

Corporate citizenship

Companies, like private citizens, have rights and responsibilities, with the generation of wealth being only one measure of success. To an ever-increasing degree, stakeholders expect businesses to act as social, economic and environmental forces for good.

As a leading Group of companies that provide specialty products and services to customers mainly in the mining and manufacturing sectors, AECI is committed to making a positive contribution to the lives of individuals and communities in South Africa. The focus is on how the Group relates to external stakeholders, the marketplace, government and society as a whole; how it measures and manages performance in matters relating to safety, health and environmental impacts; and how it meets its obligations to help all citizens become meaningful participants in the country's economy, in particular the advancement of its employees from previously disadvantaged groups. Such matters are overseen by the corporate citizenship committee on behalf of the Board, in terms of clear guidelines.

Corporate social investment

Corporate social investment (CSI) goes far beyond the philanthropy of the past – that is, donating money to good causes. It is an ongoing responsibility that AECI's businesses accept for their environment, both human and physical. To this end, the AECI Group employs best practices so as to promote the improvement of the overall quality of life of local communities. The Company's CSI programme concentrates on assisting the communities in which it operates through investments in skills training as well as early childhood and community development.

Through its alignment with the Group's strategy and business objectives, the programme is deliberate, focused, progressive and is guided by a formal policy framework. The programme's main objective is to mutually benefit the Group and its stakeholders.

Policy

Through its CSI programme, the AECI Group is committed to empowering and uplifting disadvantaged individuals and communities in South Africa.

Specifically, AECI wishes to:

- address inequality in South Africa by making a measurable improvement in the lives and welfare of the disadvantaged communities in which it operates; and
- enhance the Company's image and reputation as a caring and responsible corporate citizen.

Efforts in this regard are long-standing and the programme's focus is demonstrated by initiatives, such as those listed below, which were supported by an investment of some R5 million in 2008:

- **The Johannesburg Youth Orchestra Company**, which has been supported by AECI for some years, is now an Associate Member of Jeunesses Musicales International, the world's largest NGO for youth music. The company runs three programmes: orchestras and ensembles, instrumental individual training as well as a schools project, and teacher training. The Orchestra also has more than 180 young learners in a project in Soweto, with instruction in wind instruments for adults being a recent addition to its offering.