

KNOWTHECHAIN | QUESTIONS REGARDING FORCED LABOUR RISKS IN YOUR COMPANY'S LEATHER SUPPLY CHAIN

In countries including but not limited to Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, leather processing is characterised by hazardous and poor working conditions, which may be early indicators or eventually lead to forced labour.¹ In countries including India and China forced labour risks have been documented. Through this questionnaire, KnowTheChain would like to get a better understanding of how your company is addressing risks related to forced labour specifically in its leather supply chain.

In answering these questions, please indicate where your company's policies or practices specifically apply to cattle sourcing, leather processing or leather goods manufacturing countries at risk of forced labour and human trafficking such as **Brazil, China and India**² or other countries where you might have identified forced labour risks.

Traceability:

1. Leather goods manufacturing:
 - a. In which countries does your company and/or your suppliers manufacture leather goods (option to indicate percentage or volume of supply from each country)?
 - b. What are the names and addresses of your company's and/or your suppliers' leather goods manufacturers? Please indicate the nature of your relationship to them, e.g. direct owned or purchasing only (option to indicate workforce data you deem relevant, such as workforce composition (e.g. percentage of informal/migrant/female workforce) or rate of unionisation). What are the names of the persons legally responsible for the production facilities?
2. Leather processing / tanneries:
 - a. In which countries does your company and/or your suppliers process and produce leather?
 - b. What are the names and addresses of your company's and/or your suppliers' tanneries? Please indicate the nature of your relationship to them, e.g. direct owned or purchasing only (option to indicate workforce data you deem relevant, such as workforce composition (e.g. percentage of informal/migrant/female workforce) or rate of unionisation). What are the names of the persons legally responsible for the production facilities?

Purchasing practices:

3. How does your company use its leverage to influence its leather supply chain with regards to labour practices and/or reward suppliers with good labour practices?
4. How does your company ensure its labour standards are cascaded down its leather supply chain beyond tier 1 suppliers?

Worker voice:

¹ Associated Press (2017) - [Report examines grim Bangladesh leather trade, links to West](#); India Committee of the Netherlands (2017) - [Do leather workers matter?](#); Undark (2017) - [Skin Deep: Feeding the Global Lust for Leather](#); SOMO (2016) - [Hell-bent for leather. Labour conditions in the leather industry in Pakistan](#); Human Rights Watch (2012) - [Toxic tanneries](#).

² The [US Department of Labor](#) identified risk of forced labour in the cattle industry in Brazil, the leather industry in China, as well as related to sourcing leather goods / accessories from India.

5. Grievance mechanisms: Does your company ensure workers in its leather supply chain have access to grievance mechanisms? If yes, please explain what mechanisms are available for workers in both owned and third party leather goods production facilities and tanneries. Please also explain how your company ensures those mechanisms fulfil the [effectiveness criteria under the UN Guiding Principles for Business & Human Rights](#), e.g., they are trusted and used by workers.
6. Worker engagement and empowerment: How does your company ensure that workers in its leather supply chain know about, and can exercise their rights (e.g. freedom of association or, where there are regulatory constraints for freedom of association, alternative means of organising)?

Monitoring / certification:

7. Do you participate in sustainable leather sourcing / certification?
8. If yes, how does the verification initiative/certification address labour rights, and how does your company ensure labour standards are adequately covered?

Stakeholder engagement:

9. Does your company actively participate in one or more multi-stakeholder or industry initiatives focused on forced labour and human trafficking or work with peer companies to address risk in high risk regions/clusters of tanneries or manufacturers?
10. If so, please specify who you work with and how you address forced labour risk related to leather sourcing.

Additional information

Please provide any additional information regarding how your company addresses forced labour risks in its leather supply chain (e.g. related to risk assessment and due diligence, supplier training, recruitment) or regarding your company's supply chain structure which you think is relevant.

Background information:

This questionnaire has been sent to the following companies:

- Footwear companies: Belle International, adidas, Nike, Kering (Puma), VF (Timberland)
- Luxury brands: Hugo Boss, Prada, Kering (Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Brioni, Gucci, Saint Laurent Paris, etc.), Ralph Lauren, PVH (Tommy Hilfiger, Michael Kors, Calvin Klein)

Please note your response will be made public on the [Business & Human Rights Resource Centre website](#). In addition, KnowTheChain will publish a short analysis to highlight better practices, as well as companies and areas where disclosure is limited. For an indication of what KnowTheChain regards as better practices, please review the [methodology](#) and the [findings report](#) of [KnowTheChain's apparel & footwear benchmark](#).