

# WHAT SHE MAKES

IS KEEPING HER IN POVERTY



Photo: GMB Akash/Panos/OxfamAUS

**GEOGRAPHY  
TEACHER NOTES  
YEAR 10**

**AN EDUCATION RESOURCE FOR OXFAM AUSTRALIA**



**OXFAM**  
Australia

# WHAT SHE MAKES

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**What She Makes:** Education Resource has been created in collaboration with Social Education Victoria (SEV) and the Geography Teachers Association of Victoria (GTAV) and Oxfam Australia. It has been developed to support the delivery of a flexible and engaging curriculum to support the What She Makes labour rights campaign, to increase intercultural understanding and awareness of the lives of garment workers in Bangladesh and an intensive and thorough examination of the determinants of living wage equity. This resource aims to inspire young Australians to take action against popular brands to pay a living wage to the women who make our clothes.

**What She Makes:** Education Resource has been mapped to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Available online for free download, the resource includes:

- Specific mapping to the Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship Levels 7-10, Geography Year 10: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding required by Unit 2: Geographies of human wellbeing, and Year 7 Place and Liveability and Year 8 Changing Nations;
- Background notes for teachers to ensure teacher knowledge of context whilst supporting teacher professional judgment within the local context;
- Tablet- and print-friendly Student Activity worksheets;
- Detailed Lesson Plans with support for assessment tasks decisions by the teacher. What She Makes helps students explore the barriers facing garment workers seeking a living wage, how wellbeing is affected by poverty, and how students can get involved to pressure brands to address these issues.

**Credits:** Oxfam Australia would like to acknowledge and thank Augusta Zeeng, Terry McMeekin and Lauren Giffen as authors of the resource. Your knowledge, understanding, educational awareness and passion for the issues and curriculum implementation are greatly appreciated.

Special thanks also to Nayeem Emran, Sarah Rogan, and Stina Johansson from Oxfam Australia for your support, expertise, guidance and assistance. This resource was project managed by Augusta Zeeng, Professional Learning Programs Project Manager from Social Education Victoria and Lauren Giffen, Schools Program Coordinator from Oxfam Australia.

**Disclaimer:** Reference has been made to the Australian Curriculum: Civics and Citizenship and Geography. Teachers should also refer to state jurisdiction for local curriculum context. This resource was originally published in October 2018. All information and links correct at the time of publishing.

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# WHAT SHE MAKES

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## This resource is for Year 10 Australian Curriculum Geography.

### A teachers' resource

This resource is designed to cover most aspects of Geographical Knowledge and Understanding required by Unit 2: Geographies of human wellbeing. The activities encourage the use of most of the Geographical Inquiry and skills components.

### Background information

How do the clothes that you purchase have an impact on global human wellbeing?

Australia imports more than 96% of all garments sold in our retail shops. Globally, 80% of garment workers are young women aged between 18 and 25 years. Most textile and clothing industries have closed down in Australia and other high-waged countries, and production has moved to countries in Asia and Africa, where wages are much lower. Disposable, cheap fashion has become the norm as low-priced imports flood local retail outlets. The low prices are due to the low wages and lower production costs of offshore production. Local manufacturers have been unable to compete with the cheap imports. As consumers, we have become used to paying \$10 for a T-shirt or only a few dollars each for bras and briefs. On average, only a tiny percentage of the price we pay for each garment goes towards the wages of the factory workers who made it.

Along with the international union movement and many other international government organisations (IGOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs), Oxfam has become heavily involved in campaigns to increase the wages of the poorly paid women who work in the global textile industries. When workers don't earn a living wage, they become trapped in a cycle of poverty, which is hard to escape. Much emphasis has been placed on the specific human wellbeing issues encountered by the textile workers of Bangladesh, particularly after the disastrous factory fire of 2013. Interestingly though, the large international textile factories have now begun to move to even lower-waged locations in Africa, such as Ethiopia.

