



# SUSTAINING PROGRESS

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

SEWING  
OPERATOR  
Guatemala  
2025



In 2025, it seemed as if the only constant was disruption, from tariffs and a challenging economic climate to shifting global priorities, extreme weather events and the tightening of global development funding.



Yet, what remained clear, perhaps even clearer, is the link between supply chain stability and worker resilience. The conversation with our members, partners and funders became not about *if* but *how* we continue to advance equality and opportunity for workers.

RISE continues to be a space to make shared progress. Buyers work with us to keep their workforce development on track. Suppliers partner with us on programs that support a more confident and productive workforce. Workers gain tools and training that improve their resilience, well-being and financial future. Funders see their investment go to proven worker-focused programs.

Together, we made important strides in 2025. **Three years in, RISE has supported over one million workers through our workplace programs.**

**We are grateful to our growing circle of members and partners for staying committed and proactive.** You made hard decisions. You stayed in the conversation. You proposed changes and improvements

to our work. **Your collaboration over these past 12 months made the impact we outline in this report possible.**

Reducing duplication of effort continues to be a priority, and we're taking positive steps. This year, **53% of workplace programs were co-funded between our members or between our members and participating factories, saving RISE members a combined \$500,000.** Together, we shaped the sector's direction through Working Groups on Financial Health, Mental Health, and Respect.

Our engagement and learning in 2025 set us up well for 2026. We are integrating **mental health** across our programs, building on what we consistently hear from workers about managing stress and pressure. We will continue to deepen and scale our work on violence and harassment in the world of work. We look forward to putting the **climate solutions** we designed together into action. Our commitment to the long-term financial health of workers, building on the proven impact of our wage digitization work, has only doubled.

I am grateful for your ongoing partnership. We look forward to continuing this work together.

**Christine Svarer**

*Executive Director of RISE*



India, 2025





We stand at a pivotal moment. The challenges before us—climate crisis, economic pressures, threats to workers’ inherent dignity—demand more than incremental change. **They require the bold, collective action that only true partnership can deliver.**

In 2025, RISE with its multi-stakeholder approach proved its worth. With diverse voices uniting around shared values—we placed gender equality and worker rights and at the heart of our work—creating unstoppable momentum for change. Women workers on factory floors aren’t just participating in solutions; they’re leading them.

The path ahead perhaps may not be easy. Complexity cannot be our excuse for inaction. Every delay in addressing gender-based violence—every compromise on safety—impacts every stakeholder.

I’ve witnessed what’s possible when industry, workers and civil society align with courage and conviction. Meaningful progress isn’t inevitable—it’s built through persistent, principled collaboration.

The year ahead calls for even greater determination. Together, with workers at the center of our efforts, we are poised to meet this moment.

### Krishanti Dharmaraj

*Independent Chair of RISE Steering Board*

*Founder of DIGNITY INDEX*

### The RISE Steering Board

#### Anisha Chugh

*Executive Director,  
Women’s Fund Asia*

#### Aron Cramer

*President and CEO, BSR*

#### Payal Dalal

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

#### Sally Gilligan

*Chief Supply Chain and  
Transformation Officer,  
Gap Inc.*

#### Christina Hajagos Clausen

*Director Textile and Garment  
Industry, IndustriALL*

#### Roopa Nair

*Observer to the RISE Steering  
Board and Branch Chief of  
the ILO-IFC Better Work*

#### JJ Park

*CEO, ShinWon*

#### Indalecio Perez

*Head of Sustainability  
Engagement, Inditex*

#### Ramesh Singh

*Regional Director for  
Asia, CARE*



# Local Presence, Lasting Change.

## PAKISTAN

Empowerment thru  
Creative Integration  
(ECI)

## EGYPT

Center for  
Development  
Services (CDS)

## INDIA

Colors Consulting  
Kshitij  
Upfront

## SRI LANKA

## BANGLADESH

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

## CHINA

## VIETNAM

CSAGA  
LIFE Centre

## CAMBODIA

Cambodian Women for  
Peace and Development  
(CWPD)  
CARE Cambodia

## INDONESIA

Kemitraan Kerja Foundation (KKF)  
Microfinance Innovation Center  
for Resources and Alternatives  
(MICRA)

## GUATEMALA

CARE Guatemala  
FUNDATED  
Pro Mujer

RISE works through an expanding network of local partner organizations to deliver our mission and drive lasting change. Our local partners understand their contexts deeply and don't just deliver our programs, they help design them. Their knowledge shapes our approaches and makes our work stronger. We couldn't do it without them.

