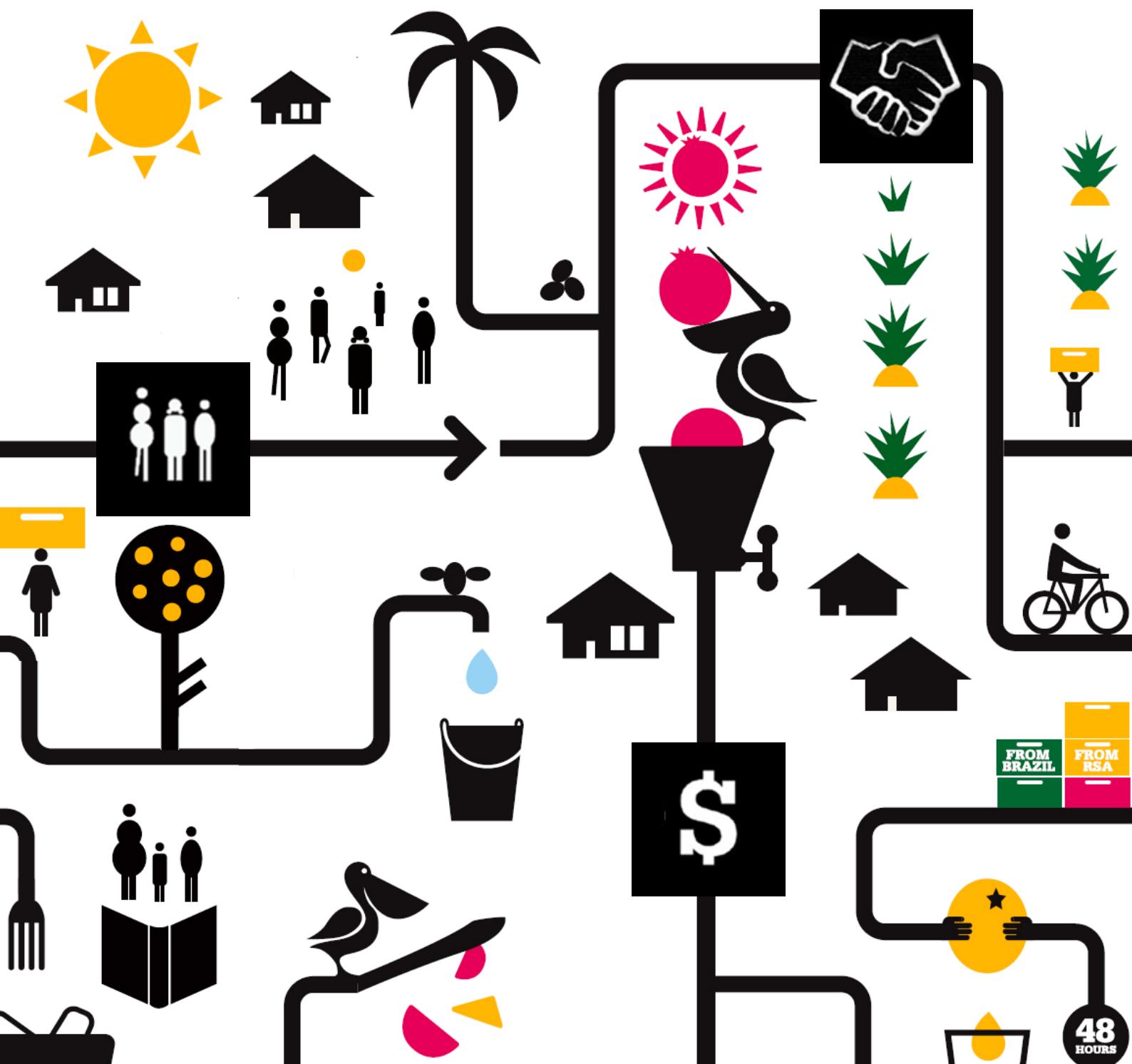




BLUE SKIES



The Joint Effort Enterprise 2014
Our Blue Print for a sustainable business



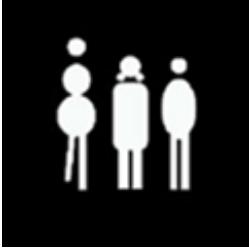
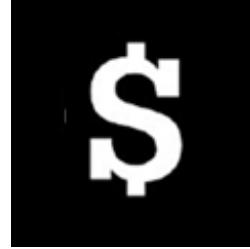
What is the JEE?

Introduction

The Joint Effort Enterprise is the Blue Skies model for a sustainable business. It is not a model which has been introduced in response to the growing interest around 'sustainability', but is a set of principles formed in 1998 by the Founder of Blue Skies to ensure that the organisation endures. The JEE has been necessary for Blue Skies to respond effectively to actual and immediate challenges, and to be innovative and profitable in a highly competitive market.

