



Reimagining Industry to Support Equality

IMAGE: © RISE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Rising Together for Gender Equality

HANAN | SEWING DEPARTMENT | EGYPT, OCT 2023



RISE FINANCIAL HEALTH

IMAGE: © RISE

Linh's Savings Goals

LINH | QUALITY ASSURANCE | VIETNAM, JULY 2023

Linh works in the Quality Assurance department in a factory in South Vietnam, and was a Peer Educator in the RISE Financial Health program. Linh, 31, has worked at the factory for eight years and lives with her parents, brother, and sister.

"I really enjoyed participating in the training organized by RISE because it helps us gain new knowledge and learn many skills, especially when we live in the countryside and lack opportunities to learn soft-skills like the young who live in cities," said Linh. "Since the day I joined the project, I learned how to use [my mobile phone] to pay electricity and water bills, etc. This helped me save a lot of time. I like the topic "Managing your money" most because it helped me to plan my future finances."

Linh now practices SMART saving goals and has already saved half the amount needed towards her goal to build a house.

"Before the training I just tracked my income and expenses, but now I have a plan for how I manage money, and I prioritize my family's needs, and not just my own."

Following participation in RISE Transform Financial Health program, Linh has improved her presentation and communication skills, which increased her confidence, and has now been asked by management to communicate directly with buyers.

Linh says the training helps women to restructure their whole lives financially and they feel more confident to make financial plans. "It supports gender equality because women now have a voice and can share it with other people," she reflected.

"I feel really proud about being a Peer Educator. When I go back to the production line, I get recognized and have greater confidence in improving not only my life, but also other people's."

Introduction

From launch to integration to innovation, this year has been truly inspirational in seeing RISE become fully operational. With our many partners, we are rising together for gender equality. On behalf of the whole RISE team, I want to thank you for coming on board.

We officially launched on the eve of International Women’s Day in March 2023, bringing together the fashion industry’s four largest women’s empowerment programs: BSR’s HERproject, Gap Inc.’s P.A.C.E program, CARE, and Better Work. Since then, HERproject and P.A.C.E have been fully integrated into RISE’s program offering at the workplace level. We are working closely with Better Work’s global teams, for example on wage digitalization in Cambodia. We are also collaborating with CARE to expand our work into Guatemala, on strengthening our framework on gender-based violence and harassment and on how to integrate approaches to address social norms that prevent women from exercising their rights and taking full advantage of opportunities.

We are delighted to have so many of the brands, buyers and suppliers, who have worked with one of the founding partners before, join our new venture and bring their experience to the table. We are equally

grateful for the commitment and energy that new members are adding to RISE. I would like to extend a special thank you to our Leaders’ Circle members: Gap Inc. and Target whose significant support has been instrumental to RISE this year.

Finally, this year we are also pleased to welcome Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth as our Anchor Partner for Financial Health. This partnership will catalyze and expand our work on digital wages for long term financial health and resilience for workers.

There is much more to come. This is just us getting started, and we’re looking forward to your continued collaboration in 2024.

Christine Svarer | Executive Director at RISE

The fashion industry’s four largest women’s empowerment programs come together

HERproject BetterWork P.A.C.E. care = RISE

Overcoming Workplace Disagreements

PHAN VAN PHANG
HEAD OF PRODUCTION LINE
VIETNAM, JULY 2023

Phan Van Phang is head of a production line at a factory in South Vietnam. Phang has worked at the factory for seven years and is also Deputy Chairman of the trade union.

Having completed the manager module of the RISE Digital program, Phang was impressed with the guidance on building harmonious relationships at home and in the workplace. The guidance has helped the factory managers to better communicate with workers in their day-to-day work.

“After the manager training, they are more energetic in working with the workers, which reduces tension, and leads to overall more harmonious relationships.”

“When managers are stressed, they now find ways to calm down before they talk to the workers.” Phang also notices the impact on workers.

“They become more confident, so production goes more smoothly because they are confident to ask to for help and overcome disagreements.”



Where We Work



2023 RISE in Numbers

COUNTRIES
9

MANAGERS TRAINED
808

WORKPLACE PROGRAMS
147

PEER EDUCATORS
8,399

WORKERS TRAINED
304,378

OF WHICH ARE WOMEN WORKERS
188,352

OF WHICH ARE MEN WORKERS
116,026

The above numbers relate to all workplace programs taking place in 2023.

