

Communication on Progress

PROTINA

Cote d'Ivoire

April 20, 2012

As CEO and founder of the soybean-processing company PROTINA, I, Zekrullah Kazemi,

renew our continued support for the Global Compact initiative and its principles.

Our ongoing efforts are outlined in the following report :

Cote d'Ivoire has just been through a civil war. Our factory, situated between the Police Academy and the Ecole de Gendarmerie, was hit by heavy artillery. We were closed for nearly three months. On May 9 we started work. However most of our outlets remained closed after having been looted and destroyed. Our main customer only opened on August 5.

Human Rights

In this area, our concern is to buy soybeans, millet, corn and sesame seeds from growers who do not use child labor. Before the civil war, we bought directly from cooperatives. Many of our suppliers were women. However, with the disruption of the supply chain, we are now buying from the market in Abidjan, with no way of knowing where the produce comes from.

Therefore we rely on agencies who work on these issues to monitor the situation.

Labor

The workers, most of whom live in Yopougon, went through some tough times, using up their savings to survive. Their priority now is to get back on their feet financially. We met with them on September 27 at a staff dinner at our house. The main request is to be paid on the 5th of the month. This has not always been possible due to the economic upheaval.

We committed to pay their salaries on the 5th of each month and we are doing so as the economy is improving.

Of the 14 points submitted for improving the business, seven have been implemented, three are being implemented and four will be implemented as the business expands.

- Increase in salaries -implemented
- Salaries paid on the 5th of the month - implemented
- Social Security - implemented
- Yearly bonuses - implemented
- School loans - implemented

- First Aid Kit - implemented
- In case of illness, the participation of the business – implemented

- White coats – about to be bought
- Make a bigger vat for the soy milk and an improved filter – the vat has been made and the filter is being made
- Holidays – at present according to needs (funerals, trips, family emergencies etc.)

- Advertise our products – in the near future
- Official badges– in the future
- Transport for the personnel – in the future
- Health insurance – in the future.

Environment

PROTINA doesn't use any chemicals. Our main waste is soy paste after making the soy milk. We try to sell this as animal feed. The other waste products are eggshells, butter wrappers, etc from the pastry section. We try to keep the thrash can area tidy.

However the soy milk is sold in plastic bottles, as required by the supermarkets. To change this policy there would need to be a lobby to preserve the environment.

Corruption

We try to give the smallest amount possible. Some civil servants from the Town Hall expect small amounts of money (10 dollars) in exchange for locating spots for street vendors.

Post Conflict Issues

Specific to conflict torn countries, we have staff from different political backgrounds. Feelings are still raw and reconciliation is on the national agenda. We try to deal with these feelings by listening attentively to all parties and encouraging people to work as a team despite their differences.

We have staff from all four main ethnic groups and four religions. We try to have women make up at least half the staff. At present we employ 7 women and 9 men. Three of our workers are from Burkina.

Conclusion

We are determined to raise the standards of our company. We are being helped in this regard by the United Nations which has chosen PROTINA along with 12 other companies in Cote d'Ivoire as companies which have the potential to improve the quality and quantity of their businesses. The World Bank is also helping us to improve our business.