



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Collaborative Action toward Gender Equality in Supply Chains



**TAJMIRA,
SEWING OPERATOR**
©RISE | Bangladesh,
2024

CASE STUDY: BANGLADESH



©RISE, Bangladesh, 2023

Historically, men were the only ones handling the hemming at the Matrix Styles Ltd. garment factory in Bangladesh. Not anymore.

“After the RISE Foundations trainings on self-management, gender and communication, women asked to learn this skill. Senior management provided hem-process training. Now women work alongside men,” Aminur Rahman, Senior Executive in the compliance department, explains.

The Foundations program provided Matrix Styles with an opportunity to upskill its workforce, improve workers’ well-being and build a more gender-equal workplace. Their strategic investment has since led to improved productivity, communication and morale, while worker absenteeism has decreased by about two-thirds.

“By working together — with the RISE team in Bangladesh, women and men workers and the factory management — we can see things starting to shift both in terms of how workers approach their job and in how factory management supports

workers. The Foundations program helps women imagine a different future and equips them to speak up about their needs, actively seek skill advancement and challenge traditional assignments in the factory,” Nazneen C. Huq of Change Associates says.

A Ripple Effect Beyond Factories

The results of the program extend beyond factory walls. Suma, a female junior sewing operator, finds the program useful in her home life. “Applying my new communication skills has improved my relationship with my family members.”

Mohammad, a male sewing operator, has noticed a similar impact. “I’m more patient and deliberate [at home]. By discussing things with my family, I can make more informed and thoughtful decisions.”

“Now women work alongside men.”

AMINUR RAHMAN
Senior Executive, Compliance Department

About the Foundations Program

Globally, over 96,000 workers, 64% of them women, working in RISE members factories have trained through the Foundations program over the past two years. The program, implemented with local partners, combines best practice content from our founding partners BSR’s HERproject, Better Work and Gap Inc.’s P.A.C.E. The local RISE team and partners engage directly with the factory to upskill workers on leadership, health, labor rights, financial literacy and communication.

In a year marked by change in Bangladesh, we are grateful for the flexibility and ongoing commitment demonstrated by our local partners, participating factories and brands.

2024
RISE IN BANGLADESH
BY THE NUMBERS



The numbers represent workplaces where RISE conducted activities through September 30, 2024.



In 2024, our second year, we started the implementation of a new Strategic Plan that will guide us through 2026. The plan allows RISE to create opportunities and remove immediate barriers for women workers and business. It also sets the direction toward resolving deeper systemic issues that prevent women workers from realizing their inherent right to dignity. Our goal is to support an additional 1.5 million workers by 2026. Between our partners, members and supporters, we're well on our way.

We are excited to continue to grow our impact by increasing the number of new workplaces where we deliver our work, thus increasing the number of workers we support. This is made possible through our growing membership — we were thrilled to welcome our first supplier members this year. We are also expanding our geographic reach to include Indonesia and Guatemala, while also starting to test ways of scaling deeper into the supply chain.

In 2024, we navigated a cautious and polarized environment. As we enter 2025, we do so both knowing that the operating environment will remain uncertain and holding steadfast conviction in the importance of our work. Across our interconnected priorities at RISE — freedom from fear of gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work, increasing the financial health and resilience of workers and expanding opportunities for women for advancement and leadership — your partnership makes it possible for us to continue to advance toward fairness and equality. This will allow women and men workers and factories to better respond to the challenges of today. And those of tomorrow.

Collaboration is and will remain at the heart of our shared success. RISE is proudly becoming a platform that unites stakeholders who work on different aspects of gender equality within and across the garment, footwear and home textile supply chain. Centering ourselves in the realities, needs and priorities of women workers, and bringing together the perspective of women's organizations, workers' representative groups, suppliers, brands, buyers and many more, we are identifying new solutions to advance gender equality. Together.

On behalf of the RISE team, I extend my thanks to the partners and members who are working with us on this mission.

