ayzh Health

India, Kenya

Established in 2010, ayzh Health & Livelihood Pvt Ltd. (ayzh) serves the world’s most vulnerable women, girls, and babies by offering women-focused products, addressing Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A).

SUMMARY

ayzh aims to eliminate preventable causes of maternal and infant mortality, and remove obstacles to good health and well-being, ensuring the long term sexual and reproductive health of women and girls worldwide. The company brings simplicity, dignity, and equality to women’s health through the manufacturing and distributing of low-cost, high-quality products, such as clean birth kits.

CHALLENGE

Women's health, survival, and well-being is an urgent, recognised need around the globe. More than 5 million mothers and infants die annually with over 80% of deaths concentrated in 30 countries (India claiming the most).

Infection is a leading cause of death for mothers and newborns as resource-constrained health facilities struggle to maintain a sterile birthing environment. While childbirth is a particularly vulnerable time, women face significant challenges and silent issues along the entire reproductive life cycle (e.g., menstruation, pregnancy, postpartum, breastfeeding, infancy). In India, only 5% of women use sanitary pads (77% use old cloth), and globally, less than 40% of infants are breastfed exclusively up to six months.

SOLUTION

Breaking away from the status quo of compartmentalised innovation – i.e., products, education, advocacy, policy, and funding focused on a single vertical of RMNCH+A – ayzh’s scope is affordable solutions from menstruation to menopause. Through integrated innovation and leveraging adolescence as a critical gateway to improving maternal and neonatal health outcomes, ayzh manufactures and distributes low-cost, high-quality products. Integrated with education and training, they are carefully designed to meet the unique needs of the world’s most vulnerable women, babies, and girls. The company has a proven sustainable, scalable model for manufacturing and distributing Clean Births Kits (USD 3 each).

IMPACT

ayzh aims to eliminate preventable causes of mortality, and remove obstacles to good health by complementing the circle of women’s health (reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent) with low-cost products that deliver health, hygiene, and livelihood for intergenerational well-being.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The ayzh model shows how a business built on simple, low-cost products can be sustainable and scalable. ayzh is one of the only for-profit social enterprises working in the maternal and newborn health sector, creating greater impact at lower cost than key competitors. The company’s advantage is based on significant departure from traditional approaches and current practices, which tend to be philanthropic, inefficient, and unsustainable:

- Proven market-based approach - Demonstrated ‘willingness to pay’ from customers and target beneficiaries in low-resource settings
- Scalable yet adaptable - Meets local needs via product customisation while reach is widespread reaching high priority areas across the globe
- Supply chain expertise - Keeps cost low to end-consumer
- Value-added packaging - Use of environmentally friendly materials; provides women honour and dignity
- Integrated training and advocacy - Builds awareness of and demand for products and practices for health and hygiene at the time of childbirth
- Local economic opportunity - Meaningful income and empowerment for Indian women
- Brand recognition - Raises global awareness of RMNCH+A issues and engages private sector partners
Continuous improvement - Investment in Monitoring and Evaluation contributes to shared learning through stakeholder engagement

SCALABILITY

With proof of concept, ayzh is replicating their model via social franchising, establishing regional production and distribution “hubs” (franchises) that sell and deliver in local markets. This expansion increases the production capacity and reach, while creating more economic opportunity for underemployed women.

To date, the company has piloted three hubs in India, and their first global hub established in Kenya (40% of sales are in Africa). Over six years, ayzh plans to establish more than 50 hubs across India, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

EXPANSION PLAN 2019-2023

- Leverage commercialisation of menstrual hygiene kits to launch a series of educational resource books and digital games on Sexual and Reproductive Health for adolescent girls.
- Raise USD 3-5 million to scale up operations in Africa and Southeast Asia and be a significant player in contributing to SDG 3.
- Use grassroots data collection to identify gaps in RMNCH+A health and influence policy change.

INVESTMENTS

ayzh is currently looking to ensure they get large scale tenders and government contracts for Asian and African countries as well as in refugee settings for their products where there is great need. Access to flexible short-term and long-term capital will be their priority.

The company is looking to raise about USD 3 million equity to scale their work in India and East Africa.

PARTNERSHIPS

ayzh have a strong history of engaging diverse stakeholders and forming strategic partnerships to advance global goals.

Notable examples include:

- 300+ health institutions: Buy and distribute products
- CAMTech & Open IDEO: Funded development of products
- EXPO 2020-EXPO Live: Funded education and training
- Duke Evidence Lab: Conducted ground-breaking research on cost consequence
- Grand Challenges Canada: Provided scale-up investment
- TOMS & Palladium Group: Expanded product reach into most difficult-to-reach regions
- Pfizer Foundation: Provided scale-up investment
- Kuthambakkam Trust: Provide employment for women who assemble their products

AWARDS

- MacArthur 100&Change Top 200 Finalist (2017)
- World Economic Forum Impact Lab Winner (2017)
- Global Sourcing Council 3S Award (2017)
- United Nations Global Compact SDG 3 Pioneer (2016)

FOUNDER

Zubaida Bai, Founder & CEO, Indian.

Widely regarded as an expert and leader at the intersection of women’s health, appropriate technology, and business, Zubaida – who has been designated by the United Nations as a Sustainable Development Goals Pioneer – led the creation of a sustainable and scalable business model that has impacted one million women, babies, and girls.

Zubaida has a Masters in Mechanical Engineering (Sweden), an MBA (USA) and an Honorary Doctorate from Claremont University (USA).

CONTACT

Website: www.ayzh.com
Email: Zubaida.Bai@ayzh.com