

Working Conditions; Signature Programme

What we want to achieve

Improved working conditions and wages for every man and woman in the apparel industry

The results

Increased disclosure and transparency of supply chains and working conditions
Increased number of collective bargaining agreements
More women leading the way to better working conditions
Improved industry cooperation
Policies and regulations that foster good working conditions
Improved capacity of organisations promoting improved working conditions

How we measure success

Number of workers benefiting from better working conditions and wages
Number of collective bargaining agreements
Number of women leading efforts to improve working conditions

How we measure success

Number of disclosure and transparency mechanisms used to improve working conditions
Number of grantee organisations strengthened
Number of stakeholders working together

We believe

Transparency and traceability lead to increased accountability and better working conditions
Worker-management negotiations and collective bargaining enable good working conditions and workplace harmony
Industry formalisation leads to improvement of working conditions
The industry needs to work together in new ways to improve working conditions
Many workers are employed in small and medium enterprises

Potential risks

Stakeholders lack the appetite to improve working conditions because immediate costs outweigh the incentives to change
Improvements in job quality can lead to increased unemployment
Brands unwilling to fully embrace transparency due to fear of reputational risk
Workers unwilling to step up as leaders due to fear of losing their jobs
Coordination and collaboration among a critical mass of stakeholders is difficult to achieve, but necessary for change

What we do

Increase industry accountability through public disclosure of working conditions, purchasing practices and supply chains, in a way that incentivises improvement
Help to amplify worker voice and participation in improving working conditions, especially women
Promote industry cooperation to support better working conditions
Support the development and enforcement of policies that foster good working conditions, especially in small and medium enterprises
Support institutional capacity of grantee organisations

The challenge

Supply chains are fragmented making traceability a challenge

Worker exploitation and unsafe working conditions persist, despite widespread acknowledgment of problems and significant resources allocated to addressing them

Increased cost of improved working conditions leads to the migration of production to areas with worse conditions and weaker legal enforcement

Power relations between stakeholders in the chain (brands, factory management, governments, unions and workers) are unequal