappers. Some kids came to my house for homework help, which I encouraged them to do. On weekends, many of the younger kids came over to watch Disney movies at my house and color in my coloring books.



Students lined up with the books they chose at my house, waiting for me to check them out.

Housing, Clinics, and other Facilities in the Sugar Belt

Housing is provided to all employees of the RSSC. It is estimated that the population of the sugar belt is about 30,000 people, 90 percent of whom are not RSSC employees (Motsa, 2013). Many are family members of employees, but some are contractors working with the RSSC. Others simply choose to live in the area because it is a good place to live. While in the RSSC employees are able to live comfortably with their families, sugar cane cutters in Mozambique live in cramped quarters that seem even smaller when their wives and children come to visit (Richardson 2010). All houses come with front yards that are adequate space for a personal garden. Due to the warm climate of the lowveld, households are able to farm their plots year round. Crops grow well and fast as a result of the accessibility of clean water piped into every household. Fruit trees that grow mangos, avocados, papaya, bananas and more, line the

streets all over the estate. A family that is committed to their plot can grow at least some form of fresh vegetable for their house year round.

The estates have a presence of both the Royal Swazi Police and RSSC security. In Ngomane, many of the residents told me that the presence of both have led to a large decrease in crime in the estate in the past ten years. Crime is slightly larger in Simunye and Mhlume because more executives and wealthy employees live in those areas. Regardless, the police are effective at protecting the people. They even patrol the roads in the areas between estates to make sure that people are not driving drunk. The security guards in the estates patrol all day, making sure the children and women especially are safe.

As previously mentioned, Swaziland is a country plagued by an HIV epidemic, with the most recent SHIMS study showing the Swazi population between 18-49 to be 31 percent positive (ICAP 2012). In many rural areas, Peace Corps volunteers see illness and death on a regular basis. One volunteer who lives in a rural area with a high HIV rate was surprised upon visiting my community to see that people look relatively healthier, even though the HIV rate is even higher in the sugar belt partly as a result of disposable incomes and a frequently migrant community. All facilities and services meant for company employees are open to the greater community, and the utilization rate of non-RSSC employees living in the sugar belt averages 70 percent (Motsa, 2013).

One explanation for this is the access to clinics where people can get tested for HIV and other STDs. Those who are positive can receive access to ARVs (anti-retrovirals), the medicine necessary to keep people alive who begin to show symptoms of AIDS. ARVs are very expensive in the United States, but they are provided free in Swaziland. Despite this, many who live in rural areas do not have access to ARVs because they cannot afford the bus fare to get to their nearest

clinics (Lalvani, et al. 2010). Thus, those in the RSSC estates are managing their HIV to the same standards as those who live in the larger Swazi cities. At the moment, there are 1,870 patients receiving ART (anti-retroviral treatment) in the RSSC clinic, 593 of whom are employees (RSSC 2013).

Many of the deaths in Swaziland stemming from AIDS are compounded by tuberculosis (TB) infection. The combination of TB and AIDS in Africa is a dangerous killer, because a person does not have enough antibodies to fight both at once. Eighty-three percent of patients in Swaziland who have TB are co-infected with HIV (RSSC 2013). The RSSC clinics each have a wing specifically for TB patients. Throughout the clinics, UV lights have been installed in almost all rooms occupied by patients which is said to reduce the risk of transmission. The clinic makes sure to comply with all World Health Organization standards so that the spread of TB can decrease in estates. This can lead to a decrease nationwide, because those who live here come from rural areas around the country.

Community Development

There are over 300 employees scattered throughout the various sectors of the RSSC who are trained to be peer educators. This is in response to the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic (Motsa 2013). The RSSC assists with HIV/AIDS education in the work place, in the estates, and also in the surrounding communities. Each division of the company has its own, such as agriculture division, office workers, and even the cane cutters. Even the schools have teachers trained as peer educators. The youth of the estates benefit because these peer educators are parents and grandparents as well. So are the people that are affected by the peer educators. This is a volunteer position, and there is an annual celebration to thank the peer educators for their hard work.