RISE Impact Model

RISE’s vision is based on the premise that all workers in the workforce are economically empowered and able enjoy their right to dignity through equality, choice and ability to reach their full potential, both personally and professionally.

We bring this vision to life through three interlinked strategies that aim to tackle both immediate barriers and medium to long term structural improvements: (1) strengthening knowledge and skills for workers and managers and supporting more gender inclusive systems in factories; (2) embedding gender equality in business practices and (3) influencing industry and public policy. This is supported by two core enablers: Data, evidence & learning and women workers’ voice and representation.



Capacity Strengthening

Through the capacity strengthening pillar, RISE delivers workplace programs at scale that support an empowered, productive, and respected workforce, where all genders are recognized as essential for business success. Implemented through the peer-to-peer methodology with our local partners in-country, RISE currently offers four workplace programs:

RISE Respect

TACKLING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Respect program engages managers as well as men and women workers. Program results include improved relationships in the factory, increased awareness of what constitutes unacceptable behavior and sexual harassment, less acceptance of gender-unequal statements, and a greater sense of empowerment. After the program participants feel that they are able to play a role in preventing and addressing violence against women, and demonstrate a greater awareness about internal policies, grievance mechanisms, and support systems for survivors. In 2023, we have been deepening our work in Bangladesh and India and are conducting research to understand the specific social norms which influence the prevalence of gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in factories.

39% decrease

in acceptance of supervisors shouting in the workplace.

46% decrease

among respondents who believe more rights for women results in men losing out.

