



**Staying the Course Amid COVID-19:  
Private Sector Action for Women's Health and Empowerment Progress Report  
2021**

universal**access**project

UNITED NATIONS  
FOUNDATION



Since 2019, 21 global companies and business organizations have announced new and expansive commitments to improve the health and well-being of millions of women workers and community members in supply chains around the globe. Half of these commitments came after the world was struck by COVID-19, a pandemic that has disrupted global supply chains and devastated the lives of millions of workers, particularly women workers. These commitments were made through the UN Foundation's [Universal Access Project](#) and its [Private Sector Action for Women's Health and Empowerment](#) initiative, which asked companies to pledge to implement bold, measurable and time-bound plans to reach women workers with health and empowerment information and services like contraception, maternal health care, menstrual health care, leadership training, anti-harassment programs, reproductive cancer screenings and more.

The first [Progress Report](#) released in September 2020 documented the commitment status of the first 11 companies that made their public announcement at the Women Deliver conference the year before. By mid-2020, each was reeling from the immediate economic downturn less than four months after the COVID-19 pandemic began shutting down workplaces. The future was unclear, but the world had fundamentally shifted to a new reality. Yet, all the companies stuck by their commitments to invest sustainably in the health and well-being of their women workers, while adjusting their timelines. Since then, while the economic situation may have stabilized somewhat, the new world remains unclear as multiple waves of infection in country after country continue to disrupt business and more importantly injure workers, particularly women, through lost employment, increased violence and abuse, loss of access to reproductive and other health services, mental health problems and the death of peers and loved ones. Health is now a recognized business risk. The pandemic has heightened not just concerns for worker health but also awareness of the systemic barriers to the health and well-being of workers.

During this difficult period, the Private Sector Action initiative was able to secure five new commitments in 2020 (including a new, expanded one by an existing commitment-maker) and six more in 2021. These commitments were made possible in large part thanks to UN Foundation consultants in Kenya (Keen Solutions) and in India (Samhita Social Ventures). In total, once the pledges are fulfilled, these corporate commitments represent investments that will reach about 1.2 million women workers and 2.3 million workers, dependents and community members in total, with outreach focused primarily in 17 countries. The 2021 Progress Report finds that **all 21 companies and business organizations stand by their commitments**, even though for most the timetable and path for achieving their goals has lengthened and taken new turns.

The companies who have made commitments are:

- **2019 commitment-makers:** Columbia Sportswear Company, Ethical Apparel Africa, Hela Clothing, Inditex, Lindex, MAS Holdings, Nordstrom, Share Hope, Shahi, Twinings, and Unilever
- **2020 commitment-makers:** Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association (EPHEA), Farida, Del Monte Kenya Limited, and PVH Corp.
- **2021 commitment-makers:** Amalgamated Plantations Private Limited (APPL), Arvind, Mt. Kenya West Women in Coffee (WESTWIC), Kenya Tea Development Association Foundation\*, Novartis Sub-Saharan Africa, and Tata Coffee Ltd.

It is important to underscore that this report is based on self-reporting by the companies. The UN Foundation performs no audits or other validation of the data. Nor does the report speak to any topics outside of the women's health commitments or other corporate obligations. Yet, it does provide insight into where companies stand on worker health, what their challenges are, and how they are adjusting their approaches to the new realities under the pandemic. Most companies have not been able to reach their original goals for women's health training, education, and services. All have had to adapt.

*\*Kenya Tea Development Agency Foundation commitment began in mid-2021 and progress is not reflected in this report.*

In the last year, commitment-makers took various steps to respond to the pandemic and adapt to new realities, and these actions suggest the possible contours of a post-pandemic world. The health focus, justifiably, has been on COVID-19 prevention and care and the emergency needs of workers and communities. Notably, for many companies, the structures and personnel used for their health education and empowerment trainings could be repurposed for the pandemic response, a foundation for a wide range of responses and experimentation on workplace approaches. Some created COVID-19 emergency response committees, used the workplace for vaccinations and services, increased focus on gender-based violence and mental health support, piloted or expanded telemedicine, and increased outreach to government services. In one telling example of leveraging skills and program capabilities for emergency support, Share Hope employed its staff and team of P.A.C.E.-trained workers to pull together fully-equipped and locally sourced care packages – duffel bags – for 1,000 families needing assistance in Haiti after the August 2021 earthquakes.

As the pandemic interrupted plans on women's health, several trends among the commitment-makers emerged:

1. *Developing virtual learning models and service delivery.* This was already starting to take place as a way to reduce the cost and worktime interruption of training and worker education. But the pandemic has accelerated that process, where virtual learning served as a safe mode of worker interaction and information. E-learning has been a major focus of those in apparel (but far from exclusively in this sector), like Arvind, Farida, Inditex, MAS Holding, Shahi, and EPHEA, which have worked on transitioning from on-site to virtual trainings and education. Several have used WhatsApp as a tool for quick information and awareness raising. Others used tablets and online platforms or both. A major interest has been to improve the use of pictures and videos effectively for learning. Several companies plan to work with [Nivi](#), an online platform for family planning information and referrals to service providers. It is clear that the future of workplace training will be some form of training blending in-person and virtual.
2. *Strengthening programs and systems.* While workplace interventions were interrupted or slowed due to safety concerns and production pressures, companies worked to improve their programs or systems. Shahi developed a model of peer groups of no more than 10 people for discussion on reproductive health and other sensitive topics. Realizing that onsite training of the Gap Inc. program, [Professional Advancement and Career Enhancement](#) (P.A.C.E.), was not possible in its partner factories, Share Hope turned to training unemployed women, and after successful completion of training, introduced them to hiring managers. APPL and Del Monte saw the need for menstrual hygiene products at work and in the community; women leaders at tea plucking sites now carry pads for any woman who needs them at work. Del Monte distributed 5,200 packages of sanitary pads to 900 teenage girls to help curb the high rate of menstruation-related absenteeism at local schools. Arvind improved their program design with their training partners to create greater flexibility and adaptability in preparation for future challenges and standardized their operating procedures. PVH invested in its online platform to capture key performance indicators and enable monitoring of outcomes for P.A.C.E. trainings and worked with vendors to integrate P.A.C.E. into their human resources and management systems. Twinings invested in building the capacity of local health providers as well as the health staff at their tea estates. Inditex was part of a collaboration with other brands as part of the Industry Summit to adopt a gender self-diagnosis tool developed by the International Center for Research of Women and piloted it in three factories. Several companies, including PVH and Nordstrom, are supporting the Empower@Work collaborative that is a training platform for collective action on women's empowerment.
3. *Deepening partnerships.* All the commitment-makers enjoy strong partners, and it is clear their partnerships played an important role in their responses to COVID-19 and ongoing program activities. BSR's HERproject, the Better Work program, Swasti, and St. John's Medical College have been leaders in developing e-learning approaches and tele-medicine. Many other partners have played significant roles during the pandemic working with companies in this report to address worker needs. Below can be found a list of the key partners the companies and business entities have worked with.