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Prior to the year 2012, there was no presence of the Peace Corps in the sugar belt. The RSSC fought hard for volunteers to be placed in these areas, arguing that their youth came from the same rural areas as those in which other volunteers serve. It claimed that their youth would benefit just as much from Peace Corps presence as any other community. Youth in sugar belt communities often face similar challenges to kids in rural communities even though it may seem that they have more money and fewer problems. Volunteers in more rural areas often balk at the problems I tell them my students face, when their problems are often more basic, such as having enough food to take with their ARVs—the medicine a person needs to take to fight AIDS in the late stages. Youth in the sugar belt come from the rural areas, and often go back to those places on the weekends to be with their families. The things they learn from the sugar belt volunteers, they may be able to take back to their own communities. Finally, in 2012, the Peace Corps assigned volunteers to these communities for the first time. I was assigned to Ngomane, as well as three other volunteers were placed in Tshaneni, Simunye, and Mhlume estates respectively.

The RSSC is involved in many campaigns in the estates to help teach community members the truth about HIV in hopes that prevalence rates will drop. It is engaged in the national campaign to circumcise as many males as possible of all ages. In rural parts of the country, vans come around to collect men and take them to clinics for circumcision. In the sugar belt, men can go to any of the clinics to get this procedure done. The procedure is free of cost, and the reason for the push is due to many studies that claim that being circumcised reduces the chances of HIV infection by up to 60 percent (Gray et al. 2007). Another new campaign in the estates is the push to get expectant fathers more engaged in family planning. The reason is that there is a major disconnect of males from the birthing process and child care. The campaign

wants fathers to be more responsible in the family planning in hopes that they will be around for their children more, especially if they are not married to the expectant mother.

In September of 2013, the company held an “HIV Social Behavior Change Communication Awareness Campaign” event in the Ngomane estate. The company sponsored a soccer game as a way to draw the crowds to the event. The RSSC also provided DJs for the event, so that people would hear that something is happening and come to participate, as it is usually done where word of mouth is the only way to hear about events. Throughout the game, peer educators were on hand to offer HIV testing and counseling services for those who needed them. There was also a competition at the end of the match for community members to answer questions about safe sex and win prizes.



One of the teenage boys I trained to show other boys and men how to put on condoms correctly.

I decided this event was a good opportunity to do my first condom demonstration in my community. The previous night, I invited and trained three former male students in condom demonstrations at my house. On the date of the event, I brought the boys with me to the tents where the HIV testing was happening. In front of the tents, I gave my penis model to the boys to do the demonstrations. An RSSC employee came over, and

she taught the female condom as well just using her hand. I provided enough condoms for whoever wanted to try putting the male condom on the model to be able to. I also gave away female condoms to men and women who were interested in trying it after the lesson. The boys, the RSSC employee, and I were also on hand to answer any questions the community members

posed. The demonstrations were a great success, and many commented that they had learned at least one new thing about how to properly wear a condom. Even my students who I trained at my house told me that they never knew that HIV could be transmitted through semen.

The RSSC sponsors all types of athletic and cultural events, as well as national duties, for those living in the estates (Motsa 2013). It offers transportation for partially or fully subsidized rates. Some examples are all of the school trips that the pre-schools, primary schools, or high schools may go on, whether in or out of the country are partially subsidized both for transport and activities. Also when sports or culture teams go to compete within the sugar belt or in other parts of the country, the RSSC often offers their buses at no cost to the team. With inability to afford transport being one of the major reasons of a lack of participation in sports and other activities nationwide, it shows that the RSSC understands this, and does not want it to stand in the way of its community members receiving the experiences that they deserve.

Economic Empowerment

Community Services is a sector of the RSSC that deals with all community issues. It takes economic empowerment of community members very seriously. Every five years, the RSSC conducts an HIV Prevalence Survey, and the 2012 report found that the prevalence among women in the lower socio-economic status is much higher. This is due in part to the transactional relationships that women are forced to enter into in order to support themselves and their families. As a result, the RSSC decided that by trying to economically empower these women, prevalence rates would go down (Motsa 2013). According to Community Services Director Faith Motsa, the company is trying to teach unemployed women skills to start businesses under company supervision. It provides the work, creates a union for the women, and then brings in experts to teach them how to run their businesses.

Community Services brings in Swaziland Women's Economic Empowerment Trust (SWEET), a women's poverty alleviation group that educates and empowers women to start their own businesses. It also called upon Inhlanyelo, a small business fund that offers small loans to uneducated Swazis who may not even be literate. Inhlanyelo works with Small Enterprises Development Company Ltd. (SEDCO) and SWEET to teach people how to design their own business plans, and how to run their businesses. These organizations also teach financial literacy so that the people engaging in small loans will be able pay them back and start saving for their own futures. The RSSC is currently conducting a survey of what businesses the women may be interested in so that they choose to invest in a sustainable business model.

