



Arisa Newsletter 4, October 2019

Follow Arisa on social media

Arisa is active on social media. Under the name 'Arisa Foundation' we share messages about human rights in South Asia, especially in relation to the global supply chains of garment and textile, natural stone and seed production. Follow us on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/arisafoundation/>) and LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/arisa-foundation/>)!

With this newsletter, Arisa wants to keep you specifically informed about our own activities.

Stop Child Labour coalition presents final report of *Getting Down to Business project* (2017-19)

Arisa is member of the Stop Child Labour coalition (SCL). SCL implemented the programme *Getting down to Business – Accelerating joint action towards a child labour free world* with funding from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from 2017 till 2019. The programme focussed on three countries: India, Mali and Uganda and a number of sectors: gold, natural stone, leather/shoes, textile/garment, vegetable seeds and coffee. The programme promoted the concept of child labour free zones linked to a sector-based approach of companies and CSR initiatives. By doing so, thousands of children made the transition from work to school. The final report shares experiences and results over the past two year. Some main results of the programme include:



• over twenty companies have improved their policies and practices towards eliminating child labour and improving workers' rights;

- the SCL approach has been actively promoted in at least four ICSR sector covenants;
- seventeen concrete agreements have been made with companies and CSR initiatives on their engagement in area based projects.

Arisa mainly focused on the natural stone and seeds sectors and actively contributed to lobbying activities in the Netherlands and Europe. Lessons learnt will be taken into account to strengthen action in our new projects. By doing so, we hope to motivate and inspire more companies and other stakeholders to take responsibility and join the fight against child labour.

You will find more information in the final report: <https://stopchildlabour.org/stop-child-labour-presents-the-final-report-of-the-getting-down-to-business-2017-2019-project/>.

Kick-off program *Work: No Child's Business* in India

In alliance with Stop Child Labour, Save the Children and UNICEF, Arisa started a new programme from July 1st 2019. Efforts will be made over the next five years to combat child labour in India, Vietnam, Mali, Uganda, Jordan and Ivory Coast. Funding comes from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Arisa is involved in the program in India, where local organisations in three regions (Bihar, Rajasthan and NCR/Delhi) will set up activities. From Monday 23 to Friday 27 September 2019, the program's kick-off meeting took place in Patna, the capital of the state of Bihar. With more than 30 participants, we worked for five days on further acquaintance, building trust and exchange of experiences and ideas.

On the second day projects of Save the Children Bihar, Nav Jagriti and MV Foundation were visited, which clearly show the local approach at community level that is needed to successfully tackle child labour. We also took a first step towards cooperation and coordination of everyone's activities in the various regions, to achieve optimum utilisation of the expertise of all participating organisations! Follow-up agreements are planned in the coming months to make the plans for 2020 more concrete.



TruStone Initiative into force

International corporate responsibility in the natural stone sector entered a new phase: the TruStone Initiative was officially launched on 1 October 2019.

On 13 May 2019, Arisa and other parties, together with Minister Kaag for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and companies from the natural stone sector, showed their commitment to conduct business responsibly following the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Since the launch of the initiative, 23 companies and nearly 30 procuring authorities such as municipalities, have joined TruStone. This means that a large part of the volume of natural stone used in the Netherlands and Flanders is covered by the Initiative. Discussions with several companies and municipalities to join the initiative are currently in an advanced stage.



The sector will start mapping the risks in their supply chain and to cooperate with all parties to tackle problems such as child labour, forced labour and occupational safety and health.

For more information on the TruStone Initiative, visit:
<https://www.imvoconvenanten.nl/en/trustone>.

What do you pay attention to when buying natural stone products?

Whether it concerns your bathroom, kitchen or terrace or the streets and squares you walk on: we use natural stone everywhere. It looks beautiful, but what many people do not know is that the working conditions in the supply chain are tough. And that children also work in the quarries and in the households, while they should go to school. Where does your natural stone come from and who made it?

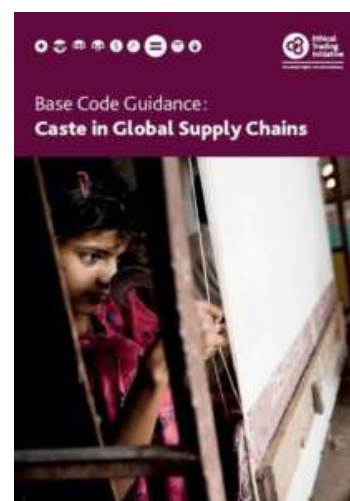


Bram Callewier from Stoneasy and Lizette Vosman from Arisa explain what you can do when buying natural stone in an article from *hetkanWEL* (Oct 15, 2019): <https://translate.google.nl/translate?sl=nl&tl=en&u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.hetkanwel.nl%2F2019%2F10%2F15%2Fwaar-let-je-op-bij-het-kopen-van-natuursteen%2F>.

New report on caste discrimination in the supply chains of companies

Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), an alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs worldwide defending workers' rights, recently published a new guidance for companies in collaboration with the Dalit Solidarity Network UK.

Caste in global supply chains outlines four steps businesses can take to tackle caste in their supply chains, in order to comply with their human rights obligations and the UK modern slavery legislation. Caste-affected countries are home to over half of those working in slavery and child labour in the world. Experts agree that over 80 per cent of those in bonded labour or child labour in India, Nepal or Pakistan are either Dalits (lowest castes) or from tribal communities. Forced and bonded labour as well as child labour, involving Dalits, has been documented across sectors including in garment, leather, agriculture, construction, carpet weaving, natural stone and minerals.



Read more about this report on the website of the International Dalit Solidarity Network: <https://idsn.org/no-more-silence-companies-must-address-caste-in-their-global-supply-chains/>. On this site you can also download the report.

Severe violation of labour rights of Dalit women in leather industry

A new report by *Homeworkers Worldwide* finds Dalit women working in global leather supply chains being subject to discrimination, unsafe work, low wages and labour rights abuses, including sexual harassment.

The report, *Due diligence in Tamil Nadu leather footwear manufacture*, identifies caste and gender discrimination as one of the root causes of worker vulnerability and rights abuses in the sector and calls on brands to address the issue directly with their suppliers.



Working with animal hides is historically an occupation assigned to the lowest castes in India, as it is considered 'impure' and 'polluting'. The report shows that it is mainly Dalit and Muslim women who are engaged in this work.

For more information about the report, visit <https://idsn.org/dalit-women-producing-leather-footwear-for-global-brands-suffer-serious-labour-rights-abuses/>.

Support the work of Arisa Foundation!

Arisa Foundation is financially supported by institutional donors and a group of individuals who are well-disposed to Arisa's work. We attach great importance to the financial support of those who appreciate our work, because it indicates that there are many people who also consider the goals we are committed to as important. Every gift to Arisa - no matter how big or small - is very welcome!

Transfer your donation to bank account NL 81 TRIO 037 931 3200 of Arisa Foundation in Utrecht, with specification "Donation". BIC-code is TRIONL2U.