The global textile industry has not just resulted in social issues related to workforce but it has also created environmental problems. In the countries where these factories are located, scarce water and electricity resources are guaranteed to the factories and in many cases the local residential communities only have short hours of electricity and water supply to their homes. The cheap clothing provided to the world's wealthiest countries has become disposable. Fashion and style change quickly and outfits need to be replaced by this season's latest colours and designs. Disposal of clothing waste is now a problem, as not only is the water and energy used to create it lost, but where does this clothing end up? Maybe landfill? In fact, a lot of this clothing is packed into shipping containers and sold back into the clothing markets of Asia and Africa for local consumption.

To complete these tasks, students need to have access to the online resource *What She Makes: power and poverty in the fashion industry*: <http://whatshemakes.oxfam.org.au/resources/> (*Whatshemakes*)

Having access to the full resource gives students the chance to become better informed and the excellent images will help to stimulate their interest and increase their visualisation of the issues.

### Curriculum content description

Different ways of measuring and mapping human wellbeing and development, and how these can be applied to measure differences between places (ACHGK076)

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## ACTIVITY

# 1

This activity covers the skills of collecting, recording, evaluating and representing data.
























### Mapping data and human wellbeing

#### Student task:

This task will involve students breaking up into small groups (3–4 students) and deciding upon three countries from the list below that they are going to research.

This task requires online access, an atlas (if possible) and a blank outline map of the world. It will take more than one lesson to complete.

#### Country List:

			Canada 	Bangladesh 	Italy 
Ethiopia 	Vietnam 	China 	South Africa 	France 	Egypt 
Argentina 	Australia 	Brazil 	Russia 	Norway 	South Korea 
Kenya 	Morocco 	India 	Saudi Arabia 	Denmark 	United States of America 
Colombia 	Thailand 	Papua New Guinea 	Mexico 	Indonesia 	Cambodia 

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Each group member will need to collect four different examples of indicators of human wellbeing to compare with their chosen countries. Students will need to categorise the three countries they choose into Group A, B or C. Make sure each group member selects different countries and indicators. Begin by each team member choosing either wealth, income GDP or wage (one each) using the links below and then use the table below to graph data using your countries and indicators.

Comparison	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3	Indicator 4	Group A, B or C?
Country 1					
Country 2					
Country 3					

## Sources for country comparisons:

- World Data: [www.worlddata.info/average-income.php](http://www.worlddata.info/average-income.php)
- Global Wealth Databook P21-24: <http://publications.credit-suisse.com/tasks/render/file/index.cfm?fileid=A8BD95FB-A213-1EE7-59CC7F2F001A11AF>
- CIA World Fact Book: [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html)

The indicators of wellbeing may be selected from the table below or students could decide some for themselves. Be sure that all group members use different indicators and at least one person in each group uses an indicator of income or wealth.

## Possible comparisons:

mortality rate	TV ownership
car ownership or traffic mortality	food consumed daily
housing or shelter	life expectancy
birth rate	literacy rates
access to electricity	school attendance
telephone ownership or internet access	number of doctors per 1,000 of population
access to water	employment

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Data sources are found in the gazetteer of any Atlas or in one of the following or many other online sources:

- <https://www.gapminder.org/data/>
- CIA World Fact Book [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)
- <http://world-statistics.org/>
- [www.ssfindex.com/maps/](http://www.ssfindex.com/maps/)

In a small group (3–4) students share the collection of a range of data to help their group identify which of the countries in the table below fits into the three categories of human wellbeing. Students will be required to back up their classifications with evidence of why they believe this to be so.

## Categories of human wellbeing

**Group A** — A highly developed or wealthy economy with a high level of human wellbeing for most of its people.

**Group B** — An economy that falls somewhere in the middle. A place with reasonable levels of human wellbeing but where the economy doesn't result in a life as good as it is for most of the residents in the wealthiest places.

**Group C** — A developing economy, which makes it one of the poorest places on earth with very low levels of human wellbeing for most residents.