One example in the estates is the uniforms that each laborer in the company wears. It is a large job to supply all of these uniforms, so traditionally they have been purchased from Samson and other companies whose business it is to provide uniforms. Community Services is proposing a job for the women who live in the RSSC estates to sew the work uniforms that employees require. This would both bring a second income into households where the wife is unemployed and keep the money inside of Swaziland.

Environmentalism in the RSSC

The most common form of corporate social responsibility we see globally today is environmental responsibility. This is a result of the many legal repercussions that would be enacted if corporations take advantage of the environment, and leave people living in those areas to suffer the effects of the company footprint (Lund-Thomsen 2005). Youth are affected directly by environmental degradation because it can both ruin their health and teach them to have no respect for the environment. I interviewed Jabu Myeni who is the Environmental Officer for the RSSC for information on their environmental efforts. In our interview, she told me that the

RSSC complies with the environmental certification standards for the ISO14001 each year. ISO stands for the International Organization for Standards. The 14001 is a criterion for which companies can comply with international standards. It provides an assurance to both the company and stakeholders that environmental impact is both measured and improved (ISO.org 2013). There is an officer in each department of the RSSC that has the job of making sure that the company is complying to standards.

The RSSC monitors and controls all aspects of waste that come out of their factories, and also from residential areas. In the sugar belt, there are two large factories, in Simunye and Mhlume. Officers monitor the stack emissions coming out of the factories so that the air in the sugar belt is not too polluted. Effluent is waste water that comes out of the factories from processing the sugar and also from the plant chemicals mixing with the water in the fields. Water purification plants make sure that this water is cleaned, or else properly disposed of.

Water and energy levels are also carefully watched by the RSSC so as not to be wasted. Sugar cane is a water intensive crop. As a result, the RSSC is always looking into new technology to effectively use the water that is available. Water sprinklers are currently being phased out in exchange for a drip water system that reaches the root of the plant more effectively, and is also not blown away by wind. Coal stoves used to be a common feature of sugar belt households, but they also have been phased out and replaced by gas stoves. Families are given one gas cylinder a year to cook in the house with. The estates are lucky enough to have street lights, which are non-existent in rural areas. The RSSC is in the process of changing all the bulbs in houses and offices to LED bulbs which are both more energy efficient and last longer.

Trash pickup is something we take for granted in the United States. As a graduate student at Illinois State University, I did a survey on the feasibility of recycling pickup in the towns of

Bloomington-Normal. In most of Swaziland, people do not even have trash pickup, let alone recycling pickup. Rural Swazis dig trash pits, and burn their trash when it accumulates. In the RSSC estates, there is a weekly trash service. It comes on different days depending on estate, but Ngomane is serviced on Mondays. Youth take this for granted, but this is really much better on their lungs than burning trash. Recycling is now being introduced at offices, schools, and market areas in several of the estates. Some of the wealthier residential areas also have been given recycling bins, but that is not common. Recycling pickup comes on Thursdays on all of the estates.

Simunye has one of the two proper landfills in all of Swaziland. The cost of the landfill in Simunye was E10,000,000 (approximately \$1,000,000). The only other one in the country is in the capital, Mbabane. What makes a proper landfill is that it is carefully lined to avoid contamination. There are ponds for collecting and cleaning contaminated water that may gather in the ground when it rains. At the landfill, all of the trash is separated, and taken to the proper disposal sites. Most of these are in Matsapha, the industrial area in the middle of Swaziland. Some of the trash is even taken to South Africa, which borders the sugar belt to the north.

The RSSC even tries to engage the communities with environmentalism causes. There are signs all over the estates that say “Keep (Estate Name) Clean”. Students litter every day in the school, and thus the following morning it is their responsibility to walk around the school and clean up the trash. A large event was held during the day of Earth Hour. Besides honoring the event with encouraging people to turn their lights off for the hour, they bused in primary and high school students from all of the estates. These invited school children were asked to come and recite poetry about what it means to them to save the earth.

Setbacks to RSSC, School, and Parental Efforts

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As teenagers, students lack the motivation to take advantage of all of the opportunities that their parents, teachers, and the RSSC may be trying to provide them. Since students have three tries in Swaziland to complete high school, some many not take it as seriously as if they had to get it right the first time. Many of the students at the RSSC high schools are not completing their form 4 and 5 years for the first time. Teachers try to motivate students to work hard, but they struggle to connect with the youth.

Due to the quality and standards of the school, not all students can afford to pay for the tuition of the schools that the RSSC serves. In the United States, a student must attend school in the district that they live in. In Swaziland, students may study anywhere they please as long as they can afford it. As the RSSC schools are government schools, this means that there are students at the RSSC schools who live outside the sugar belt. Also, there are students who live in the sugar belt who go to school in more rural areas where their parents can afford the fees.

