



NETWORK ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE GARMENT & FOOTWEAR SECTOR

Summary Report (2017 – 2019)



NORGES BANK
INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT



for every child

INTRODUCTION

This report presents a summary of the activities and outputs of the Network on Children's Rights in the Garment & Footwear Sector (the Network). The Network was established in October 2017 by Norges Bank Investment Management and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Its purpose was to provide a platform for dialogue between international garment and footwear brands and retailers, manufacturers and sustainability experts. The aim was to identify challenges, explore solutions and share innovative practices to improve the impact on children's rights in the global garment and footwear supply chain.¹ The Network was active for two years, between November 2017 and November 2019. It was succeeded by a peer-learning group of companies from the Network seeking to build on Network learning and to support practical integration of children's rights in human rights due diligence and responsible sourcing practices.

Network participants

Companies: adidas, Carrefour, Children's Place, Disney, H&M, Kering Group, Li & Fung, Tesco, VF Corporation

Organizations and experts: Article One, Center for Child Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility, Fair Labour Association, ILO (Better Work), OECD, Phulki

NETWORK PARTICIPANTS

The Network brought together 12 leading garment and footwear companies from Asia, Europe and the US, representing a market value of more than US\$280 billion. The companies represented in the Network covered more than 1 million employees in their own operations and an estimated 8 million workers in the garment and footwear supply chain.² The Network also involved a range of experts from international organizations, non-governmental organizations, local civil society groups and business and human rights experts. The Network involved staff from Norges Bank Investment Management (e.g. sustainability, risk monitoring, and portfolio management) and UNICEF.

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE NETWORK

The Network was established to provide a forum to enhance the understanding of the impact on children in the garment and footwear supply chain and improve business practices for children in sourcing activities. Specifically, the Network's objectives were to:

- Deepen the understanding of the multitude of ways in which children are directly and indirectly affected, beyond child labour, both positively and negatively;
- Facilitate peer learning and disseminate innovative good practice examples of children's rights embedment in human rights due diligence and responsible sourcing frameworks;
- Contribute to improved monitoring, assessment and disclosure of children's rights and company measures to improve the management of children's rights risks in the supply chain over time.

¹ The Network focused on addressing impacts on children in the supply chain. It did not address the many other ways in which children can be affected in the garment and footwear sector, such as through marketing practices, advertisement, product safety and working conditions for employees in the companies' own operations.

² Rough estimates based on information provided by the companies in the first workshop, as well as desk research.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Workshops and webinars

The Network organized three in-person workshops, four webinars, and several bilateral company conversations from November 2017 to February 2019. The workshops were held in Geneva, Switzerland, and Dhaka, Bangladesh. In addition, Network learning and insights were presented at a seminar organized by UNICEF on child rights metrics in global supply chains and during a UNICEF-led session at the OECD Forum on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector in 2019.



Second Workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in May 2018, attended by 25 representatives from five international brands and retailers, six manufacturers, civil society groups, Norges Bank Investment Management and UNICEF.

Development of practical company guidance

During the discussion at the first workshop, participants expressed the need for more research and evidence on the different ways in which children are affected in the supply chain beyond child labour, such as through working conditions for parents and living conditions for workers and their families. They suggested that the Network develop practical guidance for companies on the effective integration of children's rights in human rights due diligence and responsible sourcing practices.

Responding to these suggestions and recognizing current gaps, UNICEF partnered with Article One, a business and human rights consultancy, to develop a guidance tool on children's rights in the garment and footwear supply chain. The guidance tool explores practical steps that companies can take – individually and collectively – to embed children's rights in company policy and practice in the supply chain. The document was designed to:

1. Synthesize evidence on how children are affected in the garment and footwear supply chain;
2. Review and identify limitations in prevailing company approaches to managing children's rights;
3. Suggest concrete steps to integrate children's rights in approaches to responsible supply chain management.

The tool was developed in 2018 and 2019 and was informed by discussions during the workshops and webinars, a detailed literature and desk review of the children’s rights practices of 25 leading garment and footwear companies, and in-depth interviews with companies in the Network.

“From a child rights perspective, our current audit scope covers the presence of child labour, and only if required by local law, maternity protections, breastfeeding corners and in-factory childcare.”