**1. Once each student has collected their four pieces of data for each country, they need to independently decide which country fits into each of the three categories.**

Categories of human wellbeing (for the sake of this assignment)

**Group A** – High level of human wellbeing

**Group B** – Middle level of human wellbeing

**Group C** – Low level of human wellbeing

**2. Then as a group, students compare their results for each country and decide on a final list of which countries fit into each of the three categories.**

**3. As a group, students discuss the following and make notes of their answers.**

- Were there any countries that you had trouble fitting into a category? Explain why?
- Which category had the greatest range or difference between levels of human wellbeing? Explain your answer using 3–4 examples from your data collection.
- What do people in the High level of human wellbeing group have access to that people in the Low level of human wellbeing group do not? Make a list.

**4. Students are to shade in an outline world map to show the three groups of countries that they have identified. One colour for each of the three categories. Give the map a title. This can be completed online or on paper.**

Students could produce an online, digital map using one of the tools listed on the following website or just using paint on a blank world map.

<https://oedb.org/ilibrarian/do-it-yourself-gis-20-free-tools-data-sources-for-creating-data-maps/>

<https://mapchart.net/world.html>

**5. Students need to describe the pattern that they have identified for each of the three regions. Their answers should use terms such as continent names, numbers, hemisphere, equator, concentrated and scattered.**

- a) Describe the pattern that you have identified for each of the three regions. Your answer should use terms such as continent names, numbers, hemisphere, equator, concentrated and scattered.
- b) If you were planning to build a factory that produces goods that have high wage costs, which of the three regions of human wellbeing would you locate it in? Why?

**6. Watch this short clip to better put into perspective the distribution of global wealth. It may prompt discussion or just help to get some perspective.**

[www.gapminder.org/answers/how-many-are-rich-and-how-many-are-poor/](http://www.gapminder.org/answers/how-many-are-rich-and-how-many-are-poor/)

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## ACTIVITY

# 2

### A living wage

#### Curriculum content descriptions

Reasons for spatial variations between countries in selected indicators of human wellbeing (ACHGK077)

Issues affecting development of places and their impact on human wellbeing, drawing on a study from a developing country or region in Africa, South America or the Pacific Islands (ACHGK078)

Reasons for, and consequences of, spatial variations in human wellbeing on a regional scale within India or another country of the Asia region (ACHGK079)

These activities cover the skills of observing, questioning, interpreting, analysing and concluding.

Is it too much to ask that a person who goes to work for more than 40 hours a week should be able to live on the wage that he or she earns? Access to money is a major cause of inequalities between regions of wellbeing. Access to housing, food, water, employment, education, energy, clothes and healthcare are all indicators of wellbeing. If you are being paid a living wage, it is likely that you will have a decent standard of living for yourself and your family. Most countries set a minimum wage rather than a living wage for their workforce. How is this problematic, or is it?

### TASK ONE

#### Working in the global garment industry

##### Student Task

This task may be done as a class or even a homework task. It requires online access to view the clips. This task may be completed in a small group or as a whole class.

1. To get an understanding of what it means to be a worker in the garment industry of Asia or Africa, view the following short film clips and discuss and or make notes using the following questions as a guide. Answers are an introductory guide, students can expand upon these and include various other observations from the videos.

##### Bangladesh

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfVWt3Z1d3g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfVWt3Z1d3g)

- A. What is the evidence that these three workers, Anju, Forida and Fatima, do or do not earn a living wage?

*Working long hours but cannot provide the basics for themselves or their family.*

- B. Describe their working conditions.

*Six days a week, more than 12 hours a day.  
"Back breaking work".*

- C. Describe their living conditions.

- *Living in the slums*
- *In a compound with six families. Eating watery rice with chilli and salt*
- *Apartment with ten other people*
- *Sleeping on a concrete floor*
- *Living in poverty*

- D. Describe the quality of their family life.

