

# SEE Questionnaire

## Community Relations Q1



## Have your company's actions or operations resulted in economic and social impacts that have adversely affected the quality of life in a community?

### Rationale for question

This question requires companies to assess positive or negative impacts they have had on their communities.

Certain business operations, by their very nature, may have unavoidable negative impacts. For example, regular environmental noise pollution will affect communities near an airport and under the flight paths to and from that airport. Commercial activity may overburden local infrastructure, for example, through heavy traffic that leads to the deterioration of quality of life and crowded local roads. Likewise, business decisions, such as layoffs, closures or outsourcing, may be necessary in some instances, but they can significantly decrease quality of life in communities if comparable job opportunities are unavailable. Nonetheless, adverse community impacts may be avoided, or at least mitigated, through impact assessments, effective collaboration with stakeholders, careful planning and other means.

This question, however, also provides an opportunity for companies to describe any positive contributions they have made specifically to local communities. Businesses' actions that can stimulate commercial activity include, for example, locating offices and facilities in depressed areas thereby contributing to regeneration, investing in local infrastructure, employing people locally to cut down on commuting, contributing to local business groups that promote entrepreneurship, restoring landscapes and wildlife habitats. The list is endless.

### Defining terms

A 'community' should be a restricted geographic area. There is no defined radius for a community; it could be a town or city, section of a town or city or neighbouring villages and towns. For example, a sparsely populated region may consider a wider geographic area to be a community.

'Quality of life' is not a tangible concept, unlike the standard of living, and therefore cannot be easily measured. It is the overall sense of well-being felt by an individual or community. It has two aspects: the first includes physical aspects such as health, diet, exercise, social activities and safety. The second includes psychological aspects such as stress, worry, pleasure and other positive or negative emotional states. A supportive community will enhance the quality of life for individuals.

**Primary and Secondary answer requirements**

**ANSWERING YES**

Companies must:

1. describe the negative impacts they have had on a community;
2. explain the reasons for these impacts; and
3. describe any precautionary or remedial actions they have taken to mitigate the effects.

Companies may:

1. describe any policies or guidelines for dealing with local impacts.

**ANSWERING NO**

Companies may:

1. describe any positive contributions made to the local community.

**ANSWERING DON'T KNOW**

Companies must:

1. confirm that they cannot make an objective assessment as to whether their effect on a locale has been negative;
2. provide relevant detail regarding their economic and social impact on communities;
3. explain why they are unable to make an assessment; and
4. describe any future plans.

**NOT APPLICABLE** is not a permissible answer to this question.

**NO ANSWER YET** is only permissible under extraordinary circumstances and then for only a limited period.