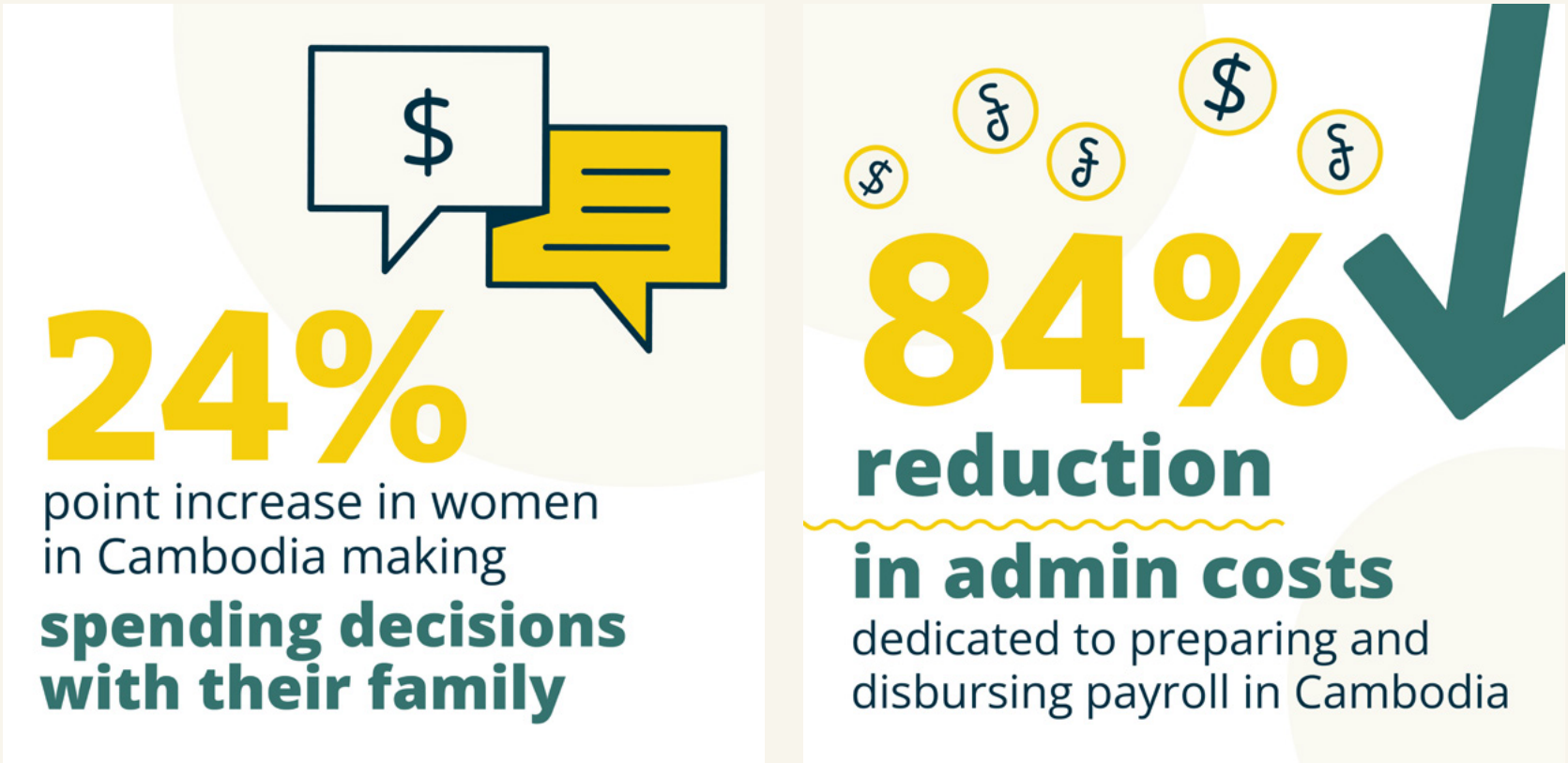
RISE Financial Health

Multiple factors prohibit women workers from gaining a full return on their time and investment at work. These include limited financial literacy skills, lack of savings, and limited access to budgeting, money management tools, and affordable financial products and services due to gender norms. RISE supports workers to increase their financial health and well-being through improved management of their financial lives, and access to better financial tools. This promotes a greater sense of agency and improved decision-making over income, building on and going beyond financial inclusion.

In 2023, we have continued to focus on scaling wage digitalization as a vehicle for financial health for workers, with greater efficiency and transparency for business.

Through our work in Cambodia, RISE has seen a 55 percentage point increase in women using their mobile phones to make financial transactions such as sending remittances and paying bills and a 38 percentage point increase in women saving more regularly (which is important in Cambodia where levels of indebtedness are high). Employers reported an 84 percent reduction in payroll costs following wage digitization, making it a sustainable change. Furthermore, 59 percent of women said they make decisions with their family about household spending compared to 35 percent before the program. This reflects the program’s positive impact relative to social norms in Cambodia.

1. [Improving Financial Health in Cambodia's Garment Sector through Responsible Wage Digitalization: Benefits for Women and Business Report](#), RISE and Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, October 2023.



RISE Foundations

In 2023, RISE launched the Foundations program, a blend of RISE legacy programs, Gap Inc.’s P.A.C.E and BSR’s HERproject, with a workers’ rights and responsibilities component from Better Work. The program aims to increase women’s agency, improve gender attitudes and build worker capacity on basic health, sexual and reproductive health, and financial literacy. It is offered in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, and Vietnam.

RISE Digital

RISE Digital is a tablet-based learning program allowing workers to access topics such as health, financial resilience, and tools for building harmonious relationships and stress management. The program is available in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Guatemala, India, Pakistan, and Vietnam.



IMAGE: © RISE

RISE FINANCIAL HEALTH

FATMA | PACKING DEPARTMENT
EGYPT, JUNE 2023

Fatma is 26 years old and single. She has worked at the factory for eight years in the packing department. Her wages are being paid into a bank account.

“I was nervous at first, but now I prefer to be paid into an account [rather than cash] as it helps me to manage my money better.”

“I spend less when I don’t have cash in my pocket, and I only cash out what I need. The training has been very helpful, especially the savings module.”

Market Transformation

RISE's market transformation pillar aims to incentivize action for buyer and supplier strategies that embed and reward progress toward women's empowerment and gender equality.

Collaborative Program Investments

Earlier this year, RISE launched a collaborative program investments process. This process combines members' supplier factory lists and identifies shared factories to promote collaborative cost-sharing of workplace programs. Through this process, 18 RISE members contributed with their supplier lists. A combined list of over 700 factories was consolidated, of which 85 overlaps were identified. RISE was able to propose over 40 cost-sharing opportunities to 12 members, with several programs enrolled as a result.

Member Working Groups

This year, we launched four working groups: Respect, Financial Health, Women's Advancement and Leadership, and Effective Collaboration. RISE Working Groups leverage member action and advise across the RISE Impact Model.