The JEE Core Principles

The JEE is principally built upon three strands; a diverse society, a culture of respect and a drive for profit.

		
Diversity	Respect	Profit
Our diverse range of skills, experience and perspectives helps us to generate the best ideas.	Our culture of respect raises our morale and helps us to conserve the resources we rely on.	We need to be profitable so as to generate the funds that enable us to survive and grow.

This model ensures that we can recruit and retain the best people, and conserve the resources we rely on, so that we can produce the best quality products, keep customers happy and generate the income that keeps the organisation going. Put simply it espouses the idea that a business works best if it is inclusive, socially equal and profitable.

The next few pages introduce the JEE core principles in more detail.



The JEE Core Principles



Diversity is the ‘Joint’ in the Joint Effort Enterprise and is one of the defining elements of our model. It reflects our commitment to breaking down the barriers that divide us and embracing the qualities that make us different.

There are over 2,000 people in Blue Skies spanning three continents and with representation from more than ten countries. As a group we employ a diverse mix of people from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and experiences. We believe this makes us collectively strong and better positioned to take the business forward.

By promoting diversity we are more effectively able to understand the demographics of the market place and therefore better equipped to meet the needs of our customers. We can also better understand the dynamics of the production base which allows us to strengthen our relationship with supply partners and optimize our inputs. Importantly, we believe that inclusivity creates a vibrant, happy working environment which increases productivity, reduces staff turnover and enhances our problem solving capabilities.



Our culture is an unwritten code for how we behave. It is primarily about ‘respect’. Respect for each other, respect for the environment and respect for the countries within which we operate.

Our culture is intended to keep us together and sustain the resources which we rely on to ensure our existence. For instance at our factories we operate what we call a ‘seamless society’ whereby we have respect for each other regardless of gender, age, colour, creed or rank. There are no special parking spaces or enclosed offices for managers, we all eat together, we help each other when in need, and we recognise each person’s individual skills and talents. This helps us to bond as a family and get the best out of each other in business.

This respect for each other extends to how we respect the environment. The mission statement for our culture states “We believe in mutual respect for each other regardless of who we are and where we come from. We believe that respect for people breeds care for fruit which in turn fosters a natural concern for the environment.” This is demonstrated for instance in the way that our farmers don’t cut down trees, we take measures to protect areas of biodiversity, and we do everything we can to campaign against illegal environmental destruction that we see taking place in our community.

Our culture also extends to the way we deal with our partners, including the farmers who supply us with our raw materials. This is why we have a team of agronomists who work closely with our farmers to help them reach the highest standards for quality, food safety and social and environmental responsibility. We are particularly proud of being among the first in the world to achieve a number of standards, including GlobalGAP (a standard for Good Agricultural Practice) and the prestigious LEAF marque – which stands for Linking Environment And Farming.

Respect for the communities within which we operate is paramount. In 2009 we joined forces with two European retailers, to form a Foundation which would raise money for projects designed to improve livelihoods within the communities where our staff and farmers live. To date the Blue Skies Foundation has completed over 35 community projects in Ghana and South Africa, including the construction and renovation of schools, toilets and clinics in rural areas where such facilities often don’t exist.



Making a profit is an important objective of any commercial organisation; however where Blue Skies perhaps differs is in our aim to make a profit but not at any cost. Profit is important because without a profit we cannot do anything, and if we lose money then we have to start cutting costs; this puts enormous pressure on the things we think are important. Profit is what keeps us alive and what keeps over 2,000 people employed, but we don't get fat on it.

At Blue Skies our passion is to deliver exceptional quality products with a strong point of difference, but to do so in a way which is competitive, which fulfills a consumer need, and is profitable. In this way we can continue to deliver these products, whilst preserving our diversity and culture. This in essence is our sustainability mission.

We are not a social enterprise and we are not trying to change the world; we are just trying to deliver a product that the market wants, but in a way which has a positive impact on people and the environment. By doing this we want to demonstrate that countries like Ghana don't have to be dependent on charity or Fairtrade, but given the opportunity, they can offer exceptional quality value added products, at a competitive price and in significant volume.

JEE Virtuous Cycle

The JEE Virtuous Cycle is an extension of our core principles and is intended to illustrate how our business aims to bring out the best in people and fruit to make a profit so that we can improve wellbeing.



At the centre of our philosophy is practicing equitable trade by 'adding value at source'. This means that raw materials are processed within the country of origin rather than shipped overseas and processed elsewhere. By doing this we believe as much as 70% of the value of the finished product stays within the country of origin, compared to as little as 15% if it is processed outside.