– Company representative in the first workshop in Geneva, November 2017

The guidance tool and its suggested practical steps for companies do not foresee the creation of parallel processes, but rather seek to support the integration of children’s rights within existing responsible sourcing policies and practices. Moreover, the guidance tool includes a comprehensive set of draft metrics that can support the assessment and reporting on children’s rights integration, including outcomes for working parents and children, over time. These draft metrics are designed for use by garment and footwear buyers (e.g. brands and retailers) as well as by manufacturers who seek to assess their potential and actual impact on children’s rights in their operations and supply chains and to monitor progress over time.

A first draft version of the guidance tool was presented to Network participants at the in-person workshop in Geneva in November 2018. Following comprehensive feedback, a revised version was shared for further feedback with Network participants in 2019. Companies in the Network and peer-learning group had the opportunity to further discuss the recommendations and draft metrics before the guidance tool was published in 2020 (add link).



**BETTER PROCESSES, BETTER METRICS:
INTEGRATING CHILD RIGHTS INTO
RESPONSIBLE SOURCING FRAMEWORKS**

I

▲ Fatwa Akhtar Moni, 14, plays a game with friends at a UNICEF-supported Adolescent Club near her home in Dhaka's Daztpara slum. Twice each week Moni and 35-40 other young people have the opportunity to get together and be ordinary teenagers in a safe space. The group's facilitators lead discussions on gender and personal development. © UNICEF/UN66977/Lmch

Globally, several hundred million children are affected in the garment and footwear supply chain. From cotton seeds cultivation to cotton farming, weaving, spinning and garment manufacturing, children are affected in myriad ways in the supply chain. However, at present, responsible sourcing programmes, audit frameworks and sustainability reporting mechanisms rarely address specific child rights risks beyond child labour.¹

The 10 steps outlined in this section, as well as the corresponding metrics, were developed to support garment and footwear brands in:

- Identifying gaps in their responsible sourcing policies and programmes in relation to child rights risks in their supply chains
- Taking proactive steps to enhance their due diligence processes by integrating specific child rights indicators into their responsible sourcing programmes.
- Monitoring and reporting the impact on children in their supply chains, disclosing the steps they take to minimize adverse and maximise positive impact, and measuring progress over time

The following steps focus on the manufacturing stage of the supply chain, but highlight the importance of including deeper tiers of the supply chain in responsible sourcing efforts. While targeted towards brands, the framework also calls for multi-stakeholder and collective action to increase effectiveness, avoid duplication of efforts and scale impact. Engaging and addressing the needs of affected stakeholders – whether children, adolescent workers, pregnant women or working parents – is a critical component throughout each step.

¹ In this document, child risks refer to the potential adverse impact business operations can have on children's rights. They include direct impact on children and adolescent workers, as well as indirect impacts through the working and living conditions of working parents.

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Maternity Protections

Sample indicators:

- Duration of maternity and paternity entitlement
- Amount of wages paid during leave (average or pro-portion of previous earnings)
- Prevalence of employment discrimination based on maternity, pregnancy and/or family responsibilities
- Proportion of mothers returning to work after maternity leave (turnover rate)

Alignment with other standards:

- BetterWork (BW) Global Compliance Assessment Tool – Compliance Points: Discrimination (Gender) Compensation (Paid Leave) Working time (Leave)
- Fair Labor Association (FLA) Compliance Benchmarks: ND.6, ND.7, ND.8, HOW1.5
- SA 8000 Criteria: 5.1
- Sedex SMETA Measurement Criteria (v. 6.0): 5.34, 6.34, 7.3(d), 7.5(d), 7.11, 7.12
- GRI Reporting Standards 401 and 408: 401-2, 401-3, 408-1

Breastfeeding Support

Sample indicators:

- Rate of working mothers breastfeeding until 6 and 24 months
- Length and number of paid breastfeeding breaks
- Provision of safe and clean workplace breastfeeding spaces and breastmilk storage facilities
- Rates of use of breastfeeding spaces among working mothers with infants under 6 and 24 months

Alignment with other standards:

- BW Global Compliance Assessment Tool – Compliance Points: Compensation (Paid Leave) Working time (Leave)
- FLA Compliance Benchmarks: ND.8.1, ND.12, HOW3
- SA 8000 Criteria: 7.1
- Sedex SMETA Measurement Criteria (v. 6.0): 1.11, 6.6(c), 6.29, 6.36, 7.6(f)

Access to Childcare

Sample indicators:

- Prevailing childcare arrangements among workers with children under five
- Proportion of workers with children under five enrolled in factory-based childcare
- Accessibility of factory-based childcare (cost, opening hours, admissions, employer subsidies)
- Accessibility of community-based childcare

Alignment with other standards:

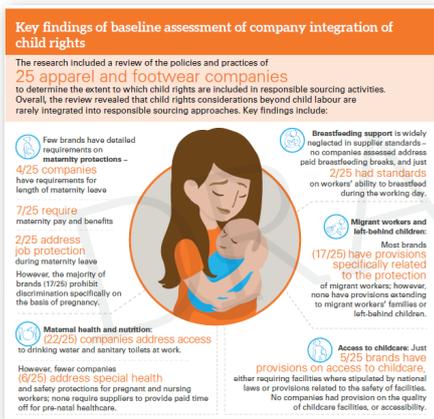
- FLA Compliance Benchmarks: HSE27
- Sedex SMETA Measurement Criteria (v. 6.0): 3.9(f), 4.17, 4.22, 4.23

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Excerpt from an initial draft of the child rights guidance tool, including corresponding metrics.

KEY DISCUSSION TOPICS AND INSIGHTS FROM THE NETWORK

1. Expanding the focus beyond child labour



At the beginning of the Network, Article One reviewed children's rights integration in responsible sourcing practices among 25 leading garment and footwear brands. The review showed that, beyond child labour, children's rights are rarely included explicitly in sustainability commitments, codes of conduct or human rights due diligence processes. The review, which included bilateral company interviews, showed that many companies operate with narrow definitions of children's rights. Above all, existing practices and standards typically tend to exclude the situation of working parents, especially mothers. For instance, just 4 out of the 25 companies reviewed reference entitlements to maternity leave in their supplier codes of conduct. Most companies refer to compliance with local law, and only one company requires a minimum leave period that meets international standards set by the International Labour Organization (14 weeks). Furthermore, only 7 out of the 25 companies expressly require that suppliers pay legally mandated maternity benefits.

As the Network activities progressed, UNICEF presented findings from factory and community assessments in Bangladesh and Viet Nam.³ The assessments provided insights into the ways children are affected directly and indirectly in both the factory and the community context. They emphasized that impacts on children in the factory and community context are often interlinked. Higher wages, for example, can positively affect health and education outcomes of workers' children.⁴ Conversely, better living conditions (e.g. improved water, sanitation and hygiene) in communities can improve worker health in the factories and reduce occupational health and safety risks. Building on these insights, discussions in the first workshop and subsequent webinars highlighted the importance of including children's rights considerations in social risk and impact assessments, and then mainstreaming them throughout the human rights due diligence cycle, e.g. improving management systems and monitoring and disclosure.

Lack of child rights awareness was identified as a concern not only among brands and retailers, but also at factory-levels. Generally, there is too little awareness among factory management about the different ways in which children are affected by parents' working conditions. In relation to decent work deficits, it was discussed that workers are often unaware of facilities available to them and that appropriate training may not be provided by factories. This

³ UNICEF, 2018, *Better Business for Children. Understanding Children's Rights and the Ready-Made Garment Sector in Bangladesh*. Available at: <www.unicef.org/csr/files/CSR_BANGLADESH_RM_G_REPORT.PDF>; UNICEF, 2017, *The apparel and footwear sector and children in Viet Nam*. Available at: <www.unicef.org/vietnam/reports/apparel-and-footwear-sector-and-children-viet-nam>.

⁴ See *Better Work, Progress and Potential: How Better Work is improving garment workers' lives and boosting factory competitiveness*, International Labour Office, 2016. Available at: <https://betterwork.org/dev/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/BW-Progress-and-Potential_Web-final.pdf>

is particularly the case in relation to challenges and protection for female workers, which it was argued were often not included in new employees' on-boarding and training. Lack of training to improve workers' knowledge of legal entitlements (e.g. maternity protections) was identified as a concern. Moreover, the fact that middle management in many countries is mostly male was seen as another root cause. Lack of female representation in factory management and supervisory functions often means fewer opportunities for female worker to discuss their challenges or raise grievances.

