

Response from Sedex to Human Rights Watch letter of 15 March 2023

Appendix I: Summary of Information and Questions

I. Tracking members' measures "beyond social audits" on health and safety

We appreciate that Sedex's June 2021 Apparel Manufacturing Sedex Insights Report includes "Recommendations for Businesses," which among other things, encourages them to "support and sign up to a new Accord on fire and building safety."⁶

Sedex is a services provider. Brands and other buyer companies use Sedex to understand their supply chains and assess their suppliers and supplier sites, as part of their social compliance and human rights due diligence programmes. They join Sedex as members to access our platform, tools, and services.

Ahead of answering these questions, we'd like to clarify that while Sedex makes recommendations to our buyer customers aligned with the UNGPs, we do not set requirements or have regulatory powers over our members. This means that while we encourage buyer members to follow best practice and adopt a human rights due diligence approach, we do not assess buyer members on whether they do this or sanction them if they do not.

Our tools are designed to support buyers to assess and understand their supply chain sustainability risks. They are built on international best practice frameworks such as the UNGPs, and we provide guidance to support our members in operating in line with these principles.

Suppliers are assessed through our Radar risk assessment tool, Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) and audit tool SMETA. SMETA does include requirements for improvements to suppliers by enabling auditors to note down non-compliance and set timelines for remediation, which suppliers then work to address. Enforcement and any sanctions on suppliers are managed by buyers – and we again recommend buyers adopt a best practice approach, aligned with the UNGPs and putting worker welfare at the centre of remedial activities.

Please note that data on Sedex's platform is owned by our members, so while we are able to share some aggregated data, our terms and conditions prevent us from sharing specific information on any individual member.

1. What features does Sedex have on its platform to track members' use of the Accord?

We do not track buyer membership of the Accords but suppliers can provide information on whether they have had an Accord assessment.

Our Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) currently includes the following question: "Are you certified by or do you have signed agreement/membership to any of the below? Please select all that apply" for which one of the options is the Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety.

To capture this information more accurately (as the Accords are not a certification), we will be updating our SAQ to replace this question with a field for sites to declare when they were last audited and the name of the audit. This is where they would report that they have been audited under the Accords.

2. How many factories (across all sectors) participating in SMETA audits are in Bangladesh and Pakistan? How many of these are from the garments, footwear and textile sector?

Sites across all sectors

- *There is a total of 2,800+ suppliers on the Sedex platform in Bangladesh that have had a SMETA audit conducted at their site between 1 April 2021 and 11 April 2023.*
- *There is a total of 1,400+ suppliers in Pakistan that have had a SMETA audit conducted at their site between 1 April 2021 and 11 April 2023.*

Sites in garments, footwear and textile sectors¹.

- *In Bangladesh, 1,400+ sites in this sector have had a SMETA audit/audits between 1 April 2021 and 12 April 2023.*
- *In Pakistan, 690+ sites have had SMETA audits between 1 April 2021 and 12 April 2023.*

3. How many Sedex member brands (in the sectors covered by the Accord) source from Bangladesh but have yet to commit to the Accord?

Many of our brand members are actively working with their factories in Bangladesh and Pakistan to improve worker safety, welfare, and working conditions using a variety of assessment and improvement programmes, such as the Accords. While we encourage our members to join the Accords, we do not collect and manage data on whether our buyer members are signatories of the Accords or any other initiative, programme etc.

However, we are able to compare our buyer member list against the Accord signatory list². Using this method we can see that we have at least 19 buyer members that are signatories of the Bangladesh Accord, with 600+ supplier sites covered under the Accord between them³. In Pakistan, we have at least 5 buyer members that are signatories of the Pakistan Accord covering 150+ supplier sites⁴.

¹ Sedex does not use the exact category of "garments, footwear and textiles" so, to answer this question, we have pulled data from all suppliers that have listed "apparel", "textile" or "footwear" in their primary site activity or product area. Please note this is self-reported information/self-identification by suppliers.

² We used the Clean Clothes Campaign Brand Tracker, here: [Which brands have signed the safety Accord? — Clean Clothes Campaign](#)

³ We pulled data on the sites in Bangladesh linked to Accord members. Where there were multiple brand departments listed (e.g. electronics, homeware etc) we only included suppliers listed against the brand departments to do with garments, textiles and footwear.

⁴ Method as above, but for sites in Pakistan.

- 4. How many Sedex member brands (in the sectors covered by the Accord) source from Pakistan but have yet to commit to the Accord.**

As above.

- 5. What consequences, if any, including and up to a withdrawal of Sedex membership, can Sedex members face, if they disregard Sedex's recommendation that they support and participate in the International Accord?**

We recommend buyer members support and participate in the Accords but we do not assess whether buyer members are Accord signatories. Sedex does not set requirements for, or sanction, our buyer members for the content of their due diligence programmes, including participation in industry initiatives.

- 6. Will Sedex periodically publish (such as annually) an update of which of its members are signing the Accord to go beyond social audits and those that are not? If yes, when is the public reporting expected to commence?**

We do not assess or publish information on our buyer members' programmes, including participation of the Accords.

We are aware that our members use a variety of risk analysis, site assessment, monitoring, grievance mechanism and reporting tools, including but not limited to Sedex's solutions and the Accords, to build supply chain human rights due diligence programmes that go beyond social auditing.

[ENDS]