



# ETI Strategy 2030: Advancing human rights in global supply chains

Today, far too many workers around the world are still denied the basic rights to which we all are entitled. For women, migrants, and many other more vulnerable groups, work is too often precarious, offering neither fair pay nor a route out of poverty. Long hours and unsafe conditions continue to define the reality of many global supply chains. Too many people still face discrimination, harassment and violence – and risk retaliation when they speak up or seek to organise. This is unacceptable and prevents progress towards a vibrant, just and sustainable global economy. But there are also many examples of progress, where workers are able to exercise their rights, and where supply chains are fairer, more resilient and productive as a result.

## Why workers' rights still need urgent action

Every product and service we rely on – from the clothes we wear, to the food we eat and the technology we use – is shaped by the hands, ideas and energy of the people who make them. Their wellbeing is not a cost to be managed but the foundation of responsible, resilient and successful business. When workers' rights are respected, supply chains are stronger, communities thrive and businesses have the trust of consumers, investors and governments alike.

Since our last strategy in 2021, the world of work has changed at speed. The climate emergency, conflict and displacement, economic instability, and the rise of artificial intelligence and automation are reshaping how and where people earn a living. Meanwhile new legal and regulatory frameworks – including the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive and other emerging national legislations – are changing expectations of corporate accountability. Increasingly these developments embed the UN Guiding Principles on Business

and Human Rights (UNGPs) into binding legal frameworks, turning the voluntary human rights due diligence approach that ETI has championed and supported companies with, for nearly 30 years, into mandatory expectations.

## Putting workers at the centre of human rights due diligence

These challenges and opportunities call for a shift in approach. Businesses that put people and their rights at the heart of their operations are more resilient and adaptive. Yet all too often business and human rights programmes are designed and implemented top down – resulting in nominal compliance rather than real, sustainable change, and with little input from either the workers or the small enterprises that form the backbone of many supply chains. By ensuring that worker insights, agency and experience shape how risks are identified and addressed, businesses can advance human rights in a way that drives innovation, competitiveness and trust.

## How ETI will drive systemic change

ETI's 2030 strategy draws on nearly 30 years' of collaboration between companies, trade unions and NGOs to strengthen workers' rights and help companies embed effective human rights due diligence. It reflects our conviction that meaningful progress depends on tackling not just the symptoms of human rights abuse but the root causes too – from poor purchasing practices to lack of freedom of association, gender inequality and forced labour.

This strategy sets out how we will work with our members and partners to embed human rights at the heart of business, strengthen due diligence and accountability, and amplify workers' voices as we navigate the transformations ahead. We will ensure that our efforts are more practical, clear and impactful than ever.

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is the leading alliance of businesses, NGOs and trade unions working together to advance human rights in global supply chains through collective action, advocacy and accountability. As a tripartite membership organisation, we provide a trusted, practical space for collaboration to strengthen working conditions, address human rights abuses and support resilient, responsible business practices.



**Vision:** A world of work where everyone's human rights are protected and respected.



**Mission:** To advance human rights in global supply chains through collaboration between businesses, trade unions and NGOs. We work to address systemic barriers, strengthen respect for human rights and drive lasting change.



# PILLAR 1



## OUR GOAL

ETI supports company members to protect workers across global supply chains by strengthening how they identify, prevent and address human rights risks.

# Effective human rights due diligence (HRDD)

## OUTCOME 1

**Effective human rights due diligence is embedded in company member supply chains**

We will deliver this by:

1. Offering practical tools, frameworks and training to help company members embed effective HRDD and reduce risks in their supply chains.
2. Supporting company members to advance responsible purchasing, gender equity, just transitions for workers, forced labour, and authentic engagement with workers and communities.
3. Delivering clear and up-to-date ETI Base Code guidance and tools, founded on ILO conventions, so companies can act confidently on key issues.
4. Bringing members together by sector to share challenges, gain insights and collaborate on solutions, including for new challenges such as the impact of AI on supply chains.
5. Making sure ETI's frameworks reflect the latest global and regional human rights legislation so that members can lead the way on effective HRDD.

## OUTCOME 2

**Strengthened transparency and accountability allows company members to demonstrate credible progress on salient risks**

We will deliver this by:

1. Supporting company members to adopt ETI's Corporate Transparency Framework and report meaningfully on key issues facing workers.
2. Helping company members to deepen their transparency reporting and strengthen disclosure practices.
3. Working collaboratively with NGO and trade union members to help company members make credible progress and uphold accountability.



### OUTCOME 3

#### Company members are going beyond compliance, meeting and exceeding mandatory human rights due diligence (mHRDD) requirements

We will deliver this by:

1. Providing clear guidance on how ETI membership and resources support compliance with global, regional and national legislation.
2. Offering updated tools and guidance to support effective implementation and reporting.
3. Ensuring that company members employing compliance approaches use these as a foundation for addressing root causes and embedding respect in their supply chains, not as an end in themselves.
4. Supporting suppliers to understand new mandatory requirements through resources and case studies, including engagement with trade unions and NGOs.

### OUTCOME 4

#### Company members are integrating meaningful stakeholder engagement (MSE) into HRDD systems

We will deliver this by:

1. Delivering collaborative projects that address systemic risks in global supply chains through MSE, drawing on ETI's tripartite expertise and collaboration.
2. Integrating MSE frameworks and technical tools into ETI's HRDD Progression Framework, to help company members embed effective engagement at every stage of due diligence.
3. Expanding ETI's NGO and trade union caucuses in key sourcing regions, building an expert global network to support enhanced HRDD, MSE and crisis response.
4. Championing MSE in advocacy for new legislation – both in the UK and internationally – so that laws deliver tangible benefits for workers and other rightsholders.



