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# HIDDEN HOMEWORKERS

## **ARE YOU SOURCING APPAREL AND FOOTWEAR FROM INDIA, PAKISTAN OR NEPAL?**

We are inviting brands to work with us, to extend your supply chain monitoring to reach hidden workers beyond first tier suppliers. We are keen to collaborate with all supply chain stakeholders to help homeworkers access their rights and improve their working conditions.

Homeworking can be found all across South Asia, doing many different tasks, including embroidery, sewing and finishing clothes, assembling jewellery and stitching leather shoes, both for domestic and international retailers.

Typically employed informally by subcontractors or intermediaries, and drawn from the poorest communities, women homeworkers are often the worst paid and most insecure workers in most companies' supply chains. Homeworkers' employment is irregular, precarious and sometimes hazardous, and their very low rates of pay creates a risk of child labour. As a result, the presence of homeworkers is often hidden by suppliers and may not be disclosed at audits.

Despite this, for many women, especially those with young children, homeworking offers a vital source of family income. Covid-19 has hit homeworkers particularly hard, leaving many unpaid and without future orders, with no social security and many unable to even access the limited government relief that is available in some parts of the region.

Hidden Homeworkers is a consortium of NGOs supporting homeworkers producing for global brands in the apparel and footwear industries in India, Pakistan and Nepal, and other women in precarious employment, co-funded by the European Union. Team members include Traidcraft Exchange, HomeNet South Asia, Homeworkers Worldwide and local HNSA members including SEWA Delhi and SAVE in Tirupur.

## WHAT ARE WE OFFERING?

- Support to develop an effective Homeworker policy, that encourages your suppliers to disclose the use of sub-contractors and homeworkers.
- A suite of tools to gain transparency to homeworker level in supply chains, in order to improve homeworkers' working conditions.
- Resources and local partners to support mapping of your supply chains, or across a target location, documenting roles and working conditions.
- Training and support for the homeworkers, delivered by our local partners, enabling them to participate fully within these processes.

## WHAT ARE WE ASKING BRANDS TO DO?

- Allow your suppliers to disclose homeworking within your supply chains, by taking an open and positive position towards the issue.
- Commit to working with your suppliers to safeguard the livelihoods of any homeworkers that may present, and to addressing issues identified through the project.
- Introduce us to your suppliers and sub-contractors, so we can interview suppliers and subcontractors, to map production chains and where disclosed, the use of homeworkers.
- Work with us to draw up an action plan, seeking ways to increase transparency within supply chains at every stage of the process, in order to improve homeworkers' working conditions.
- Brands and suppliers are invited to contribute towards the costs of the project but this is not a precondition for their participation.

### For more information please contact:

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