

## **The Social Sustainability Survey 2015**

*University of Groningen, Netherlands*

**Dear Participant,**

You have been selected to participate in a study that addresses challenges of manufacturing factories when implementing social sustainability. The aim of this survey is to better understand how supplier firms manage social compliance to meet the demands of their Western customers.

The results of the study will be used exclusively for scientific purposes. All data gathered through this survey will be used strictly confidential. We guarantee the anonymity of each individual respondent and their manufacturing plant, and the individual results will not be shared with customer firms.

The questionnaire survey consists of five sections and will take 15 minutes to complete. Answer should be given about the entire manufacturing plant. In case there is more than one factory, please choose the most representative one when answering the questions. We appreciate it if you answer all questions.

If you have any questions on the questionnaire survey, please do not hesitate to contact me -  
**Prof. Dr. S. Beugelsdijk & Indian Chamber of Commerce (Trade Facilitation Desk)**

***THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!***

Contact:

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*Please enter answers in the spaces enclosed with heavy lines following the instructions below:*

- (1) When numbers are given, circle the appropriate one, unless otherwise indicated.  
 (2) Fill in the blank spaces following the instructions.  
 (3) Try to explain in detail, if you choose the response ‘Others’

## I. Basic information about this plant’s social sustainability performance

*Social sustainability is concerned with workers’ health and safety, as well as with their well-being (e.g. working time, remuneration, and freedom of association).*

1. For how many years has this manufacturing plant been actively involved in social sustainability development? \_\_\_\_\_ year(s).

2. Who is primarily responsible for social compliance in this plant?

- Factory manager/owner
- Human Resource (HR) manager
- Quality manager
- Social Compliance manager
- If others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Have social audits been conducted at this manufacturing plant?

- Yes, external audits (e.g. by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties or customer initiatives)
- Yes, internal audits (i.e. self-evaluation)
- No

If yes, please specify how many social audits have been conducted last year?

\_\_\_\_\_ External audits (e.g. by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties or customer initiatives)

\_\_\_\_\_ Internal audits (i.e. self-evaluation)

4. How would you assess the level of the social sustainability implementation at your location, i.e. has a social policy actually been put in practice?” for the following items:

	Needs major improvement	Needs little improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
The social sustainability policy <b>as a whole</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Leadership</b> (e.g. managers actively support social compliance initiatives)	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Documentation</b> (e.g. formal reporting of factory accidents or sickness rates)	1	2	3	4	5

How would you assess the level of the social sustainability implementation at your location, i.e. has a social policy actually been put in practice?” for the following items:

	Needs major improvement	Needs little improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Very good
<b>People</b> (e.g. employee suggestions are taken serious)	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Process management</b> (e.g. social sustainability policy is on official agenda of regular factory meetings)	1	2	3	4	5

5. For each of the following descriptions, please tick the **one** that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
<b>Self-assessments</b> are conducted <b>regularly</b> and the results are used as a basis for improving our processes.	1	2	3	4	5
All <b>workers are trained</b> in the social sustainability requirements (e.g. health and safety hazards).	1	2	3	4	5
We <b>clearly document</b> the social sustainability policy and procedures, and continuously update them.	1	2	3	4	5
We <b>integrate financial and social sustainability reporting</b> to make more informed assessments on our plants overall performance.	1	2	3	4	5
We strictly <b>maintain our daily operations and practices</b> according to the documented social sustainability requirements.	1	2	3	4	5

6. For each of the following descriptions, please tick the **one** that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Social sustainability is important because it <b>attracts large customers</b> .	1	2	3	4	5
We have to ensure social sustainability in order to not <b>risk losing</b> our best <b>workers</b> to other factories.	1	2	3	4	5
Social sustainability can lead to <b>economic benefits</b> (e.g. lower sickness rates or worker absence).	1	2	3	4	5
Investments in social sustainability can give us a <b>competitive edge</b> over other factories in the market.	1	2	3	4	5
We implement a social sustainability policy to <b>manage and report</b> our social impact on individual workers.	1	2	3	4	5
We implement a social sustainability policy to <b>meet our customer's demands</b> .	1	2	3	4	5

## II. Basic information about this manufacturing plant's customer

Please answer the following questions with regards to your manufacturing plant's most important customer (e.g. with regards to sales or reference), which is located in North America or Western Europe.

1. In which country is this customer's headquarter located? \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How long has this manufacturing plant been working with this customer?
  - Less than 1 year
  - 1 to 3 years
  - More than 3 years

3. On average, what percentage of your sales does this customer purchase from you? \_\_\_\_\_%

4. For each of the following descriptions, please tick the **one** that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
This customer is <b>crucial</b> to our future performance.	1	2	3	4	5
We do <b>not have a good alternative</b> to this customer.	1	2	3	4	5
It would be <b>difficult</b> for us to <b>replace</b> this customer.	1	2	3	4	5
If our relationship was discontinued with this customer, we would have <b>difficulty</b> in making up the <b>sales volume</b> .	1	2	3	4	5

5. Do you receive practical support from this customer? Yes  / No .

If yes, in which areas: *(multiple answers possible)*

- Productivity and process support (e.g. lean)
- Management and/or Human Resource (HR) systems
- Training of workers and management on product quality and/or design
- Training of workers and management on labor practices and working conditions
- Production planning (e.g. production schedules and staffing capacity)
- Communication between management and workers
- If others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_.