Students who are unable to pay school fees on time at the beginning of each term are sent out of school until their parents or guardians can pay. This often means that children of working parents who are unable to pay the fees wander the streets of the estates for days. This is not productive as the students are missing days of class, and will be left behind the rest of the students. This is the way that it happens nationwide, but the RSSC should come up with some sort of fallback plan in a situation like this. Since it hopes to maintain a good image, especially in terms of the schools, there should be something in place to make sure students do not miss school even when they cannot pay.

Punctuality and keeping meetings is also a big issue that the RSSC faces. As one of the largest corporations in Africa, it is the responsibility of the RSSC to show its good business practices to the people that it serves, and not just business partners. The company is well known

to cancel events at the last minute with the schools, leaving the youth untrusting of the RSSC to keep its promises. There were two such occasions where I was involved with the schools that the RSSC cancelled events that it delegated to the already busy schools to plan at the last minute.

One of the events was for Earth Day. The RSSC was planning to come to Ngomane to do an event focusing on picking up litter, and keeping the RSSC estates clean. Students both at the primary and the high school were planning for the event. Both schools were busy at that time, using the time they usually have for practicing for sports season to practice speeches and plays. If it were not for the head teacher of the primary school calling to ask for the start time, they would not have even known that the RSSC had backed out of the event at the last minute.

The RSSC also promised a business liquidation event for their three Junior Achievement teams. The event was cancelled twice, and apparently the company is known to do this every year since this is a busy time for them. One of the JA facilitators for Lusoti High School said that one year the liquidation event was pushed back 11 times, and never ended up happening. This year, it finally happened on the third try, on October 7, 2013. This sort of irresponsibility, especially from an established corporation to an upstart company shows the wrong sort of business ethics. If the RSSC is intending to be a model for JA companies in the sugar belt, it should be more responsible and not let these students down.

The estates of the sugar belt report the highest HIV rates in Swaziland (RSSC 2013). Unfortunately, the official numbers are not available to the public, but this is a very troubling problem for the youth when they start to become sexually active. Since sex education is not being taught to these kids, and those under 18 cannot take free condoms from free condom dispensaries around the estate, they risk contracting the virus. If the RSSC cannot make a push for sexual education in schools, the estates will continue to suffer for it. Young women have the

highest reported prevalence both in the sugar belt and nationwide. Teenage girls are still dropping out every year due to pregnancy, often impregnated by older married men. Successful girls' empowerment clubs and sex education in schools could do a great deal to reverse this trend.

Analysis

Despite the setbacks, the RSSC has worked hard to provide youth in the estates with positive ways to grow and develop. Using the developmental assets provided by the Search Institute for youth aged 12-18, I will explain how the RSSC is contributing to the development of youth in their estates. It asserts that these are the building blocks for young children grow up healthy, caring, and responsible (Search Institute 2013).

In regards to the first set of assets known as Support (see Appendix 1), both the company and community try to provide support to these youth. A caring neighborhood (asset 4) and caring school climate (asset 5) are evident. Whereas most rural areas are spread apart, estates are divided into streets where everyone lives nearby. But unlike in cities, families are given garden space in front and behind their houses to grow some food to sustain them. In general, the nation of Swaziland considers itself to be one tribe, and thus has the sense of one big family. In the estates, I have witnessed a very strong bond between neighbors. They are able to depend on each other for everything from sharing the food in their gardens to watching after each other's children. The fact that workers are able to have subsidized or free housing on the estates allows them to bring their children along instead of leaving them in rural areas where they cannot keep an eye on them and help them grow. Also, the schools on the estates allow these youths a far better education and more opportunities in the future. These kids would not have that same opportunity if they were left behind while their parents went to work on a mine in South Africa.

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Overall, parents feel safe to allow their children to play in the streets because there is a constant presence of security guards who patrol the estate all day (asset 10). Even so, as per Swazi culture, parents are much more protective of their daughters, and at a certain age begin to keep them indoors to help with cooking and cleaning, but also to keep them from single male cane cutters who wander the estate when they are not working.

