

Manpower: Promoting Human Rights

Helping People Find Meaningful Work

Media outlets around the world broadcast the images of destruction after a tsunami hit the coastlines of several Asian countries in December 2004. Gone in an instant were homes, jobs, crops, and thousands of lives, leaving many families without a means of making a living.

One of the hardest-hit areas, the state of Tamil-Nadu in south-east India, became home to two Manpower Vocational Training Centers in 2006. Operated in partnership with HOPE Worldwide, the two centers enable inhabitants of 64 nearby villages to develop marketable skills in areas such as tailoring, masonry work, cell phone servicing, and computer usage. Manpower has committed to investing \$1 million in the two centers, which will become self-sustaining after the company's 15-year commitment concludes.

"On the surface, it's all about economic empowerment and economic recovery in a devastated area," says Charles Bartels, director of global society responsibility and knowledge sharing. "But there's a significant cultural change taking place as well."

For example, many of the center's students are women who, before the tsunami struck, may have had to obtain permission to leave their homes, let alone hold a job. Now, with their fathers and husbands deceased or unable to support a family, these women learn how to sew dresses, lay bricks, repair cell phones, and master Microsoft Office—and earn as much money as a man in the process. At the same time, many of their children are learning English at newly constructed schools, a partnership

that HOPE has with United Way International, to make them more employable and also help the families move out of poverty.

Perfect Alignment

"There was a terrific need for vocational training in India, and the country is also an important, emerging market for us. It doesn't diminish the good that we do to say that our approach to social responsibility is aligned with our business interests," says Bartels.

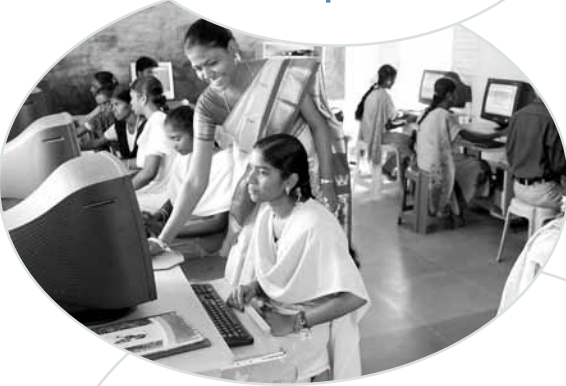
In fact, since its founding in 1948, Manpower has always valued programs that put people to work because work provides both personal dignity and sustenance. The approach simply makes sense for a company that provides employment services. As Bartels explains, "Social responsibility is at the core of what we do every day, a part of every interaction."

Although Manpower makes outright charitable contributions—to the tune of about \$3 million in 2008—it often prefers to sponsor work force development programs to assist people who are disadvantaged and disenfranchised. Depending on the country, those categories may include women, the blind, the physically disabled, or people with low levels of income or education.

Facing a pending worker shortage worldwide, Manpower wants to tap underemployed populations to meet the needs of its clients, especially the large number that value a diverse work force. "We have to be able to find the best workers, wherever or whoever they may be," says Bartels. "It's just smart business to connect with all potential employee groups and bring them into the workplace."



Manpower®



Company name: **Manpower Inc.**
Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin
www.manpower.com/social
Founded: 1948
Scope: Global (80 countries)
Employees: 33,000

Doing good helps

Manpower recruit and

retain its own employees.

With Respect for All

As with the vocational centers in India, Manpower often works in partnership with nongovernmental organizations to undertake programs aimed at sustainable employment. Other examples include:

- Sponsoring homework clubs at some Milwaukee city schools, which brings Manpower employees into one-on-one contact with the work force of the future. The schools are close to Manpower's headquarters, an LEED-certified building completed in 2007. Manpower intentionally placed its new offices in an inner-city brownfield, to assist the city's economic, social, and environmental recovery.
- Working with the city government in Stockholm to help integrate immigrants from the Middle East and East Africa into the Scandinavian culture. Program participants spend half of each day learning Swedish, then devote the other half to an internship within the business community. The internships not only provide valuable experience but also introduce immigrants to the work culture in their new country.
- Helping secure 12,000 signatures, representing corporations, organizations, and individuals, to the Athens Ethical Principles. Manpower was the first company to sign the principles, which declare a zero-tolerance policy for work-

ing with any entity that benefits in any way from human trafficking. "Human trafficking means forced labor," says Bartels, "and that takes away the opportunity for people to have access to meaningful work and a respectful work setting."

- Joining with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and several global corporations in the ninemillion.org initiative, which combines education with sports to bring about positive social change for the estimated 9 million children living in refugee camps around the world.
- Partnering with two nonprofit groups to help find meaningful work for Iraqi refugees who resettled in the United States after supporting American military forces in their home country.

Helping people around the world find sustainable employment has an additional bonus: Doing good helps Manpower recruit and retain its own employees.

"Companies that are able to tell their social responsibility story effectively have a much more engaged work force," Bartels notes. "And an engaged work force is much more likely to stay in place, do a better job, and recommend to others that their employer is good to work for and do business with."