Christine Suarer
Executive Director of RISE

The RISE Steering Board

Anisha Chugh
*Executive Director,
Women's Fund Asia*

Aron Cramer
President and CEO, BSR

Payal Dalal
*Executive Vice President, Global
Programs, Mastercard Center for
Inclusive Growth*

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Strategy and Impact, CARE*

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Transformation Officer, Gap Inc.*

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*Director Textile and Garment
Industry, IndustriALL*

Roopa Nair
*Special Advisor to the RISE
Steering Board and Branch Chief
of the ILO-IFC Better Work*

JJ Park
CEO, ShinWon

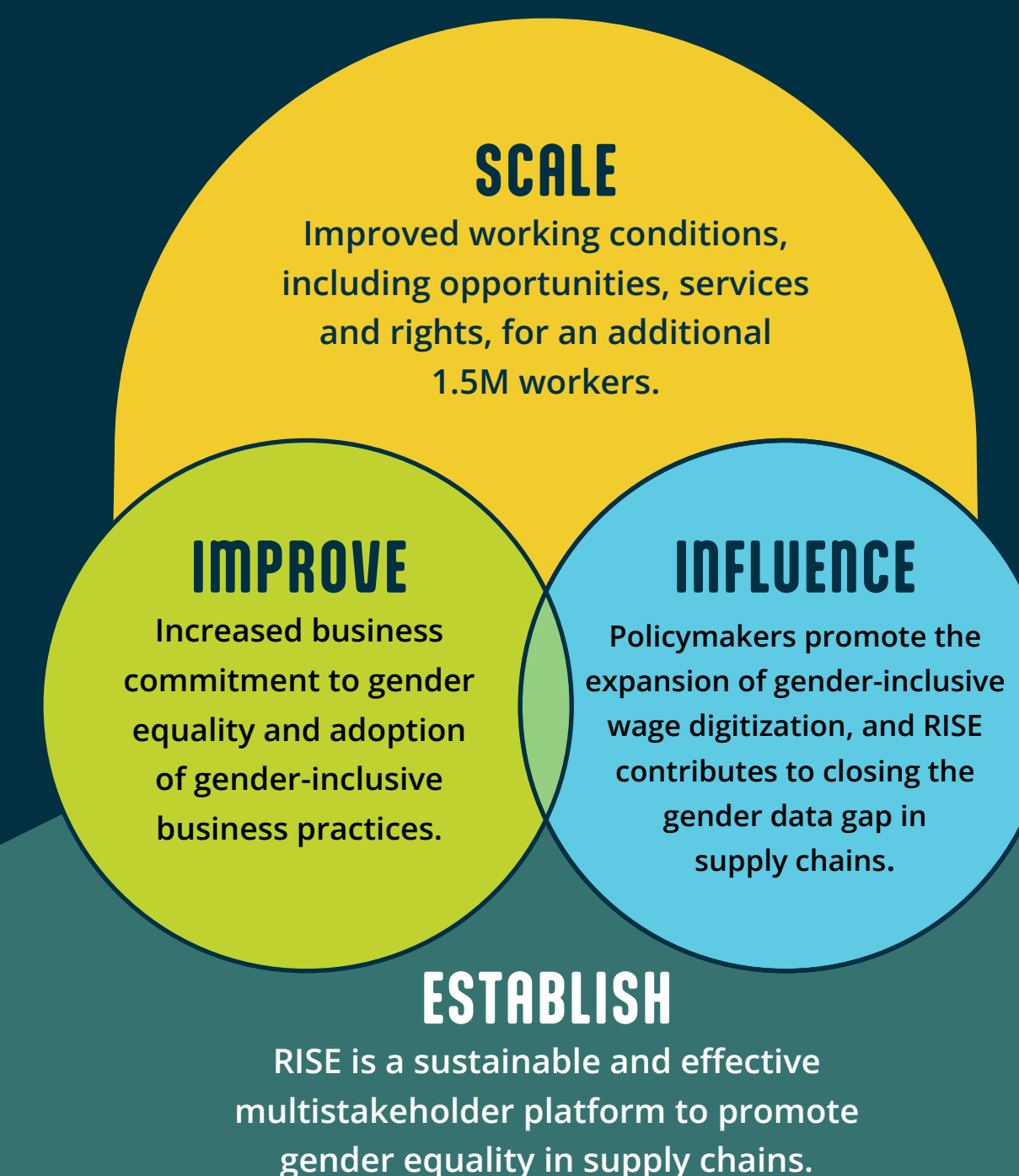
Indalecio Perez
*Head of Sustainability
Engagement, Inditex*