6. For each of the following descriptions, please tick the **one** that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
We are a <b>major supplier</b> to this customer in this market.	1	2	3	4	5
If we discontinued supplying to this customer, this customer would have <b>difficulty</b> making up the <b>sales volume</b> in this market.	1	2	3	4	5
It is very <b>costly</b> for this customer to <b>change</b> to new suppliers in this market.	1	2	3	4	5
This customer will <b>perform poorly</b> if we do not perform well (e.g. lost sales, product recalls)	1	2	3	4	5

### III. Questions about this manufacturing plant's relationship with this customer

*Please answer the following questions with regards to your manufacturing plant's most important customer (e.g. with regards to sales or reference), which is located in North America or Western Europe.*

For each of the following descriptions, please tick the **one** that best represents your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
This customer usually <b>keeps the promises</b> that it	1	2	3	4	5

makes to our manufacturing plant.

This customer <b>works with us closely</b> to implement the social sustainability policy (e.g. personal visits, training programs).	1	2	3	4	5
For this customer, we are prepared to <b>make investments</b> that pay off only in the long run.	1	2	3	4	5
When we <b>share our problems</b> with this customer (e.g. material prices), we know that it will respond with understanding.	1	2	3	4	5
If we implement the social sustainability policy, we would <b>get rewards</b> from this customer (e.g. guaranteed orders).	1	2	3	4	5
This customer has often provided us <b>information</b> that has later proven to be <b>inaccurate</b> .	1	2	3	4	5
This customer allows <b>open two-way dialogue</b> on the social sustainability policy, so that set targets can be established jointly.	1	2	3	4	5
Our key customer has <b>invested resources</b> in developing our social sustainability capacities (e.g. hospitals).	1	2	3	4	5
Whenever this customer gives us <b>advice</b> on our business operations, we know that it is sharing its <b>best judgment</b> .	1	2	3	4	5
If we struggle in implementing the social sustainability policy, this customer would simply <b>switch to other suppliers</b> rather than work out problems with us.	1	2	3	4	5

#### IV. Basic information about this manufacturing plant

1. Is this manufacturing plant a family business?      Yes  / No .
2. What is the year of incorporation of this manufacturing plant? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What does this manufacturing plant primarily produce? *(multiple answers possible)*
  - Garments
  - Textile
  - Fashion Accessories
  - Shoes
  - If others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_.
4. For how many years has your plant been involved in exporting? \_\_\_\_\_ year(s).
5. Currently, profits from export account for approximately \_\_\_\_\_ % of this plant's total profits.
6. From this plant's total export profits, what percentage is sold to customers located in North America or Western Europe? \_\_\_\_\_ %.
7. Please **divide** 100 points among the items below to indicate what this manufacturing plant is especially known for in the market (e.g. 30 for product quality, 15 for prices, 10 for delivery, 25 for flexibility, and 20 for social responsibility):

**Divided points**

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Product quality	_____
Prices	_____
Delivery (e.g. speed, reliability)	_____
Flexibility (e.g. change product style after order is placed)	_____
Social responsibility	_____

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Total **Sum = 100**

8. Compared to our competitors in the market, this manufacturing plant's total profit is

<b>Very Low</b>		<b>Similar</b>		<b>Very High</b>
1	2	3	4	5

9. Please estimate this plant's annual turnover in quantity and value: \_\_\_\_\_ pieces. \_\_\_\_\_ \$.

10. How many workers does this manufacturing plant employ? \_\_\_\_\_.

11. Last year, this plant welcomed \_\_\_\_\_ (*number*) new workers.

12. Please specify the percentage of how the current workforce changed, compared to last year?

- Increased, by \_\_\_\_\_%
- Decrease, by \_\_\_\_\_%
- No change

13. Where do most of the workers stay?

- Factory dormitories
- With families
- Own apartment (without families)
- If others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_.

14. Can workers discuss issues of interest with the factory management, and elicit their feedback?

Yes  / No .

If yes, through which channels:

- Regular monthly individual meetings
- Free and independent worker assemblies (e.g. trade unions)
- Worker education trainings
- If others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_.

## V. Background information about you

1. What is your nationality? \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Are you the factory owner/manager of this manufacturing plant? Yes  / No .

3. How long have you worked with this plant?

- Less than 3 months
- 3 to 12 months

- 1 to 3 years
- More than 3 years

4. How many years of total work experience do you have?

- Less than 3 years
- 3 to 10 years
- More than 10 years

5. What is the highest level of education that you have completed:

- No formal education
- Elementary school
- Middle school
- High school
- University education (undergraduate program)
- University education (graduate program)

**Thank you for your time and cooperation!**

**Please return this questionnaire to**

**[kasturi.nandy@indianchamber.net](mailto:kasturi.nandy@indianchamber.net)**