Another part of the caring neighborhood is the access to clinics nearby. If we consider the RSSC to be the overarching neighborhood, then all of the amenities that we find in the RSSC estates show that it too is a caring neighbor. It provides nearby clinics so that those who fall ill do not have to travel to other areas to find care. It offers family planning workshops once a month, and anyone is welcome to attend them showing that the company wants mothers to give their expectant children the best care possible. The only thing that the clinics do not provide yet is a birthing service, so women must travel one to two hours to give birth, depending on the estate they live in. After babies are born though, they are able to get all necessary shots at the RSSC clinics. This prevents them from illness and future long-lasting defects.

The school climate also works hard to nurture the youth. RSSC has taken measures to make sure that the sugar belt schools comply with the new laws that make corporal punishment illegal, but it still commonly happens here as much as it does throughout the rest of Swaziland. Despite this method of “tough love”, sugar belt teachers take keeping their students out of trouble to heart. Many of them will go on the occasional rant about safe sex or the dangers of taking drugs during class time. This shows a genuine concern for the well-being of their students. They welcome any students during morning assembly to come forward, and speak or recite poetry about life skills issues. At Lusoti High School, the school set aside time in the schedule for the volunteer to teach life skills to the form 3s and form 5s. At Mhlume High School, the

volunteer is frequently asked to come to classes to give motivational speeches for success to the students. While there was no time given for me in the schedule to do such things, I was permitted when I requested to speak at morning assembly on topics ranging from staying hydrated for sports matches to the dangers of sexting.

Many parents show an interest in involvement in their children's schooling (asset 6). Twice a year, open days are held at all Swazi high schools. Parents are to come, and teachers give them the student marks, as well as comments on performance. Teachers at the schools take the time to give constructive comments, instead of rushing the parents along. Despite that many parents are working during the school day, those who cannot make it often send a non-working relative or neighbor in their place. There are few students who do not have anyone come for their grades. Parents are also strongly involved in the running of the school. Parent meetings are held once a month at Ngomane High School and attendance is high. There is even a tradition to incentivize Ngomane teachers to excel with an annual five day trip to Durban paid for by the parents, for which the RSSC subsidizes transport.

The section titled Empowerment is lacking in Swaziland overall, because children are seen mostly as a source of labor to households and schools. Children are often the ones who are made to do the cooking and cleaning, as well as fetching groceries from the market. Children are not empowered in any way at home or in school. In the schools, students are sent to fetch anything a teacher needs, whether it is from the next room or from the teacher's own house. Despite that, kids in the sugar belt appear to have slightly more autonomy than their rural counterparts. Both the RSSC and the Swazi government can make rulings on that to schools, but there is little that they can do to enforce it.

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The focus on English as the formal language of education in Swaziland also does little to empower the youth as Swazis. Students who use siSwati in school are promptly beaten in large numbers at the start of each term. Students are asked to spy on each other and report to teachers. By the end of the first week of a term, the number of “offenders” dwindles from 80 on Monday to about 30 on Friday. Most documents to parents are in English, and this doesn’t help the students, parents, nor school because many parents cannot read English. This is a misguided attempt at globalization enforced by the government, and strengthened in the sugar belt, to make students proficient in both English and siSwati from grade 1. Since all instruction is in English, you find that students who do not understand English well struggling through all of their schooling.

In terms of female youth empowerment, the RSSC invited SWAGAA (Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse), an organization focused on providing counseling and a safe haven for victims of abuse into the sugar belt. SWAGAA comes to work with the schools and also in the RSSC Community Services office. It worked to establish Girls Empowerment Clubs at all of the high schools and primary schools in the estates. The organization sends college students that it has trained to set up and lead these clubs. Every week they deal with different topics, such as human trafficking or transactional sex relationships.

Another safety (asset 10) that RSSC provides is not allowing child labor. Neighborhood boundaries (asset 13) insist that for children to develop properly, they must be kept safe by their neighbors. While this would seem a given in the United States, children are commonly exploited for labor around the world, and across Africa. One example is the child workers in the Tanzanian gold mines (Morna 2013) where children do not go to school, but instead work long hours in the mines. Children sometimes as young as 8 are put to work in the mines and the work hazards are

numerous (Coursen-Neff 2013). The RSSC would not allow such things as it complies with a strict code of safety of employees that includes not allowing children to operate machinery or cut sugar cane.

The school motto of Ngomane High School is “Excellence in All We Do”, and that motto really shows that the RSSC and school have high expectations (asset 16) for performance. The RSSC provides incentives for students to excel in school, and reward the schools and teachers when they perform well. Head teachers’ offices in all of the RSSC schools are filled with awards throughout the years that their students have earned through sporting and education competitions. Education is taken very seriously, and especially grade 7, form 3, and form 5 students who take external national exams at the end of the school year are kept for several hours past the end of the school day. Teachers sacrifice their free time to review with the students so that they would be prepared for those exams.

