### Stop Trafficking!

**Anti Human Trafficking Newsletter**

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### Australia NGO Grades Companies on Supply Chain Evidence

**Electronics Industries**

Baptist World Aid in Australia released the first Electronics Industry Trends report 18 months ago; since then, the expectation that companies should act to protect workers in their supply chain has continued to grow. In the U.S, the Dodd Frank legislation came into effect, requiring companies to trace the minerals they use to ensure they are not fueling armed conflict.

The Modern Slavery Act has been passed in the UK, requiring higher levels of disclosure from UK companies on what they are doing to mitigate supply chain risks. The public has become sensitized to the problems of excessive working hours in Chinese electronics manufacturing. Reports have been released outlining the systemic use of forced labor in component manufacturing.

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### Fashion Industries

Baptist World Aid in Australia launched the third Australian Fashion Report on the eve of the third anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh, a tragedy which cut short the lives of 1,136 garment workers. When the factory came down, it simultaneously catapulted the poor and unsafe working conditions of the apparel industry to front page news and to the front of our minds.

The Rana Plaza tragedy shocked the collective conscience of consumers and decision makers across the world, helping to accelerate efforts to upheld the rights of workers throughout the entire apparel industry supply chain. Three years on however, the need remains pressing. There are presently 14.2 million people...
Electronics cont. from pg. 1

in Malaysia. The plight of children and adults working in hazardous and deadly conditions in the gold mines of Mali, the tin mines of Indonesia and artisanal and small scale mines across the planet has been broadcast around the world. Public awareness that workers in the electronics industry are overworked, underpaid, exploited and enslaved is now widespread.

This report grades 56 companies from A to F on the strength of their labor rights management systems to mitigate the risk of forced labor, child labor and exploitation in the supply chain. It significantly expands on the work of the previous report, updating the research and adding an additional 17 companies. Engagement with the research process for this report was also higher; 61% of companies actively contributed, providing data and information for their scorecards (up from 54% previously).

Encouragingly, 64% of the companies that were researched across both reports showed some improvement and 9% showed significant improvement, including Dick Smith, BlackBerry and Garmin. Despite progress, it is clear that overall, the industry still has a long way to go. No company was awarded a grade in the A range and the median grade for companies was a low C-

Grades are awarded to companies based on 61 assessment criteria, across four broad categories: Policies, Traceability and Transparency, Monitoring and Training, and Worker Rights. These four pieces of the system when brought together and implemented well, should enable improvements in working conditions and reduce the risk and incidence of modern slavery.

One of the biggest concerns contributing to the industry’s poor performance is that no company is actively ensuring that workers across its supply chain are receiving a living wage (a point covered in more detail on page 6 of the Report). While the majority of companies had a code of conduct that included the right to collective bargaining, only 7% could actually demonstrate manufacturing facilities with collective bargaining agreements in place.

Additionally, traceability for the industry remains problematic. The Dodd Frank legislation and the efforts of some companies have shown some substantial improvements; however only one company (Intel) was able to fully trace all of its smelters and components manufacturers. The majority of companies did know their final stage manufacturers; however, only 10% had traced its inputs and no company had fully traced their raw materials. If companies don’t know or don’t care who is producing their product, then they cannot ensure that workers are not being exploited. The low traceability deeper into the supply chain is particularly concerning as this is often where the most atrocious worker rights abuses occur.

Attention to the supply chain has been greatest at the final stage of manufacturing. In China the largest producer of the world’s electronics and electronics components, there is some evidence that the incidences of child and forced labor have been falling, while demand for workers in the sector has continued to drive wage improvements.

Deeper into the supply chain, a number of initiatives to reduce exploitation have been developed, however most are still in their early stages. Agreements negotiated as part of the international trade agreement known as the Trans Pacific Partnership, when enacted, should mitigate the use of bonded labor in Malaysia. The closed supply chain program ‘Solutions of
Electronics cont. from pg. 2

Hope’ being driven by a number of companies in the industry, should lead to better working conditions, a reduction in funding for armed conflict and improved development in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Brands and policy makers must continue driving change.

Disappointingly, a number of Australian brands including Kogan, Soniq and Palsonic were among the worst performers receiving D- and F grades. Dick Smith was an Australian stand out, moving from a D grade to a B- reflecting increased disclosures about traceability and proof that workers in its first tier factories were receiving wages above the minimum.

