

WHAT IS Worker-driven Social Responsibility?

The Problem

Corporations consolidating power and control
Suppliers increasingly squeezed in supply chains
Working people without effective protections
Lack of effective enforcement, remedy for abuses
Human rights abuses are treated as a PR problem

Our Solution

Workers' organizations lead programs meant to benefit them
Brands sign legally binding, enforceable agreements
Corporations fund needed improvements
Suppliers face timely consequences when rights are violated
Workers know their rights & are supported by independent audits
Workers see concrete, measurable change in their workplaces

Worker-driven Social Responsibility recognizes that:

- Low pay, dangerous conditions, & **human rights abuses are systemic problems**
- Global **supply chains incentivize a race to the bottom** for wages & working conditions
- Government **enforcement bodies are often under-resourced**
- Millions of **workers are excluded** from union protections, including U.S. farmworkers
- **Workers are rights-holders**, not just another stakeholder in a program
- Organized **workers are the best defenders of their own rights**

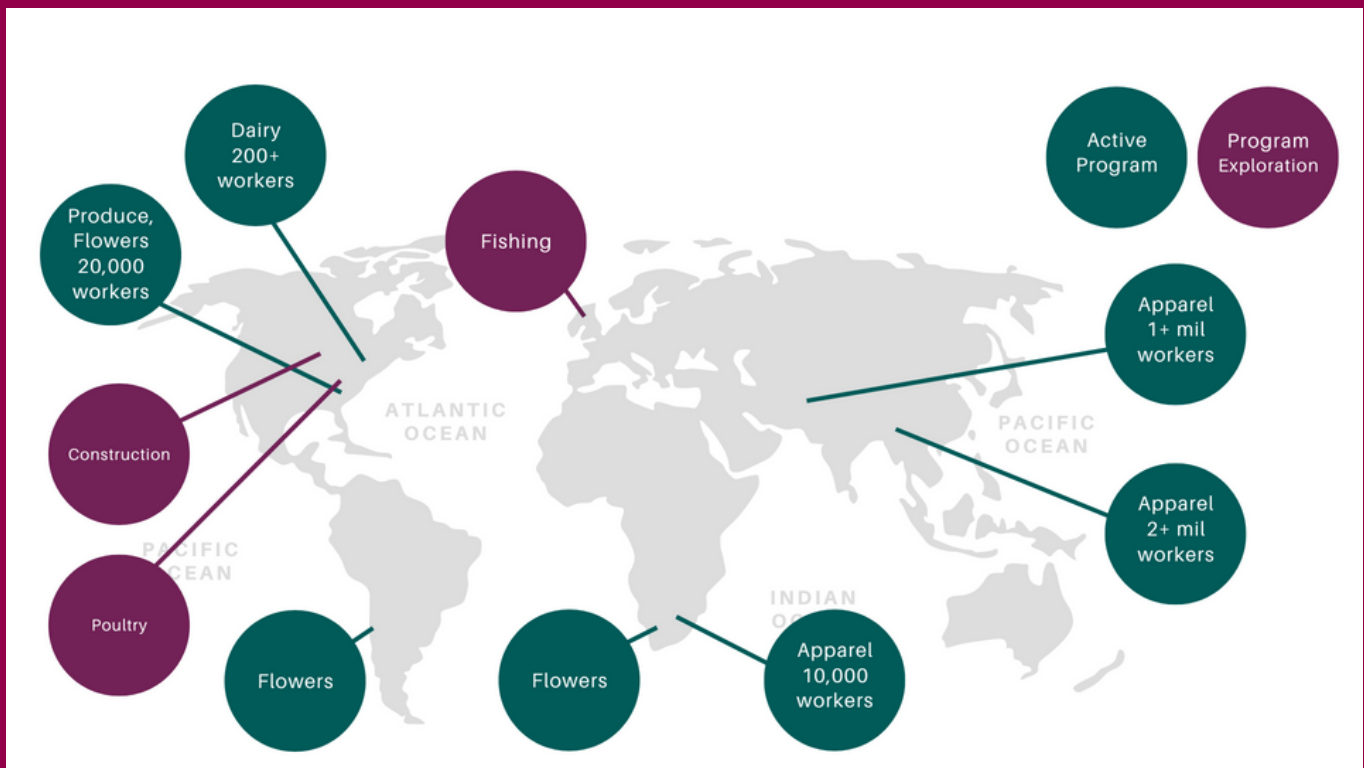
Worker-driven Social Responsibility puts workers at the center of creating & enforcing programs to **protect their own rights**.

Corporate Social Responsibility puts corporate reputations at the center when the consequences of their purchasing practices come to light.

Worker-driven Social Responsibility WORKS

A decade-long record of addressing entrenched human rights abuses:

- The Coalition of Immokalee Workers' **Fair Food Program** preventing forced labor on participating farms in the U.S. and Chile.
- The **International Safety Accord** ensuring workplace safety for millions of garment workers in Bangladesh, now expanding globally as the International Accord for Health and Safety in the Textile and Garment Industry.
- The **Milk with Dignity** program improving working conditions for dairy farmworkers in the Northeastern US.
- The **Gender Justice in Lesotho Apparel** agreement focused on addressing gender-based violence faced by people in garment manufacturing.



Every Worker-Driven Social Responsibility program is based on SIX PRINCIPLES

WITHOUT THESE, IT'S NOT WORKER-DRIVEN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY!

- ✓ Labor Rights Initiatives Must Be Worker-Driven
- ✓ Obligations for Global Corporations Must Be Binding and Enforceable
- ✓ Buyers Must Afford Suppliers the Financial Incentive and Capacity to Comply
- ✓ Consequences for Non-Compliant Suppliers Must Be Mandatory
- ✓ Gains for Workers Must be Measurable and Timely
- ✓ Verification of Workplace Compliance Must Be Rigorous and Independent

SUCCESS backed by research



Worker-Driven Social Responsibility model is displacing MSIs as the “**gold standard**” for **protecting human rights**, concludes the decade-long longitudinal study of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives (MSIs), including third party certifications and other Corporate Social Responsibility programs published by Harvard Law Clinic’s MSI Integrity Institute in their report [Not Fit for Purpose](#).

Worker-driven Social Responsibility is noted as **a model for companies to meet UN Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) 8 (Decent work and Economic Growth) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities). “In particular, SDG-aligned companies participate in and support worker-driven monitoring initiatives, such as the Fair Food Program” – Columbia University Center on Sustainable Investment, [Handbook for SDG-Aligned Food Companies](#).



“In summary, **WSR models** overcome the shortcomings of alternative approaches in **protecting workers’ basic dignity and human rights to fair working conditions, health, and safety.**” – [statement](#) from leading U.S. Human Rights organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union, Human Rights Watch, and the Columbia Law School Human Rights Clinic.



“**Corporations should join and collaborate towards developing worker-driven social responsibility programs**” finds research from ReStructure Lab, a collaboration of leading human rights researchers from Stanford, Yale, and other universities. The report [Social Auditing and Ethical Certification](#) further notes that, “social auditing and ethical certification systems have been found to sideline workers, unions, and local communities, providing unclear benefits for suppliers and producers while increasing their costs in order to comply ...Ultimately, [**social auditing and ethical certification systems**] **create an illusion of progress** that fuels complacency and displaces effective solutions to address forced labour in supply chains.”



The Fair Food Program (FFP) was dubbed an “**international benchmark**” to address human trafficking by the [UN Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking](#).



LEARN MORE: WSR-Network.org