Squibb’s Dibs

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In May, drug behemoth Bristol-Myers Squibb set an unprecedented $100 million aside to help to treat PWAs in five African nations: Swaziland, South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Botswana. According to BMS, the goal of its five-year “Secure the Future” program is “to build a medical infrastructure in Africa” through physician training and community education.

The $18.3-billion-a-year company may do well by doing good: The program is likely to generate long-term business in Africa. That point is not lost on some activists, who object to BMS’ decision not to provide its AIDS meds for general use—only for the 20,000 patients in clinical trials. “Donating drugs does not address the real issues,” a BMS representative acknowledged. “Africans want the tools to solve their own problems. This will help them.”

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