*Unable to spend time with the family*



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## Bangladesh

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QSC\\_9c6qCQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QSC_9c6qCQ)

- A. What is the evidence that this woman earns a living wage?  
*Able to pay for food, rent and save money.*

- B. Is her life any better than that of Anju, Forida and Fatima?  
*Subject to interpretation, encourage and facilitate discussion within the classroom.*

## Ethiopia

<http://p.dw.com/p/2rh5t>

- A. How is Lemlem Mussie's life similar or different to that of the women working in Bangladesh?  
*Working six days a week, long hours for a low wage. Working overtime for no money.*
- B. Does she seem to be earning a living wage? Explain.  
*No. Lemlem does not earn enough money to get by and often cannot afford to buy food.*
- C. Why does the factory manager say large factories like the one where Lemlem works have been built in Ethiopia?  
*Labour and utility costs are often big cost factors in the fashion industry. Ethiopia will be competitive as it is low cost.*
- D. Describe the contrast between the factory and Lemlem's accommodation.  
*Gleaming modern factory compared to makeshift accommodation.*
- E. From these examples of the working life of garment factory employees in Bangladesh and Ethiopia, do they appear to be earning a living wage? Explain your response.  
*Subject to interpretation, encourage and facilitate discussion within the classroom.*

## TASK TWO

### Minimum wage

*This task covers the skills of representing, analysing, concluding and communicating.*

Reference: *What She Makes: power and poverty in the fashion industry* <http://whatshemakes.oxfam.org.au/resources/>

### Student Task:

This is a simple graphing task. Students are required to convert hourly rates of pay into a monthly total, then graph their totals. Instruct that graphs should be accurate, neat, in columns of descending order and shaded, with the exception of Ethiopia as these columns are not garment workers.

Read pages 9 and 10 at What She Makes

[http://whatshemakes.oxfam.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Living-Wage-Media-Report\\_WEB.pdf](http://whatshemakes.oxfam.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Living-Wage-Media-Report_WEB.pdf)

1. Use the data from the minimum wages comparative table for workers in the garment factories of Asia on page 10 to construct a column graph to illustrate the monthly wage for a worker from each country. Assume they work a 48-hour week for 4.3 weeks in a month. Factories in these six Asian nations produce 91% of all clothes sold in Australia.
2. Add a 7th and 8th column for Ethiopia to illustrate the monthly income for a bank employee of AUD \$24 per month and for a government or public service employee of AUD \$28 per month.

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Students would then answer the following:

- A. Would you expect that a worker in a bank or in the public service would earn more or less per month than a garment factory worker? Explain your answer. What does your graph illustrate about wages in Ethiopia?
- B. How many times more do garment factory employees earn in China than in Bangladesh?
- C. As wages have grown in China, what would you expect must have happened to the wellbeing of the workers?
- D. As wages have grown in China, what would you expect must have happened to the location of garment factories in Asia?
- E. How might the monthly wages displayed in your graph explain the quite recent heavy investment by Chinese companies in garment factories in Ethiopia?

## TASK THREE

### Living on the minimum wage

*This task covers the skills of observing, recording, interpreting and concluding.*

Dollar Street is a pictorial record of how people live. It compares 264 families in 50 countries visually recording a great many everyday aspects of their lives. The aim of this project is to show that there are people and families behind the statistics relating to human wellbeing within each country and that within each country there are those who are better off than others.

Resource: [www.gapminder.org/dollar-street/matrix?countries=Bangladesh&zoom=3&row=2](http://www.gapminder.org/dollar-street/matrix?countries=Bangladesh&zoom=3&row=2)

There are eight families in Bangladesh who have their lives available for comparison. Of them, only one family has a wife who works in the garment industry. They are the Hossain family with the highest monthly income of \$175 (AUD \$235) as of August 2018.

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## Student task:

Compare the lives of three Bangladeshi families, including the Hossain family.

