

POLICY TO FIGHT AGAINST FORCED LABOUR AND CHILD LABOUR IN SUPPLY CHAINS

Forced labour including human trafficking and child labour are prohibited to exist in our business operations. They are forms of modern slavery, are morally wrong, and should be fought against. Our policy forbids us from condoning forced labour and child labour in any of our operations including our supply chains and requires that we take systemic action to identify and fight against the risk of forced labour and child labour wherever it exists.

The existence of forced labour or child labour in a supply chain is not just morally wrong but it is also very bad business. Where the problems of forced labour or child labour exist, there is an environment of injustice that inherently creates conflict and that will cause weakness and instability in the surrounding human and political relations. These circumstances translate into the risk of supply-chain links that, if not well understood, can break, sometimes suddenly. Other risks associated with overlooking the risk of forced labour and child labour are the serious risks to brand and business reputation that result, including where increasingly the problem of fighting against forced labour and child labour involves recognizing that many laws—especially trade laws—require the taking of action in the form of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and where most countries in the world regard forced labour and human trafficking as crimes.

Forced labour is most often rooted in structural poverty and found within an environment that involves inequality and discrimination. In such circumstances, profit can be pursued by some at the expense of vulnerable and unprotected workers. Some forced labour occurs at the hands of oppressive states, but most occurs at the hands of private agents.

Some of the most common forms of forced labour are debt-induced forced labour (a cycle of debt induced bondage), forced labour in prisons, human trafficking for the purpose of forced labour (deceptive practices often employed against migrant populations), coercion in the terms of employment (such as withholding identity documents, and the non-payment of earned wages), and forced labour associated with inherently exploitative labour contract systems (such as excessive and inescapable fees being imposed upon migrant workers once in a destination country).

Many resources exist to help businesses tackle these problems. We will do our part, not just because we should, but because working toward continuous improvement gives our work a sense of meaning and purpose.