



Cimbria East Africa & Cimbria Denmark

Cimbria East Africa (EA) was established in 1980 as a subsidiary of Cimbria A/S, today one of the world's leading producers within processing, handling and storage of grain and seeds. Cimbria EA design, manufacture and assembly small and large grain and seed storage facilities and other kinds of post harvest equipment. Before entering the SUSBIZ programme Cimbria EA had already become a member of United Nations initiative for corporate social responsibility, the UN Global Compact, but felt a need for assistance and a systematic management approach to lead the CSR agenda in the company in Nairobi and at the construction sites in both Kenya and through out the East African region.

Cimbria A/S and Cimbria EA demonstrated a clear vision for a strong and well managed CSR agenda in the Kenyan branch of the company. The engagement with SUSBIZ Kenya was lead by top management and CSR policies were integrated into the business culture and operations.

This enabled a real change of management and company culture, enabling the company to manage key operational roles in more effective ways.

The PA was appointed CSR manager, demonstrating the company's commitment to integrating CSR into its business. The position of HR manager was also established, enabling health, safety and labour policies to be effectively developed and implemented.

As a result, Cimbria East Africa is now able to deliver systematic reporting to Global Compact about its CSR activities.

Company facts

Cimbria East Africa (CEA) Ltd

- Est. 1972
- 36 Permanent employees
- 30-35 Contract Workers
- Products: Post harvest equipment

Cimbria A/S Denmark

- Est. in 1947
- Approx. 350 employees
- Products: World leading in post harvest equipment – grain and seed handling

About SUSBIZ Kenya

SUSBIZ Kenya was a multi-stakeholder Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme with partners from Federation of Kenya Employers, the Danish Business Authority and Danish Federation of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

The SUSBIZ Kenya Programme was implemented from 2011 – 2013 and facilitated integration of sustainable business development and strategic CSR in Kenyan companies, who had Danish business relations. The aim was to build capacity and show that socially and environmentally responsible business conduct create better companies.

The approach focused on:

- Participation of managers and workers
- Shift away from check lists of compliance, to implementing change management
- Develop local capacity to deliver workable solutions to integrate CSR into its business
- Business enhancement is realised through implementing CSR management

The SUSBIZ team worked with knowledge sharing through training workshops and in-house assistance with a focus on practical solutions. The activity flow through the Programme was: CSR assessment and initial audit reports -> action plan development -> training and in-house capacity building -> progress evaluation -> documentation and external communication.

Effective HR policies and follow up



Through effectively employing an HR manager, and establishing Cimbria's labour policy, Cimbria delivered significant changes in work relations and a more up-beat attitude amongst staff, impacting significantly on the productivity of its workforce.

Following SUSBIZ training and advice the HR function was up scaled and moved from the finance department to a specialised HR function and an HR manager was employed.

One of the first results was the development of a labour policy and a structured procedure for its implementation, review and improvements.

A handbook on how the policy would be implemented in practice among all employees, was also compiled. In addition, a procedure of induction courses for all new workers and regular refresher trainings for existing workers was set up.

Sub-contractors and contract staff

A large part of the assembly and construction work of silos and other post-harvest equipment takes place on-site at Cimbria's customers' farms. Often sub-contractors and contract staff is being used for the specific assignments.

As part of the process around the new labour policy, requirements for sub-contractors are now established. Requirements revolve around training sub-contractors in fire safety, first aid, health & safety, environment and labour issues. The requirements count for construction sites and for the few subcontracted assignments taking place at Cimbria's own premises.

Another issue handled by Cimbria related to contract workers being on short-term contracts, even though the job sometime was available for up to a year. Contract workers felt insecure about their job stability.

Today contract workers experience more security in their work relationship with Cimbria because contract periods have been extended. This has also improved the working culture and quality and productivity of the workforce.

The contract workers also experienced more equal terms as other employees, since they were entitled to the company's medical cover and annual leave, as is the case for permanent staff.