1. Create a table that compares at least 10 indicators of wellbeing between these families.  
Fill in the table using images or text.

wealth, Income GDP, wages	TV ownership
car ownership	food consumed daily
housing or shelter	life expectancy
Birthrate	literacy rates
electricity	school attendance
telephone or internet access	doctors per 1,000 of population
access to water	Employment

Indicators of well-being	Hossain Family	Family 2	Family 3
Monthly income	\$	\$	\$
Cost of food	\$	\$	\$
Size of house			

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2. Identify two or three differences and similarities between their lives.
3. Explain how life is different for the Hossain family than for the other two Bangladeshi families that you investigated?
4. Use Dollar Street to compare the lives of a family in each of the other Asian countries with high numbers of garment workers (China, Vietnam, Cambodia, India and Indonesia). Compare families with about the same income as the minimum monthly wage for a garment worker that you graphed in Task 2.
5. Discuss what life would be like for a garment worker in a low wage-paying Asian country relying on the minimum wage. Would you call this a living wage?
6. Look at Dollar Street for several African countries near Ethiopia. Does the level of human wellbeing seem to be different in Africa to Asia?

## TASK FOUR

### Minimum wage vs living wage

Page 11 ([Whatshemakes](#))

**Look at the t-shirt image of the cost structure of Australian clothing prices. Identify the labour production cost.**

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Page 12 ([Whatshemakes](#)) Read Forida's Story.

**Discuss with your class the ways that an increase in Forida's wage and improved working conditions will be beneficial to her wellbeing.**

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Pages 16–21 ([Whatshemakes](#))

**You have 15 minutes in a small group to try to formulate an explanation of the difference between a living wage and a minimum wage. Jot down notes below.**

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### Student task:

**Read the information and then, in clear and simple terms, using at least one example from the text, be ready to orally report your group understanding to the class. The explanation should only be two minutes maximum!**

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## TASK FIVE

### Consequences of low-cost fashion industry

This task covers the skill of communicating, reflecting and responding.

This is a teacher-directed research section to be completed as a whole classroom activity. This can aid in facilitating discussion between students.

Use case studies from the following resources to explain how the human wellbeing of garment workers in Asia and Africa has been compromised so that we can have access to cheaper clothes.

As a class, view the clip below. It outlines the environmental consequences of the booming textiles industry in Bangladesh. Discuss how this use of power and energy resources by the factories also impacts on human wellbeing and living conditions in the homes of local Bangladeshis.

<http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1534718/the-cost-of-dhaka-s-boom>

Another consequence of the low-cost fashion industry is the safety of workers. Many workers are expected to work long hours for little pay and are often expected to do long hours of unpaid overtime. The result is a poor work-life balance, tired workers are more prone to injury and sometimes workplace safety standards are poor.

Five years ago there was a huge garment factory fire in Bangladesh. It shocked the world and led to many of the global fashion brands vowing to improve pay and conditions for their international workforce.

With your students, watch this clip produced by clothing retailer H&M after the fire.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY4FeUYMFzM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY4FeUYMFzM)

1. Why does this company want its customers to believe that it has addressed workplace safety and pay issues?
2. In what ways are they attempting to improve the living conditions and standards of human wellbeing for the makers of their garments?

3. Have they convinced you that H&M is one of the good guy retailers of fashion? Explain.

4. What more could they do?

In the five years since the huge fire in the garment factory in Dhaka much has changed and little has changed for the workers in the garment factories.

Read at least two of these articles.

[www.theage.com.au/comment/the-human-cost-of-fast-fashion-is-still-too-high-20180423-p4zb64.html?btis](http://www.theage.com.au/comment/the-human-cost-of-fast-fashion-is-still-too-high-20180423-p4zb64.html?btis)

[www.theage.com.au/national/shameful-clothing-brands-failing-bangladeshi-workers-say-activists-20180422-p4zb1r.html](http://www.theage.com.au/national/shameful-clothing-brands-failing-bangladeshi-workers-say-activists-20180422-p4zb1r.html)

<http://theconversation.com/five-years-after-deadly-factory-fire-bangladeshs-garment-workers-are-still-vulnerable-88027>

In Africa, the importation of second hand clothing into the local market has also become a problem. Huge quantities of used clothing are shipped to Africa where they are sold in the local markets. Although this provides cheap clothing to locals it has almost destroyed the local garment manufacturing industry. Local dressmakers and shirt factories are unable to match the low prices of the second hand imports.

