

# Wearing Poverty Out



Funding projects ending  
exploitation in the supply  
chains making our clothes

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## Donate clothes you don't wear to TRAIID using one of the methods below



Book a free fast collection from your front door

[traid.org.uk/collections](https://traid.org.uk/collections)  
020 8733 2595



Drop clothes off at one of our 11 charity shops

[traid.org.uk](https://traid.org.uk)



Donate clothes at one of our 900+ clothes reuse banks

## We reuse around 92% of donations which funds projects ending exploitation in our fashion supply chains



Donations are sorted by style, brand and condition



Donations are priced, reused and resold in our charity shops



Items unsold in our shops raise funds by being wholesaled



These sales fund work to end abuse in fashion supply chains



Be responsible for the clothes you no longer wear. Donating clothes to TRAIID puts them back into circulation so they can be worn again.



Extending the life of our clothes is one of the most environmentally beneficial things we can do to shrink our waste, carbon and water footprint.

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Giving your unwanted clothes to TR Aid **funds work to end abuse** in the supply chains making our clothes.

Children, forced labour, life threatening pesticides, dangerous working conditions and environmental catastrophe **have no place in fashion.**

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From the cotton fields to the garment factories, **TR Aid funds projects to create positive change** for the children, women and men who grow, cut, stitch, embellish and dye our clothes.

**Donate** your wearable unwanted clothes to TR Aid, and we will be able to do **even more!**

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## How TRAIID funds projects

**TRAIID funds projects by collecting, reusing and reselling your unwanted and unworn clothes in our charity shops. We depend on these donations to fund our work.**

TRAIID is a fashion reuse charity working to stop wearable clothes from being thrown away or wasted. We stop thousands of tonnes of clothes from going to landfill and incineration every year. We collect the clothes you no longer want or need, and after sorting, we reuse and resell them in our charity shops.

**Every year, TRAIID commits the funds raised in our charity shops to projects improving conditions and working practices in the supply chains making our clothes.**



# £3,124,156

**Donated to projects ending exploitation and improving conditions in the supply chains making our clothes**

## Why fund projects related to fashion?

**Behind the glossy veneer of the fashion industry, hundreds of millions of women, children and men are employed making clothes in some of the world's poorest places.**

Labour rights violations including the use of child and bonded labour, poverty wages and unsafe working conditions are routine and widespread.

It's not only people that pay a high price for our clothes. Environmentally, the fashion industry is one of the world's most polluting and resource intensive industries. Across the EU and the UK, our clothes have the fourth largest environmental impact after housing, transport and food.

In the UK, we throw away **300,000** tonnes of clothing every year, and are buying more clothes than ever, increasing our fashion consumption by a staggering **200,000** tonnes between 2012 – 2016.<sup>1</sup>

Fast fashion dominates our high streets and its business model of *make, use, dispose, repeat* has normalised the idea that clothes are disposable. Fast fashion generates high levels of waste, increases consumption and uses up precious resources like water to sell clothes which are poorly made, barely worn and quickly replaced.

**By funding projects to improve conditions in the supply chains making our clothes, TRAIID connects our work in the UK to reuse clothes and reduce waste, to the people and places negatively impacted by making those clothes.**



Our wardrobes are full of clothes made of cotton, from jeans to t-shirts. It's the most used natural fabric in the fashion industry. Track back through the supply chain of any cotton item you own, and it will have started as an agricultural product grown by a farmer in a field, somewhere in the world.

Around **100** million small-holder farmers across more than **100** countries depend on cotton for their income, and it's a precarious existence.

Cotton is a fussy fragile crop. It's susceptibility to disease is managed by drenching crops with highly toxic pesticides. It is estimated that despite using only **2.5%** of the world's cultivated land, cotton accounts for **6%** of all pesticides used and **16%** of insecticides, more than any other single major crop.<sup>2</sup>

These toxic chemicals wash into our waterways and pollute ecosystems, especially in developing countries.

The health implications for cotton farmers are shocking. It is estimated that at least **200,000** people are killed by pesticides every year, and that **25 million** agricultural workers suffer from acute pesticide poisoning. Many more suffer from chronic ill health, including cancers, neurological diseases and infertility.

Cotton is also a thirsty crop. Its production relies heavily on water and accounts for **69%** of the total water footprint of textiles.