### BANGLADESH

"In 2025, our partnership with RISE led to a powerful culture shift across factories. We strengthened Anti-Sexual Harassment Committees, built trusted reporting pathways, and equipped management and workers to challenge some existing norms. **Together, we embedded gender equality, respectful behaviors, and effective grievance systems into everyday workplace practices.** This collaboration not only enhanced safety and empowerment but also laid the foundation for long-term, sustainable, sector-wide resilience. In this achievement, both workers and management are playing their roles which has a multiplier effect."



**Sanaiyya Faheem Ansari**  
Executive Director, Network for  
Research & Training (NRT)

### CAMBODIA

"The rapid growth of digital wage payments to 76% is the highlight of our 2025 collaboration with RISE (up from 22% of Better Factories Cambodia's members in 2019). This does not just make things easier and faster for the factories. **It is a key win for workers, especially women workers, giving them safe access to bank accounts.** This helps them save up, make plans, and build a better, stronger future for their loved ones."



**Sophavy Seng**  
Senior Project Manager, CWPD

### INDIA

"Our partnership with RISE has strengthened our **commitment to dignity, respect, and gender equality in the workplace.** Through this program, we have seen workers become more confident, better informed, and more willing to speak up for their rights and responsibilities, and there is a visible shift in behaviour and communication on the shop floor. As the implementation team, we have experienced first-hand how structured training, regular follow-up, and strong management support can transform workplace culture. The creation of Change Makers and Champions under the RISE program is helping to sustain these efforts, as they continue to spread the message of respect, safety, and inclusion among their peers. We look forward to deepening our partnership with RISE and integrating RISE principles into all our practices and policies."



**Sandhya GS**  
Implementation Manager, Upfront

### GUATEMALA

"I am particularly proud of our impact in 2025 regarding how we were able to see the transformation of workers from challenges to hope, by being able to see that **workers have the opportunity to build a better future through what they learned during the implementation of the RISE Financial Health program,** and the possibility that workers now have to be agents of change, through the dissemination of this information, to their peers, family and community."



**Mariela Renau**  
Project Coordinator, FUNDATED



# More Countries. Stronger Workplaces.

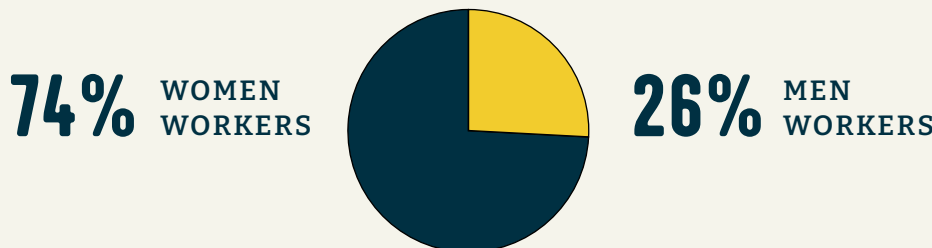
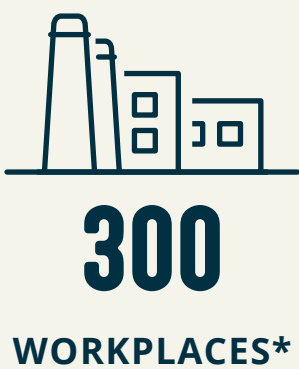
We worked with our members to cover greater parts of the global supply chain. This included expanding programs in Guatemala and Indonesia, as well as expanding to Sri Lanka.



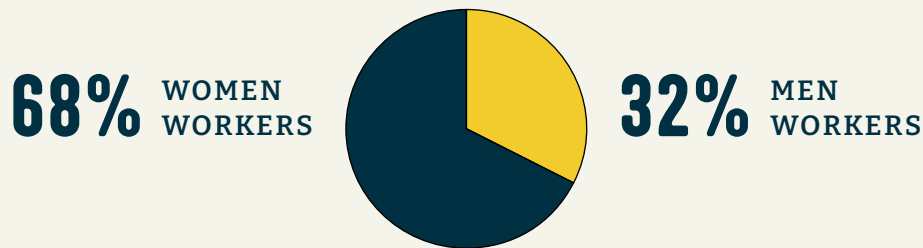
MORE THAN  
**1 million**  
WORKERS REACHED

SEWING OPERATOR  
Guatemala, 2025

## 2025 REACH IN NUMBERS



## CUMULATIVE REACH SINCE 2023

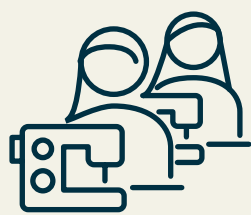


RISE delivers capacity strengthening programs through two different approaches: Under the Peer Educator model, programs are delivered through local partner organizations, and under the Integrated Model, they're delivered through licensees.