“We cannot rely on worker interviews during audits to understand the issues workers face, as very often they are coached by factory management to respond in a way that paints the supplier in a positive light.”

– Company representative in the second workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, May 2018

2. Prevalence of compliance approaches that prevent a focus on root causes

Network participants identified and explored root causes leading to negative children's rights impacts and limitations in current company approaches to addressing them. One root cause identified was the strong focus on compliance, monitoring and audits, which can prevent a holistic understanding of negative consequences for children. There was a common perception that compliance approaches were limited in identifying more complex, and often indirect, impacts on children, such as concerns that result from lack of decent work for parents and caregivers.

While participants acknowledged that supplier codes of conduct and auditing have contributed to much-needed greater awareness of worker rights in the supply chain, discussions explored limitations in prevailing compliance approaches. Among key shortcomings identified were:

- Focus on the existence rather than the quality of protections, services and facilities
- Exclusive focus on the workplace neglecting the living situation of workers and their families in the community
- A 'snapshot' mentality that fails to identify root causes and systemic challenges
- Duplication of audits and audit fatigue
- Lack of meaningful engagement with rights-holders
- Lack of focus on human-rights concerns in the deeper supply chain (beyond tier one)

To give an example, participants in the Dhaka workshop pointed out that day care centres and breastfeeding facilities provided by factories were established to be compliant with legal requirements, and that factories may not take additional steps to consider quality and accessibility. Breastfeeding facilities are often located in day-care centres that are far from the production lines, which can make it impractical for nursing mothers to use them. Moreover, while childcare facilities typically exist in factories as they are required by law, they are often not properly equipped and insufficiently cater for the needs of working mothers. One factory manager noted that a typical factory has several thousand workers but often only a few children in the childcare centre. This indicates that the system is not working, yet it is not detected in typical audits.



Children's Rights in the Garment and Footwear Supply Chain

A Practical Tool for Integrating
Child Rights into Responsible
Sourcing Frameworks
AUGUST 2019

3. Better laws, enforcement and government service provision

Gaps in legislation and enforcement were highlighted as key challenges underlying negative impacts on children's rights. In particular, it was noted that strengthening business practices in certain areas can only have a limited effect if not accompanied by strengthened laws, oversight and enforcement capacity to address challenges at scale. In relation to decent work, laws on wages and maternity protections were acknowledged as inadequate in many garment- and footwear-producing countries. Low wages were indicated as a root cause for many of the adverse impacts of the sector on children, with poverty remaining a major challenge for workers and their families. Inadequate length of maternity leave was also seen as a key concern. It was further discussed that the typical absence of paternity leave entitlements in many countries – and responsible sourcing standards – is a challenge, as lack of paternal involvement and support has a detrimental impact on mothers and children.

Poor basic services and infrastructure were identified as further root causes of poor living conditions for workers and their children. Industrial development has in many production countries outpaced social infrastructure, resulting in gaps in access to basic services for workers and their families. It was noted that there is a lack of urban planning in many areas where factories are concentrated, limiting the space and housing available to workers. This has an impact on the housing market, driving down the quality of available housing while driving up the cost. Price-fixing and monopolies in service provision (often unauthorized providers) was identified as another key concern in several countries (e.g. Bangladesh). As a result, residents in poor working communities often pay more for essential services than residents in middle-class neighbourhoods. Access to and quality of provision of health and education services were also highlighted as key challenges undermining children's rights. Both buyers and manufacturers were perceived as important agents for improved government-led service delivery through advocacy and provision of technical support, expertise and funding – rather than efforts to duplicate service.

4. Purchasing practices that conflict with responsible sourcing priorities

During the Dhaka workshop, which included representatives from six garment manufacturers, the link between purchasing practices and working conditions was explored in detail. It was discussed that this nexus is important not only in relation to overall working conditions, but also in relation to children's rights, since poor conditions for working parents also affect their families. For example, longer working hours and low wages prevent parents from spending time with and caring for their children. Other identified risks included higher production pressure that incentivize factory managers to outsource production, where risks to children are generally higher, seek to tap into vulnerable workforces (e.g. adolescent workers) or rely on child labour.