The goal of the Private Sector Action initiative is to promote corporate action that supports meaningful change for women workers, their health, safety, and professional advancement. The hope is that the pandemic will lead to a stronger commitment to and investment in these areas, with a focus on management systems and accountability.

## **PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS**

Action pour le Développement du Peuple – ADEPE (Rwanda)  
AJPRODHO JIJUKIRWA (Rwanda)  
Better Work program (ILO/IFC)  
BSR HERproject  
CARE  
Christian Health Association of Kenya  
Collective Good Foundation  
Empower@Work (collaborative)  
Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (IPPF affiliate)  
Family Health Care Options (Kenya)  
Family Planning Association of India (IPPF affiliate)  
Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka (IPPF affiliate)  
Gender Violence Recovery Centre (Kenya)  
Good Business Lab (India)  
The Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association  
International Center for Research on Women  
MAMATA (Bangladesh)  
Marie Stops Kenya  
Medicus Mundi (Morocco)  
National Organization of Peer Educators (NOPE)  
Personal Advancement Career Enhancement (P.A.C.E.) program (developed by Gap, Inc)  
The Power of Nutrition foundation  
Project Baala (India)  
St. John's Medical College (India)  
Sakhi (India)  
Samhita Social Ventures  
SAVE (Tamil Nadu, India)  
SHOPS plus project  
Swasti (India)  
UNICEF/Mothers@Work program  
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund  
UNWomen  
WaterAid

# 2019 Commitments

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## COLUMBIA SPORTSWEAR

### COMMITMENT

Columbia Sportswear commits to expanding its HERproject program to reach 150,000 workers by 2025 in Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam. This growing commitment will ensure that important training and information on nutrition, menstrual health, maternal health, family planning, and more will be delivered to women workers in its supply chain.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Columbia Sportswear Company and its implementing partner, BSR's HERproject, have had to largely pause programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but remain committed to reaching the targets on the current timeline and has developed a five-year plan to scale the work with key manufacturing partners. The company has reached over 15,000 women workers since the commitment was made. Columbia is sharing the cost of HERproject implementation with key suppliers as part of its expectation that those manufacturers engage in worker well-being efforts.

### PROGRESS

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Columbia Sportswear Company and its implementing partner, BSR's HERproject, have delayed the start or implementation of various aspects of the HERproject rollout and have had to pause on-site training, though they remain committed to resuming work when conditions improve. Columbia Sportswear has enrolled seven new factories in HERproject programs in 2021 and will continue to expand the project as conditions improve in operating countries.

## ETHICAL APPAREL AFRICA

### COMMITMENT

Ethical Apparel Africa (EAA), a garment manufacturing and sourcing agent in West Africa, commits to continue to provide support to kick start workforce well-being, empowerment, and women's health programs, including family planning and maternal health care, reaching 1,500 women in garment factories in Ghana by 2023.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

EAA is on track to meet its goals by the stated deadline.

### PROGRESS

Since its commitment, EAA has so far created more than 1,000 high-quality jobs in Ghana's emerging garment manufacturing sector, more than 70% of which are for women. Although COVID-19 has made it difficult for EAA to initiate the planned cross-factory programs, EAA has maintained existing interventions like transport subsidies, lunch programs, and training for partner factories to prevent harassment and abuse, including sexual harassment, while strengthening harassment-reporting mechanisms. Other interventions include:

- A two-day sexual and reproductive health training course delivered to 222 workers in one factory, which covered family planning benefits; methods; myths and misconceptions; sexually transmitted infections; reproductive cancer; violence against women and girls; and maternal health care.
- A week-long workplace campaign around International Women's Day featuring women apparel leaders throughout the region and refreshing workers on policies related to gender including recruitment, promotion, compensation, harassment, time off, and maternity policy as well as incentive systems.
- A two-day malaria prevention course delivered to 332 workers educating on causes, strategies to prevent transmission, and medication resistance patterns, diagnosis, and treatment along with the distribution of long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs).



EAA shifted its interventions to a factory-by-factory basis and avoided large group settings due to the pandemic, and leveraged existing business technology practices, including video-based communication methods, to maintain social distancing measures.

## HELA CLOTHING

### COMMITMENT

Hela Clothing, a garment manufacturer in Kenya, commits to implement HERhealth and partner with local women's health and well-being providers to ensure workers have access to health and empowerment information and services, such as family planning, maternity care, cancer screenings, STI services, gender-based violence assistance, menstrual hygiene, and more, reaching 10,000 additional workers in Sri Lanka, Kenya, and Ethiopia by 2022.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Hela remains committed to its goals, although the COVID-19 pandemic has extended many implementation timelines and likely will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

### PROGRESS

Hela has reached 4,453 workers, 3,209 of whom are women, with a number of programming interventions including:

- A crèche facility for ages six months to three years to ensure employees have childcare while at work, staffed by six nannies under the company payroll who are trained in Early Childhood Development. Children are provided free meals during care.
- Staff cafeteria and safe drinking water to ensure employees have access, free of cost, to a balanced diet and clean water.
- Life-skills training for workers including in soap making, bread making, beauty training, drawing, and more so employees can learn a skill to supplement their income.
- Partnerships with organizations including BSR's HERProject, NOPE, Marie Stopes, and more to provide information and services related to family planning, sexually transmitted infections, maternal care, gender-based violence assistance, menstrual hygiene, and more.

Hela also launched the Gap Inc. P.A.C.E. program this year to support financial management, health management, and empowerment for workers to pursue personal and professional goals.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Hela has increased its focus on ensuring the health and safety of its employees while at work. This has been done through practical measures (temperature checks, social distancing, mandatory face masks, established health & safety manual tailored for COVID-19, etc.) that are carefully monitored and

audited to ensure they remain effective in protecting employees. Hela has also been conducting awareness campaigns to ensure its employees understand their part in keeping themselves and their co-workers safe. New ways of disseminating health information were used, including through Hela FM, the public address system, and videos in the cafeteria during lunch breaks.



*“As an equal opportunity employer inclusivity is at the core of everything we do. Hence we understand that a truly inclusive workplace is one where everyone – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, physical and cognitive ability – feels a sense of belonging. While we establish this through our hiring, retention and promotion policies we further reinforce it with initiatives that empower our team to be their best selves and responsible global citizens. Ultimately, we found that this makes for a highly engaged workforce which has played a pivotal role in Hela’s resilience during the global pandemic.” Anushi Jayasinghe, Director – Human Resources & Administration (left)*

# INDITEX

## COMMITMENT

Inditex, a global fashion group, commits to expand its Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy throughout the supply chain, aiming to reach over 1 million women workers with programs on health, protection and empowerment by 2022, specifically committing to reaching at least 70,000 women workers with health services such as maternity and reproductive health care by 2022.

## COMMITMENT STATUS

COVID-19 forced Inditex to postpone some planned projects and programs in 2020, but Inditex is fully committed to reaching its goals and objectives by the target date and is adapting its plans to the new global context.

