

Towards Forced Labour Free Clothes:

A Multi-Country Civil Society Initiative (2025-2028)

Co-funded by the European Union under NDICI – Global Europe: Thematic programme on Human Rights and Democracy – Lot 3 Combatting forced labour.



WHO ARE WE

This Action is implemented by a consortium of six organisations based in Asia, Latin America and Europe. All of them are highly engaged and experienced on labour rights of migrant workers in the garment sector. Romero Initiative (CIR), the lead applicant, works together with Free Trade Zone (FTZ, Sri Lanka), the Migrant

Assistance Programm Foundation (MAP, Thailand), the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF, Bangladesh), Öz İplik İş (Turkey) and Reporter Brasil (RB, Brazil) towards the production and export of forced labour free clothes to Europe along.

WHAT IT IS ABOUT

The problem: Millions of domestic, cross-bordering and international migrant workers and refugees are exposed to modern slavery conditions and forced labour practices in the garment sector. This implies practices related to abuse of vulnerability, deception, restriction of movement, isolation, physical and sexual violence, intimidation and threats, retention of identity documents, withholding of wages, debt bondage, abusive working and living conditions and excessive overtime. Consumers and citizens in the Global South and Europe are often unaware that their clothing may be produced through forced labour.

The opportunity: The EU Forced Labour Regulation creates a legal framework banning the sale or export of products made with forced labour in the European Union's single market. It applies to all goods – whether imported or produced within the EU – and covers forced labour at any stage of production, extraction, manufacture or processing. The regulation

enters into force upon publication and will be fully applicable from 14 December 2027.

The regulation has the potential to significantly reduce global forced labour by leveraging the EU's market power. It forces companies to improve transparency and human rights due diligence in their supply chains, incentivising them to eliminate exploitative practices to retain market access. It also strengthens global norms against forced labour and may encourage other jurisdictions to adopt similar measures, advancing human rights and ethical business conduct worldwide.

The objective: To reduce the risk of forced labour for migrant workers through improved multi-country engagement of civil society actors (CSA) and social partners within the supply chain of clothes to the EU. Thus, to make this EU regulation work, forced labour practices in the garment sector must be prevented, monitored and addressed in a reliable and evidence-based way.

THE SOLUTION

To make these changes happen, our Action will focus on three outcomes:

1. Stronger civil society actors able to protect labour rights, promote decent work through meaningful and efficient participation in social dialogue, and target interested public officials, labour inspectors or social partners to effectively implement related EU and ILO Conventions.
2. A more active, informed, engaged and empowered migrant workforce, supported by civil society associations in the monitoring and reporting of cases of forced labour and in the enforcement of the necessary mitigation measures to fight it.
3. Fewer abusive and fraudulent labour practices in the garment industry against migrant workers particularly women workers and homeworkers including relatives through the presentation of better evidenced cases of abuse.

HOW

Awareness-Raising about forced labour in the garment sector: Research about prevalence of forced labour in target countries, actors and risk mappings provide evidence and an informed understanding of forced labour forms and their impact on refugees and migrant workers. On this foundation, the partners will conduct awareness programs to the employees' branch union-wise, public forums and migrant workers focusing on female employees and women-headed families.

Enhancing participation of migrant workers in the monitoring and reporting of forced labour: Based on the collection and multi-country exchange of best practice monitoring, interventions and measures of forced labour in the garment sector, training on worker-led monitoring and participation in social dialogue, a multi-country worker-led-monitoring and reporting system will be developed.

Empowering migrant workers and building trust: Peer-to-peer trainings at workplace on labour rights including gender-based violence, grass-root organizing of migrant workers, the development of women's leadership, legal trainings, support and advocacy for victims of forced labour cases will create a strong foundation to develop and implement a worker-led monitoring system of labour and human rights violations.

Advocating for stronger policies and improved implementation at local, national, multi-country, and EU levels: this includes lobby letters and meetings, the development of policy proposals, a multi-country expert conference, and roundtables at various levels, all aimed at promoting the worker-led monitoring system.

