

CASE STUDY: RSSC



The Royal Swaziland Sugar Corporation Limited (RSSC), located in the north-eastern Lowveld is one of the largest companies in Swaziland. The company employs over 6000 people (including seasonals) and produces two-thirds of the country's sugar.

RSSC provides and manages housing and all related infrastructure for its employees and their dependants within the estates' various towns and villages. Aside from the Group's 2 500 direct employees, a further 30 000 people live on the estates.

First class primary education is provided for employees' children at a private English medium school, Thembelisha Preparatory School. The Group is also a founder member and a major stakeholder in Mananga College, a private high school established to improve the availability of first class education facilities in the lowveld. There are a further seven Government owned schools on the estates to which the Group provides substantial support.

RSSC has recognised HIV/AIDS as a strategic business issue and manages it at the highest level in the organisation. This is facilitated through the HIV/AIDS Tripartite Committee within which Management, the Union and the Staff Association are represented. The Managing Director chairs this Committee.

Policy

RSSC has a HIV/AIDS management policy which strongly upholds the ethics of confidentiality and non-discrimination between HIV infected employees. Workplace HIV/AIDS initiatives are implemented on an ongoing basis for both the permanent employees as well as contract labourers which also helps sensitize employees and reduce stigma and discrimination. A HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinator facilitates all HIV/AIDS programmes and related issues.

Program Activities

The program has 300 Peer Educators in total for the staff complement 6000, with the 1:20 ratio of Peer Educator to Employee much lower than the standard 1:50. All Peer Educators are tracked and maintained, with reporting structures in place, refresher trainings conducted and group forums/dialogues such as the Annual Peer Educators Day facilitated. 4000 employees are reached on a monthly basis with health dialoguing that is facilitated by the Peer Educators. Condoms are available in multiple locations including toilets, public areas and Peer Educators hand them out on request.

The Group provides health care at two site based clinics, Mhlume and Simunye which are centrally managed by a Medical Services Manager. The emphasis is on primary health care and the prevention of diseases. Global Fund supported free Anti Retroviral Treatment (ART) is available through the clinics, which clinics operate Monday to Friday and provide services not only to employees but to all who live within RSSC communities. Outreach activities are also provided to areas within the estate that are distant from the two static sites

A wide range of recreational facilities are provided through two RSSC owned country clubs, as well as through other facilities in an effort to keep employees active and healthy. The Group further provides sponsorship for cultural and sporting activities. A Wellness Centre at Mhlume opened its doors in 2011. This much needed facility will go a long way in addressing Body Mass Index (BMI) issues and stress relief. Welfare services are offered to employees, dependants and members of community.

Success

Programming has been so successful that in 2012 HIV/AIDS was relegated to the third largest risk to the company after being the number one risk for five consecutive years. To this end staff turnover and absenteeism rates have been greatly reduced.