To achieve gender equality, RISE engages in problem solving within a comprehensive interconnected framework that includes responses to addressing gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH). Yet, addressing and preventing GBVH in and of itself requires an intersectional approach that must bring together diverse actors from multi-sectors who are willing to transcend boundaries and varied objectives towards a common goal. RISE continues to play this important role in convening the garment, footwear and textile supply chain, gathering upstream and downstream actors, alongside organizations and collaboratives focused on women's leadership and rights. In 2024, we have witnessed an increased interest in gender equality as a result of awareness-raising, regulatory development and consumer scrutiny, but at the same time, we have also witnessed the backlash against women. Now more than ever, RISE must amplify and scale up its efforts and leverage its multi-sector collaborators and partners to both confront these challenges and build a better world of work.

Krishanti Dharmaraj
*Independent Chair of RISE
Steering Board, DIGNITY INDEX*

With our partners, members and supporters,
we are committed to support an additional
1.5 million workers:



WHERE WE WORK



2024 REACH IN NUMBERS



433

WORKPLACES*



1,539

MANAGERS
PARTICIPATED**



14,276

PEER EDUCATORS
PARTICIPATED**



399,618

WORKERS
PARTICIPATED
(TOTAL)*



269,804

WORKERS
PARTICIPATED
(WOMEN)*

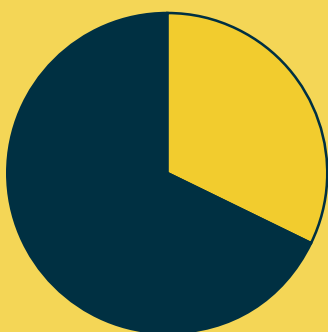


129,814

WORKERS
PARTICIPATED
(MEN)*

68%

WOMEN
WORKERS



32%

MEN
WORKERS

CUMULATIVE REACH SINCE 2023



583

WORKPLACES*



2,051

MANAGERS
PARTICIPATED**



22,941

PEER EDUCATORS
PARTICIPATED**



730,284

WORKERS
PARTICIPATED
(TOTAL)*



469,866

WORKERS
PARTICIPATED
(WOMEN)*

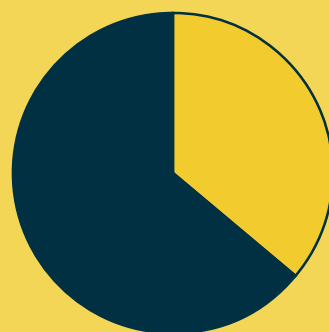


260,418

WORKERS
PARTICIPATED
(MEN)*

64%

WOMEN
WORKERS



36%

MEN
WORKERS

RISE delivers capacity strengthening programs through two different approaches: Under the Peer Educator (PE) model, programs are delivered through local partner organizations, and under the Integrated Model (IM), they're delivered through licensees.

Some numbers are revised to reflect updates from data cleansing and methodology adjustments.

**Combines programs delivered under both the peer educator and integrated models*

***Manager and peer educator numbers are from the peer educator model*

Collaborative Industry Action for Gender Equality

As part of our three-year strategy, we are working with stakeholders to ensure that the garment, footwear and home textile industries integrate gender equality in their plans for sustainable business resilience and success. This means convening workers, unions, brands, suppliers, local organizations and governments, each contributing their unique power, perspective and expertise to create realistic solutions and make real progress toward our goal.