Many of the largest and well-known brands were amongst the strongest performers. Apple, Microsoft, Acer, Intel, LG and Samsung all received a B+. The fact that Apple, one of the most proactive companies in managing its supply chain risks, has still been targeted for excessive working hours in its Chinese factories and the use of extremely hazardous child labor in its mining processes, shows how much more needs to be done to address the issues within the whole sector.

That said, it is clear that the electronics industry provides investment, jobs, skills, products and tax revenues that are critical for driving development and providing technology that is reshaping our world. The Report affirms the initiatives that have been undertaken to enhance these benefits. However, without improved safeguards in the production processes, this industry will also continue to drive exploitation and slavery and put workers’ lives at risk.

The Report is a tool for investors, consumers, governments and corporations to continue to enhance the benefits that flow from the industry while mitigating the risks to workers within it. (http://behindthebarcode.org.au/)

Fashion cont. from pg. 1

in forced labor exploitation and 168 million child laborers scattered across the global economy. Many are forced to work in the farms and factories that feed the apparel industry. For millions of others working in the industry, wages remain so low that they are unable to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

The Report assessed 87 companies, awarding each a grade from A to F based on the strength of their labor rights management systems to mitigate the risk of exploitation in their supply chain.

Fairtrade companies, though still relatively niche, remain the standout when it comes to strong labor rights management. Etiko and Audrey Blue (inc. Mighty Good Undies) both received A+ grades. The next best performer was one of the world’s biggest fashion retailers, Inditex (Zara), which received an A grade.

Some companies receiving an A grade are reflective of one of the most welcome trends in the industry – the improved company knowledge of suppliers. Knowing suppliers is critical to a strong labor rights management system. If companies do not know or do not care who their suppliers are, then they cannot ensure that workers are not being exploited. In 2013, 50% of companies had complete knowledge of who their suppliers were at the final stage of production (the manufacturing or ‘cut, make and trim’ suppliers). This has since increased to 70%. It is clear that the industry is also increasing its efforts to know suppliers deeper into the supply chain. In 2013, 41% of companies had engaged in some effort to know their input suppliers (e.g. where their fabric is produced). This has now increased to 79%.

However, there is still much to be done. Only 31% of companies knew more than 75% of their input suppliers, and at the next tier down - at the raw materials level - only 5% of companies knew who all of their suppliers were. Continuing to improve traceability will remain one of the most important challenges for the industry.

While input and raw materials sit outside the purview of companies, the worst forms of worker rights abuse (including forced and child labor) will continue to remain prevalent in these parts of the supply chain.

One of the chief concerns for garment workers around the world is their wage. Minimum wages are so persistently low in most developing countries that workers remain trapped in a cycle of poverty. It is a welcome improvement then, that the amount of companies able to demonstrate that some portion of their workers were earning significantly above the minimum wage had increased to 32%, up from 14% a year before (see ‘Living Wages’ on pg. 11 of the Report).

It is clear that more work needs to be done in providing public transparency by the fashion industry. Less than half of companies have established a partial public list of their suppliers, and only 16% had shared a full list. Additionally, only a fifth of companies were making the broad results of their monitoring efforts public. Transparency deepens the credibility of the claims companies make about their supply chain systems, and serves to engender trust between companies, consumers, and decision makers.

Others should follow the leadership of companies like Nudie Jeans and replicate the recent efforts of Kmart Australia, Target Australia and Coles in sharing detailed supplier information with the public.

The fashion industry can have a positive effect. The industry generates over a trillion dollars of export revenue,
Thailand’s Seafood Slaves

Thailand is under intense and increasing global pressure to address the use of trafficked, bonded, forced and slave labor in its fishing sector and crack down on the activities of its enormous industrial fishing fleets. Over half a century of too many boats using unsustainable fishing methods has degraded Thailand’s fisheries to the point where many vessel operators slash labor costs through the use of brutal systems of exploitation and turn a profit by illegally plundering the seas.

In 2014, Thailand was downgraded to Tier 3 in the US State Department’s Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report and remained there for 2015. Tier 3 places Thailand in the same category as Iran and North Korea, reflecting a severe lack of meaningful progress in the prevention and suppression of human trafficking and the protection and rehabilitation of survivors.

After several years of dissatisfaction with Thailand’s non-compliance with the European Union’s Regulation on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, which entered into force in 2010, the EU issued a ‘yellow card’ warning to the country in April 2015. A review of that decision could see a ‘red card’ ban on imports of wild-caught fish products potentially worth over €640 million ($730 million) to the Thai economy – almost a tenth of the country’s revenue from seafood exports.