## PROGRESS

Since its commitment, Inditex has reached 66,922 workers with on-site health, empowerment, and protection programs, more than half of which (35,381) were women; and reached an additional 140 suppliers and manufacturers, and a resulting 126,326 workers, with trainings related to women's empowerment. Inditex re-envisioned its long-standing Women Empowerment Strategy as a more inclusive Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy emphasizing human rights and inclusivity at the core of all projects and activities. Within the strategy's three pillars of health, protection, and empowerment, Inditex has implemented a number of programs; highlights include:

- The Sakhi Health project, which delivered “train the trainer”-modeled programs virtually to 16 Inditex suppliers in India, training people in child daycare services, rights and good practices for pregnant workers, and general health awareness. A related Sakhi Worker Wellbeing project, also in India, focused on strengthening systems to prevent discrimination, harassment, and abuse in factories and improving the overall work environment, particularly for women.
- The Medicus Mundi health program, which works to improve the health of Inditex's supply chain in Morocco, including through medical services, awareness campaigns, and training on labor rights and gender equality. The program also supported nearly 800 women with emergency food aid during the COVID-19 lockdown period. This program also has a protection aspect, which works to raise awareness about and prevent workplace harassment, including supporting women in vulnerable situations due to the pandemic with access to food and hygiene products.
- HER Finance and Together Strong programs in factories across multiple regions in which Inditex operates offered trainings on financial education and on literacy and gender equality, respectively, for workers and community members.
- The Sowbhayam Project, based in India's Tamil Nadu state, works to raise awareness in and educate communities, employment agencies, and other stakeholders about labor rights and avoiding employment practices that violate women's health and rights. The project has focused on four priority areas: strengthening commitments with employment agents and creating a guide to best practices; consolidating surveillance committees in towns; improving the program of volunteering in the community, a key component of the project's sustainability; and continuing awareness-raising activities in schools and with groups of teenagers. In 2020, efforts included raising awareness in the community on the importance of children being in school until age 18; programming and information in four districts reached 2,897 people, nearly 60% of whom were women and girls.
- The Ethical Trading Initiative Social Dialogue Scale Up Phase combines workers' participation with women's empowerment through the creation of anti-sexual harassment committees at the factory level. This training-based program works to develop structures of social dialogue and gender equality in factories; empower female workers through greater knowledge and leadership skills; and increase the capacity of factories to have grievance mechanisms against gender violence that are effective, fostering the creation of Sexual Harassment Committees. Since the program's launch in 2020, one supplier has participated in the project, reaching more than 4,000 workers.

Beyond its own value chain, Inditex participated in a skills development program with 16 companies from different sectors to learn and share knowledge on practices and policies related to gender equality including trainings on roles and prejudice, gender-based inequalities, equitable workplaces, women and leadership, sexual harassment prevention, and more. It also collaborated with other brands in the apparel industry to implement a gender self-diagnosis, facilitated by the International Center for Research on Women, to take a closer look at how it fits the needs of women workers in the industry.

Inditex cites that the needs laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic have strengthened its focus on worker well-being, and its response centers on four cornerstones rooted in human and labor rights of workers in its supply chains: health first; protecting people; economic response and recovery; and multilateral collaboration. Regarding its gender strategy and COVID-19 response, Inditex has identified alternatives to respond to the needs of its workers, including using new and web-based technologies like Microsoft Teams for training sessions, hosting webinars on COVID-19 prevention, and offering emergency support for working women with dependents while creches were closed. In addition, clinics for medical campaigns under the Medicus Mundi Sur project, supported by Inditex, have been used to treat COVID-19 patients. Inditex plans to continue using some of these new approaches after the pandemic ends, specifically online presentations and meetings, increased use of visuals to enhance learning in trainings, and adapting materials to be presented in local languages for better understanding.

## LINDEX

### COMMITMENT

Lindex, a Swedish fashion chain, commits to ensure 80 percent of its first-tier suppliers have implemented WE Women, a program to incorporate gender equality into management systems and provide employee training, to reach at least 20,000 women workers in India, Pakistan, Turkey, China, and Myanmar by 2025.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Lindex remains committed to its goal on the current timeline but recognizes that the fluctuating nature of COVID-19 could cause delays in program implementation.

### PROGRESS

Lindex reached 119,000 people, 70,000 of whom were women, in Bangladesh, Myanmar, and India through WE Women. Due to the impact of COVID-19, Lindex is mapping the health situation throughout its supply chains and planning next steps, including potentially expanding WE Women into China and Turkey. To ensure the sustainability of its efforts, Lindex has integrated gender equality into its Code of Conduct as a basic requirement for business and supply chain partners.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued to evolve, Lindex worked with suppliers to implement hygiene and safety measures and ensure workers had proper medical and sick leave support. It also conducted digital visits to factories using video streaming platforms to maintain a supportive presence during and after COVID-19 lockdowns. Based on learnings over the past eighteen months of the pandemic, Lindex is re-examining areas in its supply chains that were more prone to disruption in order to find ways to make them more stable and resilient. Lindex is also doubling down on its commitments to transparency and mutual support between Lindex and suppliers, factories, and workers.



# MAS HOLDINGS

## COMMITMENT

MAS Holdings, South Asia's largest apparel manufacturer, is expanding its original 2019 commitment to reach an additional 10,000 people -- for a total of 20,000 people -- by 2021 through its Women Go Beyond program, which, in partnership with the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka, offers training, information, and services on women's health and well-being, including reproductive health, non-communicable diseases, and addressing and preventing gender-based violence.

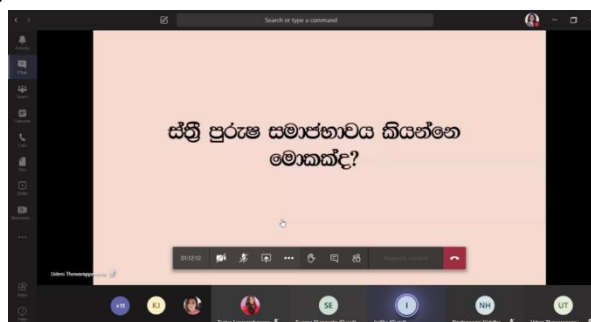
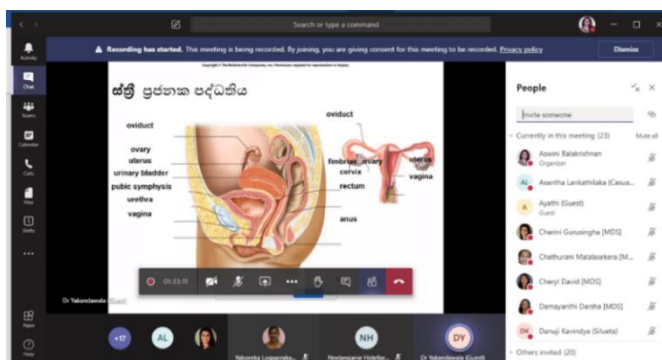
## COMMITMENT STATUS

MAS Holdings has exceeded its commitment goals, reaching a total of 27,381 workers through its Women Go Beyond program.