“It is important for us to have partners like RISE and Mastercard to work with on wage digitalization, because we can bring factories to the table and help [answer the question of] ‘why digitalization matters’. But we don’t understand what the best financial services are and how to connect those services to the workers, and how to make sure there’s a feedback loop. That’s the power of our collaboration.”

– The Children’s Place



Helping Financial Providers Understand Workers' Needs

Workers will adopt new financial products and services providing they are well designed, relevant, affordable and that workers receive the right support in the transition. For instance, following RISE Financial Health training, InstaPay, the payment app licensed by the Central Bank of Egypt, has been popular with men and women garment workers, enabling them to pay their bills, buy groceries and send money to friends and family. Our partnership with the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth has been an important lever in reaching financial service providers and building their understanding of the financial needs of women and men garment workers. Our dedicated guide for financial service providers, developed in partnership with the Center, features actionable recommendations on how they can help advance financial inclusion and resilience in global supply chains.

Boosting Financial Inclusion in Egypt

Read our report →

Guide for Financial Service Providers

Read our guide →

Linking Factory and Community Interventions against Gender-Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH)

Through our new partnership with UN Women in Tamil Nadu (India), our members can access targeted programs to address GBVH in communities around their suppliers' factories, in addition to implementing RISE Respect in the workplace. Together, we are streamlining the way businesses can access comprehensive and sustainable programs addressing GBVH at the local level and contributing to shaping policies.

Find out more →



ISLAM, SEWING OPERATOR
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Partnering with National Institutions to Expand Wage Digitization in Cambodia

Since 2019, the proportion of garment factories in Cambodia paying workers digitally has increased by 54 percentage points, driven by concerted efforts by stakeholders including RISE, our members, ILO Better Factories Cambodia, GIZ Fabric Cambodia and TAFTAC. The 28% of garment factories that still pay their workers in cash include non-export-facing factories who supply our members’ suppliers. Their managers often cite the cost of payroll, insufficient cash out points and lack of workers’ familiarity with digital banking as key barriers — all of which are challenges that can be overcome with the right interventions. We partnered with GIZ Fabric Cambodia, GOPA and the Cambodian Garment Training Institute to build their trainers’ capacity to deliver RISE Management Advisory Service on Digital Wages in factories across the supply chain. Demonstrating that all suppliers can benefit from wage digitization, regardless of their position in the supply chain, advisory service participants have reported an average 83% reduction in administrative costs, and annual savings of approximately US\$9,800.

Scaling Responsible Wage Digitization in Cambodia

[Read our report →](#)

Collaboration at the Workplace Level: Shared Responsibility for Gender Equality

Enabling ways to work in collaboration to advance gender equality in supply chains is fundamental to RISE’s approach. No single company can solve gender equality on its own, neither at an industry nor at a factory level. With the market displaying an increasing interest in enhancing gender equality, many supplier factories are under pressure from buyers to implement many different, sometimes duplicative, activities. RISE aims to serve as a funnel for gender equality programs, helping to alleviate training duplication for factories, to better distribute resources across the supply chain and ultimately to improve gender equality across more factories with more workers.

As of 2024, RISE has created more than 70 collaborative program investment opportunities for RISE members. This collaborative effort enables our members to deploy available resources more effectively across more factories, which leads to more workers participating in programs. Buyers come to supplier factories with a streamlined request and speak with a united voice about the value of investing in gender equality. Through cost-sharing opportunities, we reduce the risk of program duplication in factories, ensuring that both member and factory resources are best utilized.

ABOUT COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM INVESTMENT

Collaborative program investment is a process led by RISE to identify and propose opportunities for members who source from the same factories to cost-share capacity strengthening programs in shared factories.