Globally, an average of nearly **10,000** litres of water is used to produce one kilogram of cotton fabric; and a cotton t-shirt uses around **2,500** litres of water which would take you around **three** years to drink.<sup>3</sup>

Transparency is also a problem, especially for the consumer. Brands don't provide information about where its raw materials come from, and often don't know. This means for example we could be wearing cotton that comes from Uzbekistan where children are taken out of school as forced labour for the annual cotton harvest.

**TRAID believes that such dire health and environmental outcomes to make clothes is unacceptable. That's why we have committed over £1,175,228 to date, supporting work to develop safer and more sustainable ways to grow cotton without using hazardous pesticides.**



**2,500**

Producing one cotton t-shirt uses around **2500** litres of water which would take you around **three** years to drink

**£1,175,228**

supporting work to develop safer and more sustainable ways to grow cotton

## What TRAIID funding and our partners have achieved so far:

**200** Ethiopian farmers are the first ever in the country to get organic certification

Training **2,800** farmers in Ethiopia to stop using pesticides bringing benefits to at least **13,000** family members and the wider community

Farmers taking part in our projects in Ethiopia and Benin have seen their harvests increase from between **50%** to **100%**

Lobbying by our partner OBEPAB in Benin, convinced the government to ban the use of the highly hazardous pesticide (HHP) endosulfan; and all organic cotton is sold to the Beninese government with a guaranteed premium (currently 20%)

Farmers in Benin have started to benefit from higher prices for crops grown alongside organic cotton such as Shea and Cashews

Development of food sprays using natural cheap household ingredients to attract beneficial insects which then eat pests

Breeding non-GM cotton seed in India to provide **1,500** farmers with access to non-GM organic cotton seed

Trained around **3,500** cotton farmers in Mali to sustainably grow their own supplies of plants to make organic pesticides to control pests and protect crops

Supported **4,500** small-scale cotton farmers in Pakistan to reduce pesticide use, increase their incomes and farm more sustainably

Thousands of cotton farmers taking part in our projects have improved incomes. They spend less on pesticides and many are now getting the organic premium



# Worker's rights



The fashion industry employs millions of people globally and relies on an abundance of very cheap unskilled labour, mainly women, to produce clothes.

Exploitation, poverty and limited life chances are the norm for the people who make our clothes. Cheap labour, and pressure from retailers to turn around clothes quickly and cheaply, leads to routine rights violations, poverty wages and unsafe working conditions.

Despite making clothes for some of the best known and most profitable brands in the world, the wages paid are so low that workers can barely afford to pay their rent or buy enough food. Families become trapped in poverty because garment workers can't afford to send their kids to school to get an education. Instead, children start working as early as possible to supplement incomes.

As pressure increases on factories to produce clothes cheaply, garment work does not enable people to earn enough to create better lives for themselves or their children. It is work that should be lifting people out of poverty, instead it consigns them to it.

The people who cut, stitch, embellish and pack our clothes struggle to change the exploitative working conditions they face. Many are invisible and voiceless, working at the bottom of supply chains in unregulated sweatshops or as homeworkers.

The lack of transparency in fashion supply chains means that exploitation like child labour, sexual harassment, forced overtime and dangerous working conditions is easy to hide.

**TRAID believes that making clothes should not rely on exploitative labour. To date, we've committed **£868,478** to projects empowering workers to claim their rights, to make factories safer and to strengthen unions working on behalf of garment workers.**



**74,453**

garment workers in Cambodia provided with free legal assistance in 2016

**£868,478**

committed to projects empowering workers

## What TRAIID funding and our partners have achieved so far:

In 2015, our partner FTZ was instrumental in lobbying the government in Sri Lanka to introduce a minimum wage and a **15%** pay rise for any private sector worker on a low wage

Securing financial compensation for over **1,500** wrongfully dismissed garment workers in Bangladesh

Increasing the administrative capacity of trade unions to provide legal support for garment workers in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Sri Lanka

**74,453** garment workers in Cambodia provided with free legal assistance in 2016 to fight their cases

A minimum wage increase in Cambodia for garment workers due in large part to our partner CLEC's campaigning efforts

In Cambodia, our partner CLEC lobbied H&M to adopt a new internal policy for suppliers to make it harder to fire workers without a reason or compensation benefitting nearly **58,000** workers and improving working practices in many individual factories

Supported Ruaab SEWA, in Delhi, India, an embroidery cooperative owned and managed by women homeworkers to secure fairly-paid work direct from suppliers for many high street brands.