Working Environment

In order to create a better environment for its workers, Cimbria constructed new locker rooms, shower and changing rooms. To further improve staff engagement across the organisation, a new canteen was built, where everyone eat together.

Medical examinations were also provided to all workers exposed to noise and/or fumes. A procedure for medical examinations has been implemented for existing and new staff.

At the workshop by Cimbria's main office, the company invested in a new paint facility for powder coating. Correct masks with carbon filters were also provided.

Strategic Community Engagement

Cimbria has managed to move their community engagement beyond philanthropy. The SUSBIZ programme encouraged Cimbria to launch initiatives that would engage its clients. Today Cimbria provide education to farmers in several of its work sites on proper ways of grain handling. This has created an awareness of their products and strengthened the reputation as a manufacturer of grain handling equipment, while securing farmers' ability to protect their grain.

Health & safety part of company DNA



As Cimbria operates with farm equipment in the metal- and construction sector, there is a relatively high risk for injuries and accidents. Cimbria entered the SUSBIZ programme with a vision of reducing risks and work related injuries. They have succeeded.

Today the company is registered with the Directorate of Occupational Safety and Health Services and following all government regulations. The company constituted a health & safety committee, in accordance with legislation, which included the election of employee representatives

New initiatives have been launched such as correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE was addressed by equipping supervisors with guidelines and check lists to use at the start of a new construction to ensure all staff had the correct PPE for the job. In the workshop, welders used their own protective glasses and masks, but this did not protect workers nearby. Hence, Cimbria began using welding shields to protect other workers from welding lights.

Staff Training

In order to implement health and safety successfully, one important factor was to establish staff training. This had to be organised in such a way that it addressed and delivered training to both workers at the main office and at their on-site facilities.



Health & Safety Training

A new training programme for occupational health & safety was established at the various sites for its supervisors and employees. In turn supervisors would train sub-contractors and the contracted workers.

When the company workshop experienced a serious fire in 2012, caused by an electrical fault, full attention was given to prevent fire and ensure fire safety.



Burnt down workshop

Fire and emergency management training is now fully in operation with annual training exercises with fire and emergency preparedness drills implemented at headquarter and construction sites.

Today the company work on the emergency preparedness plan which will be part of the employee handbook. In addition a basic first aid training programme is being developed. Safe driving lessons for 'defensive driving' were initiated in order to avoid accidents and increase security in relation to risk of hi-jacking.

Environment

On the environmental side Cimbria had for some time been challenged on securing correct disposal of solid waste. In addition to the company's annual environmental audits, solid waste is now being collected by a company licensed by the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA).

Key learnings & continuous improvements



Through the effective management of health & safety, Cimbria can now reduce its losses in productivity and costs due to fires. The number of accidents and sickness is minimised, and workers moral has been boosted, which is contributing to productivity.

Today Cimbria is a highly engaged member of both UN Global Compact and the local UN Global Compact Network in Kenya. All Global Compact management and reporting procedures have been professionalised. Policies and documentation have been highlighted and CSR decisions are not any longer taken on a day to day basis. Registration and communication with public authorities is now improved and work smoothly.

Overall the company is operating in a more professional and efficient way, meeting national and international guidelines.

During the time of the SUSBIZ programme, Cimbria Denmark supported the CSR development process and encouraged in many ways CSR standards to follow same procedures as in Denmark.

Cimbria EA has, since the establishment, had an ambition as a fair and ethical company but without clear policies and standard operational procedures. With SUSBIZ, new priorities were established and CSR is no longer an add on to core business activities. Improved working environment and company business culture have been fully integrated with core business, saving money, improving quality and delivery on time. It is positive to experience, other things being equal, high economic growth rates for Cimbria EA during the lifespan of the SUSBIZ programme.

‘Giving an example of our staff I honestly tell you that they are in very high morale probably because of those changes of HR and giving them small benefits and trainings and all that. they are up to it! So it has really opened up our thinking of improving things, and it should continue....Hongera! (Congratulations!)’

Joseph Mburu
Chief Accountant