



## WALMART'S WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

### WOMEN IN FACTORIES TRAINING PROGRAM

*Around the world, Walmart leverages its value chain to help our customers save money and live better while addressing the big issues that matter to us all — sustainability, hunger relief, healthier foods and empowering women. In 2011, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation launched our global Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) initiative. This five-year initiative aims to help improve the lives of women around the world.*

#### Why Women's Empowerment?

In 2011, Walmart launched the Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Initiative to leverage Walmart's size and scale to help increase women's economic mobility. Walmart and the Walmart Foundation both work on projects as part of this initiative. The focus of WEE is to help improve the lives of women around the world by providing training, market access and economic opportunities.

Under the WEE initiative, we have committed to training nearly one million women on farms and in the workforce. The Women in Factories Program, funded by the Walmart Foundation, is a key WEE workforce initiative and our goal

is to train 60,000 women in 150 factories in India, Bangladesh, El Salvador, Honduras and China by the end of 2016.

We believe the program can contribute to increasing the productivity and self-esteem of factory workers, especially women, and positively impact factory operations. Factory officials anecdotally report seeing improved performance of workers, and reduced absenteeism and attrition. The training curriculum is open-source and retailers, brands, suppliers and other interested organizations are welcome to use it and other resources being made available by the NGOs implementing the program. The

NGOs are SWASTI in India; CARE in Bangladesh; World Vision in El Salvador and Honduras; and BSR in China.

Through \$10.7 million in grants from the Walmart Foundation, the Women in Factories program trained 48,729 women in Foundational Training for life and work skills and 2,546 women completed Advanced Training by the end of 2014. The training has been implemented in 82 factories.



## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Women in Factories Program is to provide female factory workers with the core competencies necessary to be successful in the workplace, at home and in their communities.

The program is important because many women working on the line in factories lack the exposure and training that will help them continue on a journey of personal and professional development.

The program focuses on delivering:

- Job readiness skills so workers can exercise greater control over their work and personal lives.
- Core communication and conflict resolution skills to be better advocates at work and at

home and reduce vulnerability to exploitation.

- A work environment more receptive to promotion and inclusion of female workers.

At the same time the program seeks to empower factory management and suppliers to:

- Identify and develop talent within the factory without gender bias.
- Retain a strong workforce and reap the benefits of investment in talent development.
- Enhance factory efficiency.
- Equip factory leadership to implement the program on a continual basis as part of their ongoing operations.



**Avani Bhadra**  
Welspun Factory, India

*"Thanks to the training program, I now have dreams I never had before – to pursue my education and become a better trainer. I have been given the role of an elder in my family and am consulted for many important decisions, and I am thrilled to report that my siblings are now attending school. In my village, an unmarried woman is typically not allowed to go outside the home to work, but because of my success at Welspun, girls are now able to work in the factory."*

## TRAINING

*CARE developed the open-source curriculum and it has been adapted for each country by the local implementing partner.*

### Foundational Training

When the program begins all men and women who work on the production line participate in 15 hours of Foundational Training.

Topics include:

- Managing work and career
- Communication skills
- Gender awareness
- Health, including hygiene, water/sanitation, reproductive health
- Occupational health and safety
- Application of learning at work and home



## Advanced Training

The next step is to provide select women with a 100-hour Advanced Training course. Topics include:

- Basic literacy (as needed)
- Technical training (facilitated by the factory)
- Functional literacy/numeracy
- Personal finance
- Health and nutrition
- Communication and negotiation
- Problem solving, decision making, and goal setting
- Gender, social status, and relationships
- Legal empowerment
- Self-management and leadership

## EVALUATION

To understand the return on investment and the effectiveness of the program, the Walmart Foundation provided a grant for \$1 million to Tufts University to evaluate the Women in Factories program in India, Bangladesh, El Salvador and Honduras. The

evaluation is being conducted under the leadership of Dr. Drusilla Brown.

Preliminary anecdotal information from the implementing NGOs indicate some women workers are having opportunities for

supervisory or managerial roles, workers feel more empowered to make suggestions and the women are demonstrating leadership to help women in their communities receive medical care and education when cultural norms may ordinarily prevent this.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

To learn more about the WiF program, or to access the open-source WiF curriculum, visit [corporate.walmart.com/global-responsibility/womens-economic-empowerment/women-in-factories-training-program](http://corporate.walmart.com/global-responsibility/womens-economic-empowerment/women-in-factories-training-program).

For more information contact the Walmart Foundation or NGOs involved in the program.

Country	Organization	Contact	Email	Phone
China	Business for Social Responsibility	Shirley Xue	sxue@bsr.org	+86-21-61036746
Bangladesh	CARE	Melanie Minzes	mminzes@care.org	+1-202-595-2800
India	Swasti	Joseph Julian	julian@swasti.org	+91-8547874262 +91-9388402234
Honduras El Salvador	World Vision	Ernesto Rodriguez	ernesto_rodriguez@wvi.org	503-2261-9800 Ext. 1010
All	Walmart Foundation		wmfoundation@wal-mart.com	