Some numbers are revised to reflect updates from data cleansing and methodology adjustments.  
\*Combines programs started in 2025 under both the peer educator and integrated models  
\*\*Peer educator numbers are from the peer educator model



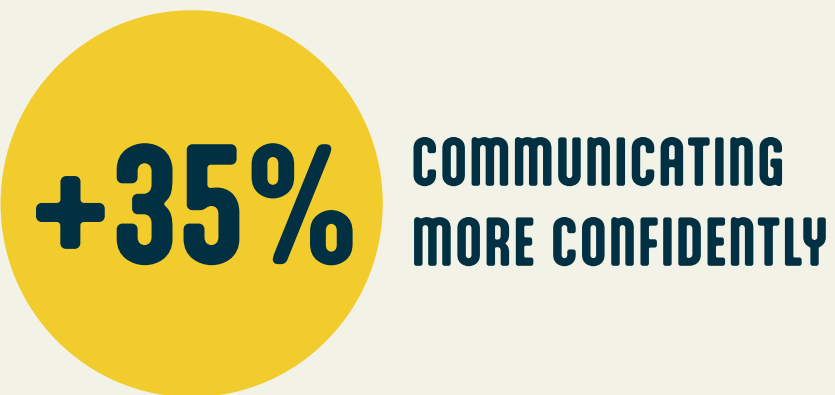
# THE IMPACT OF RISE’S FACTORY PROGRAMS ACCORDING TO WORKERS



## WORKERS REPORT:



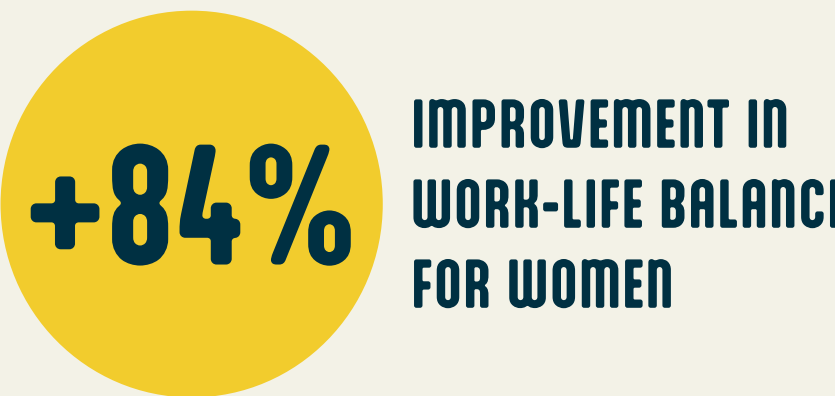
*“Applying what I learned, I now plan my finances carefully each month. I opened a bank account where I deposit 3,000 taka regularly to build my savings.”*  
Bangladesh



*“I’m now more confident in expressing my views and applying effective communication skills at work.”*  
India



*“This training helped me and my peers build our confidence, recognize our own worth, and prioritize our rights.”*  
Pakistan



*“I find it easier now to tackle challenges both at home and in the workplace. I am better at prioritizing between tasks related to my family’s needs, safety considerations, self-esteem and my well-being.”*  
India

The results are drawn from baseline and endline data collected from 1,670 participants (49% women) in Foundations program between 2023 and 2025 in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, and Vietnam

# THE IMPACT OF RISE’S FACTORY PROGRAMS ACCORDING TO MANAGERS



## HIGHLIGHTS OF HOW MANAGERS SEE THE CHANGE IN WORKERS’ BEHAVIORS



Data based on nearly 3,000 managers interviewed across nine countries at the beginning and end of workplace programs



## Bringing value to suppliers

We are proud to count a growing number of RISE supplier members. With both buyers and suppliers at the table, members can align on shared goals and co-invest in solutions that scale. We look forward to welcoming more suppliers as we expand across the sector.

GG Group, a supplier to major U.S. retailers, became a RISE member in 2025 after seeing three consecutive years of strong results from implementing workplace programs across its factories.