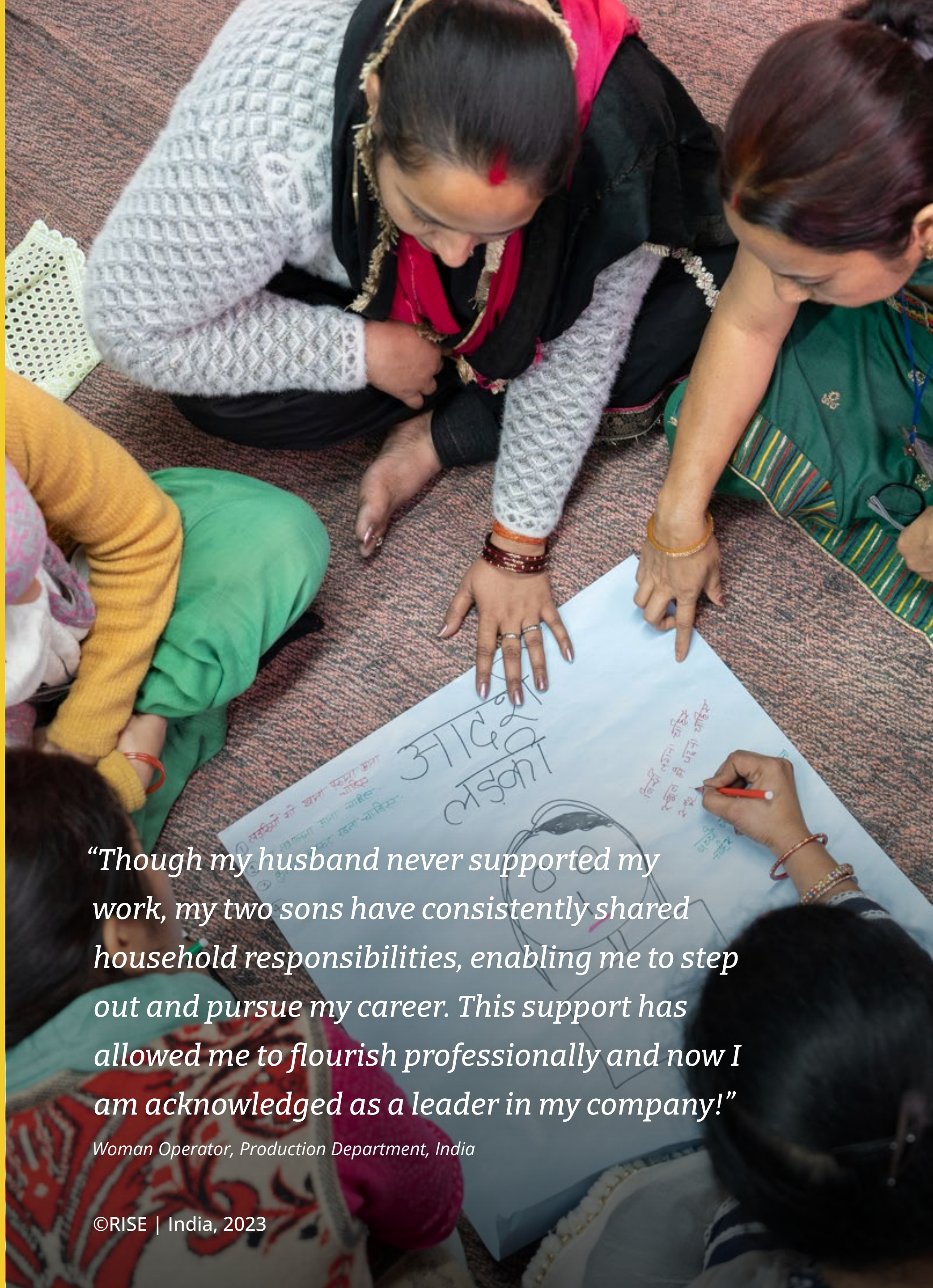


Improving How We Respond to Women's Needs and Priorities

Women's perspectives, needs and experiences inform our approach and capacity strengthening programs, ensuring they are relevant and effective. We gather insights through thematic interviews, workshops and focus groups conducted directly with workers or with women's rights organizations, unions and other representatives. By emphasizing the individual agency of each worker, we can deliver better support, opportunities and rights for up to 10 million workers over the next decade.