The discussions showed that in many companies, responsible sourcing and buying teams can be out of alignment, resulting in suppliers receiving mixed messages. For instance, while a responsible sourcing team may be asking suppliers to provide better maternity policies, childcare support or breastfeeding breaks, buying from the same company may simultaneously undermine suppliers' ability to invest in these standards by pushing for cheaper prices or shorter lead times. This is corroborated by a global UNICEF business survey on family-friendly policies (forthcoming), which showed that companies (especially small and medium-sized enterprises) in industries exposed to price fluctuations were less likely to offer employee guarantees such as paid leave, childcare and flexible working arrangements due to greater uncertainty and planning difficulties.

Manufacturers in the Dhaka workshop stated that if brands consider factories' social sustainability efforts in price negotiations, beyond implementation of codes of conduct and compliance, this would have an encouraging effect. It was also argued that brands are well positioned to promote specific sustainability concerns, build supplier capacities and allocate resources to influence factory practices. In this context, it was emphasized that brands should not only punish suppliers for non-compliance with sustainability standards, but also use good sustainability performance as a positive incentive, which is rewarded with longer contracts, higher order volumes or even premium payments.

Participants also highlighted that a solution to the challenge of over-commitment by factories could be in the transparency of orders. Although brands often ensure that factories have capacity to produce their orders with decent working conditions, over-commitment can still occur where different brands are placing orders at the same factories. Therefore, more collaboration and transparency between brands on order volumes and factory capacity could help to ensure better working conditions in factories. Moreover, 'fairer' purchasing practices among brands should be accompanied by strengthening better management systems at factory levels in relation to production planning, capacity reviews and internal communication between relevant stakeholders (e.g. human resources and production). Manufacturers acknowledged that unfavourable purchasing behaviour is often exacerbated by improper production planning at the factory level, which adds to challenges for working parents with potential negative impact on children.

Buying practices that correlate with substandard factory workplace conditions included:

- a. Short-term relationships between buyers and suppliers
- b. Downward pressure on prices
- c. Increased quality demand at same price levels
- d. Short (or changes in) turn-around times

“We need to understand the needs of workers. When you say ‘worker’, every worker has a family.”

“Services may exist, but because of high pressure, many workers are not able to avail of them. You cannot capture this in an audit.”

“We need to emphasize training, implementation and making sure the right processes are in place ... rather than just ticking the box.”

“We need collaborative, centralized solutions rather than each factory and brand developing its own systems.”

Selected statements from brands and manufacturers in the workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, May 2018

5. Proposed areas for improvement

During the discussions, a number of opportunities were listed that could address identified shortcomings and more effectively tackle negative consequences for children. A selection of topics and recommendations included:

- Improving management systems and increasing capacity to address child rights at the factory level
- Creating a more worker-centric approach in responsible sourcing, which ensures that actual needs of workers are understood and addressed (e.g. worker voice)
- Promoting women’s empowerment in the supply chain, especially for working mothers, including in higher management
- Strengthening trade unions and workers’ collective bargaining rights
- Improving buying practices and greater purchasing transparency
- Coordinating and joining up advocacy for improved government action between brands and factories, particularly addressing weak legislation and enforcement

Need for improved monitoring and reporting metrics

Another limitation discussed was the current gap in metrics to measure and monitor negative (and positive) children’s rights impacts in the supply chain beyond child labour. There was consensus on the importance of better outcome and performance metrics that aid the implementation and monitoring of children’s rights considerations in responsible sourcing practices. Current company or industry standards rarely include child rights indicators. Specifically, examples were explored how adequate process and outcome metrics can enable companies to:

- Identify children’s rights gaps in their responsible sourcing policies and programmes;
- Take proactive steps to integrate child rights in existing processes (e.g. audits, capacity building);
- Monitor outcomes for working parents and children;
- Measure progress and evaluate effectiveness of responsible sourcing processes for children;
- Report on steps taken and progress achieved to improve impacts on working parents and children, including positive contribution towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, to reach scale and sustainability, the Network discussed how embedding children’s rights in sustainability and reporting standards platforms and in standard-setting bodies will be critical. This is particularly pertinent in light of the current gap on children’s rights, including the absence of relevant metrics in many sustainability standards and initiatives. Activities may also include sharing Network insights within the investment community to promote awareness, uptake and alignment.