Influencing

In 2023, RISE's influencing work has centered on increasing the recognition and support for gender-responsive digital wages as a route to improved financial health and wellbeing for workers. We shared our findings and insights at the MENA Digital and Financial Literacy Roundtable, the World Economic Forum and Cambridge Centre for Alternative Finance, the FinEquity Gender Intelligent Design Workshop, and the OECD and Central Bank of Egypt Financial Literacy and Women's Economic Empowerment in Egypt workshop.

Photo: Leora Klapper, Lead Economist at the World Bank Global Research Group, who studies the impact of digital financial services, especially on women, visiting RISE's Financial Health program in Cambodia.

L-R – Mr. Khuon Lim Theng, Wing Ying Factory, Virak Nuon, Better Factories Cambodia; Leora Klapper, The World Bank Group; Sophavy Seng, CWPD; Sethypong Sok, RISE.



Data, Evidence & Learning

RISE Impact Portal is the monitoring, evaluation, and learning platform for RISE Capacity Strengthening programs, including the Financial Health, Respect, and Digital programs, in addition to the Foundations Program that was launched in 2023. The Impact Portal shows program progress and impacts through regular updates, baseline and endline reports, photos, and case studies showcasing program outcomes for individual workers.

We are also partnering with [Open Supply Hub](#) to provide a visual overview of RISE's programmatic work while also increasing transparency for industry stakeholders, who will be able to view the factories where RISE is active.

Women Workers' Voice and Representation

RISE is grounded in the perspectives and priorities of women workers. This year, when we initiated the ideation process for what a potential intervention on women's advancement and leadership should focus on, the natural starting point was to ask women and men workers what advancement and leadership in the workplace means to them.

The responses challenged prevailing assumptions of looking at women's advancement only as upward mobility from worker to supervisory positions. Especially to women workers, advancement can also mean horizontal advancement, and opportunities to be represented in good quality and highly demanded jobs. Designing an enabling environment and creating jobs that respond to women's interests and needs is an essential driver to women's advancement, including the recognition of the value of care work and family responsibilities.

THROUGH A PARTICIPATORY PROCESS, RISE CONSULTED:

132 factory workers

including both women and men workers, as well as 24 factory managers and supervisors, and 20 community members in India and Bangladesh.

50+ stakeholders

including international brands, INGOs, local suppliers, academics, and women's organizations.

10 international brands

that engaged in the Women's Advancement and Leadership working group.

IMAGE:
© RISE



RISE FINANCIAL HEALTH

MAGDA | CUTTING DEPARTMENT | EGYPT, JUNE 2023

Our Partners

At RISE, we see collaboration as one of the key drivers to achieve our vision. We want to thank all our partners who have shown commitment and trust in us this year.

RISE Members

As a membership initiative, RISE welcomes brands, buyers, retailers, suppliers, and vendors in the apparel, footwear, and home textile industries as members. In 2023, RISE is proud to count on the commitment of: Abercrombie & Fitch Co., Aje and Aje Athletica, AEO Inc. (American Eagle and Aerie), BESTSELLER, Boden, Capri Holdings, Carter's, Columbia Sportswear Company, Dôen, Gap Inc., Hanna Andersson, Inditex, Kmart, Macy's Inc., Marks & Spencer, Nordstrom, Primark, PVH Corp., Ralph Lauren, Tapestry, Inc., Target, The Children's Place, Tory Burch, Victoria's Secret & Co., The Warehouse (NZ), Williams-Sonoma, Inc. and Zalando.



IMAGE: © RISE

BESTSELLER

ANDREI VASILIEV, SOCIAL IMPACT MANAGER

"BESTSELLER has supported HERproject for many years and is now a proud member of RISE. As a contribution to RISE, we have been happy to help catalyze the Women's Advancement & Leadership pillar as well as continued to implement several RISE programs in partnership with our suppliers across key markets."

BESTSELLER



Kmart Group

ALBERT YEUNG, HEAD OF ETHICAL SOURCING

"At Kmart Group, we are committed to gender equality and women's empowerment across all the markets we operate in. Our focus has been on providing professional skills, access to healthcare and practical training to empower women in the workplace. Over the past five years, we've actively engaged and collaborated with RISE/BSR's HERproject. Through our partnership, we've enrolled over 109,000 women in the program, which spans almost 60 factories in Bangladesh, India, and Vietnam. The impact assessments show these programs are effective in bolstering women's confidence and skills so that we can collectively continue to advance gender equality, and move the needle on female empowerment in the workplace."