WITH WHOM

Target Groups:

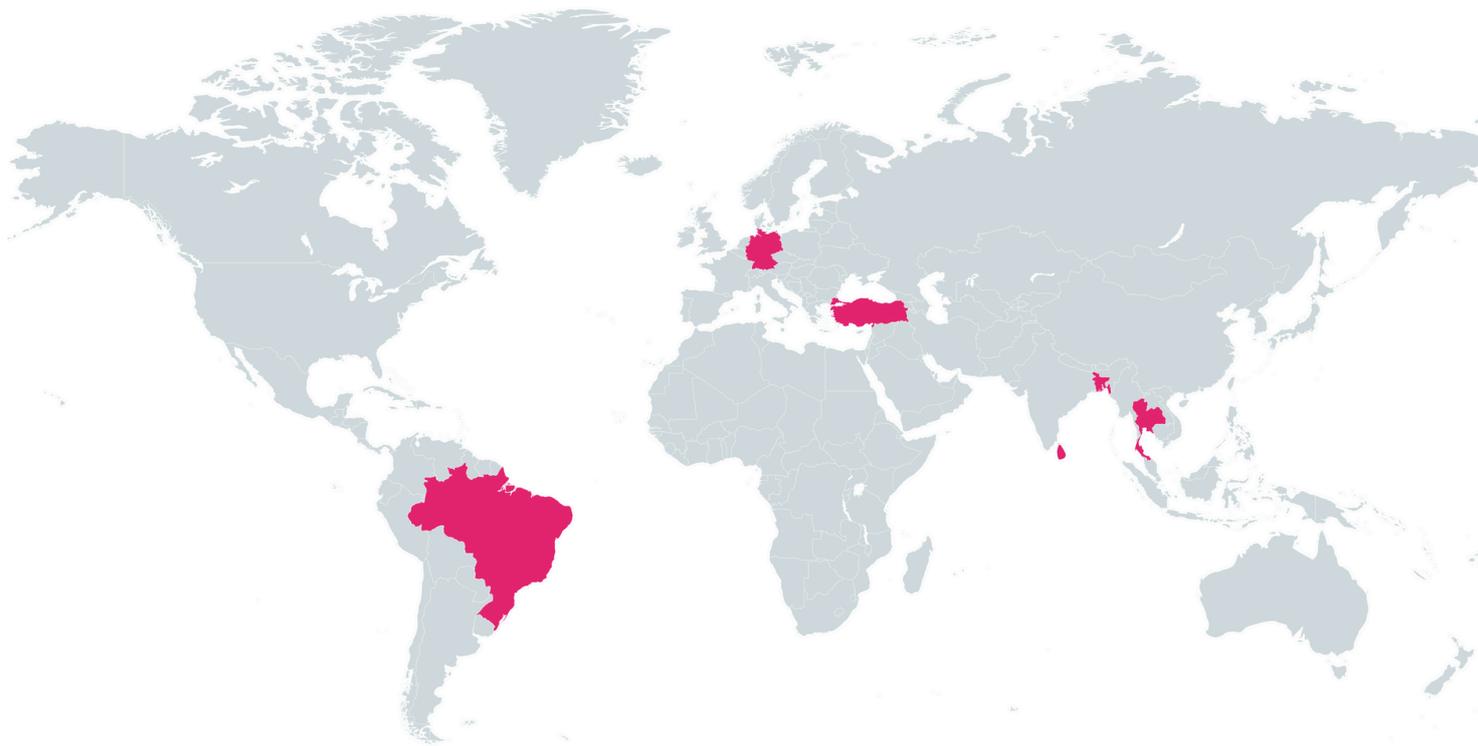
- Civil Society Associations, including unions, migrant self-organizations and NGOs
- Migrant and refugee workers from the garment sector
- Political and economic decision makers

Final Beneficiaries:

- Other migrants and refugees working in the garment sector from the Global South
- Consumers and citizens from the Global South and Europe

WHERE

Consortium members from: Bangladesh, Brazil, Germany, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey



WHEN

June 2025 to May 2028 (36 months)

HOW MUCH

The total budget of the Action over 3 years is 2.762.284 €, of which 1.998.349 € will go directly to our partners for implementation in the Global South.



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