Creative activities (asset 17) and youth programs (asset 18) are encouraged by the schools. All of the schools are quite competitive in cultural and sports events. Every year, the three high schools compete in sports, and have a big rivalry about it. Culture day often happens at the high schools on the last Wednesday of each month. The kids come to school in their traditional clothing and make traditional foods at home to bring to school. During times of the year, choir teams form in some of the primary and high schools. Ngomane High School is known for hosting school events just for the enjoyment of students often at the middle and end of the school years. They invite students to perform choreographed dances, sing, rap, and recite poetry. They understand that with hard work, they sometimes need to give students the chance to unwind.

Swaziland is a strong self-affirming Christian nation. Thus religious community (asset 19) is easy to come by for youth. Many students are involved in SU, the Christian school club, where

students of all denominations can meet and talk about religion and God. This is both in primary schools and high schools, and they usually meet once a week. Many community members do not just go to church on Sundays, but on various nights of the week. The RSSC and churches even bring in religious motivational speakers occasionally to lead church events.

The internal assets are not easy to quantify. It seems like everywhere else, youth vary in terms of self-esteem and motivation. Regardless, the RSSC works hard to make sure that the youth who live in the estates have a positive view of personal future (asset 40). It has put many different assets into students' paths to make sure they have the opportunities should they decide to work hard for their personal success.

Reflections

I am really lucky that I received a chance to peek into a world that few outsiders ever get a chance to be a part of. Usually, employees who have the means to live outside of a work camp will choose to do so because conditions and sanitation in camps often leave much to be desired. The RSSC has gone out of its way to build something both livable and desirable for its employees. While it is effectively a work camp, the sugar belt villages cannot be visibly labeled as such. Youth have more freedom to live their lives in more rural areas. They are more in touch with the outside world around them. Many of them are already connected to the internet, and are looking for ways to express themselves.

I would like to think that this is all thanks to the Community Services department of the RSSC, and the RSSC's allowance of funds for Community Services to enact their projects. It shows that even a huge corporation with hands all over the world could improve the standard of living for employees and their children by having a strong Community Services team. The RSSC put schools in the sugar belt, allowing parents and children to live together, instead of leaving

children at home in the rural areas with grandparents or in child-headed households. This gives those children a chance to grow and learn from their parents, and also to receive the love and nurturing that it needs. While many children in the rural areas do not see one or both of their parents for long stretches of time, sugar belt kids see their parents together and it gives them a more healthy view of what a relationship looks like.

Swazi youth right now who are watching hip hop and African house music videos are seeing images such as excess wealth and women depending on men to get it. I am worried that many of my students are getting blinded by this image, and are going to fall down the path to procuring many things they cannot afford and going into debt. Most of these youths live with their parents or aunts/uncles who previously to living in the sugar belt had lived in extreme poverty. I hope that they can help to keep these kids grounded, and not too fixated on money. These kids now have spending money compared to their rural friends because their parents now earn discretionary spending money that they can give to their kids. In many cases, this has caused the youth to spend outside their and their parents' means. In some cases, they resort to extremes to afford new things on a regular basis. I myself tried to talk to these kids about excess, and trying to spend money they do not have, but to no avail.

But at the end of the day, the fact that they even have to ability to think freely and extra money to spend is all because of Community Services. I cooperated and worked a lot with them on my projects. Director Faith Motsa had an open door policy for all four of the sugar belt volunteers, and she was always happy to lend a hand or an ear. She listened and helped implement and fund some of our ideas for the youth. She also gave great ideas for what we could do in our communities (long before we even arrived). To use a current popular term, we became part of her "boots on the ground". She was constantly planning things to try to motivate students

to study. Her and Community Services' ability to pull money out of the RSSC into community projects for education and health will have a huge impact I expect on the lives of these children. These youths have no idea how lucky they are to have this extraordinary group of people with who are focused on the development of all Swazis. The Community Services personnel are a group of socially-minded Swazis who are looking out for their own people, and doing what they can to help raise them out of poverty and illness.

In the figure on page 13, the bottom arrow is social capital. While the theory of "social capital" may have many critics, the fact that their business model includes it is a big indicator that it is at play here. The theory of social capital in relation to community development was not invented, but expanded upon, by Robert Putnam stating that social capital is the expected collective or economic benefits derived from the preferential treatment and cooperation between individuals and groups (Putnam 2000). You can see it at play here because the company cares and wants it to be real. Concepts like social capital and communism can be pipe dreams, but they work on small scales when in a community that wants it to work.