Building on these discussions, the draft guidance tool includes a broad set of draft metrics that support the measurement of and reporting on child rights integration and outcomes by garment and footwear buyers and manufacturers over time.

Buyer-level process metrics	
<p>1 ASSESS AND INTEGRATE</p> <p>1.1 Assess child rights risks and company's preparedness to respond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company includes child rights in risk identification and impact assessment processes (incl. audits, worker voice, maternity analysis, etc.) The company undertakes a gap analysis to understand its preparedness and proficiency to address, manage and mitigate identified child rights risks through its sustainability policies and processes The company aligns to supply chain to the raw material level, with a specific focus on identifying child rights risks in deeper tiers of the supply chain <p>1.2 Integrate child rights into policies and management systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company has a public commitment to addressing adverse child rights impact in the supply chain The company includes child rights (Annex B) in its supplier code of conduct The company includes child rights (Annex B) in its supply chain management processes (e.g. audits, supplier screening and selection processes) The company has or supports prevention and remediation processes to address instances of adverse impact on children The company takes steps to improve purchasing practices to avoid negative consequences on working conditions, including for working parents and children <p>1.3 Internal buy-in and training of key decision-makers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child rights standards are approved by senior management who are accountable for improving performance, with a dedicated focal point responsible for monitoring and implementation, including in the supply chain The company includes child rights in training activities of external functions (e.g. compliance, buying, etc.) <p>1.4 Strengthen supplier capacity to address child rights and root causes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company implements meaningful capacity building programmes with suppliers that encompass child rights risks The company implements meaningful measures that progressively improve root causes of adverse child rights impact (e.g. women's empowerment, collective bargaining and/or living wage) 	<p>2 MONITOR AND REPORT</p> <p>2.1 Monitor progress on activities and child rights outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company tracks KPI activities to integrate child rights and periodically reviews progress The company monitors child rights outcomes at the factory/ community level (Annex B), including in deeper tiers of the supply chain <p>2.2 Stakeholder engagement, worker voice and grievance processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company lists or supports meaningful worker engagement priorities or collective bargaining, worker voice that encompasses child rights concerns The company has or suggests effective grievance processes in the supply chain that encompasses child rights concerns <p>2.3 Report outcomes and disclose suppliers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company reports on activities towards integrating child rights in its business policy and practice, including in the supply chain The company reports on child rights outcomes at the factory/ community level, including in deeper tiers of the supply chain The company discloses its list of suppliers, including beyond tier one
<p>3 COLLABORATE AND ADVOCATE</p> <p>3.1 Collaborate and invest in promising initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company participates in or supports industry initiatives to scale positive impacts on children <p>3.2 Advocate for children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The company engages in activities that support local government efforts to protect and fulfil child rights, including the rights of working parents The company engages in advocacy efforts, including through industry platforms, that call for public policy and investment in child rights 	

