

Making a Difference

Improving the Quality of Life

An Interview with
Lisa M. Borders, Chair, The Coca-Cola Foundation



Lisa Borders visiting a school in India that is receiving assistance from The Coca-Cola Foundation and its more than 100 partners in the Support My School project

EDITORS' NOTE Lisa M. Borders is also Vice President of Global Community Connections at The Coca-Cola Company. In early 2013, Borders successfully completed her tenure as President of the Grady Health Foundation. Formerly, she served as President of the City Council and Vice Mayor of Atlanta. She was elected citywide in a special election in August 2004 and re-elected by an overwhelming margin in the 2005 normal citywide election cycle, serving through January of 2010. She also served as Co-Chair of the Transition Team for



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Atlanta Mayor M. Kasim Reed. Formerly, Borders was CEO of LMB LLC. She also served as a Senior Vice President of Marketing and External Affairs with Cousins Properties Incorporated, as well as President of the Cousins Properties Foundation. Prior to joining Cousins, Borders worked in the health care arena for over 15 years. She served as the Chief Administrator for Atlanta Women's Specialists and also served as VP-Operations for Healthcap Atlanta. She serves as a trustee at The Westminster Schools, an emeritus board member at Clark Atlanta University, a member of the Board of Ethics at Emory University, a founding leader of No Labels, and a board member of the Atlanta Downtown Community Improvement District. She holds a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a Master of Science in Health Administration from the University of Colorado.

ORGANIZATION BRIEF Founded in 1984, The Coca-Cola Foundation (coca-colacompany.com) partners with organizations around the globe to support initiatives and programs that respond in a meaningful way to community needs and priorities. Established in 1984 and funded by The Coca-Cola Company, the foundation focuses on three global sustainability priorities: Water, Women and Well-Being. When natural disasters strike, The Coca-Cola Foundation and the entire Coca-Cola system responds with immediate emergency relief efforts. Through the Coca-Cola Matching Gifts Program, eligible employees make personal contributions to qualified organizations and The Coca-Cola Foundation matches those contributions on a 2-for-1 basis.

Would you highlight the importance of corporate responsibility and community engagement to the culture of Coca-Cola?

From our founders John Pemberton and Asa Candler in the 1890s to our former Chairman, Roberto Goizueta, in the 1980s and 1990s to Muhtar

Kent in the 21st Century, all have infused the Coca-Cola culture with a desire to use our business to improve the well-being of our communities.

Mr. Goizueta once said, "The cynics will tell you the good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow – do it anyway." Our current CEO Muhtar Kent has said, "We have seen through our own experiences time and again that our business in any market is only as strong and sustainable as the communities in which we operate."

Improving the quality of life in the 200-plus communities where we operate is a part of The Coca-Cola Company's DNA. We are committed to giving back at least 1 percent of our prior year's operating income to support the community. In 2013, The Coca-Cola Company and The Coca-Cola Foundation, our global philanthropic arm, gave back more than \$139 million to build stronger, healthier, active communities and to protect our environment.

This year, The Coca-Cola Foundation celebrates 30 years of giving back. Since our inception in 1984, we have invested more than \$660 million, and by the end of 2014, the foundation will have invested more than \$750 million worldwide.

Do the areas you support need to align with your business or are philanthropic efforts considered separately?

Our foundation priorities are strategically aligned with our business. Recently, company leaders came together and carved out a set of global imperatives to serve as the foundation's updated focus areas. These imperatives are included in the company's sustainability framework. Our goal at The Coca-Cola Foundation is to support those community programs focused on replenishing water, empowering women, and enhancing the overall well-being of people and communities.

Would you provide an overview of Coca-Cola's goal to empower five million women by 2020 and how these efforts are progressing?

Four years ago, The Coca-Cola Company announced 5by20, a 10-year effort to empower five million women entrepreneurs across our global value chain by 2020. This means focusing on women producers, suppliers, distributors, retailers, recyclers, and artisans with whom our company works.

5by20 addresses barriers preventing women entrepreneurs from succeeding in the marketplace by increasing access to business skills training courses; financial services and assets; and networks of peers or mentors. Working with key partners, such

as International Finance Corporation, UN Women, and Department for International Development, we are helping build on best practices in the Coca-Cola system, and on the valuable insights and programs our partners bring to the table, encouraging innovation, scale-up, and replication.

Currently, we have 5by20 programs operating in 14 countries, including Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Kenya, Liberia, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, and Thailand, empowering more than 300,000 women.

Would you highlight your efforts in supporting access to healthy activities?

Since 2011, the foundation has awarded nearly \$50 million to community programs encouraging our youth and adults to get active. Some of the initiatives we support include Europe's International Sport and Culture Association, which is encouraging 100 million Europeans to become active; Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in the United States, which is converting old railroad lines into bicycle and foot paths; Colombia's Colombianitos, which offers community youth soccer programs; and Troops for Fitness, another innovative program, bringing affordable nutrition and active lifestyle programs to residents in Chicago who are most in need of wellness services. This program also uses U.S. veterans as military-style fitness class coaches. In our hometown, we are supporting the Atlanta Beltline, which is transforming 22 miles of old railway tracks into pedestrian-friendly trails and bike lanes where young people, families, and seniors alike can connect and exercise daily.

How challenging is it to address educational concerns?

We believe education is the single greatest force enabling people worldwide to improve their lives. In each community, we work with local leaders to address their particular educational challenges. For instance, in the United States, we launched the Coca-Cola First Generation Scholarship Program in 1993. To date, we have awarded more than \$36 million in scholarships to more than 2,800 students. These students are the first in their families to attend college.

Our work in India illustrates our belief in education as a catalyst for individual and collective success as well. Through the help of more than 100 partners in India, The Coca-Cola Foundation is providing access to clean drinking water, sanitation facilities, libraries, computer centers, and fitness programs for 100,000 school children at 300 schools in rural and semi-urban India. Launched in 2011, Support My School sets up water filters, teaches rainwater harvesting methods, plants trees, installs playground equipment, and educates children on how to live healthier lives. ●