## PILLAR 2



### OUR GOAL

ETI enables company members to support independent worker representation, ensuring workers have a real voice in decisions that affect their rights and livelihoods.

## Worker representation and freedom of association

### OUTCOME 1

**Company members are actively promoting workers' freedom of association across their supply chains**

We will deliver this by:

1. Building awareness and understanding among company members of freedom of association and the critical link between collective bargaining and living wages.
2. Launching a member working group that guides companies through a structured pathway to promote freedom of association and collective bargaining.
3. Co-developing a programme of industrial relations training with trade unions to help strengthen capacity among companies and suppliers.

### OUTCOME 2

**Effective approaches to representing marginalised workers, including in non-unionised supply chains, are developed by ETI and adopted by companies**

We will deliver this by:

1. Refining ETI's approach to representation for marginalised and underrepresented workers to expand opportunities for organising and access to formal unionisation.
2. Delivering funded initiatives focused on improving representation of marginalised workers in deeper tiers of supply chains.
3. Enabling collective efforts to drive better solutions to genuine worker representation in non-unionised environments.

### OUTCOME 3

**Company members explore credible worker-centred approaches, reducing reliance on certification and audits**

We will deliver this by:

1. Challenging overreliance on audits and certification by researching and validating credible, worker-informed alternatives.
2. Highlighting case studies that show how worker-centred approaches improve HRDD outcomes.
3. Developing partnerships that expand ETI's capacity to advance worker-informed practices.
4. Sharing good practice from social dialogue initiatives in Bangladesh and elsewhere and adapting lessons learned to other key sourcing countries.

# PILLAR 3



## OUR GOAL

ETI fosters collaboration to address systemic human rights challenges, with a focus on forced labour, gender equity, worker representation and just transitions (climate change).

# Collective action for systemic change

## OUTCOME 1

**ETI members will take collective action on priority issues and demonstrate practical impact**

We will deliver this by:

1. Convening business, NGO and trade unions to address systemic human rights issues in our prioritised focus areas.
2. Developing practical and scalable initiatives for collective action, with clear expectations and accountability mechanisms.
3. Strengthening ETI's presence in key sourcing countries and supporting our existing teams in Bangladesh and India to lead local tripartite action.
4. Expanding ETI's global partnerships and reach (including in Asia and Africa) to help members embed effective HRDD across their global supply chains.
5. Convening a tripartite China working group, supporting members to address existing and emerging labour rights issues.

## OUTCOME 2

**ETI helps to shape effective human rights legislation, international frameworks and global standards**

We will deliver this by:

1. Mobilising members to advocate for legislation such as mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD) that drives real progress on systemic issues.
2. Monitoring global legislative and policy developments, identifying where collective action is needed (eg, EU Forced Labour Regulation, UK Employment Rights Bill) and supporting company members with implementation that goes beyond compliance.
3. Collaborating with multilateral organisations such as the ILO and the OECD to amplify their standards and promote good practice.



# PILLAR 4



## OUR GOAL

ETI's tripartite membership responds effectively to supply chain crises and ETI Base Code violations, protecting workers' rights and ensuring appropriate remediation.

# Crisis preparedness, response and remediation

## OUTCOME 1

**ETI enables effective action to address ETI Base Code violations, in line with the UNGPs**

We will deliver this by:

1. Strengthening ETI's procedures for investigating and addressing alleged breaches of the ETI Base Code.
2. Exploring transparency and reporting requirements for ETI Base Code violations.
3. Enhancing internal processes to ensure workers involved in violations of the ETI Base Code are protected.
5. Growing our ability to design and fund scalable programmes that address systemic issues identified through action to address ETI Base Code violations.

## OUTCOME 2

**Company members take effective and proportionate action in response to global crises, addressing the impacts on workers in supply chains.**

We will deliver this by:

1. Bringing together members during global crises, sharing intelligence from local companies, trade unions and NGOs, and providing guidance on responsible action.
2. Employing ETI's crisis management process to address supply chain impacts from conflict, disasters, economic instability and civil unrest.
3. Publishing updates to demonstrate company member action taken in response to crises affecting member supply chains.

## OUTCOME 3

**Company members strengthen their preparedness to respond to future crises and violations**

We will deliver this by:

1. Developing member training on crisis response and ETI Base Code violation procedures.
2. Maintaining relationships with other multi-stakeholder initiatives and external mechanisms to broaden response capacity.
3. Creating standardised guidance to enable faster initial action by our members.
4. Maintaining a global contact network of unions, NGOs and associates for efficient intelligence and mediation.

# Growth Strategy

## GOAL

**ETI grows its tripartite membership, influence and visibility, increasing its impact and global leadership on business and human rights.**

## OUTCOME 1

**ETI expands and diversifies its membership to drive greater influence and impact by:**

1. Growing our tripartite membership to strengthen collective impact.
2. Expanding training and e-learning to support members and partners globally.
3. Growing into new sectors where the ETI approach can drive industry progress on addressing human rights in those supply chains.

## OUTCOME 2

**ETI enhances its reputation as a global leader in business and human rights by:**

1. Developing and delivering proactive advocacy and communications.
2. Raising ETI's profile through effective branding and targeted outreach.
3. Strengthening relationships with key governments and policymakers.
4. Growing a network of donors, investors and multi-stakeholder allies.
5. Defining the role of credible MSIs under EU CSDDD and positioning ETI's leadership in this space.



# For human rights, for better business



ETI is the leading alliance of businesses, NGOs and trade unions working together to advance human rights in global supply chains.

Our vision is a world of work where everyone's human rights are protected and respected.

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