While some other corporations only try to build trust among stockholders, the RSSC is also building trust among shareholders. These shareholders' lives depend on the graces of the RSSC and what it would be willing to give. The RSSC thrives and is a respected company in Swaziland because of its best practices. The mines at Marikana are proof that a company does not need to provide sufficient living standards in order for poor people to come and work and live there for a small wage. The RSSC allows people the dignity of living in nice houses with potable running water. There are no protests of unfair conditions. People are merely grateful for an opportunity to live and work in the area. They have built a great reputation in Swaziland as a business people would want to work for. Their community outreach and school events show how

much they are about the youth of Swaziland. It is a strong cycle of trust between the people of Swaziland and the RSSC. The RSSC in turn benefits by having the good graces of the King, a large pool of candidates to choose from who have graduated from the high schools in the sugar belt, and public support. Everyone benefits when they stop and consider each other as humans, instead of just what they can get out of each other. In result, they get even more out of each other, harmony and strong work ethic.

Conclusion

Corporate social responsibility has shown itself to be a mutually beneficial relationship in the relationship between the Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation and the people of sugar belt, having a trickle-down effect on the youth who live there. Those who live in the area known as the sugar belt have a reputation around the country for having a relatively high standard of living compared to any other area outside of the main cities (Mbabane and Manzini). This in turn draws willing and motivated employees to the company, ranging from laborers to skilled workers to management. Those who wish to continue receiving the benefits that the RSSC has to offer continue to work hard for the company, and for that the company also runs successfully.

One suggestion for future study is to investigate whether or not CSR in Swaziland has an impact on the fight to reduce the prevalence of HIV spread in Swazi youth. With all of the international and local aid NGOs and organizations working in Swaziland, are more corporations willing to also get involved to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS?

Youth who live in the sugar belt estates benefit directly by the fact that their parents have jobs in this area, and thus can afford to go to school in the area. This paper has shown the ways that youth benefit from what the RSSC has to offer. When former students of RSSC area schools go on to excel in the world of work, the recognition comes back to the company whether those

people return to be employees of the company or in other sectors of work. The invisible hands of the results of the RSSC area schools are visible everywhere. I saw it when I learned that my doctor who lives and works in Mbabane, the capital, had graduated from Ngomane High School. I saw it when I met former Waterford pupils on break from their university studies in the US telling me that they started high school out in Lusoti or Mhlume. The youth graduating from the high schools now are graduating in a difficult time where HIV rates are soaring and so are the unemployment rates. Lucky for them, the RSSC is more than willing to provide a safety net for them to fall back on should they need it. This type of responsibility to the youth goes above and beyond what is common of CSR initiatives globally, and the Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation sets a good example.

It is hard to quantify or even qualify the energy and enthusiasm I have encountered especially at the RSSC Community Services office. These people work so hard to serve their community, and it is evident. It is motivated mostly by a vision for the future and fear of what will happen if the prevalence of HIV grows in Swaziland generally and the sugar belt specifically. It is their enthusiasm and hard work that assures me that these kids' futures are in the right hands. While some corporations operating in Africa may be accused of violating human rights, the RSSC does not only comply with international business and environmental standards, but goes out of its way to provide for the people who live in the area. While no company is perfect, it is a true model for both Africa and globally for how to maintain a happy and healthy population and workforce. Thus since the development of youth is tied to this, their development is also stronger.

Appendix 1

40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents Aged 12-18 External Assets⁵

SUPPORT

1. Family Support | Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. Positive Family Communication | Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
3. Other Adult Relationships | Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
4. Caring Neighborhood | Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. Caring School Climate | School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. Parent Involvement in Schooling | Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school.

EMPOWERMENT

7. Community Values Youth | Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. Youth as Resources | Young people are given useful roles in the community.
9. Service to Others | Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. Safety | Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.

BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS

11. Family Boundaries | Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts.
12. School Boundaries | School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. Neighborhood Boundaries | Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.
14. Adult Role Models | Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. Positive Peer Influence | Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
16. High Expectations | Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME

17. Creative Activities | Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.
18. Youth Programs | Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.
19. Religious Community | Young person spends one hour or more per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. Time at Home | Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.

⁵ Search Institute. 2013. "40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents Aged 12-18". Accessed on October 3, 2013. <http://www.search-institute.org/content/40-developmental-assets-adolescents-ages-12-18>.

