



IN SUPPLIER GUIDING PRINCIPLES, COCA-COLA TAKES A STAND ON ETHICAL RECRUITMENT

Coke's Guidance for Suppliers and Bottlers on Workplace Rights Prohibits the Payment of Recruitment Fees in an Effort to Eradicate Debt or Bonded Labor from its Global Supply Chain

NEW YORK, NY – Wednesday, March 26, 2014 – Members of the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#) (ICCR) welcome The Coca-Cola Company's issuance of formal policies for its suppliers and bottlers which uphold human rights in the workplace. The [Human and Workplace Rights Issue Guidance](#) document covers many policies supported by International Labor Organization conventions and is designed to eradicate human trafficking and modern day slavery from the company's supply chains.

Included are specific policies related to recruitment which expressly prohibit the practice of workers paying recruiters in order to secure employment contracts, an unethical practice that often traps migrant and other unskilled workers in debt or bonded labor and is a form of modern slavery.

Coke's policy calls upon suppliers and bottlers to ensure that:

- **All fees, such as recruitment, renewal, work or exit visas, will be paid for by the employer.**
- **Transportation to and from the host country is paid by the employer.**
- **Employees will be allowed full and complete control over the monies they earn and facilities will not withhold money to guarantee a term of employment.**

According to Stuart Kyle, Director, Workplace Accountability, The Coca-Cola Company, ***"Guided by stakeholders, including ICCR, and other experts, we developed an enhanced set of requirements which have been communicated broadly, and will be included in capacity-building efforts and our third party auditing of our locations, bottlers and direct suppliers. We feel this is an important step in the journey to play our part to eliminate human trafficking and forced labor."***

The policy also requires that employment contracts be in a language that employees can easily understand and be provided prior to their arrival in the host country, and that workers retain access to personal identity documents. In 2013, Coca-Cola set goals to sustainably source its key ingredients, including palm oil, and established Sustainable Agriculture Guiding Principles.

Through a grant from Humanity United, in January ICCR members launched a ["No Fees" campaign](#) which will target companies sourcing palm oil and seafood down to the commodity level where the fees for work practice is prevalent.

As David Schilling, Senior Program Director of ICCR observed, ***"The "No Fees" initiative builds upon decades of productive ICCR engagements on human rights and supply chain issues. We commend Coca-Cola for adopting a clear "no fees" policy and we will be evaluating its implementation over the***

next several years. We expect to see other companies following Coca-Cola's lead in working to end the exploitive practice of exacting payment for employment."

Dan Viederman, Executive Director of Verité, an international consulting, training and research NGO, has launched a website dedicated to providing [resources for responsible recruitment](#).

"Our research over the past decade shows that migrant workers are often charged recruitment fees by labor brokers in order to secure a job," said Viederman. "Workers go into debt which leads to debt bondage and makes them vulnerable to labor rights violations of all types. These are solvable problems, and Coca-Cola has taken a vital step in the right direction with this policy change. More companies should do so by using existing tools to identify the specific risks they face and take steps to eliminate the practice at points of recruitment."

Said Valentina Gurney, Associate Program Director of ICCR, ***"Millions of migrant laborers looking to feed their families become vulnerable to slavery through unscrupulous labor brokers who charge exorbitant recruitment fees, impose unreasonable deductions from promised wages, confiscate travel documents and prevent them from leaving. The goal of ICCR's "No Fees" initiative is to work with companies to create systems that will ensure workers in their immediate and extended supply chains are not forced to pay for employment. Coca-Cola rightfully recognizes its ability to impact this issue through its extensive global supply chains and we applaud its commitment to protecting the rights of some of the most vulnerable workers worldwide."***

[About the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility \(ICCR\)](#)

Currently celebrating its 43rd year, ICCR is the pioneer coalition of active shareholders who view the management of their investments as a catalyst for change. Its 300 member organizations with over \$100 billion in AUM have an enduring record of corporate engagement that has demonstrated influence on policies promoting justice and sustainability in the world.

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