There is growing pressure from consumers for producers and retailers to change their behavior and disclose what steps they are taking to clean up their supply chains. In August 2015, lawsuits were filed against Costco and Nestlé, alleging that they knowingly sold products sourced through the use of forced labor.

While drawing on evidence from across Thailand and assessing the situation nationally, the 2016 Report is grounded in an analysis of the port town of Kantang in the southern Thai province of Trang. Crucially, EJF investigations in 2015 demonstrated forcefully that the problem of ‘pirate’ IUU fishing persists.

In March 2013, EJF travelled to Kantang with Thailand’s Department of Special Investigation (DSI) and the Royal Thai Police as they rescued 14 victims of slavery from Boonlarp Fishing Limited Partnership pier. Most of the men, the youngest being 16, had just returned from a six-month term at sea on three different fishing vessels. During in-depth interviews with EJF, the men gave accounts of deception and exploitation by brokers and traffickers, slave-like working conditions, forcible confinement and frequent verbal and physical abuse.

Analyzing Illegal Fishing and Human Rights Violations Using Blockchain Technology

Provenance, based in the UK, is a platform that empowers brands to take steps toward greater transparency by tracing the origins and histories of products. With Provenance technology, one can easily gather and verify stories, keep them connected to physical things and embed them anywhere online. Provenance has applied blockchain technology for supply chain management, effectively tackling illegal fishing and human rights abuses. With the technology anyone with a smartphone and internet access can track fish from the time it is caught until it reaches supermarket shelves.

Provenance’s technology will allow fishermen to record their catch by sending a simple text message. This will replace the existing practice of maintaining paper records, which cannot always be relied upon. As the catch moves up the processing/supply chain, these records are also transferred over the blockchain. This will create a transparent, readily verifiable trail. Once it reaches the end point, be it a restaurant or a supermarket, customers can scan the accompanying label to verify its entire history, from the point of origin of the produce to the end point.

Provenance wants to implement the solution on a global scale so that it can be used by border control and certifying authorities to ensure that there are no environmental or human rights violations.

Use of blockchain technology in supply chain management is a well-known application. A handful of companies are already working on it. While blockchain enables transparent record keeping, ensuring sustainable fishing and safe, humane working conditions will still be the responsibility of government bodies and various social organizations. (http://www.newsbtc.com/2016/09/11/provenance-tackles-illegal-fishing-and-human-rights-violations-with-blockchain-technology/)

Blockchain Technology

The new blockchain technology facilitates peer-to-peer transactions without any intermediary such as a bank or governing body. Keeping the user’s information anonymous, the blockchain validates and keeps a permanent public record of all transactions. That means that your personal information is private and secure, while all activity is transparent and incorruptible—reconciled by mass collaboration and stored in code on a digital ledger. With its advent, we will not need to trust each other in the traditional sense, because trust is built into the system itself.

Although many opportunities for the blockchain require a digital currency, Bitcoin is only one application of this great innovation in computer science. The blockchain can hold any legal document, from deeds and marriage licenses to educational degrees and birth certificates. Call it the World Wide Ledger. It enables smart contracts, decentralized autonomous organizations, decentralized government services, and transactions among things. The Internet of Everything needs a Ledger of Everything: the blockchain is a truly open, distributed, global platform that fundamentally changes what we can do online, how we do it, and who can participate. (https://hbr.org/2016/05/the-impact-of-the-blockchain-goes-beyond-financial-services)

Fashion cont. from pg. 3

predominantly for low and middle income countries. In Bangladesh and Cambodia, the industry respectively accounted for 89.2% and 77.4% of total merchandise exports in 2014. In the Asia Pacific alone, more than 40 million people are employed in garment manufacturing. Millions of people have migrated from lives of subsistent rural agriculture into factory work, hoping to improve their situation and that of their families. The fashion industry is playing a substantial role in reshaping nations and helping communities lift themselves out of poverty.

At the same time however, we know that wherever measures have not been sufficient to uphold the rights of workers, the industry has also helped to fuel forced labor, child labor, unsafe working conditions, and exploitation. (Report, pgs 4-6) (http://behindthebarcode.org.au/)
Online Tool to Analyze Corporate Supply Chains

In March 2012 President Obama called on federal agencies to strengthen efforts to combat human trafficking. Six months later, he issued an executive order (13627) to strengthen protections against human trafficking in government contracts so American taxpayer dollars are not used to support modern slavery.

Because of the complexity of global supply chains, the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons joined forces with Verité, Made in a Free World, and The Aspen Institute to develop a new online resource to help federal contractors and business professionals better understand and visualize the risks that may exist in their supply chains.

