



# Building a Global Brand through Corporate Citizenship

Johnson & Johnson's **Jane Griffiths** joins Criticaleye's **Livia Reuss** to discuss sustainability, workforce diversity, and impact investment

In her extensive and acclaimed career at pharmaceutical company, Johnson & Johnson's (J&J), **Jane Griffiths** has managed 6,000 employees in her former role as the Group Chairman of Janssen EMEA and now acts as Global Head of Actelion, both divisions of J&J.

Throughout this, she has remained a steadfast advocate for corporate social responsibility. Here, **Jane** discusses some of the many CSR initiatives underway at J&J, the impetus behind them and how CSR has helped to build global brand recognition from customers through to foreign ministers.

**How have you contributed to sustainability and social good in your roles at Johnson & Johnson?**

In addition to my roles within Janssen and, more recently, at Actelion, I'm also the chair of J&J's Corporate Citizenship Trust in EMEA where we've engaged in a lot of grant-making. One of the many initiatives we've invested in is the development of nurses in East Africa. Over the last 15 years, we've funded the training of 2,000 to 3,000 people.

Each of those nurses have gone into their communities and trained health workers, massively magnifying the effect of the initial investment. A number of them have since set up their own private businesses. Recognising there were not maternity services in some villages, they taught local caregivers to become midwives and perform ultrasounds to improve maternal health.

The Trust is now engaging in impact investment through a fund that allows us to review small start-up businesses in Africa and India.

We're helping people with their business plans and partnering to develop infrastructure. We're providing mentors from our own company who bring their skillsets to the issues these start-ups are facing.

**Why is J&J investing so much in initiatives that are not central to profit-generation? What's the business imperative?**

At the end of the day, you've got to get some kind of return on the investment; some initiatives aren't going to make >



strong financial returns, but they might result in major social impact like improved health outcomes.

A few years ago, I participated in a discussion group with fund managers, industry leaders and customers about what motivates each of us. At one point, we came to the rather controversial conclusion that there's not any incentive for a business to act in an ethical way as long as they're delivering for the shareholder.

One fund manager explained how a growing number of investors want to know where their money is going. Today there are an increasing number of funds with the sole focus of sustainable or socially conscious investment, many of which are doing exceedingly well. Individuals are beginning to see that they can have a say and make a difference through this channel.

**How do you justify CSR initiatives outside of your core markets where you're potentially facing diminished profit margins?**

When you're a global healthcare company, you have to act globally. You don't just operate where you make a profit, you operate where you don't make a profit as well. So, in Africa for example, we've set up grants across every market, many of which lack any kind of commercial activity. We've developed global public health facilities with the goal of collaborating with local healthcare providers to facilitate access by individuals and communities in need. Where there's little to no ability to pay, we've waived our patent and allowed a third-party manufacturer to deliver our drugs at a lower cost than we do.

This has not only improved health outcomes, but fostered a relationship of trust between the firm and foreign ministries. When we recently opened offices in Ghana and Kenya, government ministers came not just because we were setting up a commercial operation, but because we were also contributing to healthcare infrastructure in those areas.

In emerging markets, where you are seen to be caring about the country and its welfare, foreign leaders will see you as a company worth partnering with.

**You've emphasised the impact of healthcare initiatives abroad, how do these compare to the CSR activities you've developed in the UK?**

We're currently taking on a number of social impact companies as suppliers, many of which employ disabled or disadvantaged workers. We've hired a media company that employs ex-offenders in the UK. We've found that providing ex-offenders with jobs in their first year after release substantially reduces the rate of re-offending.

Another supplier we use employs a significant number of autistic people in IT network design. The firm had a customer who needed to plan the IT network, which is quite a complicated job. They believed they could have it mapped out in three weeks but having asked their employee, who is autistic, he told them it would take only three days.

This exposure to different people broadens your view of what your workforce could look like and teaches you to be more embracing of differences and diversity.

**I imagine that employees at J&J must be inspired by these stories. Have you seen any changes in employee engagement as a result of the firm's work in CSR?**

Initiatives like this add a higher purpose to our everyday work. There's nothing more rewarding than hearing that the company you work for has provided employment for someone who, in another environment, might not have had that opportunity, or has improved things for workers across the waters.

The people who go on our six-month secondments into some of the CSR projects abroad come back amazingly engaged. When they come back from these countries where they've seen what people get done with limited resources, they're very shame-faced about the budgets and resources we need for projects here. ■



**Jane Griffiths**  
Global Head  
Actelion Pharmaceuticals Ltd

Jane was named Global Head of Actelion in June 2017 after serving Company Group Chairman of Janssen in EMEA for over six years. She currently chairs the Johnson & Johnson Corporate Citizenship Trust in EMEA and sponsors the Janssen Global Pharmaceuticals Sustainability Council.

Jane is also a member of the EFPIA Board, past Chairwoman of the EFPIA Executive Committee, and past Chairwoman of the PhRMA Europe Committee. She is also a passionate advocate for women in business and STEM education.

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