*“We began implementing workplace programs because many of our clients, including Macy’s, Target, Knitwell and Nordstrom, were already RISE members. Since then, we’ve seen reduced turnover—even among new employees—and improved operational efficiency as workers develop skills they otherwise wouldn’t have access to through formal education.*

*Joining RISE has also advanced our ESG goals and strengthened our relationships with key buyers, giving us a distinct competitive advantage. It allows us to demonstrate to our clients exactly how these programs enhance the resilience of our supply chain. At the end of the day, **workers aren’t just part of the supply chain; they are the supply chain.**”*

**Shein Han**  
ESG Director, GG Group

ShinWon Corporation became a RISE member in 2024 as part of their long-standing commitment to employee empowerment and inclusion. The RISE Financial Health program has improved workers’ financial confidence and retention.

*“In 2025, our partnership with RISE enabled us to deliver meaningful training programs to our employees and witness their growth firsthand, reminding us that when our people grow, ShinWon grows. As RISE’s first supplier member, we also introduced the program to our partner factories and were encouraged by the warm welcome from many global brands.*

*This partnership is more than an initiative; it is a long-term commitment that strengthens our people and the way we work across our global network.”*

**JJ Park**  
CEO, ShinWon Corporation and  
member of RISE Steering Board



Indonesia, 2025

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Getting leadership on board is key to the success of our workplace programs. Here, management teams in Bangladesh and China share how RISE training shifted mindsets, strengthened communication, and delivered results that outlasted the training itself.

### Securing management buy-in to address gender-based violence

#### BANGLADESH

In 2025, when the Respect program on addressing violence and harassment in the world of work successfully concluded at a garment factory in Bangladesh, the factory's Anti-Harassment Committee was independently resolving cases and maintaining proper documentation. Supervisors who once resisted participating in RISE training had become active and engaged.

But when we first started working there in 2023, the situation was very different. There was limited buy-in from the management, supervisors refused to release workers for training due to high production pressure and some sessions were even cancelled.

To turn this around, we collaborated closely with buyers and factory management to shift mindsets and processes. We trained RISE peer educators and all 400+ supervisors so they could cascade learning to their teams, and we strengthened the Anti-Harassment Committee through full-day capacity-building sessions with HR. As a result, the factory now has a strong mechanism to prevent and remediate violence and harassment at the workplace. They share information on gender-based violence and harassment through the PA system, employee awareness sessions, and dedicate information corners throughout the facility.



Bangladesh, 2025

### When workers started speaking up, production became smoother

#### CHINA

"When RISE training started this year, I thought it would slow down production. During the training, I learnt about gender equality, assertive communication, and how to prioritize better. I started paying attention to work-life balance for our employees.

I've also noticed changes among our workers. Fang\* used to stay quiet when production schedules clashed with her eldercare duties. After the training, she began using planning tools and speaking up. Last week we had a sudden order increase and needed to adjust shifts. She told us her time limits clearly and suggested alternatives. We hit

the deadline, and she handled her responsibilities at home. Another worker used to avoid talking to management. Now she proactively raises production issues.

Overall, my team communicates better. They solve problems faster which means production runs smoother."

**Production Manager**



China, 2025

\*All names anonymized



# We turned workers' experiences and perspectives into scalable, industry-wide change that transforms the day-to-day reality of workers.

In 2025, we used our collaborative approach to gather data and experiences from women and men workers, factory managers, NGOs, funders, international buyers, worker unions, women's rights groups, government, trade associations and financial institutions. Together, we turned that information into solutions the sector can use.



# Practical climate solutions, co-designed with the people who use them.

Extreme heat and flooding are disrupting production now. Workers and factories need solutions that work for their realities. In early 2025, we gathered data from 120 workers in Cambodia and Bangladesh to document the impacts of climate change including exhaustion from rising temperatures and poor ventilation, health issues from dehydration, and loss of wages when extreme weather disrupts commutes. Working with brands, suppliers, and financial institutions, we co-designed solutions that address these issues by:

- Improving factory environments to support workers in a changing climate
- Reimagining factory schedules, operations, and policies to manage climate disruptions
- Reinforcing well-being and social protection systems to help workers navigate climate risks

**Weaving Fairness: How Women Workers Hold the Key to Climate Resilience in the Garment, Footwear, and Textile Sectors**

[Read our report →](#)

# A guide to help factories choose financial products that work for workers.

In Indonesia, we worked with factory management to analyze data on worker borrowing. Workers were taking high-interest loans because they didn't have access to better options. The factory worked with their payroll partner to offer a low-interest loan product. Within weeks, 100 workers signed up.

