



Fabric of Change

INNOVATING FOR A SUSTAINABLE APPAREL INDUSTRY

Invitation to join Fabric of Change

Supporting social entrepreneurs innovating along the apparel industry supply chain:
DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS FOR ALL



The apparel industry is an important driver of economic growth employing **60 million** workers, of whom more than **75% are women**.



However, an apparel industry line worker in Bangladesh earns only between **USD \$68** and **\$234** per month. Often a job is not enough.

ABOUT FABRIC OF CHANGE

Ashoka launched *Fabric of Change* in partnership with C&A Foundation in 2015: A 3-year global initiative to unlock the unique power and potential of social entrepreneurs and their solutions to advance a shared vision of a fair and sustainable apparel industry in which people are empowered and the planet is respected.

The initiative at a glance

- **Key goal:** support social innovators to turn the apparel industry into a force for good
- **A vibrant network** of 29 inspiring social entrepreneurs positively impacting:
 - Over 420,000 apparel sector workers, artisans and other citizens directly and another 5.4 million individuals indirectly
 - 1,800 businesses and organizations
- Beyond the core network, **400 innovative projects** from around the world were mobilised through an online Changemakers Challenge
- The initiative has dispersed over **500,000 Euros in direct support** to social entrepreneurs' work and has hosted several gatherings around influential apparel sector events around the world

Key achievements to date

- **29** high-impact social entrepreneurs were selected including **8** new Ashoka Fellows who benefit from a 3-year stipend and a lifelong support through the Ashoka network
- A **community** of like-minded **changemakers** across sectors started to be created through 3 inspiring collaborative events and online platforms
- An **accelerator program** for **11** established social entrepreneurs was run to develop scaling-up/ open growth strategies (Globalizer program)
- Over **350** projects that change the industry around the world were identified (Changemaker Challenge)



PROPOSAL

We would like to invite you to join forces to capitalize on what has been achieved so far and continue this movement to transform the sector into a force for good. After 3 years with a global sector emphasis, we would like to invite you to partner on a more specific focus on the social side of the problem in the industry.

The aim of a Fabric of Change Phase II program would be to identify, select and support social entrepreneurs working on supply chain innovations to fight workers exploitation and improve basic rights of garment factory workers, artisans and other apparel low-income employees - 75% of which are women.

Key objectives

- **Focus on impact and support effective solutions fighting against unacceptable working conditions**, if not modern slavery, in the hands of passionate entrepreneurs to scale up
- **Go beyond the current focus of the industry on environment and product innovations “green”** to include people in the change
- Impact a sector which currently disproportionately affects **women**
- **Influence the sector** and advance a shared vision of the apparel industry as a force for good through the work of social entrepreneurs

Value proposition

- **Innovate differently**, by co-creating with social entrepreneurs along the supply chain of your company
- **Engage your employees** and strengthen your responsible image
- **Build on the initial investment** of C&A Foundation into Fabric of Change
- Leverage **Ashoka’s 35 years of experience** selecting, supporting and connecting social entrepreneurs as well as its broad network of changemakers across the philanthropy, business, media and academic sector

Call for action

Join a community of changemakers and unleash the power of collaboration for greater impact! That way, capitalize on the Fabric of Change initiative and its existing solid cohort of social innovators, and leverage Ashoka’s experience in **bringing collective impact** with combined power of social entrepreneurs.

Instead of focusing our work on areas that are now well supported in the apparel industry such as environmental and technological innovations to improve sourcing, production and end-of-use processes (e.g. Fashion for Good), we would like to **narrow the Fabric of Change support to the social side of the industry**. The progress made since RP are far from enough to respond to the widespread unacceptable reality too many garment workers still face to make our clothes.

Join the Fabric of Change movement and support the scale up of system change solutions to enable decent working conditions for all in the apparel industry.



EXAMPLES OF ASHOKA FELLOWS
WORKING ON **DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS FOR ALL** IN THE APPAREL INDUSTRY



Kohl Gill - LaborVoices (USA)

LaborVoices reaches agricultural and manufacturing workers directly and collects real-time anonymous information about their work conditions via mobile phone surveys. That way, they provide data to global brands and an early warning system to their supply chains. It also enables workers to make informed choices about where and how they work. Impact: operational in 11 countries, supports organizations based in 85 countries, has 150,000 active data points and 25,000 registered workers.



Manoj Bhatt - GoodWeave (India)

GoodWeave aims to eliminate child labour from the manufacturing industry in India. Initially focusing on the carpet and rug industry, they target the informal sector, engaging brands into committing to higher transparency standards. Offering an independent, third-party certification label, GoodWeave builds stronger transparency and prevents child labour in the informal sector. Impact: Since its creation 20 years ago, prevalence of child weavers has fallen by almost 75%. They are now looking to expand into other industries.



Ashila Mapalagama - StandUp (Sri Lanka)

The “Stand-Up” labor movement is an alternative to the traditional top-down trade union movements. The approach moves beyond protest and focuses on ways in which workers can collectively enhance their own resilience and social security needs by pooling resources, including an alternative insurance system which compensates injured and unfairly treated workers, and offers emergency loans and legal aid. Impact: has over 2,000 worker members and growing a larger network of workers by leveraging the “train the trainer” model.



Rebecca van Bergen - NEST (USA)

NEST is developing a set of compliance standards to ensure women artisans benefit from ethical and economically viable sourcing partnerships with retailers. Its standards are mapped to traditional factory audits, but adapted to the context of home-work and decentralized production models. Impact: Nest’s Artisan Guild has 130 active artisan business members, representing 31,833 individual artisans across 37 countries. In 2015, artisan businesses working with Nest saw an average 45% increased production and 76% growth in revenue.

ABOUT ASHOKA

Ashoka is the largest global network of social entrepreneurs with system-changing solutions working across countries and topics. It started in 1981 based on the simple insight: “There is nothing more powerful than a new idea in the hands of an entrepreneur”. Today it has a global network of 3,300 Ashoka Fellows in 85 countries putting their system-changing ideas into practice on a global scale. Ashoka actively engages with partners to collectively advance its goal of a society where “Everyone (is) a changemaker”.

Beyond selecting and supporting individual social entrepreneurs, Ashoka is ideally positioned to identify patterns in social innovation, convene key decision-makers from the corporate, public, philanthropy and investment sectors to facilitate the emergence of collaborative models that can address the most critical societal challenges at large scale.

NGO Advisor has ranked Ashoka among the Top 5 NGOs in the world.

www.ashoka.org