This resource, ResponsibleSourcingTool.org (http://www.responsible-sourcingtool.org/), offers an in-depth examination of 11 key sectors and 43 commodities at high risk for human trafficking or trafficking-related activities, such as charging workers recruitment fees or confiscating their identity documents. The site enables users to analyze sector-specific risk factors as well as social, economic, and political risk factors. It also offers a comprehensive set of tools and resources to assist companies in developing systems to prevent human trafficking in supply chains.

If contractors, companies, and suppliers examine their operations at every tier and incorporate best practices to reduce the risk of human trafficking and help rid their supply chains of unscrupulous labor practices, the U.S. will set the global standard for protections against human trafficking in government and corporate supply chains.

Ultimately this online tool will only succeed if federal contractors, companies, procurement officials, advocates, and consumers use it. (Susan Coppedge, Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State.)

Fishing: Excerpt from Joint NGO Letter to President Obama

“We would like to thank you for your commitment to addressing important issues related to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and seafood fraud. The proposed Seafood Import Monitoring Program is a good first step in requiring documentation to show that seafood products were legally caught, but falls short in ensuring that the products do not violate labor and human rights laws, including the treaties to which the United States is a party — the Palermo Protocol, the 1926 Slavery Convention, and the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery.

Legend:
Red: Known Child and Forced Labor
Orange: Known Forced Labor
Yellow: Known Child Labor
Gray: Risk Unknown; due diligence advised.
White: Non-producing country; due diligence advised.
Advocacy

How Much Would It Cost to Improve Wages?

Consumers are often curious to know how much extra it would cost per garment to ensure workers receive a decent wage. This question is more complicated than it first seems. Given the business model of most apparel manufacturers, there are a range of difficulties in passing price increases directly onto workers. However, a number of researchers and groups have attempted to estimate what the additional cost to the consumer would be if it could be achieved.

A study by the Fair Wear Foundation found that the additional amount needed for factory workers to receive a living wage in the outdoor apparel industry would range from less than 1% to 7% of the retail price. As a dollar amount, this translates to between several cents to about US$5.

NPR estimated the total labor cost of t-shirt production in Bangladesh at around 50¢US per t-shirt. To achieve a living wage, then, the additional cost may be as low as 40¢US per t-shirt.

Finally, a recent estimate cited by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) suggests that labor costs account for only 3-7% of the total price that a brand pays to purchase a pair of denim jeans made in Bangladesh, China and Vietnam.

The overall message is clear: labor costs account for only a small portion of the overall cost of a product. While substantial challenges remain for many companies in the implementation of wage increases, it is clear that the payment of a living wage can easily be absorbed by consumers and companies. Moreover, these difficulties must be overcome if apparel production is to become truly ethical.

(http://www.behindthebarcode.org.au/)

Investor Power Can Counter Labor Trafficking

To tackle trafficking at its foundation, companies will need to examine how they produce goods and make changes where necessary. Many are already starting to do so. It’s no easy task — especially since doing so risks making production more expensive and admitting that their suppliers may be tied to child labor.

That’s where investors can come in. By urging executives and board directors to change their practices and more carefully scrutinize their supply chains, investors can use the power of the purse for global good.

It’s time for investors to recognize the crime-fighting power of their portfolios — and help rescue human-trafficking victims.

(http://www.institutionalinvestor.com/blogarticle/3583048/blog/investors-have-real-power-to-end-human-trafficking.html)

Fashion Industry: Grim Facts

- **India** employs 16.8 million workers in the garment sector.
- Monthly minimum wages for the industry are US$78.
- **Bangladesh** employs 4.2 million workers in the garment sector.
- Monthly minimum wages for the industry are US$71.

(Australia Fashion Report, pg. 11)

Samples of Overall Grading

- Abercombie & Fitch C-
- Adidas Group - Reebok A
- Levi Strauss - Levis C+
- L Brands - Victoria’s Secret D+

See the Australia Fashion Report for other rankings:

http://www.behindthebarcode.org.au/
Commitment to Empower

Cambodia is a known center for trafficking, with an estimated 1.65% of the population living in conditions of modern day slavery. Cambodia is also where James Bartle chose to begin building his jeans brand, ‘Outland Denim’, in order to counter the negative effects of human trafficking.

“I’ve always admired those who put their lives on the line to actually rescue the girls out of their precarious situations on the streets and in the brothels and bars,” Bartle said. “I personally couldn’t see myself doing that, but I did want to help in some way.”