But individual solutions aren't enough. Factories need tools to evaluate which financial products actually benefit workers. In Cambodia in 2025, RISE partnered with the ILO to develop a guide for assessing financial products and services before promoting them in the workplace. Factories can use this guide to evaluate financial products and services and improve workers' financial health.

# Co-designed solutions to help women workers advance into leadership.

Women make up the majority of garment workers, yet only 9% of supervisors in Bangladesh are women. Factories lose money when women leave because they can't move up.

We gathered data from more than 100 workers in Bangladesh and India about how they want to grow at work. Then we brought together 80 industry stakeholders to design solutions that:

- Create opportunities beyond supervisor roles in quality control, production management, and emerging green jobs
- Make promotion processes transparent
- Address unpaid care work and close the childcare gap

**Shifting perspectives to accelerate women's advancement and leadership in the garment, footwear and textiles industry: How international buyers and suppliers can take collaborative action**

[Read our report →](#)



Cambodia, 2025



# We put workers' experience in the rooms where policies are made.

We're working to make worker financial health a policy priority in global supply chains. We want policymakers to see the private sector as a critical partner and to recognise that combining the power of the garment and finance sectors can accelerate progress for workers at scale.

In 2025, we made headway on this. RISE joined H.M. Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, in her capacity as UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Financial Health, for a Climate Week NYC roundtable on emergency savings and employer roles. This November, the UNSGSA visited an Indonesian factory, part of the Makalot Group, running RISE's financial health training, with support from Gap and Mastercard. Queen Máxima shared her learning with the leadership of financial service providers and employers.

UNSGSA QUEEN MÁXIMA  
WITH A SEWING OPERATOR  
Indonesia, 2025



©Patrick van Katwijk



We also brought worker perspectives to global forums shaping supply chain policy, including discussions on violence and harassment at the OECD Forum on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector and at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights.

Following our session at the OECD Forum on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector, we're now developing a joint toolkit on addressing gender-based violence and harassment in apparel and textile supply chains with Ethical Trading Initiative and Dr. Jane Pillinger.

We're building partnerships between financial service providers and the garment sector. At London Climate Action Week and Climate Week NYC, RISE and Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth convened over 30 brands, suppliers, financial service providers, academics, funders, investors and nonprofits to design solutions that work for business and workers.





# Our Collaborators

## Anchor Partner for Financial Health

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

## Grant Funders

Avery Dennison Foundation

Cisco Systems Inc.

GAP Inc.

The FABRIC Cambodia project  
*commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*

The Global Fund for Women’s Mental Health  
*powered and advised by Kate Spade New York*

Macy’s, Inc.

Marks & Spencer

Target

The VF Foundation

The Walt Disney Company

## Leaders’ Circle

We are especially grateful to Gap Inc. and Target who have made a three year commitment to the RISE Leaders’ Circle.



## RISE Members





# 2025 Insights and Reports



## WEAVING FAIRNESS:

How Women Workers Hold the Key to Climate Resilience in the Garment, Footwear, and Textile Sectors

REPORT



## 45% AND RISING: A DECADE OF WAGE DIGITALIZATION GLOBALLY

BLOG



## SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

to accelerate women's advancement and leadership in the garment, footwear and textiles industry

REPORT



SPANISH

## CÓMO FOMENTAR LA INCLUSIÓN

financiera y la resiliencia en las cadenas de suministro mundiales: Guía práctica para proveedores de servicios financieros con ejemplos de digitalización salarial en el sector de la confección textil

REPORT



BAHASA

## MEMAJUKAN KESEHATAN

Finansial dalam Rantai Pasokan Dunia: Panduan Praktis bagi Penyedia Layanan Keuangan dengan Menggunakan Contoh Digitalisasi Pembayaran Upah di Industri Garmen

REPORT



## #WHENWOMENRISE: DIGITAL WAGES ARE A WIN FOR WORKERS AND BUSINESS IN CAMBODIA

BLOG



## WEAVING THE FUTURE TOGETHER: BUILDING WORKERS' FINANCIAL RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE SHOCKS

VIDEO



## THE CASE FOR INVESTING IN WORKERS IN CENTRAL AMERICA

BLOG