

Choosing the right CSR strategy for your company

Many buckets of ink have been spilled on how important it is to have corporate social responsibility (CSR) such that companies are falling over themselves rushing to start their own CSR project before their rivals do.

By [Titus Kaloki](#) 15 Sep 2009

What is CSR? [According to Wikipedia](#), ideally, CSR policy would function as a built-in, self-regulating mechanism whereby business would monitor and ensure their adherence to law, ethical standards, and international norms.

Business would embrace responsibility for the impact of their activities on the environment, consumers, employees, communities, stakeholders and all other members of the public sphere.

Although many corporate companies have engaged in CSR projects their impact is not fully felt. *The Harvard Business Review*, 2006 December issue says, "The fact is, the prevailing approaches to CSR are so fragmented and so discounted from business and strategy as to obscure many of the greatest opportunities for companies to benefit society."

Companies need to apply the same insights they use as when doing their own business. In short, they should choose those issues that intersect with their particular business. Microsoft sponsors colleges with its to date programs, systematic professional development programs and standardised curricula. This in return helps produce skilled personnel that the company needs badly to employ.

If you are an IT firm your CSR policy should be concerned with: truthful advertising, ads to kids, price discrimination, anti competitive pricing, pricing policy to the poor, consumer information and privacy. This is because those are interests that are intertwined with your business.

The prevailing tide is that philanthropic events are measured by dollars or volunteer hours spent and not by impact such initiatives have had. CSR literature has emerged to guide business leaders but it is often unclear.

[csrafrica.net](#) MD, John Muthee says, "Companies should keep on pursuing new knowledge and ideas on CSR, do comparative checks among their peers and more important seek sustainable initiatives that are in line with their core business for a win-win situation."

Should all companies have a CSR policy and initiative? Millicent Mugweru, the editor; [csrafrica.net](#) advises "Currently every business will have to bear responsibility beyond its core business and shareholders."

Pending legislation in the UK, for example would require every publicly listed company to disclose ethical, social, and environmental risks in its annual report. However, companies should not wait to be pushed towards this direction for, successful corporations need a healthy society.

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