LISAN, CUTTING
©RISE | Cambodia, 2024



“Though my husband never supported my work, my two sons have consistently shared household responsibilities, enabling me to step out and pursue my career. This support has allowed me to flourish professionally and now I am acknowledged as a leader in my company!”

Woman Operator, Production Department, India

Unpacking How Social Norms Enable GBVH in Factories

Working with local partners Mamata and Network for Research and Training (NRT), we interviewed 84 women and men workers and managers to identify the gender norms that facilitate GBVH and limit workers’ ability to report it. We found that patriarchal norms that contribute to the prevalence and acceptance of GBVH include defining masculinity in terms of men being physically strong — as leaders, providers, managers, and decision-makers — whereas women are viewed as physically and mentally weak, and are expected to not challenge men in their roles and decisions. Many women are pressured to limit their work outside the home to roles that are more menial and/or perceived as feminine. The study also showed a culture of silence deeply rooted in harmful gender norms that result in survivor-blaming and shaming. Drawing on these findings, we are strengthening our approach to the way the RISE Respect program addresses GBVH.

[Read our recommendations →](#)

Working Together to Rethink Women’s Advancement and Leadership

We engaged women and men workers in India and Bangladesh to better understand what advancement and leadership means to them, and to develop RISE’s approach based on their input. Using a systems and future-thinking framework, we built on their answers to connect with more than 140 individuals from 80 organizations, including academics; care service providers; government representatives; industry associations; international, local and grassroots organizations; women’s rights organizations; unions; international buyers and suppliers. Their responses informed both our roadmap for the sector and a set of interventions, including three areas for action: complementing vertical and horizontal advancement approaches; addressing the role of unpaid care and domestic work; and co-designing gender-responsive business practices. Some of our members have started integrating these findings into their sustainability policies, demonstrating the potential of building solutions based on what we hear from workers in reshaping how the garment, footwear and home textile industry operates.

We would like to thank our partners for this project: Forum for the Future, Good Business Lab, Consiglieri Private Limited, Colors Consulting.

“My supervisor started screaming at me and threatening me for a production-related issue. I went to the manager to file a complaint. He told me that the supervisor is under pressure and it’s normal to get angry. The manager also said that I should apologize to the supervisor. I left my job that day.”

Woman Worker

A Membership Platform That Enables Action for Gender Equality

Who Are Our Members

An active membership base is critical to achieving RISE’s mission. Our members enable us to gain direct access to factories to engage with workers and management, and to collaborate long-term with industry to strengthen efforts to adopt more gender-inclusive practices. We welcome buyers, brands, retailers, suppliers and vendors as members of RISE. In 2024, we counted more than 30 of the largest companies in the apparel, footwear and textile industries as our members, representing more than US\$300 billion in revenue. This year, we also welcomed our first supplier members, Alpine Creations and ShinWon Corporation.

“Based on our early experience collaborating with RISE, I firmly believe that RISE supports a better working environment. Not just for women workers, but for all. This year, based on positive results, we have expanded RISE programs in our factories in partnership with Gap Inc. and Macy’s, two other RISE members. We look forward to driving more positive change for women employees in our industry together with RISE. Here’s to the inspiring work ahead!”

CEO of ShinWon Corporation JJ Park



RISE Vietnam Members Meeting, 2024

RISE Members



Limiting Duplication of Capacity Strengthening Programs in Factories

Identifying cost-share opportunities through the collaborative program investment process is one of the most appreciated RISE member benefits.

15+ collaborative program investment opportunities enabled by RISE

55+ grant-funded opportunities, saving members US\$600,000 in workplace program costs.

