

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Bangladesh

Adopting CSR is your own responsibility. But you may be eligible for government support. For instance if you are involved in the Bangladeshi textile industry.

The Netherlands is supporting the training of 200 new labour inspectors in Bangladesh, since they will be responsible for ensuring good working conditions in textile factories there.

Local working conditions are of course the primary responsibility of the Bangladeshi government. But clothing companies also have a responsibility in this area. They should discuss factory working conditions with suppliers. However, companies may be thwarted in their efforts by poorly functioning authorities. Labour inspectors, for instance, are often ill-equipped to monitor factories.

By helping train labour inspectors, the Dutch government helps both the Bangladeshi government and the companies that buy clothing from local factories. Civil society organisations also play an important role: they know a lot about the problems in Bangladesh and have good ideas about how these can be resolved.

The textile industry is a key sector for Bangladesh in terms of employment and income. Wages in Bangladesh are low – around 37 dollars a month – which draws buyers and fashion brands to the country. After China, Bangladesh is the largest exporter of clothing to Europe and the United States. That is good for the Bangladeshi economy, but not everyone benefits. Working conditions in the clothing factories are often poor.