[www.dw.com/en/east-africa-pushes-second-hand-clothing-ban/a-42747222](http://www.dw.com/en/east-africa-pushes-second-hand-clothing-ban/a-42747222)

#### Student task:

You could complete some of the research as a class for general discussion before setting this as a task or you could ask students to complete the task as a research exercise in the way that it is presented in the student worksheets.

Write a newspaper or magazine article with the headline "Who is paying too much for our clothes?"

You may like to pass on to students the instructions at this link for hints on how to write a newspaper or magazine article. Or make suggestions to length and style.

[www.makemynewspaper.com/uk/how-to-write-a-school-news-article](http://www.makemynewspaper.com/uk/how-to-write-a-school-news-article)



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## ACTIVITY

### 3

#### How can we challenge What She Makes?

##### Curriculum content description

The role of international and national government and non-government organizations' initiatives in improving human wellbeing in Australia and other countries (ACHGK081)

This task covers the skills of communicating, reflecting and responding.

##### Background

In Australia, minimum wages and safe working conditions are law. The state and federal governments enforce workplaces and rates of pay. Unions protect the interests of their members, but also campaign to assist workers globally. The CFMEU is the Australian union responsible for garment factory workers. It still has an ongoing appeal for the workers and families affected by the fire in Dhaka in 2013. The minimum award rate of pay for garment factory workers in Australia is \$19.53 per hour even as a trainee or piece worker. This is equal to almost a month of work in Ethiopia or a weeks work in many Asian garment factories.

It would take a garment worker paid the minimum wage of 40 cents per hour, 4,000 years to earn the same wage that a highly paid CEO in an Australian retail business would earn in one year.

Organisations such as Oxfam Australia are campaigning to improve the living conditions of workers in garment factories globally.

Pages 30–33 ([Whatshemakes](#))

The Oxfam campaign is asking for Australians to speak up, as together we can hold brands accountable for what she makes. We must stand with the women who make our clothes and let brands know, loud and clear, that the women working in their factories must be paid a living wage.

##### Student task:

**This is a student action task. It's quite open-ended in the way that it's presented. You can reduce or increase the possible actions and you can make a call regarding how long you wish this task to continue depending on your program and cohort.**

It's now your chance to make a difference.

In a group of 3–4 students, create a public awareness campaign to publicise what she makes. Your aim is to improve or highlight the inequalities in human wellbeing that you have discovered by studying the cheaper end of the global garment manufacturing industry.

- Who should your campaign be targeted towards?
- What means of public awareness will you use?
- How long should your campaign run?
- How will you rate your success or failure?

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## What could you do?

- Write a research piece, record a podcast or produce a TV news item on the current safety of garment factories in Bangladesh.
- Run a social media campaign to encourage people to think before they buy new clothes.
- Investigate clothing waste, water usage or waste, wages or energy.
- Raise some money for the improvement of an aspect of human wellbeing.
- Write to politicians or clothing brands about living wages in Australia or globally.
- Use one of the case studies of Anju, Forida or Fatima to create a short podcast, radio or video, which compares their living standards with your own.

## Possible extra resources:

<http://whatshemakes.oxfam.org.au/>

[www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/oxfam-ethical-fashion-list/8045708](http://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/oxfam-ethical-fashion-list/8045708)

[www.oxfam.org.au/what-we-do/ethical-trading-and-business/corporate-accountability/naughty-or-nice-2016/](http://www.oxfam.org.au/what-we-do/ethical-trading-and-business/corporate-accountability/naughty-or-nice-2016/)

<http://bangladeshaccord.org/about/faqs/>

<http://bangladeshaccord.org/about/>

<http://bangladeshaccord.org/signatories/#witness-box>



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