# Ending child and bonded labour



It is a terrible truth that children and bonded labourers are used to make our clothes in all parts of the supply chain. It is estimated that around 152 million children are put to work globally,<sup>4</sup> and many work in the garment sector.

Children tan leather, pick and spin cotton, stitch garments and embellish clothes with sequins and beads. In some jobs, like cotton pollination and embroidery, children's small fingers are preferred by employers to carry out delicate work.

Report after report shows that the use of children to make clothes is widespread. Many garment workers are also paying off unjust debts and trapped in forms of slave labour.

Brands and retailers know this sort of labour takes place in their supply chains, but when it is exposed they say it is not their fault. They blame the supplier for outsourcing work without their knowledge, or point out that supply chains are so complicated they can't be responsible for every production stage, or that they were misled about the age of workers in the factories which supply them.

However, the widespread use of children and bonded labourers in fashion supply chains is partly down to brand purchasing practices which includes tight deadlines and constant pressure on factories to cut labour costs.

Brands are also unwilling to look further down the supply chain, for example when orders are subcontracted to smaller factories and to homeworkers, where the worst forms of exploitation including child and bonded labour take place.

Working children are denied an education and are trapped in a lifetime of poorly paid unskilled work, continuing the cycle of poverty for the next generation. At the same time, when children replace adults in the workplace they get paid less, driving down incomes in already impoverished communities.

**TRAID believes that the supply chains which make our clothes should be free of child and bonded labour. That's why we have committed £1,080,450 to projects to reduce and end child and bonded labour.**



**1,000**

at risk young girls prevented from working in spinning mills in India

**£1,080,450**

committed to projects to reduce and end child and bonded labour

## What TRAIID funding and our partners have achieved so far:

Funding four centres in Bangladesh where the children of garment workers receive good care, nutritious food and educational support to go back into mainstream school.

Bought birth certificates for **150** children at the centres in Bangladesh enabling them to go to state school, get health care and prove their age to avoid underage marriage and labour

Supported five model spinning mills in southern India that do not use child bonded labour and prevented at least **1,000** at risk local children from entering the mills

Working with mill managers in southern India to address the abuse of girls who work in the mills under bonded labour schemes. A significant step as they had previously refused to acknowledge abuse took place in their mills

Engaging UK clothes brands to open-up their supply chains to find out the extent of child and bonded labour to make clothes

Improving certification standards for handmade rugs aimed at ending child labour in the industry to include no forced or bonded labour

Forced the highest court in Tamil Nadu, southern India, to investigate the lack of action on implementing legislation to establish Internal Complaints Committees and register hostels to protect girls and women from sexual abuse in spinning mills



# Let's end child and forced labour in the fashion industry

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**Partner:** GoodWeave

**Project Location:** India

**TRAID funding:** £40,000 in 2017

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## Children, homeworkers and bonded labourers work in the supply chains which make our clothes but brands and retailers ignore the problem.

There are lots of people and processes involved in making a piece of clothing. Not all this work takes place in the garment factory where the order was placed. Other production stages – like embroidery, printing and washing – are often subcontracted by the supplier to smaller factories and homeworkers.

This is a problem because while brands and retailers may have some knowledge about its first-level suppliers, they ignore widespread subcontracting and the realities for workers further down supply chains.

It's here, at the bottom of fashion supply chains, that the most exploitative practices take place, including using child labour, or people locked into forced labour to pay off unjust debts. These workers, often women and children, are hidden out of sight and are easily exploited.

The lack of transparency in fashion supply chains makes it extremely difficult to know where clothing is made, under what conditions and by whom.

Tackling this problem is a massive challenge and requires brands and retailers to take more responsibility for their entire supply chain, including work which is outsourced.

## How TRAIID funding is helping

TRAIID is funding GoodWeave to end child and forced labour in the garment industry. Our funding will be used to recruit a handful of UK clothes brands willing to fully map their supply chains to get accurate data on how many children and forced labourers are involved in fulfilling orders.

GoodWeave is the leading organisation that on a sustained and commercial level has worked with companies to fully map supply chains, while at the same time investing in community led solutions to address child labour.

Our project takes place in **four** villages in Uttar Pradesh, northern India, chosen because it serves as a hub for homeworkers, particularly embroidery.

This sort of finishing work is often outsourced from factories into homes, and it is common for children as young as **five** years old to be put to work as helpers. Working children are denied an education limiting their opportunities to a life of poorly paid subsistence work and continuing the cycle of poverty.