Victoria's Secret & Co.

SHELLY ZIMMERMAN, VICE PRESIDENT, SOCIAL COMPLIANCE

"VS&Co is honored to have joined RISE and proud to have funded the organization's Respect program in Vietnam. This critical program gives women gender-based violence education and training to know their rights and seek the support they need, furthering our commitment to women and safe and respectful workplaces."



Macy's Inc.

KEELIN EVANS, VP OF SUSTAINABILITY

"Through our social purpose platform, Mission Every One, Macy's, Inc. is working with partners to create a more equitable and sustainable future. Our sustainability program is anchored on two primary commitments: caring for the people making our products and managing our environmental impact. As we seek to protect human rights, women's equality and family well-being, we are proud to partner with RISE to support thousands of women across our global workforce."

Our Local Partners

We are proud to deliver locally adapted and contextualized workplace programs in local languages – this is only possible thanks to our network of local partners. Our partners adapt RISE programs to the local context while implementing and scaling programs efficiently and ensuring that women’s voices are at the forefront of our work.

BANGLADESH

[Change Associates Ltd. »](#)

[MAMATA »](#)

[Young Power in Social Action \(YPSA\) »](#)

CAMBODIA

[Cambodian Women for Peace and Development \(CWPD\) »](#)

EGYPT

[The Center for the Development Services \(CDS\) »](#)

GUATEMALA

[CARE Guatemala »](#)

INDIA

[Kshitij »](#)

[Upfront »](#)

PAKISTAN

[Empowerment thru Creative Integration \(ECI\) »](#)

VIETNAM

[Life Centre Vietnam »](#)

Grant Funders

ANCHOR PARTNER FOR FINANCIAL HEALTH

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

GRANT FUNDERS

- American Eagle Outfitters, Inc.
- BESTSELLER
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- The FABRIC Asia project – commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
- Fashion Makes Change
- Gap Inc.
- Nordstrom
- Ralph Lauren
- Target
- The Children’s Place
- VF Corp.
- The VF Foundation
- Victoria’s Secret & Co.
- 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. Their significant support and commitment is critical to us this year and going forward.

Gap Inc.



IMAGE: © RISE

Photo: Financial Health Training, delivered by LIFE Centre in Vietnam

A Multi-Stakeholder Steering Board

RISE is governed by a multi-stakeholder Steering Board with representatives from business, funders, labor organizations, women’s organizations, local and global civil society.



SALLY GILLIGAN
Chief Supply Chain,
Strategy and
Transformation
Officer
GAP INC.



ARON CRAMER
President & Chief
Executive Officer
BSR



KRISHANTI
DHARMARAJ
Independent Chair of
RISE Steering Board
DIGNITY INDEX



ROOPA NAIR
Special Advisor to
RISE Steering Board,
Branch Chief
ILO-IFC
BETTER WORK
PROGRAMME



MADHUVANTI
(MADHU)
DESHMUKH
VP – Program
Strategies & Impact
CARE



CHRISTINA
HAJAGOS-
CLAUSEN
Director Textile &
Garment Industry
INDUSTRIALL



ANISHA CHUGH
Executive Director
WOMEN’S FUND
ASIA



INDALECIO PÉREZ
Head of
Sustainability
Engagement
INDITEX



PAYAL DALAL
SVP, Social Impact,
International
Markets
MASTERCARD
CENTER FOR
INCLUSIVE
GROWTH



JJ PARK
Chief Executive
Officer
SHINWON



The RISE Team

RISE’s global team consists of 21 team members across nine countries. The RISE team works to deliver RISE’s vision through programmatic work, engagement and collaboration, together with a network of local and global partners.

Contact us: risepartnerships@riseequal.org

“The lives of women workers in the global garment supply chain are inextricably linked to our own and therefore, it is all of our responsibility to respect, protect, and improve their lives. I am honored and humbled to be appointed as the Chair of the Steering Board of RISE, a multi-stakeholder organization harnessing the resources of actors across the supply chain to advance gender equality.”

KRISHANTI DHARMARAJ | INDEPENDENT
CHAIR OF RISE STEERING BOARD