## PROGRESS

MAS Holdings has been prioritizing programming on women workers' health and well-being through its Women Go Beyond program for 18 years. Since its original commitment in 2019 and expansion in 2020, MAS Holdings has reached 27,381 workers -- 22,841 of whom are women workers -- with health training, information, and services. It has also expanded these offerings to community members, reaching a grand total of 49,441 people (inclusive of the 27,381 workers). Through the Women Go Beyond program, MAS works with individual experts, doctors, trained professionals, and subject specialists and partners with many organizations and professional bodies to focus on areas such as sexual and reproductive health and rights; prevention of diseases such as STDs and HIV; life skills including consent, choice, and consequences; general health and nutrition; non-communicable diseases, breast cancer detection and awareness; mental health and stress management; and pre- and post-natal care, including support for pregnant women and those returning from maternity leave. A few of several programs include:

- MAS Holdings partnered with the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka (FPASL) to develop a curriculum on Life Skills Education, which included sexual and reproductive health, life skills, and the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. This curriculum was rolled out through internal trainers, including through an online program in the midst of the pandemic.
- In partnership with the Sri Lanka Cancer Society, MAS Intimates held the 'Aloka' Breast Cancer Awareness Program, which has reached thousands of employees and more than 1,200 community members with breast cancer screenings and awareness programs.
- With incidents of domestic violence rising globally due to the pandemic, MAS equipped its human resources and other employees who are the first point of contact at factories with tools to handle reports of domestic and gender-based violence. Special online sessions were organized and conducted in collaboration with a senior lawyer, gender specialists, and a former gender consultant for UNFPA to provide more knowledge and understanding of how to support victims of abuse.



MAS Holdings notes that this work continues to be driven by the shareholders and senior leadership of the company as a major pillar of its social sustainability strategy. It uses an internal Social Sustainability Scoring tool to hold leadership accountable for all of its worker well-being work, especially amid the challenges faced during the pandemic. These programs, including the women's health program, are funded by MAS, and all costs are budgeted by the MAS Group central Women Go Beyond Team and by the social sustainability teams at each company depending on who drives the work. The costs are then allocated to each of the companies in the group respectively. Dedicated teams from a group level to divisional and SBU level are funded by the company to drive this work. The company notes that its investment includes the significant cost associated with the time-value of the participants and the loss of production time.

In the context of COVID-19, MAS has provided free care and treatment to all employees and their families affected by the pandemic and has supported the local medical system through care centers, PPE, and other equipment.

## **NORDSTROM**

### **COMMITMENT**

Nordstrom, a global retailer, commits to sourcing 70 percent of all Nordstrom Made products from factories that support women's empowerment by 2023. Nordstrom will reach 75,000 workers in Vietnam, India, and Bangladesh through programs like HERhealth, HERfinance, and HERrespect, among others. The company anticipates it will reach at least 40,000 workers with HERhealth programs alone.

### **COMMITMENT STATUS**

Nordstrom remains committed to its commitment and timeline, and although COVID-19 has impacted anticipated progress this year, Nordstrom expanded its goal to ensure by 2025 that 90% of Nordstrom Made products are produced in factories that support women's empowerment.

### **PROGRESS**

As of year-end 2020, 32% of Nordstrom Made units were produced in factories that support women's empowerment, and 53% of the workers at these factories were women. Nordstrom is also implementing HERproject programs (HERfinance, HERhealth, HERrespect, and HERessentials) in factories around the world, supporting women's access and providing training on financial literacy, women's health including reproductive health, preventing violence against women, and enabling digital training for workers.

Additionally, Nordstrom has collaborated with the BSR's HERproject team to upgrade the approach that HERproject takes to ensure the long-term sustainability of its programs. Nordstrom is encouraging all HERproject factories funded by Nordstrom to implement measures to sustain HERproject impact. As such, Nordstrom is committed to rewarding factories that share its philosophy by funding programs at their factory. HERproject programs help train peer educators, who in turn, continue this training bi-annually within their own factories. Each factory is responsible for presenting its internal plan for continuous training, ensuring that all new factory employees are reached on a regular basis. Ultimately, this increases employee loyalty and engagement while reducing turn-over within the factory.

HERproject has come together with other programs focused on women's empowerment in the supply chain/workplace including GAP's P.A.C.E program, CARE International factory program, and the ILO-IFC Better Work Program to form a new platform driving collective action for women workers, Empower@Work. The group has collaborated on a best-practices worker training toolkit launched in 2019. In 2021, Nordstrom will begin counting additional factories that have implemented programs delivered by Empower@Work members towards its target.

Additionally, Nordstrom partners with Better Work, which brings together a diverse group of stakeholders – governments, global brands, factory owners, unions, and workers – to improve working conditions in the garment industry and provide assessments, training, advocacy, and research for factory workers' wellness, with a focus on gender equality. This work is embedded throughout Nordstrom's business practices, and its Design and

Development teams have been engaged alongside the Corporate Social Responsibility team to shift production to factories that have implemented worker empowerment programs focused on supporting women.

## SHARE HOPE

### COMMITMENT

Share Hope commits to enroll an additional 4,000 women workers in the HERhealth program (a training program developed by BSR on topics ranging from nutrition, sanitation, STI prevention and reproductive health) in four apparel factories in Haiti and an additional 2,000 workers in the Gap Inc. P.A.C.E. program, with some workers participating in both programs, reaching a total of 5,000 women workers by 2022.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Share Hope maintains its commitment, but the timetable will need to be extended to mid-2022 or early 2023 given the impact of COVID-19, the political crisis in Haiti, and the August 2021 earthquake.

### PROGRESS

Since last year, Share Hope has reached 839 workers, 89 of them in 2020. Its target for the P.A.C.E. program has been 750 women workers a year, and the expectation is that it will achieve that goal in 2021, in addition to the three factories that are implementing P.A.C.E. internally with the support of the Share Hope team. Share Hope made a strategic shift to focus on P.A.C.E. training for unemployed women workers as there was interest and demand by this cohort, and on-site training was difficult given the production pressures and safety challenges in factories under COVID-19. Each worker who completed the program was given a certificate, and Share Hope then put them in contact with hiring managers at factories to be considered for available jobs.



*Preparing care packages in response to the earthquake.*

Share Hope's response to the earthquake demonstrates the foundation created by workplace programs for emergency response and the role workers can play in responding to community needs. A major challenge is getting supplies and rations to affected families after an earthquake, as care packages from aid

organizations are often stolen or hoarded by powerful community groups. The Share Hope team and a group

of P.A.C.E.-trained workers and other community partners organized the shipment of 1,000 duffel bags by airplane from Port-au-Prince. Almost all the products, such as rice, beans, cooking oil, sanitary pads, soap, toothbrushes, facemasks, first aid kits, and flashlights, were purchased from local merchants. Through contacts with UNFPA, the local public health facility provided 16,000 condoms. Only Lifestraw for water filtration was purchased externally. The workers collected the supplies and filled all the bags, which were numbered 1 to 1000 for full transparency as part of a coupon system to ensure fair distribution. It worked closely with Hope for Haiti in Les Cayes, Haiti, the Country Director of which being a former member of the Share Hope team. Hope for Haiti had operations in the affected communities and could get the bags to trusted community organizers, school directors, and pastors to distribute them to individual families.