To address this, GoodWeave will work with retailers to establish and test a new sourcing system to expose and address child and forced labour. At the same time, they will also work closely with communities in Uttar Pradesh to offer child protection and educational opportunities aiming to reach and support **7,500** homeworkers and **7,200** children.



# Helping cotton farmers grow organic

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**Partner:** Pan UK and Pan Ethiopia

**Country:** Ethiopia

**TRAID funding:** £110,000 in 2016 (£298,233 in total since 2012)

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## Small-scale cotton farmers in Ethiopia use dangerous expensive pesticides, with little to no protection, posing serious threats to their health and contaminating their land.

In Ethiopia, small-scale cotton farmers struggle to earn a living to support themselves and their families. Heavy and uncontrolled use of pesticides to manage fussy fragile cotton crops is widespread. Crops are often sprayed by hand with old equipment and no protective clothing.

The health implications are severe. It is widely agreed that official figures, suggesting that **200,000** people are killed by pesticides each year and that **25 million** agricultural workers suffer from acute pesticide poisoning, are gross underestimates. Many more suffer from chronic ill health, including cancers, neurological diseases and infertility.

Farmers become trapped in a spiral of crop mismanagement and debt, spending up to **60%** of their income on pesticides while they increasingly struggle to grow on soil depleted by pesticide over use.

## How TRAIID funding is helping

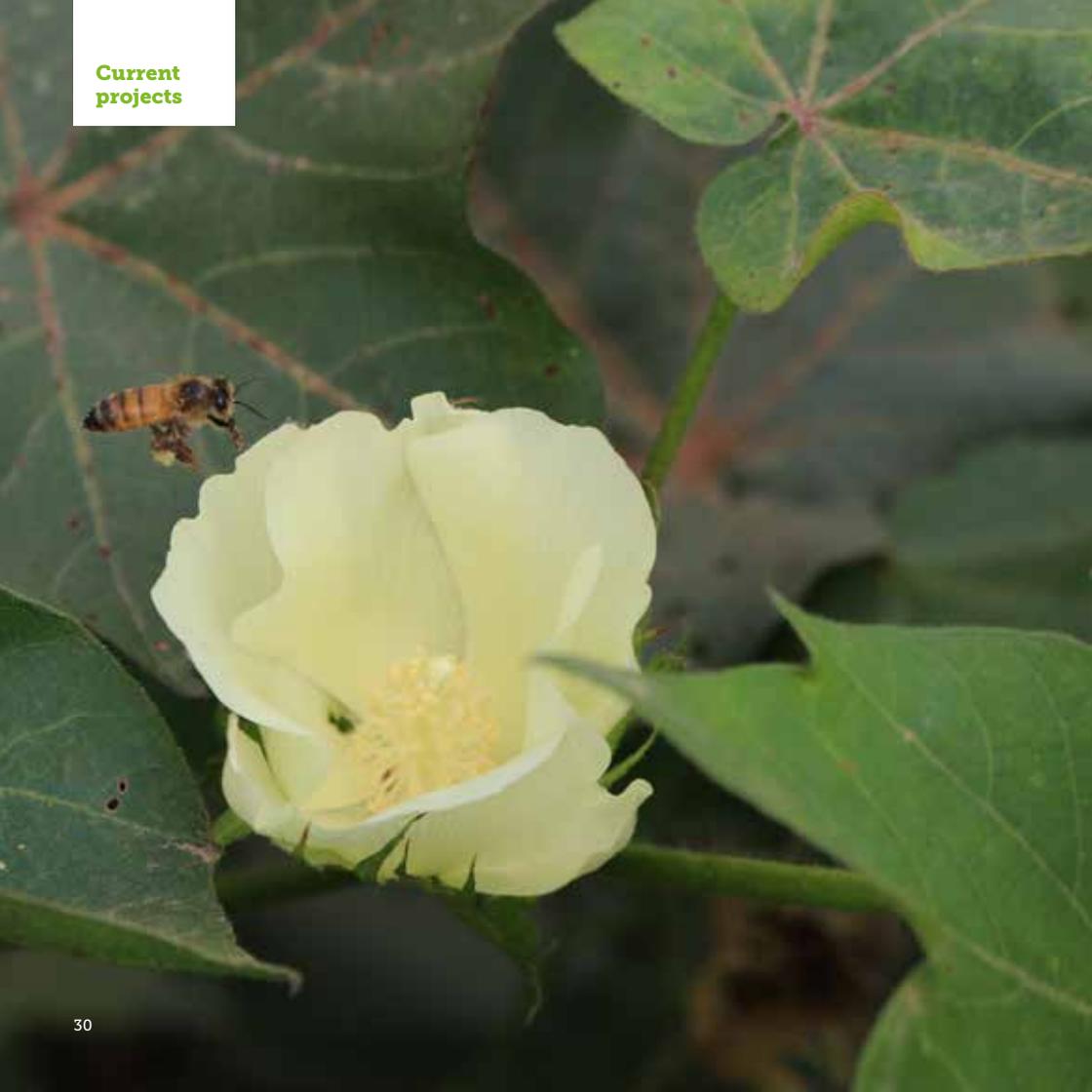
TRAIID has been supporting cotton farmers in Ethiopia since 2012 to stop using hazardous and expensive pesticides on their crops. Today, the project is flourishing with **2,800** farmers taking part, and the recent news that **200** of these farmers become the first ever in Ethiopia to get organic certification for cotton. A fantastic achievement.

