

## A COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS

Reebok's corporate culture and identity exemplifies a strong commitment to human rights. For over a decade, Reebok has been an acknowledged leader in protecting and promoting human rights. Adopting a code of conduct, applying it to factories and developing innovative ways to protect the rights of workers are a few of the company's accomplishments.

### A history of accomplishment

In 1988, the company sponsored Amnesty International's *Human Rights Now!* concert tour that encouraged and supported efforts by young people who were taking courageous stands to protect human rights in their countries.

**HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS** Inspired by the *Human Rights Now!* concert tour, Reebok wanted to continue to honor young human rights heroes. The company created the Reebok Human Rights Award, to recognize outstanding young activists, under the age of 30, struggling against great odds to promote human rights using non-violent means. The Award aims to generate positive international attention for the recipients and to support their efforts. More than 60 recipients from over 35 countries have received the £17,500 grant, recently increased to £35,000, to further their work. 2002 honorees include Kavwumbu Hakachima - a vocal advocate against child abuse in Zambia, Babita Maili Lama - a survivor of sex trafficking, who now works in Bombay to rescue other girls from forced prostitution and Malika Asha Sanders - a grass roots activist leading a movement to develop a new generation of African American civil rights leaders.

**REEBOK HUMAN RIGHTS PRODUCTION STANDARDS** In 1992, the company developed a formal code of conduct, the Reebok Human Rights Production Standards, and began implementing them in the independently owned and operated factories making its products. Reebok monitors inspect factory workplace conditions, audit factory payroll records, and interview workers on and off the factory site. The program also requires Reebok to conduct training sessions for factory managers and workers, to take quick action when problems are reported, and to work with factory management to develop long term solutions for problematic issues. The goal is to improve factory workplace conditions. In instances where a factory has repeatedly failed to take corrective steps to address human rights violations, Reebok has terminated production contracts with the factory. In a recent example, Reebok pulled out its production from an apparel manufacturer, in Asia, who repeatedly refused to pay premium wages for overtime hours.

**WORKER COMMUNICATION SYSTEM** Asian workers making Reebok footwear report grievances directly to the local Reebok office via an innovative Worker Communication System. Through this system, workers voice their concerns about workplace conditions using letters placed in drop boxes on the factory site, or through pre-paid mailers that are distributed to factory workers with their pay checks at specified intervals throughout the year. As a direct result of this system, factories are developing effective problem-solving mechanisms that have resulted in changes such as improving the quality of food, resolving disputes between workers and managers and clarifying commonly misunderstood factory policies.

**REEBOK'S LABELING INITIATIVE** In an attempt to address the longstanding problem of child labour in Pakistan, Reebok dedicated a facility in Sialkot, Pakistan, specifically to produce the company's footballs. It established strict guidelines regulating production to ensure that no child labourers would be used. The integrity of the program was maintained through independent external monitoring by community members and human rights advocates. Reebok extended its social responsibility to the community by organizing educational and vocational opportunities for displaced child workers, using funds generated from the sale of footballs.

**INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION** In 1999, Reebok published the report, "Peduli Hak" (Indonesian for "Caring for Rights") making Reebok the first footwear maker to release an in-depth third party critique of labour conditions in its overseas factories. An independent, consulting firm conducted a study of workplace conditions in two of Reebok's contract factories in Indonesia, which together make 75% of Reebok's Indonesian footwear. The findings of this report educated Reebok to take correction actions to improve factory conditions and worker rights. For example, the report found a bias against promoting female employees who make up 80% of the workforce in these factories. In response, Reebok commissioned gender awareness training for supervisors to remedy this ongoing problem. Reebok's objective in undertaking this study and its subsequent publication was two-fold. First, to gain a better understanding of the underlying causes of the problems workers face. Second, to initiate collaboration with stakeholders and other companies to address industry-wide human rights issues. Reebok continues to benefit from independent monitors who assess Reebok producing factories.

Reebok's experience has reinforced the belief that incorporating human rights standards into business practices improves worker morale, creates a better working environment, and results in higher quality products. Reebok will continue to express its commitment to human rights by honoring young human rights activists, by applying internationally recognized principles of human rights in the company's business practices and supporting the human rights community through charitable giving programs.



For more information about Reebok's Human Rights Programs, please contact:  
**Doug Cahn,**  
 Vice President,  
 Human Rights Programs,  
 Reebok International Ltd.,  
 1895 J.W. Foster Blvd,  
 Canton, MA 02072 USA or visit  
[www.reebok.com/humanrights](http://www.reebok.com/humanrights)



Left to Right:  
**Malika Asha Sanders,**  
**Kavuwumbu Hakachima,**  
**Archbishop Desmond Tutu**  
**and Babita Maili Lama**

**Reebok football label:**  
**"Guarantee: Manufactured**  
**without child labor."**