*"The team grew several feet," said Cynthia Petterson, the president of Share Hope. "This was not just an emergency response, but a way of connecting resources in the community to people who need them. Our team saw they can*

*lead in this response, not just the foreigners. This was an opportunity to say to everyone in the P.A.C.E. program, we are in a real partnership, a real relationship – you matter and you can lead.”*

## SHAHI

### COMMITMENT

Shahi, India's largest apparel manufacturer, commits to partner with the Family Planning Association of India to reach 9,000 workers in six of its factories, along with more than 10,000 community members, totaling 19,000 people, with women's health information and services, including sexual and reproductive health that includes family planning, STI testing and treatment, and mother and child health by 2020. The one-year pilot will lead to a wide-scale rollout of such services across more of Shahi's factories.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Due to COVID-19, Shahi extended its timeline for the implementation of its commitment through July 2021, but continued waves of the pandemic in India have further impacted programming. Shahi remains committed to its original goal but on an extended timeline that will continue to be impacted by COVID-19.

### PROGRESS

Although Shahi previously formalized its partnership and planning with the Family Planning Association of India to implement a train-the-trainer program for medical and welfare staff in six Shahi factories and set up a “Swasth Parivar” (“Healthy Family”) clinic offering services, the continued devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic in India has halted progress on launching the clinic and training workers. This has severely impacted Shahi's planning for its project and programming but has not changed its commitment. It has outlined short-term plans, pending changes in the pandemic, to identify a location and secure necessary licenses and approvals for its clinic and hire staff by September 2021, following which they will train internal teams and ultimately launch the clinic and begin spreading information about it in the local community.

Shahi has also been partnering with Good Business Lab (GBL) to conduct research on the role major employers of women, such as garment factories, can play in improving access to sexual and reproductive health services. It is developing a peer-to-peer support curriculum for these services, which will be implemented in small groups of 10 workers meeting weekly over four months. GBL will evaluate this group against a control group in a randomized controlled trial and then evaluate the change in knowledge, behavior, and attitude of workers toward sexual and reproductive health. It will also evaluate the effect of sensitizing workers regarding SRH in small group settings. This study, which will cover 4,500 workers, will be rolled out in the third quarter of 2021, with concluding surveys completed by June 2023.



*Health care services at Shahi's Migration Support Center*





*COVID-19 vaccination for Shahi workers.*

All the while, Shahi has focused primarily on worker health and support for its mostly female workforce with COVID-19 mitigation, prevention, and vaccination. It reports that close to 90% of its workforce has been vaccinated on-site through partnerships with private hospitals, government agencies, and public hospitals. During the second wave in India, COVID-19 care centers were established in factories and company offices for employees and dependents with beds and oxygen cylinders. Its in-house doctors are on call for medical guidance, and outside specialists are available for further medical advice. It is also supporting migrant workers across industries (including garments, retail, and construction) through its Migration Support Center with psychological, social, and informational services to help them settle in new urban environments. In partnership with GBL, Shahi has created its own digital worker communications platform, called Inache, in 2019 as a technology solution allowing workers to SMS or voice message the factory management with their suggestions, feedback, and questions. During the pandemic, this has been rolled out in 35 factories and is launching in 5 more factories in 2021.

## TWININGS

### COMMITMENT

Twinings made a bold commitment in 2017 to reach 40,000 workers and farmers in its supply chain in Kenya with the workplace women's health and empowerment program HERhealth. Twinings is now expanding this commitment to reach 100% of its supply chain in Kenya by 2023, reaching 75,000 women farmers and workers. Twinings is also committed to advocating for workplace women's health and empowerment through the tea sector in Kenya, in order to potentially reach more than 300,000 women over the coming years.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Twinings remains committed to reaching its targets despite significant delays in implementation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is adapting where possible, including through teleconsulting, to still maintain some outreach to women workers.

### PROGRESS

Twinings has reached 44,481 workers (42,348 women) with health information and an additional 24,350 workers (19,323 women) with health services, including through mobile clinics or health care centers. Moreover, approximately 30% of its global tea supply comes from sites that are implementing women's health and well-being programming, including:

- HERhealth women's health programming in Kenya, which includes a peer health-educator approach to reproductive health, family planning, nutrition, and other health information; to build on this work, Twinings partnered with SHOPS Plus to expand on the health information offering and connect women with health services throughout the supply chain.
- Mobile health-service delivery through Marie Stopes Kenya, providing as-needed health services including family planning, counseling, and products for free to small-holder farmers and women tea workers, particularly in remote and rural locations. This programming is yet to begin due to delays under the COVID-19 pandemic.
- And various programs to improve the lives, health, and well-being, including reproductive health, of women workers and their families in tea estates in Assam (expected to reach 350,000 people in 63 tea estates) and Darjeeling (expected to reach 10,000 people), India.



Twinings made some progress in early 2021, but the second and third Covid waves in India and Kenya led to the temporary suspension of activities again. Despite the lifting of restrictions in some parts of the world, producers have sometimes chosen to act cautiously and not let third parties enter their estates. This prevents the delivery of trainings and has particularly affected the launch of new projects.



Twinings places great emphasis on ensuring these and similar efforts are sustainable in the long-term, including by advocating to local governments to support the health of tea garden workers and their communities; demonstrating to tea garden owners the business benefits of investing in worker health and well-being; conducting peer-to-peer training; and building the capacity of local health providers, tea garden health staff, and relevant community groups like Mother's Clubs, Worker Committees, and Adolescent Clubs.

*"The knowledge I gained [from the] Reproductive Cancer module made me take charge of my health and that of my family. After this training, I taught my mother and daughter how to conduct self-breast exams as well as how to be vigilant about other signs of reproductive cancers," said Lucy, pictured left, who works in the security department of a tea garden in Kenya that supplies to Twinings. As a result, her mother was detected with cervical cancer at an early stage and was treated at a government referral hospital in time and is doing very well right now. "I will continue to be a champion of healthy living and annual medical check-ups to my peers, family, and village members."*

## UNILEVER

### COMMITMENT

Unilever is investing €2 million to implement the 'Global Safety Framework for Rural Spaces,' co-created with UN Women. The framework guarantees access to basic health care services (including family planning, maternal health, and mental health) reaching 70,000 people on and around their tea estates in Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda by 2022. Unilever will also work with partners to create an industry-wide action platform to promote women's safety and empowerment in Assam, India.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Unilever remains committed to its goal, despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It has expanded its work to support the creation of an industry-wide action platform to promote women's safety and empowerment in tea estates of Assam, India by 2023.

