



# GOLDENHANDS

## VISIONARY CEOs

Who have turned around organisations, people, markets and industries



# The force behind Beta Healthcare meteoric rise in the pharmaceutical world

BY EVANS ONGWAE  
eongwae@ke.nationmedia.com

**Mention the name Beta Healthcare in Eastern Africa and names of its popular products will flash across many people's minds.**

This is not surprising since the pharmaceutical firm has been growing in stature in the region, introducing brand after brand of new medicines that people find affordable.

Chief Executive Officer Dr. Sanjay Advani says this is not surprising as, since coming under the umbrella of the Aspen Group, Beta Healthcare is making a major impact in the region.

Beta Healthcare was acquired by Aspen Group, the 7th largest generic medicine manufacturing company in the world. This has led to a transfer of technology from Aspen, cross-learning from a management perspective and opening of markets for both companies. This ensures maximum distribution of products of both firms.

Dr. Advani who has helped polish Beta Healthcare to the point that it could be noticed by suitors says he believes in being 100 per cent involved, has 100 per cent belief in what we do, and ensures the firm is 100 per cent consumer centric. This mantra is what has led to major milestones in Beta Healthcare.

The pharmaceutical giant put up the new manufacturing facility in Nairobi's Industrial Area.

**Today Beta healthcare has footprints in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Malawi and Zambia.**

It has achieved technology transfer of some excellent products from South Africa facility to its Nairobi & Dar es Salaam facilities.

It has managed to launch of Infacare range of products in Sub-Saharan markets.

Another achievement was the commissioning of state-of-the-art Research and Development Centre.

Beta Healthcare succeeded in launching brands that have significant market share in their categories such as Betasil and Infacare.

It has built strategic tie-ups with foreign companies of renowned repute.

Through its holding company Aspen, Beta Healthcare has acquired over-the-counter brands of GSK such as Hedex and Cofta.

Generally, Beta Healthcare has been in



**Dr. Sanjay Advani**  
Chief Executive Officer

the forefront in launching relevant niche products in the market. These products not only answer consumer needs but are affordable and quality guaranteed.

Beta Healthcare has been aggressive in launching existing products into new markets and launching new products in all markets. Today Beta healthcare has footprints in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Malawi and Zambia.

On his thoughts on leadership, Dr. Advani says: "It is said that most successful chief executives are the ones, who pick good professionals to do what he wants done. A leader has to be people centric with a keen understanding that its people are the company's most important asset.

"Business happens out there in the market place and not in board rooms, therefore the mantra is to be out there where the action is and that is the market place.

"I believe in regular customer interaction – continuous interaction with trade channel partners, be it top notch key opinion leader, distributors, wholesalers or with kiosk owners. Believe me, the insight on the business environment that one receives with these interactions are tremendous and helps the management to take corrective actions in making the

business sustainable.

"Being ahead of the pack – good business leadership involves being in touch with what is going on in the global platform and ensuring local trends are at par."

The CEO asserts that Beta Healthcare has enormous potential and capability of spreading its footprints into the entire African market.

The company invested in an R and D centre of excellence to ensure that the fundamental role of providing niche products that answer consumer needs and are affordable is kept alive.

Dr. Advani says "Beta Healthcare will continue investing in its people, motivate and train them and indeed retain a pool of qualified talent. In two to three years, this team will be one to reckon with in the industry," he argues.

His observation is that the arena his firm operates in "is terribly fluid and the company has to be extremely dynamic and basically roll with the punches. The world has basically become a village and therefore pharmaceutical industry is constantly required to come up with new formulations and a robust pipeline of new products that answer consumer needs and Beta Healthcare ensures that it is in line with global trends."

He asserts that the modern leader

has to have a strong foundation to remain relevant in the market place; Beta Healthcare has invested in three strong pillars that is: Technology, People Development and Research.

Dr. Advani acknowledges that it is important to develop the next generation of leaders.

"It is a personal goal of mine to take young people into my fold and train and motivate them," he says. "Indeed, our skills as leaders should not remain bottled up but we need to cascade and pass on this knowledge gathered from different markets to the leaders of tomorrow.

He chooses the people to mentor from all ranks within the organization but with a clear focus on untapped potential and also the staffs potential and ability and thirst for growth.

Beta Healthcare as a company also has a robust interning programme where it takes on students of pharmacy into the company and gives them an opportunity to learn hands on. These individuals appreciate this learning and indeed the impact is felt in the companies they proceed to after the internship programme.

An outdoor person, Dr. Advani will mostly be found communing with the outdoor alongside his family. He appreciates the beauty of our country Kenya and visits game reserves in his spare time.

Also a very community based person, he enjoys giving back to the disenfranchised in our community.

He is also involved in our education and sits in the council of the University of Nairobi.

Beta Healthcare maintains a keen interest in the society. It focuses on providing quality affordable products. Its distribution network is one of the best in the region, meaning that at least 90 per cent of the population "has access to our medication," says Dr. Advani.

Over and above this, "we believe in harmonious existence with our environment. Our company has established a dedicated Safety Health and Environment (SHE) department that ensures our company adheres to all environmental laws governing these areas," he says.

Beta Healthcare donates medicines to the communities around us such as children's homes and participates in medical camps that serve the needy.