

2006 Report

Principle 1 – human rights

Health & Safety

A Health and Safety (H&S) Committee has been established that includes members of the Joint Consultative Committees (workers representatives). This committee deals with any H&S incidents and conducts a quarterly internal audit of company facilities and makes recommendations to management.

Human Rights

The Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) undergoes training in respect of the labor laws of Malawi. This training is done after election of the new body each year.

Basic Health, Education and Housing

A new school block was established last year at the company supported school (teachers provided by Government), to enable more pupils to study in comfortable accommodation and therefore encourage better attendance.

Principle 3 –freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Workers Representative Bodies

The workers are currently represented by the Joint Consultative Committee's. This however, is in a period of transition with a trade union body having being established. Membership of the company workforce stands at <10 %. Once it is at 20%, the trade unions will be considered to be representative of the workforce.

Trade Union representatives are released from work to attend training sessions and allowed to conduct recruitment sessions and meetings etc on company premises.

Principle 5 – the elimination of child labor.

The personnel department conducts internal audits of company divisions to ensure that written company policy is adhered to; no employment of under 18's and no under 21's employed in areas of hazardous work (this areas are detailed in company policy).

Age verification is a problem in Malawi due to lack of ID cards, birth certificates etc. Age determination is therefore unfortunately a subjective affair, hence the high age limits set within the company policy.

Principle 6 – the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

HIV/AIDS

A VCT centre is now in place with >2,300 people having been tested since April 2004. People tested include; employees and their dependants, children attending Satemwa primary school and members of surrounding communities. An active IEC team visits all places of work within the company twice a year.

To date 35 people have been put onto ARV's. Of these 5 are employees or their dependants. Two support groups have been established within Satemwa communities to help people living with HIV/AIDS. Current membership is a total of +/- 20

One employee has been comfortable and brave enough to publicly admit his status. With the prevailing stigma HIV/AIDS carries in Malawian society, this is considered a big win.

Gender

Women are now an established part of the factory workforce. More effort is now required to ensure that women find themselves into all levels of the management structure.

Principle 9 – encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

Craft Groups

Two women's groups have been trained in the manufacture of fuel efficient stoves. The sale of these provides an income for the women and result in less firewood usage in the homes of those who buy them. Also affects women's lives by reducing the amount of time required to collect firewood.

Fuel Efficiency

The company is replacing all the stoves at 5 company kitchens with a fuel efficient design. Two kitchens have been done to date. 80% wood saving has been achieved where this has been implemented.

A similar design is being introduced for all domestic hot water heaters within the company. Three out of +/- 27 replaced to date.