40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents Aged 12-18

Internal Assets

COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

21. Achievement Motivation | Young person is motivated to do well in school.
22. School Engagement | Young person is actively engaged in learning.
23. Homework | Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
24. Bonding to School | Young person cares about her or his school.
25. Reading for Pleasure | Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

POSITIVE VALUES

26. Caring | Young Person places high value on helping other people.
27. Equality and Social Justice | Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
28. Integrity | Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.
29. Honesty | Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy".
30. Responsibility | Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
31. Restraint | Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

32. Planning and Decision Making | Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
33. Interpersonal Competence | Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.
34. Cultural Competence | Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.
35. Resistance Skills | Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution | Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

POSITIVE IDENTITY

37. Personal Power | Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me".
38. Self-Esteem | Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
39. Sense of Purpose | Young person reports that "my life has a purpose".
40. Positive View of Personal Future | Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

Appendix 2

Glossary

- 1.) homestead – A tract of land made up of small houses that members of a family share.
- 2.) Junior Achievement – An organization that trains youth in small business best practices and holds annual global competitions for it.
- 3.) Lubombo – One of the four regions of Swaziland, it is all in the lowveld and very hot.
- 4.) Lusoti – Another name for Simunye.
- 5.) Manzini – The largest city in Swaziland, it is the transportation hub of the country since it is in the center.
- 6.) Matsapha – As the industrial city of Swaziland, it has a lot of factories and the international airport.
- 7.) Mbabane – This is the capital of Swaziland, and smaller than Manzini. It is in the highveld.
- 8.) Mhlume – A town in the sugar belt, and it borders South Africa.
- 9.) Mpaka – A town along the highway, known for its train station which only transports cargo to both Mozambique and South Africa (Durban).
- 10.) Ngomane – The smallest and most rural of the four RSSC estates because it is not along a highway.
- 11.) PEPFAR – Stands for President’s Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief. It is an organization that provides money for the Peace Corps and other organizations that deal with AIDS related work.
- 12.) permanent site – After training in a village where all the volunteers live together on separate homesteads, they move to their permanent sites. This is where they conduct their Peace Corps work for two years.

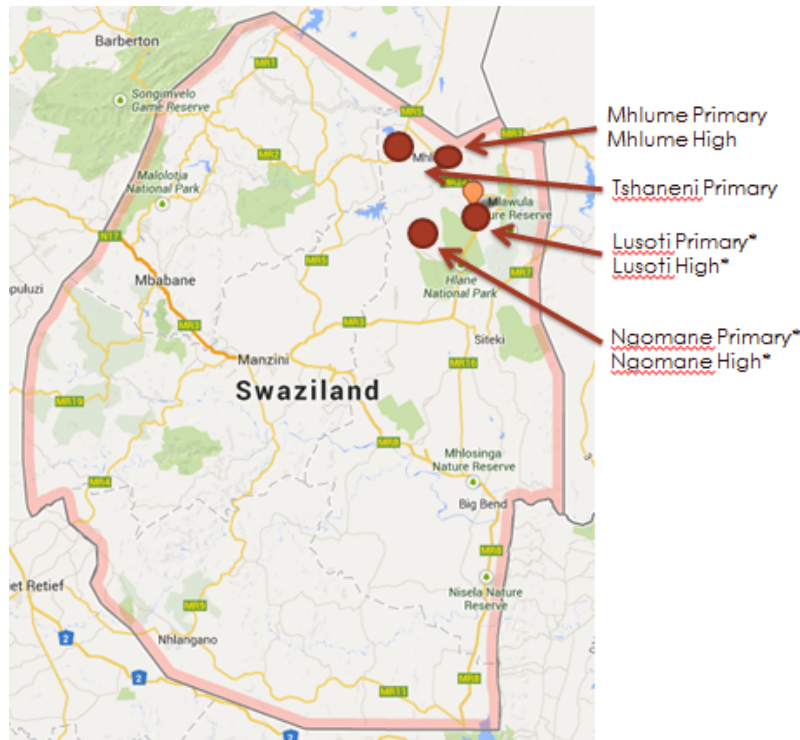
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13.) Simunye – A fancy sugar belt town with manicured lawns, country clubs, and a small shopping center.

14.) Sugar Belt – A hot region known for growing mass amounts of sugar cane.

16.) Swazi school system – Elementary school is from grades one to seven. High school is from form one to five. Kindergarten before elementary school is provided for those who can afford it. Elementary school is free, but parents still must pay for books and uniforms. High school is not free, and the fees vary greatly by school reputation.

15.) Tshaneni – A sugar belt town on the border of South Africa.



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