

Press Release

amfori launches programme for boosting gender equality in global supply chains

Brussels, September 20th, 2018 – Drawing on the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development and on its own Vision 2030, the leading global business association for open and sustainable trade - amfori, today launched an ambitious programme to empower women in global supply chains.

The Women's Empowerment Programme embodies three specific projects in amfori's three biggest sourcing countries – China, India and Bangladesh. It aims to ensure women's rights are protected and offer them the training and guidance necessary to advance their careers.

The new programme builds on amfori BSCI's Code of Conduct, which is based on the principles of no gender-based discrimination and no precarious employment. Training aims to facilitate a shift in mindset regarding women at work, bringing about tangible behavioural change and policy improvements.

The programme's activities will be tailored to the local needs and carried out in partnerships with strategic stakeholders – the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) in China, the Confederation of Indian Industries in India and the CSR Centre and DBL Group in Bangladesh. Each country focus will be as follows:

- **China** – in-depth research and policy recommendations to tackle the complex challenges of female migration to metropolitan areas
- **India** – raising awareness among workers and supervisors on labour rights and grievance mechanisms, supporting compliance with national laws on sexual harassment
- **Bangladesh** – leadership training for upward mobility and participation in representative bodies

The projects in India and Bangladesh will cover the textile and garment sectors, where women represent 70-90% of the workforce, but are disproportionately represented at the lowest tiers of the supply chain and often subject to discrimination and sexual harassment.

A win-win for businesses and society

amfori's Women's Empowerment Programme is designed to be a win-win for women workers, producers and stakeholders. Local producers will improve management skills, which will contribute to increased worker retention and productivity. Women workers will gain confidence and new skills, and benefit from improved working conditions and career opportunities. Trust in local factories and within global value chains will increase.

Through this programme, amfori will be able to develop a new type of country-specific expertise and scale up and replicate the results across more than 40 countries worldwide, where it delivers supporting services. The association will also draw on the outcomes from the Programme in its continuous engagement and advocacy for national and EU level initiatives that advance the role of women in global supply chains.

amfori President Christian Ewert said: *“Businesses have a fundamental role to play in advancing progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals. By empowering women, we empower communities and society at large. But this is not just a moral imperative for companies. Working towards eliminating gender-based discrimination, promoting career opportunities and including women in decision-making are all modes of empowerment, which in turn can enhance productivity, make businesses and their supply chains more resilient and bring financial returns.”*

According to the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE), by 2050, improving gender equality would lead to an increase in EU GDP per capita by 6.1 to 9.6%, which amounts to €1.95 to €3.15 trillion'. amfori's new Women's Empowerment Programme will thus contribute to advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 to achieve gender equality and Goal 8 for decent work and inclusive, sustainable economic growth.

For further information on the programme and background figures:

Visit amfori's dedicated web page on women's empowerment
<https://www.amfori.org/content/women's-empowerment>

Note to editors

The new programme will be introduced at the amfori Gender Equality Forum “Unleashing the Full Potential of Women in Global Supply Chains”, taking place in Stockholm on 2 October 2018.

The full programme and list of speakers are available online [here](#).

For practical arrangements and interview opportunities, contact:

Virginia Mercouri, amfori Media Relations

Tel: + 32 (0)2 739 48 22, Mobile: + 32 489 095 044, e-mail: Virginia.Mercouri@amfori.org

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We offer our members a practical framework and world-class tools that enable them to manage the social and environmental performance of their supply chains and anticipate trends. We also advocate for progressive policy and collaborate with impactful stakeholders to achieve common aims. www.amfori.org