### PROGRESS

Unilever has reached 22,000 workers, 12,000 of whom are women, with its health and empowerment efforts since it made its commitment in 2019. A total of 367,000 people, including those in surrounding communities, were reached through a local radio station was engaged to deliver two talk shows and spot ads (GBV), with messages for the community on prevention and response regarding sexual harassment and gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19. The adverts explored the role of men in combatting sexual harassment and GBV, preventing child abuse, expanding access to essential services for survivors, promoting mental health and wellness, and the role of different authorities in preventing and responding to such issues.

In terms of its Global Safety Framework for Rural Spaces, Unilever is conducting baseline needs assessments in Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda, which have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic but will help better inform programming before moving forward.

It has also launched, with IDH and Tesco, the Women's Safety Accelerator Fund (WSAF) in India. The Fund will collaborate with a wide range of industry stakeholders in Assam, India, with the aim of creating a safe and

empowered workplace for women in the tea sector. WSAF is focused on impact first and foremost and will make use of an innovative results-based financing model to be implemented as part of its final phase of implementation in 2023. In addition, a robust outcome monitoring and evaluation framework with an evidence-based focus will enable the Fund to replicate and scale this model to other regions and sectors.

Unilever also initiated, and will continue to deliver, socio-economic empowerment activities and mental health support programs that use online platforms such as Whatsapp to offer mentorship, counseling, and training, and respond to mental health, financial stresses, and related challenges amid the pandemic. These include handicraft activities with women, men, and young people through Women's Collective Action Groups and He4Them champions groups.

# 2020 Commitments

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## PVH CORP.

### COMMITMENT

PVH Corp., one of the largest fashion and lifestyle companies in the world with suppliers in over 40 countries, commits to providing professional and life skills development programs and services to 500,000 women across its supply chain by 2030.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Although the pandemic slowed progress in some regions, PVH has been impressed by their vendors' resilience and ability to adapt. PVH is on track to meet its commitment targets by its intended deadline.

### PROGRESS

So far, PVH has reached almost 6,600 women, 5,936 in its factory programs and 650 in community programs. Despite challenges from COVID-19, PVH was able to work with its suppliers to expand the Gap Inc. Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement (P.A.C.E.) training, an evidence-based learning program that covers topics such as communication, time management, financial and legal literacy, general and reproductive health, and Water Sanitation and Hygiene (W.A.S.H), into new regions and continues to implement the program while maintaining safety precautions and ensuring worker safety. PVH launched the P.A.C.E. program in South Asia (India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh) in 2019, and scaled it up to Ethiopia and Kenya in 2021. All vendors received internationally recognized COVID-19 safety guidelines to ensure that they had the resources to implement proper safety measures. Additionally, PVH launched its first-ever P.A.C.E. community program in Ethiopia, expanding beyond the four walls of the factory and impacting women in the broader value chain. It plans to scale the community program into new regions in the coming years.



*Nirojini participated in the W.A.S.H. module and the Time Management & Financial Literacy module of the P.A.C.E. program.*

PVH also implements other women's health and well-being interventions as part of this commitment, including a partnership with The Power of Nutrition, which supports the working mothers and pregnant women of PVH's suppliers in Bangladesh with essential nutrition support. PVH is also adapting its worker health and well-being efforts to reflect the current global context around COVID-19. The P.A.C.E. curriculum around W.A.S.H. was updated to reflect COVID-19 precautions, and PVH co-created and endorsed the ILO's Call to Action to mobilize emergency relief funds to protect garment workers' income and employment through the COVID-19 crisis, and worked with national governments, international organizations, and labor partners to establish social protection systems into the future.

PVH is building the sustainability of the P.A.C.E. program by integrating it into the human resources and management systems of its vendors, encouraging vendor ownership over the program, and developing its online platform for capturing KPIs and monitoring outcomes and impacts. Furthermore, through The PVH Foundation, PVH has invested \$100,000 USD in the Empower@Work initiative that offers a best-in-class harmonized training platform and curriculum for leveraging knowledge, skills

and networks to drive collective action by companies on programs to improve gender equity, soft skills, health, and well-being in global supply chains. With the Power of Nutrition, PVH has committed \$82,550 USD to the three-year program, and by leveraging a 3:1 matching opportunity, this contribution translates to a \$330,200 USD impact. It is also a founding partner of the Resilience Fund for Women in Global Value Chains (housed by the UN Foundation) to address the long-term health and economic impacts of the pandemic on women who make up the backbone of the global workforce.

*“The ongoing impacts of COVID-19 have disproportionately affected women throughout the apparel supply chain, further underscoring the importance of our work to prioritize women’s empowerment. Together with our supply partners, we have continued to safely provide educational opportunities and services, equipping women with the tools and skills for advancement and to navigate the unforeseen challenges of the pandemic.” – Marissa Pagnani McGowan, Chief Sustainability Officer, PVH Corp.*



*Jayalalitha, in green, participated in the Time and Stress Management module of the P.A.C.E. program, which has helped her balance her time more effectively especially since her promotion to Senior Production Supervisor.*

## ETHIOPIAN HORTICULTURE PRODUCER EXPORTER’S ASSOCIATION

### COMMITMENT

The Ethiopian Horticulture Producer Exporters Association (EHPEA), a membership organization of 126 producers of flowers, fruits, and vegetables for export, commits to expand its workplace training program, Empowering the Source, to an additional 50 member producers, reaching 40,000 workers including 30,000 women workers, with health education including family planning, menstrual hygiene, maternal health, and protection from gender-based violence by 2025.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

EHPEA is on track to reach its goals by its target date, even amid restrictions related to COVID-19.

### PROGRESS



*Train the Trainer program on women’s health and rights*

Since its commitment in 2020, EHPEA has reached 6,500 workers, 75 percent of whom are women, with information on preventing workplace sexual harassment and gender-based violence as well as information on family planning, nutrition, hygiene, and sanitation; three-quarters of the workers reached were women. In partnership with the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia, EHPEA built capacity and skills for 11 farm nurses on 10 farms to provide voluntary contraception, including long-acting methods, and cervical cancer screenings for women workers. More than 700 women have had a screening. EHPEA also conducted three outreach and advocacy workshops with local government stakeholders

to highlight the importance of addressing basic health and prevention-of-violence services in the workplace and its vicinity. EHPEA has worked with its management-level staff to provide training on gender-sensitive management and to make the business case for addressing gender issues in the workplace.

In addition to the time-bound commitment, EHPEA is working to ensure women's health and well-being is prioritized systematically by revising the EHPEA Code of Practice, with core elements of anti-sexual harassment policy implementation, improving maternal health services and information, and revising its training materials to address women's health and empowerment.

Finally, after the COVID-19 pandemic hit the Ethiopian horticulture market, EHPEA established a COVID-19 Taskforce, which is tasked with designing workplace COVID-19 protocol and supporting farms with its implementation to prevent and control the spread of the virus. So far, the Taskforce has leveraged virtual communications tools for each focal point at 62 farms with relevant information and is facilitating information-sharing among farms on preventative activities like social distancing, temperature testing, and hand washing; it plans to continue using virtual platforms like Zoom and WhatsApp to communicate going forward. The Taskforce also put forward recommendations to the government on mitigation measures to support the horticulture industry, which resulted in financial and technical support that has, in turn, supported the women workers in the industry and helped stabilize the working environment. EPHEA is funding all its activities through cost-sharing fees from member commercial farms and financial support from partner organizations.