Our partner PAN Ethiopia has supported farmers to reduce their dependency on pesticides using safer more sustainable alternatives. The project trains 'lead' farmers in Farmer Field Schools who then provide support to **10** 'follower' farmers in their area. Farmers are trained in soil and water health, ecological pest management principles and problem solving.

These farmers are now achieving cotton yields over **100%** higher than untrained farmers in the same area. They have also seen increases of **77%** in the price per kg of cotton since the start of the project. Without drenching their crops with pesticides.

Our partner has also been working with the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture to develop and deliver a training tool kit to reach more farmers. This has been widely distributed to government agricultural agents, NGOs and companies bringing a wealth of health, environmental and financial benefits to more Ethiopian farmers.

With the project well on its way to more farmers getting organic certification, and with many brands now looking to Ethiopia as a source of both cotton and garments, we have great hopes the future will be organic.



# Giving farmers access to non- GM organic cotton seed

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**Partner:** Fairtrade Foundation

**Country:** India

**TRAID funding:** £92,027 in 2017

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## Cotton farmers find it difficult to access non-GM (genetically modified) seeds to grow organic or Fairtrade cotton.

Nearly two-thirds of all cotton grown worldwide today is GM (genetically modified). This has totally changed the seed industry with large companies no longer offering non-GM varieties to cotton farmers. Even where non-GM cotton seeds are available, they are bred for high-input agriculture which means farmers using synthetic fertilisers, pesticides and irrigation.

Unsurprisingly, there is now a global shortage of non-GM cotton seed, which farmers must use to grow organic, Fairtrade and Cotton made in Africa cotton.

In India alone, the agrochemical company Monsanto has a **95%** monopoly of the seed market. This makes it extremely difficult for small-scale farmers who want to grow organic or Fairtrade cotton to get hold of non-GM seeds.

With no access to non-GM seeds farmers are trapped into more expensive and less environmentally sustainable cotton farming, for a product with a lower market value.

## How TRAIID funding is helping

TRAIID is funding the Fairtrade Foundation with Pratibha Syntex to breed non-GM seeds giving thousands of cotton farmers in Madhya Pradesh, central India, access to non-GM organic cotton seed.

The breeding programme to produce non-GM seed is being led by a professional seed breeder and by the end of 2017, the fields had been prepared, seeds treated and sown, and successfully germinated.

In the first year, **1,500** farmers will have access to **9,200** organic cotton seed packets. Having access to non-GM seeds will bring all the environmental and health benefits of growing organic plus a higher price for their cotton.

The project will also help these cotton farmers to benefit from improved access to high-value UK Fairtrade markets.



# Caring for the children of garment workers

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**Partner:** ChildHope & Nagorik Uddyog

**Country:** Bangladesh

**TRAID funding:** £129,208 in 2017 (£325,203 in total since 2013)

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## Children as young as two years old are left alone and at risk with no-one to care for them while their mothers work very long hours in garment factories in Bangladesh.

A high proportion of garment workers in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka are single mothers. Extreme poverty forces them to migrate from rural areas to look for work. Many find employment in garment factories which rely on an abundance of cheap unskilled labour.

While they work, most of these women leave their children at home without any care or supervision. There are many female workers living with their children in Dhaka as single or abandoned mothers and without any networks of support. These extremely poor women make a stark choice between earning an income in garment factories to subsist and survive, or their children's safety.

