

Qcil
BEYOND
HEALING





DEFINED BY ITS HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WELLNESS, AFRICAN PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURER QCIL IS ENABLING MORE FULFILLING LIVES ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

Beyond Healing

PROJECT MANAGED BY: JOHN HOLLIMAN

It's hard to overstate the importance of Qcil's work. Founded in Uganda, by Ugandans, the company is the largest producer of WHO pre-qualified HIV/AIDS and malaria treatments in the region. The organisation does not stop at groundbreaking medicines though; Qcil promotes and enables a longer, better, more satisfying life for every patient it encounters.

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Ajay Kumar Pal,
CEO, Qcil.

“Q cil started in 2005 and was born out of the need to address the suffering caused by HIV/AIDS in Uganda and its surrounding region,” CEO Ajay Kumar Pal explains. “HIV/AIDS was a very close, personal issue for our founders – some of whom had experienced it within their families – so it became their goal to find an accessible and affordable solution.”

Affordability was one of the biggest challenges for Qcil during the company's early years. High costs had made HIV/AIDS treatment inaccessible to many patients in Sub-Saharan Africa, so the company set about addressing this injustice.

“Back in the early 2000s, HIV/AIDS treatment was only available through Europe and the United States, but Qcil soon found a partner in India that had produced a treatment of its own. We initially imported

that solution, before agreeing to begin manufacturing in Uganda.”

ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE SOLUTIONS

Operating from a new facility in Uganda, Qcil's HIV/AIDS treatment was approved by the WHO in 2010. Today, in 2025, the product is used to treat patients across 14 African countries. HIV/AIDS and malaria remain Qcil's foundational therapeutic areas, and treatments for these diseases take up the largest proportion of the company's current production capacity.

“We're very focused on the diseases causing major problems on the continent of Africa,” Ajay says. “We carefully study the biggest pain points and how we can develop accessible and affordable solutions. It has helped the continent to become less reliant on overseas suppliers.” »



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STANBIC BANK UGANDA

STANBIC SUPPORTS QCIL'S \$36M GROWTH TO STRENGTHEN MEDICINE MANUFACTURING AND HEALTHCARE IN AFRICA

Qcil, Uganda's leading regional producer of WHO-prequalified HIV/AIDS and malaria treatments, is set to expand its operations with a \$36 million (UGX 133 billion) loan from Stanbic Bank Uganda.

The funds will support construction of a second WHO-compliant manufacturing facility at Qcil's Luzira site, increasing its annual capacity from 1.4 billion to 2.4 billion tablets.

Emmanuel Katongole, Qcil's Chairman said that the new plant will also enable Qcil to venture into new therapeutic areas, including injectable medicines and TB treatments making it the only manufacturer of TB drugs in the region.

"The investment aligns with their mission to meet rising regional demand and reduce reliance on imports, thereby fostering a more self-sufficient healthcare ecosystem in Africa." Katongole said.

Founded in 2005 and operating across 31 African countries, Qcil aims to bolster African pharmaceutical self-reliance, addressing the continent's dependency on imports, which exceeds 70%.

Currently, East African producers meet just 10% of the demand for antiretroviral drugs and 19% for malaria treatments, despite high disease burden including over 600,000 annual TB cases.

Mumba Kalifungwa, Stanbic Bank Uganda's Chief Executive, described the deal as both bold and necessary, emphasizing its role in Uganda's growth and healthcare improvement.

"Qcil plays a vital role in Uganda's healthcare ecosystem and aligns with our purpose: Uganda is our home, and we drive its growth. We are proud to have provided a sustainable financial solution that supports Qcil's long-term vision and strengthens the region's capacity to produce essential medicines at scale." Mumba said.

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Alongside its major disease treatments, Qcil manufactures various anti-infective, anti-emetic, hypertension, and reproductive health medicines. An important point of emphasis for Ajay is that the company manufactures all these treatments in a highly sustainable manner.

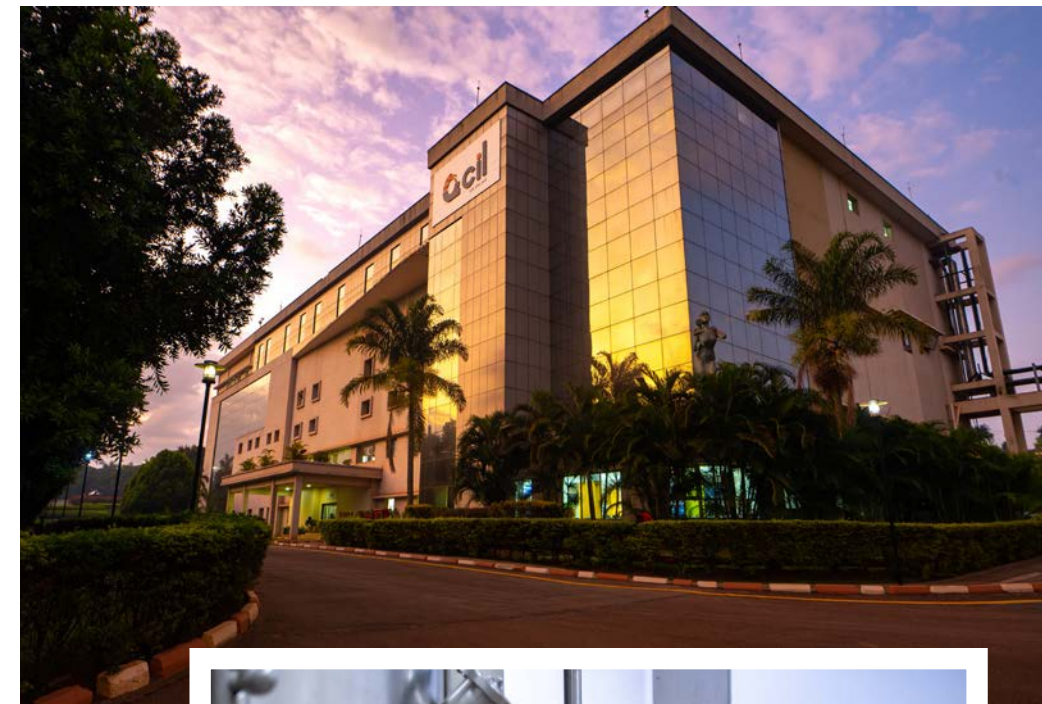
"Sustainable manufacturing is important to us, and we are very environmentally focused," he explains. "As a company, we are achieving ambitious goals on limiting greenhouse gas emissions, blue water consumption, and waste generation."

