



DKT International’s Social Impact Entrepreneurs Are Transforming Family Planning

Organization uses entrepreneurial skills and commercial focus as one of the largest private providers of family planning products and services in the developing world

Washington, D.C., (April 25, 2013): Business entrepreneurs create and transform entire industries; social impact entrepreneurs change society by transforming people’s lives. [The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship](#), affiliated with the World Economic Forum and its high-profile Davos economic conferences, defines social impact entrepreneurship as achieving large-scale, systemic and sustainable social change by using business entrepreneurship for creating new strategies to innovate and overcome traditional practices. It is an approach that is energizing business leadership – earlier this year the [Harvard Business School](#) reported that participation in its social enterprise program is up more than 10-fold in the last 15 years. And there is no better example for practical application of these skills than [DKT International](#), a team of social impact entrepreneurs that has transformed family planning in 19 developing countries.

DKT sells condoms and other contraceptives and provides reproductive health and family planning services, through innovative marketing and distribution channels, including the Internet, social media sites, midwives, clinics, drug and grocery stores. This approach differs greatly from traditional nonprofits by providing goods and services as normal commercial purchases that offer consumers a benefit at an affordable price. In its most recent fiscal year DKT’s \$130 million in total revenue was balanced by an equal amount spent on programs, with approximately 70 percent of program costs recovered through sales. The balance of revenue comes from donors, and DKT’s revenue generating models greatly leverage donor funds. It’s an entrepreneurial model that works. In 2012 DKT programs prevented an estimated 8.2 million unwanted pregnancies, 1.7 million abortions, and more than 14,000 maternal deaths.

“DKT’s management structure and practices are highly decentralized, promoting strong accountability and entrepreneurship in each of our country-level organizations,” said Christopher Purdy, Executive Vice President of DKT International. “Our strategy depends on recruiting high performing people who are true social impact entrepreneurs. Many country directors have undergraduate or advanced business degrees, and some have served in corporate marketing or business capacities before joining us. They direct a field staff of 1,800 people and have wide autonomy to make decisions quickly.”

DKT International’s use of social marketing for reproductive health products and services builds contraception and family planning demand through mass media and non-traditional messaging that reduce social stigma and target all socio-economic groups. Each country director runs his or her

custom-tailored, culturally appropriate program designed to reach the maximum number of people in each market segment.

“Our directors use new approaches in countries where tradition, religious restrictions, government censorship and politics complicate their task,” Purdy added. “They drive a product and service delivery model that continually evolves based on community need. By providing people with an essential service that they value, and can afford, our country directors create real momentum for social change.”

Since 1989, [DKT International](#) has provided safe and affordable options for family planning and HIV prevention through social marketing, establishing it as the largest private provider of family planning products and services in the developing world.

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