*Train the Trainer program on women's health and rights*

## FARIDA GROUP

### COMMITMENT

Farida Group, India's largest shoe manufacturer, commits to expanding its Worker Champion program to reach its 25,000 women workers with training and awareness on reproductive, maternal, and child health; the prevention of sexual harassment; financial literacy; and professional advancement by 2024.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

Though the COVID-19 pandemic caused a shortfall in reaching initial short-term targets, Farida Group remains committed to its goals and hopes to make up for lost ground.

### PROGRESS

Farida Group reached 800 employees through its Worker Champion program in 2021. The company saw challenges in conducting the training and awareness programs due to COVID-19 lockdowns and protocols, which also diverted resources toward prevention, mitigation, and vaccination campaigns. However, in the absence of in-person trainings, Farida Group launched online training programs for peer educators who, in turn, trained other employees. It also provided tele-medicine and tele-counselling services for employees using Microsoft Teams and Google Meet. It plans to continue both virtual trainings and tele-health offerings in the future.

Outside of its own workplace, Farida Group began a livelihood project for women in its community, offering training in hand stitching and providing work.



# DEL MONTE KENYA LIMITED

## COMMITMENT

Del Monte Kenya Limited (DMKL), a regional leader in the exports of fresh pineapple juice and canned pineapples, has committed to empowering 10,000 female team and community members with reproductive health information and services through company-led programs by 2024.

## COMMITMENT STATUS

DMKL is on track to reach its goal by the target date, even as COVID-19 restricts in-person gatherings.

## PROGRESS

Since its commitment, DMKL has provided more than 5,000 team members, including 3,400 women, with health and well-being programs such as menstrual hygiene management programs and mental wellness programs and has offered contraceptives and screenings for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and breast, cervical, and prostate cancers.

The food processor has also empowered 1,041 team members (531 female and 510 male) to combat gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual harassment in and out of the workplace through several sensitization workshops.

During a six-day health camp held in late-2020, 2,729 female team members were screened for breast and cervical cancer, and an additional 1,096 men were screened for prostate cancer.

Community members have also benefited from DMKL's commitment—the company distributed 5,200 packets of sanitary pads to 900 teenage girls in local primary and secondary schools to help curb the high rates of menstrual-related absenteeism as part of its menstrual hygiene management program.

DMKL has six in-house medical clinics that offer free information and services to team members and their dependents. The clinics are staffed with a team of 20 medical professionals and supported by three consulting doctors (a general physician, a gynecologist, and a pediatrician).

Since November 2020, 384 pregnant female team members have received ante-natal care at the in-house clinics. Through these clinics, DMKL helps address workers' health reactively and proactively, including offering preventative health care services such as immunization, pre-natal care, and family planning education.

DMKL also runs an integrated HIV/AIDS-TB workplace program and works with peer educators to focus on preventative measures.

The company has updated its policies and systems to support women workers' health and well-being, including setting up a lactation room and offering regular breastfeeding classes for pregnant or lactating female team members. The company also updated its transportation policy to prioritize the safety of female team members while commuting to and from work.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the company formed a COVID-19 Emergency Response Team to protect employees from coronavirus infections while ensuring business continuity and expanding activities to prevent gender-based violence in anticipation of the pandemic's impact.

The company has covered 95 percent of program costs and 5 percent through new partnerships. DMKL has partnered with the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) to find local partners for its menstrual hygiene management campaign, with Family Healthcare Options to implement the GBV and mental healthcare awareness clinics, and with the Murang'a County Government's Department of Health to build the skills and capacity of their medical personnel on family planning education and cervical cancer screening.

DMKL reports that these health investments have helped increase productivity to improved levels and has registered very few cases of employee absenteeism due to illness.



*Left: Dr. Joseph Mbai- Murang'a County Executive Committee Member for Health and Sanitation (cutting ribbon), launches Del Monte Kenya's breastfeeding room at the company's headquarters in Murangá. The facility is equipped with adequate equipment suitable for expressing milk, including handwashing equipment, appropriate cooling facilities, electrical outlets for breast pumps, tables, and comfortable seats. Looking on is Ms. Gloria Ndekei, KEPSA Foundation Trustee and Gender Advisor (extreme left),*

*and Mr. Stergios Gkaliasoutsas – Del Monte Kenya Managing Director (right).*

*"The room is quiet, clean and has all the necessary equipment and furniture required by mothers for ease of milk expression. For instance, we are given hot beverages, and there's plenty of water which boosts milk production. I have also been very peaceful at work and performing quite well because I know my child is safe and healthy." – Ms. Esther Kihoria – Del Monte Kenya Limited Employee - Logistics / Production department, and Lactation room beneficiary*

*"The Del Monte Kenya Menstrual Hygiene Management Program was very beneficial. It was informative and the mentorship sessions provided very good guidance and counseling for the girls. Their donation of sanitary pads helped in alleviating the challenge faced by some of my students who can't afford to buy them." -- Beatrice Wanjau – Principal of Ndula Secondary School which benefited from DMKL's Menstrual Hygiene Management Program*

# 2021 Commitments

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## APPL

### COMMITMENT

Amalgamated Plantations Private Limited (APPL), the second-largest tea producer in India, commits to nurture a healthy, hygienic, and safe workplace and community for 35,000 women workers and community members in India by providing family planning and reproductive health services across 25 tea estates of Assam and Dooars in West Bengal by 2025.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

APPL remains committed to its goal and even has plans to scale up its menstrual hygiene management program across all 25 tea estates.

### PROGRESS

APPL is focused on improving women workers' health and well-being through a number of key interventions, including primary focus on:

- Maternal and infant care: APPL offers ante-natal and post-natal care, along with infant care until 6 months of age, at all Tea Garden Hospitals. This includes pre-natal care, birth, and postpartum care, as well as childcare preparation classes, nutrition awareness classes, connections to government support programs, and pediatric care and child vaccinations.
- Family planning: More than 3,600 workers and community members have received family planning counseling across all 25 tea estates, and nearly 5,000 individuals have received contraception from the Tea Garden hospitals.
- Menstrual hygiene management: APPL has held 243 menstrual hygiene management awareness sessions in its workplaces since January 2021, which have reached more than 10,000 women and adolescent girls. It's also provided access to menstrual hygiene products for more than 17,000 women in its workplace. APPL plans to scale up its menstrual hygiene management program across all 25 tea estates to reach a total of more than 40,000 girls and women. It is also scaling this work out into the community through its Project Jalodhari, which creates safe spaces for women and adolescent girls in the tea estates and surrounding communities to discuss needs around their bodies and menstruation.
- General health and wellness and COVID-19 prevention: In partnership with the Zorg vaan de Zaak Foundation, APPL supports the 3 F Project, which reached nearly 1,000 women with awareness on the



prevention of fungal infections and/or treatment of existing infections. It also partnered with the Smart Hospital Programme through the WISH Foundation for a number of health and wellness interventions including health check-ups and a COVID-19 vaccination drive.