53% of RISE members have participated in cost-shared programs, and 90% of members think that the process is easy to participate in.

Member Collaboration at Industry Level

74% of members participate in RISE working groups on effective collaboration, financial health, respect and women’s advancement and leadership.

90% of members who participate agree that working groups are relevant and meaningful.

In 2024, the working groups have:

- Developed a member guide on human rights due diligence as linked to RISE.
- Reviewed industry tools, business cases and guides for brands, suppliers and buyers to improve access to digital wages and financial health in the supply chain.
- Improved the collaborative program investment process.
- Assessed potential markets for expansion of our Financial Health and Respect programs.
- Identified links between social norms and business practice.
- Identified a new approach to women’s advancement and leadership.

What Members Appreciate about RISE

- Top 5 member benefits according to RISE members*
- 1: Enrollment in capacity strengthening programs
 - 2: Program cost-share opportunities with other RISE members
 - 3: Events (in-person and webinars)
 - 4: Support from RISE team
 - 5: Access to the RISE Impact Portal

*Based on RISE member survey data from 2024, 79% response rate.



Partnering for Change

RISE works collaboratively through an expanding network of local organizations to deliver our mission. Our partners understand both RISE and local priorities and can support our joint efforts and scale initiatives.

BANGLADESH

Change Associates Ltd.
Consiglieri Private Limited
Network for Research and Training (NRT)
MAMATA
Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)

“As a local partner, we have observed how RISE programs are contributing to improve business practices and creating a harmonious workplace relationship between workers and management, which is key for the sustainable growth of the garment industry in Bangladesh.

Rumi Barua,
Project Manager, MAMATA

CAMBODIA

Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD)

EGYPT

The Center for Development Services (CDS)

GUATEMALA

CARE Guatemala

INDIA

Colors Consulting
Good Business Lab
Kshitij
Upfront

“Over the past decade, I’ve seen how RISE programs help build women’s confidence and leadership skills. These programs, and RISE legacy programs, help women overcome challenges and take on leadership roles. This personal growth not only benefits the women but also strengthens the entire factory. RISE is a powerful force for positive change, driving success for both individuals and businesses.

Arpita Dave,
Implementation Head
and Director, Kshitij

PAKISTAN

Empowerment thru Creative Integration (ECI)

VIETNAM

CSAGA
Life Centre Vietnam

Anchor Partner for Financial Health

Mastercard Impact Fund, with support from the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth

Grant Funders

American Eagle Outfitters, Inc
BESTSELLER
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
The FABRIC Cambodia project – commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
GOPA Worldwide Consultants
Target
The VF Foundation
VF Corporation
Victoria’s Secret & Co.
The Walt Disney Company

Leaders’ Circle

We are especially grateful to Gap Inc. and Target who have made a three year commitment to the RISE Leaders’ Circle. Their significant support and commitment is critical to us this year and going forward.



2024 Insights and Reports



ADVANCING FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND RESILIENCE IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS:

A Practical Guide for Financial Service Providers using Examples from Wage Digitalization in the Garment Sector

REPORT



INCREASING FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN EGYPT'S GARMENT SECTOR THROUGH RESPONSIBLE WAGE DIGITALIZATION:

Benefits for Workers and Business

REPORT



WAGE DIGITALIZATION: A PATH TO ACCELERATING FINANCIAL HEALTH FOR GARMENT WORKERS

BLOG



FIVE YEARS OF THE ILO C190:

What collaborative action against gender-based violence means in global garment supply chains

BLOG



IMPROVING FINANCIAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS THROUGH WAGE DIGITALIZATION

REPORT



RISE STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2026

REPORT



RISE: A REFLECTION ON WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT BEYOND SUPERVISORY ROLES IN THE GARMENT INDUSTRY

BLOG



PAYROLL TO PROGRESS: HOW WAGE DIGITALIZATION BOOSTS GARMENT WORKERS' FINANCIAL HEALTH & SECURITY

WEBINAR