Empowering women within communities that are affected by trafficking can be a catalyst for change. Bartle’s company makes premium quality denims by employing young women rescued from or affected by human slavery and sexual exploitation. The effects are two: first, women who have previously fallen victim to the sex trade are given an opportunity to thrive again on their own terms in a supportive environment; second, other women in the community avoid falling victim to the trade thanks to the creation of viable employment opportunities.

Five years in the making and launching to the public in September 2016, Australia’s ‘Outland Denim’ is the result of painstakingly careful nurturing of its sewing room staff, all with the goal of creating a balanced business that gives as much focus to the creation process as to the output.

“At first we started out enabling the seamstresses to use foot-pedal sewing machines in their home villages, and would then have the jeans couriered into the sewing room in Kampong Cham. Each seamstress was responsible for completing a jean from start to finish,” Bartle explained.

But the company had to pivot in order to keep growing. “Quality assurance was obviously an issue, and so was the sense of building a team. So we decided to centralize our operations and set up a state-of-the-art sewing room and production facility.” Now, ‘Outland Denim’ has two offices in Australia and a manufacturing hub in Cambodia.

For each pair of jeans sold, $50(AU) is sent to anti-trafficking agencies. Bartle said, “People want to be able to invest in businesses and brands that are making a positive contribution to the world in some way, and not just inflating the bottom line.” ‘Outland Denim’ is striving to do that.

Human Trafficking: Six Solutions That Work

In a 14-part global series on labor trafficking, The Christian Science Monitor investigated promising and innovative solutions to modern-day slavery. Six solutions that are working are:

1. ‘Fair Food’ Labeling for U.S. Produce
2. Empower Migrant Workers and Trafficking Victims
3. Joint Police-NGO Task Forces
4. Labor Trafficking Lawsuits in U.S. Courts
5. Make Foreign Recruiters Register with the State
6. Supply Chain Transparency

7. How You Can Help:

Read the Series and share what you learn.

Trafficking: In Florida’s tomato fields, a fight for ethical farm labor grows
http://www.csmonitor.com/World/2015/1116/Trafficking-In-Florida-s-tomato-fields-a-fight-for-ethical-farm-labor-grows

Radical idea to help freed slaves: Just give them cash

Trafficking: One woman’s journey from Staten Island slavery to her own boss

Why Seattle is scoring victories against labor traffickers

An epic legal battle pays off for trafficked workers

For Mexico’s migrant workers, a push for cross-border justice

Human trafficking: California keeps a closer eye on recruiters
http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2016/0125/Human-trafficking-California-keeps-a-closer-eye-on-recruiters

California wants to know who’s harvesting your shrimp

Chocolate gets sweeter: How consumer outrage is reducing child labor in Ghana

(How-you-can-help)
Consumer Power

To obtain the Australian Guides to ethical electronics and fashion buying, go to:
http://www.behindthebarcode.org.au

To learn about products affecting the U.S., go to the 2014 Report of the U.S. Dept. of Labor:
https://www.dol.gov/ilab/reports/child-labor/list-of-goods/
The list covers 136 goods, 74 countries and 353 line items.

Consumers of Fish Should:
• Demand that retailers and producers deliver on commitments to ensure that their supply chains are free of illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing, as well as forced or bonded labor.
• Demand detailed information on the steps retailers and producers take to improve their supply chains, including detailed data on successful measures and auditing procedures to enable consumers to monitor the impacts of supply chain measures.
• Use the information provided by retailers to make a conscious decision on which seafood and other products to purchase.
• Reward retailers that commit to effective reporting and undertake all possible measures to clean up their supply chains.
• As a last resort, if retailers cannot or will not provide these guarantees, consumers should cease to purchase their products.

Website: Unseen UK
‘UnseenUK’ tries to capture human trafficking stories from around the globe, as a way to work toward the eradication of modern day slavery wherever it is found, providing survivors with safety, hope, and choice.

See:
http://paper.li/unseenukorg/1288640983

Informative Web Sites:
(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

Environmental Justice Foundation Report
EJF Film:
http://ejfoundation.org/video/thailands-seafood-slaves

U.S. Dept. of State on Human Trafficking
http://blogs.state.gov/tags/human-trafficking
On HT in Fishing
http://www.state.gov/rsa/prs/ps/2016/09/261874.htm

Australian Reports
http://www.behindthebarcode.org.au/

Provenance
https://www.provenance.org/

Understanding Blockchain Technology
http://blockchain-revolution.com/

Environmental Justice Foundation
http://ejfoundation.org/

Stop Trafficking! is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of Stop Trafficking!
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