IMPACT AREA	DESCRIPTION	METRICS	RELEVANT STANDARDS	SDGs
General	General indicators are important for understanding and monitoring the situation of children and working parents in supplier operations. Understanding how working parents are employed, and the average ages of children, can help to identify age-specific risks and tailor appropriate interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of female workers Number of workers with children and their ages Percentage of managers and workers trained on child rights, legal entitlements and avenues for remedy Percentage of workers engaged on child rights experiences and needs Existence of grievance mechanisms that allow for raising of child rights-related concerns Percentage of workers who are aware and trust grievance mechanisms to address child rights-related concerns 		<p>SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth</p>
Maternity Protections	An adequate period of paid maternity leave is critical to allow mothers to recover from childbirth and care for their infants. It is also a key measure to promote breastfeeding. Prevention of discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and maternity is important to provide social protection for families and ensure children's health and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average length of maternity/paternity leave taken by workers Average wages paid during maternity/paternity leave (percentage of regular earnings) Percentage of women who return to work under same employment conditions after maternity leave Number of workers dismissed from employment due to pregnancy or child birth Number of women required to submit mandatory pregnancy tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BetterWork (BW) Global Compliance Assessment Tool - Compliance Points: Discrimination (Gender) Compensation (Paid leave) Working time (leave) Fair Labor Association (FLA) Compliance Benchmarks: NO.6, NO.7, NO.8, HONOR 5 SA 8000 Criteria: 5.7 Sector SME SA Measurement Criteria No. 6.0, 5.34, 5.34, 7.34d, 7.34d, 7.11, 7.12 GBI Reporting Standards 401 and 402: 401-7, 402-3, 402-7 	<p>SDG 3: Good Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>SDG 5: Gender Equality</p>
Working Conditions of Parents and Employees	Breastfeeding is crucial to child health, development and survival. Breastfeeding rates can be lower among working women due to a lack of awareness of its importance and the demands of factory work. Paid breastfeeding breaks, dedicated facilities and conducive workplace arrangements are fundamental to supporting nursing workers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of working mothers breastfeeding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exclusive up to 6 months Complementary up to 24 months Prevalence of breastmilk substitute usage Length of paid breastfeeding breaks taken by nursing workers during working hours Existence of safe and accessible breastfeeding facilities Utilisation rates of breastfeeding facilities Other forms of breastfeeding support (e.g. awareness raising, lactation consultants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BW Global Compliance Assessment Tool - Compliance Points: Compensation (Paid leave) Working time (leave) FLA Compliance Benchmarks: NO.8.1, NO.12, HONOR 3 SA 8000 Criteria: 7.1 Sector SME SA Measurement Criteria No. 6.0, 7.11, 6.0a2, 6.23, 6.36, 7.04d 	<p>SDG 2: Good Health & Wellbeing</p> <p>SDG 5: Gender Equality</p>

Examples of buyer-level process and factory-level outcome metrics that can be used to assess, monitor and disclose children's rights risk management and outcomes.

The role of investors

The Network explored the expectations and role of investors to improve sustainability practices for children among garment and footwear companies. Many investors spread their investments across markets and sectors, giving them exposure to a range of sustainability risks, including impacts on children's rights. Investors can engage and encourage companies in the garment and footwear sector to address their potential and actual negative impacts on children, including in the supply chain. They can also drive improved disclosure, influence standards and publicly advocate for better business practices.

From a normative standpoint, under the United Nations Guiding Principles, investors have a responsibility to respect human rights and children's rights. Considering children's rights in investment analyses can have positive impacts on the long-term economic value of investments. At the same time, it can also shield investors from both reputational and financial risks.

Building on the Network discussions and conclusions, the guidance tool includes recommendations for how investors can encourage better integration of child rights among investee companies by: (a) integrating children's rights in responsible investment policy and practices; (b) directly engaging with investee companies and actors that influence business practices on children's rights, such as standard setters; and (c) considering child rights risks management practices in investment analyses. Moreover, the metrics included in the guidance tool allow investors to evaluate the maturity of children's rights risk management efforts among investee companies. Throughout the Network discussions, companies expressed the need for greater investor alignment so companies are not faced with competing investor demands and priorities (e.g. in relation to disclosure on specific sustainability topics).

Next steps

In November 2019, the Network activities concluded when the draft guidance tool was shared with network participants. Towards the end of the Network's existence, several companies expressed interest in continuing the dialogue and further exploring practical implementation of the suggested steps and recommendations contained in the tool. In the last in-person workshop in Geneva in 2018, the Network proposed to build on knowledge and activities by establishing a peer-learning group that supports brands and retailers as they drive integration and action on child rights, building on the guidance tool. The aim of the group would be to:

- Drive implementation of the child rights guidance tool;
- Share examples of experiences and innovative approaches;
- Inspire others to drive integration of child rights and support the business case;
- Improve disclosure and reporting (including testing of metrics and reporting indicators).

The peer-learning group had its first call in October 2019 and will run throughout 2020. It will conclude with a compendium of promising company examples that showcase children's rights integration.

15-year old Marhaba attends a sewing class at a vocational training center in Jalalabad city, Afghanistan. Marhaba left school after second Grade, when she was 8-years old.

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