

Street children and substance abuse

[Family](#), [Children](#)



Honduran children, stakeholders or not

Even Honduran street children are H. B. Fuller stakeholders to a certain degree. They are not legitimate consumers of the glue products. But they are beneficiaries of Fuller's business activities through its subsidiary, Kativo. Many of these children are potential future employees of the company. Currently they are members of the community that Fuller/Kativo helps to support economically.

What is missing (and disturbing) is detail about what constitutes street children in Honduras, how they became street children, and what are their unmet needs that they are trying to satisfy through drug abuse. Fuller and Kativo are stakeholders in the Honduran community and future beneficiaries of the labor and purchasing power of these children once they become adults. Fuller should take an active interest in its future employees and customers.

H. B. Fuller's obligation to solve social problems

Fuller's mission statement is full of buzz words and phrases like "good corporate citizen." The mission does not express or imply that Fuller takes any responsibility toward the community that does not fall under employee, customer, or shareholder. The portion that says "... support the activities of its employees in their communities" can be misinterpreted to assume that Fuller supports the activities of the communities in which its Kativo affiliate operates in.

That is probably not the case. However, good corporate citizenship includes helping to deal with social issues in the community as a way to build the customer base, to attract top notch employees, and to attract shareholders.

Good corporate citizenship is actually a powerful marketing tool; possibly more effective than media and print advertising. If Fuller does support the activities of its employees, then the question becomes what community activities are those employees involved in.

If the answer is few to none, then Fuller should extend its liberal policies toward employees to foster activities that help make the community better.

If an employee can get a day with pay, then how about offering the same for a day of community service? In this case, for a day of going out doing drug abuse education similar to the D. A. R. E. programs in the U. S.

Kativo or H. B. Fuller HQ, who is responsible

Both the headquarters and the local affiliate must be involved in a drug abuse education and prevention initiative. Fuller's headquarters can provide foundation financing as well as other resources to begin an anti-glue sniffing campaign. The local affiliate must do all the legwork. After all, Kativo is in the heart of the community. However, it is important to understand that Fuller and Kativo is not solely responsible for solving the Honduran glue sniffing crisis. It is also unreasonable to expect Fuller/Kativo to take all of its products off of the shelves. Also read Sunbeam corporation case study

Meddling in a cultural problem

Fuller and Kativo should enlist the help of its local employees, customers, and shareholders. These people are not only Fuller stakeholders, but are the neighbors and relatives of those youth who are abusing the glue products. The local population understands the local culture best. Employees at Kativo, with proper support from headquarters, can completely take the initiative to do what it takes to at least abate the glue abuse program. If the local

stakeholders start and manage the process, then Fuller will not be meddling in a cultural problem. What Fuller and Kativo will be doing is facilitating a culturally based solution to a local cultural problem.

References

Beauchamp & Bowie. H. B. Fuller in Honduras: Street Children and Substance Abuse. *Ethical Theory and Business* (7th ed. pp. 91-93).