

THE MEKONG CLUB – BEST PRACTICE REPOSITORY PMI

THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

With 15 million growers cultivating 5.8 million tons of tobacco on 3.2 million hectares, thousands working in the curing and processing of tobacco leaves, 1.6 million people manufacturing 5.6 trillion cigarettes and 40 billion cigars/cigarillos, the tobacco industry is susceptible to issues related to labour rights and human rights – including modern slavery. In order to achieve significant impact in eradicating such issues, the industry strives to achieve best agricultural practices, and PMI demonstrates leadership by accelerating its efforts.



PHILIP MORRIS
INTERNATIONAL

ABOUT PMI

Philip Morris International is a leading international tobacco company, with a diverse workforce of around 77,000 people, striving to be environmentally and socially responsible. PMI is dedicated to fighting illegal cigarette trade, and deeply engaged in supporting the communities where tobacco is sourced and where employees live and work.

BEST PRACTICES

The Mekong Club wishes to commend PMI for its leadership in combating modern slavery. The company has been a standard-setter for the tobacco industry in the following ways:

1. PMI has been implementing the Agricultural Labour Practices (ALP) Code program since 2011 to eradicate child labour and other labour abuses, and to achieve safe and fair working conditions and a decent livelihood on all farms where tobacco is sourced. This program was developed in a strategic partnership with Verité, a leading global NGO in responsible supply chains reaching more than 350,000 farms. PMI expects its farmers and suppliers to apply the Code, and to work with PMI in a diligent and transparent manner on continuously improving agricultural labour practices.
2. PMI initiated a 'Step Change' approach in 2018 to address the most prevalent and persistent issues that keep resurfacing in its leaf supply chain. This has helped in the area of child labour – by implementing a monitoring and remediation system to address cases holistically in partnership with local NGOs, government bodies, and community leaders. The effectiveness of the monitoring system and remediation activities is externally verified by local third parties. The 'Step Change' approach has also identified the provision of adequate accommodation for farm workers as a focus area with the objective to make necessary investments to help farmers address accommodation issues.
3. PMI IMPACT is a global initiative to support public, private, and NGOs to develop and implement projects against illegal trade and related crimes, including human trafficking. Launched in 2016, the entity has pledged USD 100 million to fund the first three rounds of grants. A council of external experts evaluates the project proposals and selects the applications for the award of grants to fund research, to enhance knowledge, and to develop solutions against illegal trade and human trafficking. In addition, it calls for the development of technological solutions, tools, and equipment to scale and facilitate the anti-illicit efforts.

SOURCES AND FURTHER READING:

<https://www.pmi.com/who-we-are/tobacco-facts/tobacco-economics>
<https://www.pmi.com/who-we-are/overview>
<https://www.pmi.com/media-center/news/eliminating-child-labor-from-pmi-leaf-supply-chain>
https://www.pmi.com/resources/docs/default-source/pmi-sustainability/alp-progress-update-1--2019.pdf?sfvrsn=2f6292b5_2
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