Over the course of two decades, Qcil has made a significant positive impact across the Sub-Saharan region – a geographical area that has historically lacked investment in pharmaceutical manufacturing. Despite complex regulations, long lead times, and low margins, Qcil has persevered, changing the nature of the region's battle with deadly conditions.

"We don't focus on niche issues but instead try to solve large problems that affect a lot of people," Ajay states. "Importantly, we always aim for the highest levels of compliance, challenging the misconception that you can't manufacture quality in Africa."

IN A POSITION TO GROW

Naturally, the young industry and limited business ecosystem surrounding Qcil has presented the company with various difficulties in operating on the African continent. However, having established itself and gained the trust of local communities, the organisation is now in a position to grow.



"We recently secured a loan for \$36 million to set up our second factory," Ajay reveals. "This facility will be the first on the continent to manufacture tuberculosis medicines. It will also produce hydroxyurea to treat sickle cell disease, as well as expanding our capacity for solid-dosage and small-volume injectable treatments for HIV/AIDS and malaria. The outcome is that, in future, consumers can decide whether they want to take a pill a day or a single injection covering six months of treatment."

Everything Qcil does, from research to investment, is guided by its Purpose: to enable 'Life After Well'. The phrase encapsulates Qcil's belief that health is not just about the absence of illness, but the ability to fully experience life. Through its products and methods, the company aims to provide patients with the opportunity to thrive, not simply survive.

"Our work is not about giving someone a painkiller and then the pain goes away," Ajay reports. "For people with long, >>



chronic diseases like HIV/AIDS, we provide them with all they need to enjoy a full and happy life in spite of their diagnosis.”

The quality of treatment provided by organisations like Qcil means that the average life expectancy for HIV/AIDS patients in Sub-Saharan Africa has risen rapidly in recent years – and continues to rise today. The quality of these longer lives is improving at a similar rate.

“Access to medicines like ours is enabling people with the opportunity for a more energetic and vibrant pursuit of all that life has to offer,” Ajay affirms. “The question we ask ourselves is, how can someone enjoy life beyond their

treatment? That’s why we take a more holistic approach to our work that considers social and environmental factors and how they impact local communities. We want to leave our patients and local communities in a better position than when we encountered them.”

PEOPLE-CENTRIC FOCUS

Qcil’s people-centric focus is backed by its status as a publicly traded, people-owned business with almost 3,000 shareholders. Internally, the organisation is proud to have a skilled team out to prove the technical prowess and quality of delivery that can be achieved in Africa.

“ACCESS TO MEDICINES LIKE OURS IS ENABLING PEOPLE WITH THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A MORE ENERGETIC AND VIBRANT PURSUIT OF ALL THAT LIFE HAS TO OFFER.”



“Most of our employees are from Uganda, and they are incredibly talented people,” Ajay remarks. “We have developed initiatives within the business to encourage the development of talent. Every year we train over 45 pharmacists as part of an internship programme, as well as welcoming graduates as trainees. The quality of our training means that most of these trainees go on to be a key part of Qcil, or else they are recruited by large government institutions because of the skills we have helped them to develop.”

Employees who stay with Qcil are part of a special undertaking with powerful, far-reaching implications – namely, finding tangible solutions for Africa’s most serious health issues. With the help of new technology and pioneering science, Qcil continues to develop more effective products, increasing the availability, accessibility, and affordability of its life-saving treatments.

“We are playing a key role in decreasing the African continent’s large disease burden,” says Ajay. “We work proactively, and if there is a better molecule out there, we want to make sure it is available in Africa too. Similarly, by investing in our home region, we are mitigating supply chain issues & enhancing the flow of products.”

In the future, Ajay suggests that there may be discussions around whether some Qcil treatments remain private or become free-to-access, publicly funded products. For now though, Qcil is focused on growing into a pan-African company, replicating its success in new regions.

“Africa needs our support in reducing the reliance on imports for life-saving medicine,” Ajay concludes. “We are confident that we, with the help of our new facility, will have the local capacity to address that.”



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