*Creating awareness among Women on menstrual hygiene management*

# ARVIND

## COMMITMENT

Arvind Ltd., a global leader in textiles, commits to providing sexual and reproductive health information and services for 12,000 of its women workers across three states (Gujarat, Karnataka, and Jharkhand) in India by 2024.

## COMMITMENT STATUS

Arvind expects delays in reaching its commitment due to frequent COVID-19 lockdowns impacting program rollouts and implementation. However, it hopes to resume a modified program in December 2021 barring changes with the pandemic.

## PROGRESS

Arvind has reached 252 women workers in the Gujarat state with a pilot of its Young People Empowerment Program (YPEP), in partnership with Samhita-Collective Good Foundation, an initiative designed to equip women workers with workplace skills and abilities, improve their overall health and well-being, and raise trainees' awareness in health, nutrition, gender, WASH, and COVID-19 practices in addition to offering health care services directly at apparel manufacturing units.

Due to the COVID-19 surge in India and resulting lockdowns, the pilot program concluded in March 2021 and further programming was put on pause. Arvind is taking this time to redesign the YPEP program based on a needs assessment conducted during the pilot. Incorporating insights from the assessment, the program is evolving to better meet the needs of women workers, enhance the capacity of training partners, and ensure flexibility and adaptability in training delivery. Arvind also incorporated a blended-learning approach, using in-person and online platforms, including WhatsApp, to share relevant training information and activities during COVID-19, and a buddy system reaching active WhatsApp participants with information to pass on to their peers who don't have access to mobile phones. Arvind hopes to commence the revised program, with COVID-19 protocols and safety measures, in December 2021. Arvind is also working to create a standardized training toolkit for YPEP based on collective experiences and lessons learned from the program so far to inform guidelines and recommendations to replicate YPEP in new geographies.

# NOVARTIS

## COMMITMENT

Novartis SSA commits to reaching 40,000 workers, community members, and schoolgirls, including 20,000 women workers, in small- and medium-sized enterprises and surrounding communities with health education, products, and services on reproductive health and family planning in at least five countries in East, West, and Central Africa through its Healthy Family Program by 2023.

## COMMITMENT STATUS

Novartis remains committed to its goal despite rising cases of COVID-19. It plans to scale up innovative ways of reaching women workers, especially in rural areas, using mobile phones and fliers.

## PROGRESS

Novartis had its first group of 35 out of the 100 associates undergo training to work with community health providers to help support the health, empowerment, and well-being of workers and community members, with health-awareness initiatives including those related to sexual and reproductive health, family planning, and non-communicable disease. Associates will also serve as mentors offering menstrual hygiene education and products for schoolgirls in the communities in which Novartis operates. During the International Day of Women and in an effort to empower women, the English-speaking West Africa cluster launched a women's forum for their 82 associates with an aim to increase self-confidence and create a psychologically safe space to share experiences and learn from their peers.



Novartis has also collaborated with a number of regional organizations including the Christian Health Association of Kenya (CHAK), Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), the Afya Dumu project in Kenya, and with the Tropical Health Education Trust (THET) in Ethiopia to reach communities, including women workers, with health information and services, including linkage to family planning services. In the Nyeri, Makueni, and Kakamega counties where the Afya Dumu program operates, a total of more than 1,600 females and over 1,500 males have been reached with key messages as well as screening and linkage to care for hypertension and diabetes (see Fig. 1 below)

**Fig: 1**



Novartis has also partnered with the Procter & Gamble Foundation in Kenya to provide clean and safe water to communities and train adolescent girls in menstrual hygiene management. In the recently launched ESG project in Machakos county, a total of 234 girls were reached with training and an annual supply of sanitary pads (see Fig. 2 below). The program is focused on keeping the girls in schools and will therefore provide them with mentorship to ensure they remain motivated and focused for good performance, aiming to have 100% of the girls transition to the next level of education.

**Fig: 2**



During the pandemic, Novartis has leveraged digital learning platform Nivi to reach rural women and workers with information on family planning that also provides linkages to health care services and facilities in Kenya and Nigeria. Discussions are ongoing with other vendors to expand the reach of health messages through such platforms across Sub-Saharan Africa.

## MT. KENYA WEST WOMEN IN COFFEE (WESTWIC)

### COMMITMENT

Mt. Kenya West Women in Coffee (WESTWIC), a women-led membership organization of 50 coffee estates and cooperatives, commits to reaching 15,000 workers, 70% of whom are women, with family planning, reproductive health, nutrition, and other health information and services by 2024.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

WESTWIC has seen delays and disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic but is on track with its commitment targets.

### PROGRESS

WESTWIC has engaged 10 coffee estate owners, overseeing 3,000 coffee workers – the majority of whom are women – to initiate trainings to support workers' health and well-being with information and services. Due to the



COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns and restrictions, training implementation has been limited, but online training programming is underway to ensure that the efforts can continue. WESTWIC will also extend such trainings beyond the coffee estates and into the surrounding communities. It is currently in discussion with local partners to bring these plans to fruition. WESTWIC is also hoping to engage with the digital health platform Nivi to reach women with smart-phones and provide them with essential women's health information as well as recommendations and referrals for family planning.

## TATA COFFEE LTD.

### COMMITMENT

Tata Coffee Ltd. (TCL) has committed by 2025 to improve the health and well-being of 7,500 women across Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu comprising of their employees, women dependents of employees, and women in the surrounding tribal communities -- with an emphasis on reproductive health and family planning, menstrual hygiene, anemia and nutrition, maternal health, and overall physical and mental health.

### COMMITMENT STATUS

TCL made its commitment in 2021 and is still on track to meet its goals in the timeframe stated.

### PROGRESS

To date, it has reached 1,528 workers, 1,515 of whom are women with such services, and has helped refer and manage health challenges for workers including 89 women with anemia, 4 with hypertension, and 27 with diabetes. The TCL program aims to empower women and the community by ensuring adequate health information and services, resulting in improved health and well-being of their children, families, and communities to provide a better quality of life for all. Its initiatives focus on reproductive health and family planning, menstrual hygiene, anemia and nutrition, maternal health, and overall physical and mental health, including:

- Communications programs on health awareness;
- Regular health check-ups for target populations, including screening camps for breast, uterine, and other cancers; and
- Women's health services provided through its in-house facilities, including psychiatric counseling for alcohol and tobacco abuse.

TCL is also expanding efforts to create a healthy work environment with a robust, well-defined, and well-enforced Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy in its workplace.

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*The United Nations Foundation's [Universal Access Project](#) is leading the [Private Sector Action for Women's Health and Empowerment](#) initiative to work with companies that have large global supply chains employing millions of women workers to improve the health and well-being of their workers. To learn more about these commitments and explore the business case for investing in workplace women's health and empowerment, visit [www.privatesectoractionforwomenshealth.com](http://www.privatesectoractionforwomenshealth.com).*