Many children left alone are as young as **two** years old, and older children end up working, often in dangerous workplaces, to bring in extra income for their family. They are at high risk of accidents, trafficking and abuse. These children miss out on going to school limiting their future opportunities and trapping them in continued poverty.

## How TR Aid funding is helping

TR Aid funding has set up two centres in Dhaka for tiny tots between **2 and 5** years old, and two drop-in centres for children between **6 and 16** years old, supporting around **200** children in total at any one time.

At the centres, the children receive quality care, nutritious food, some medicine and education. It's a clean calm space in which to learn and play.

It is a wonderful package of support delivered by our Bangladeshi partner Nagorik Uddyog which eases the burden in unimaginable ways on the mothers working for long hours and very little pay in garment factories.

TR Aid funding also enabled Nagorik Uddyog to buy birth certificates for 150 children, without which they were not recognised as citizens and unable to use state education or state health care. The birth certificates also provide children with proof of their age giving them some protection against underage marriage or labour.

Most importantly, the centres are helping to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty through education. Younger children have gone to school with the projects support, and the parents and employers of older working children are persuaded to give time for education. With literacy and numeracy skills, they will have a much better chance of ending up in safer and better paid jobs, and more able to provide for their own children and send them to school.



# Ending the abuse of girls in cotton spinning mills

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**Partner:** READ

**Project location:** India, Tamil Nadu

**TRAID funding:** £162,427 in 2017 (£383,067 since 2010)

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## Young girls in India are working in appalling conditions in spinning mills making cloth and thread which is used by brands and retailers to make clothes.

In Tamil Nadu, southern India, up to **300,000** girls and young women are working in appalling conditions in cotton spinning mills making yarn and cloth used to make clothes sold on our high streets.

Recruiters target poverty stricken families with promises that their daughters will receive decent wages, good accommodation and a lump sum payment which can be used for a marriage dowry – something these families could not otherwise afford. Known locally as ‘Sumangali Thittam’ or marriage scheme, it is one of the worst practices in the textile industry.

The reality is that the girls live and work in squalid spinning mill compounds paying for housing and food from tiny wages. The work is dangerous and difficult. They work long hours with forced overtime, are closely supervised and allowed little contact with the outside world, including their families. This isolation leaves them vulnerable to verbal, physical and sexual abuse.

Few girls ever receive the lump sum payment as they are fired just before the end of their contract or leave due to ill-health, injury or depression.

## How TR Aid funding is helping

TR Aid has funded work to stop the practice of Sumangali Thittam since 2010. Our partner READ works in Tamil Nadu, southern India, where Sumangali is widespread, to identify and remove under-age girls from mills, while improving the pay and conditions of older girls and women.

The project initially worked with villages close to the mills targeted by recruiters to educate them about what conditions would really be like for their daughters in the mills. Now awareness amongst local villages has been raised, READ is now focusing on stopping girls from other states being recruited.

READ is also working to put pressure on the government to enforce legislation to register hostels and establish Internal Complaints Committees, measures which should help to protect women and girls from sexual abuse and assault.

TR Aid funding has also supported the management of **five** ‘model’ spinning mills which are free of child labour with good pay and conditions.

READ is also working to encourage a further **30** mills to register their hostels with the government (meaning they must follow certain norms and be monitored), given around **300** girls alternative vocational training, started a mini business for ex-mill workers and provided education scholarships for **22** girls.

**1 WRAP. Valuing Our Clothes: the cost of UK fashion 2017**

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/sustainable-textiles/valuing-our-clothes>  
(accessed 30 Jan 2018)

**2 Pesticide Action Network UK**

<http://www.pan-uk.org/cotton> (accessed 30 Jan 2018)

**3 Water Footprint Network. Water Footprint Assessment of viscose and polyester and a comparison to cotton 2017**

[http://waterfootprint.org/media/downloads/WFA\\_Polyester\\_and\\_Viscose\\_2017.pdf](http://waterfootprint.org/media/downloads/WFA_Polyester_and_Viscose_2017.pdf) (accessed 30 Jan 2018)

**4 International Labour Organisation. Global Estimates of Child Labour Results and Trends 2012 – 2016**

<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/child-labour/lang--en/index.htm>  
(accessed 30 Jan 2018)



## Thank you!

It's your clothes donations that makes this life changing work possible.

To book a free collection, or find your local TRAIID charity shop or textile bank, visit **[www.traid.org.uk](http://www.traid.org.uk)**



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