

Annual report Arisa 2020



Preface

I am incredibly proud to be the chair of Arisa, a unique organisation in the field of international cooperation and human rights. Over the years Arisa has shown its value and indispensability in advocating for the rights of workers and farmers in South Asia. Because of its relatively small size, Arisa is able to react quickly to current situations, always well substantiated and in cooperation with partners in Europe and South Asia. Arisa has long standing and intensive relations with South Asian organisations and has access to reliable information from the ground. This information is effectively used in lobby and advocacy activities across Europe.

In my opinion, the team of Arisa is too modest about their work. The situation of the workers in South Asia and the achieved results deserve a larger audience. Thus, it makes me happy that Arisa is presenting a narrative report. It is not a coincidence that this is happening at the same time the organisation is celebrating its 40th birthday!

As for many people, 2020 has also been a strange year for Arisa. The Covid pandemic and particularly the subsequent lockdown had tremendous effects on labourers in South Asia. Arisa's partner organisations had their hands full with assisting the target group as effectively as possible, in emergent situations and in their continuous fight for their (labour) rights. Arisa tried to help out where they could, for example by initiating a successful fundraising campaign to support partners in their relief activities for migrant workers and their families. This had to be carried out from a distance because of travelling restrictions. A positive consequence of connecting online is that communication intensified through more frequent contact.

As the Board we are closely involved in setting up the strategic direction for the period 2021-2025. Notable developments in the strategy are: more attention for caste discrimination in supply chains and addressing both ends of the textile supply chain by continuing pilot work on cotton seeds and textile recycling. Arisa will also continue to extend its activities to other South Asian countries in addition to India. After all, the organisation recently changed its name from India Committee of the Netherlands to Arisa (Advocating Rights for South Asia) and the new name reflects an expansion of the South Asian focus. We believe that potential partners in other South Asian countries can benefit from the expertise gained by Arisa and its partners in India.

Arisa strives to be a good employer. Two staff members joined the team at the end of 2019, which enabled the team to improve the quantity and quality of the work. There is more attention for the talents and desires of all team members, which should lead to a happier team and better work. Practical and real-life case studies emanating from Arisa's work illustrate this annual report. We hope you will enjoy reading it.

Karen Kammeraat – Chair of the board

Content

Preface	2
Introduction	4
Arisa in 2020 at a glance	6
40 years Arisa – India Committee of the Netherlands	7
Cooperation with partners	8
<hr/>	
Cross-cutting issues: caste discrimination	10
Urgent appeals	11
Multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSI)	12
Research	13
Cooperation with businesses	15
Child labour	17
<hr/>	
Arisa in the media 2020	18
Website, newsletter and social media	19
Outlook 2021	19
Finances	20

Introduction

This Annual Report illustrates our work and provides an overview of what we have done and achieved in 2020. We also want to look back at the 40 years of history of our organisation and highlight some of the important accomplishments in those years. Although we are proud of what has been achieved, we also realise that there is still a lot of work to do in the coming years.

Arisa began the year 2020 with positive energy. Two new staff members joined us in the second half of 2019 and this has enabled us to expand and improve the quality of the work. With more activities we are able to further strengthen our work on human rights and labour rights in India and South Asia. In February some of us visited India and were able to gain first-hand impressions of the work of some of our partners, have discussions and share insights. This insight into the work that partners do on the ground is always very inspiring and provides the necessary evidence and support for our work in the Netherlands and Europe.

And then the Covid-19 crisis hit us hard and we needed to adapt our work to the new reality of lockdowns and concomitant strict measures. Simultaneously, we became aware of heart-rending stories from our partners and through the news: images of thousands of migrant workers in India walking home from their place of work to their home state. Due to the lockdown measures they lost their jobs and ended up without any income or support. Arisa-partners sprang into action to do whatever they could to support these migrant workers with relief support and they provided them with access to government support schemes.

The Covid-19 crisis exposed a number of structural problems within international trade. There were repeated reports of cancellations at the manufacturers of garment orders by major brands. The consequences of this are re-allocated to the weakest persons in the chain: the workers. Instances of workers' non-payment of wages are numerous. More than ever, responsible purchasing practices are needed, and measures must be taken to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on suppliers and their workers. Arisa is involved in discussions with companies and multi-stakeholder initiatives on responsible business conduct also during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Arisa – mission/vision

Arisa is an independent non-governmental organisation that aims to fight injustice in India and South Asia. We are a human rights organisation with longstanding partnerships and relations with organisations in South Asia, based on trust and equality.

Our focus is on defending human rights in international supply chains, especially the rights of children, women, Dalits and other vulnerable groups. By working closely with local partners and using on-the-ground evidence Arisa advocates with businesses and governments for responsible business conduct and respect for human rights in the entire supply chain.

While we face many challenges in our working environment because of the pandemic, Arisa has also noticed the contact with South Asian partners has intensified. Through Zoom and other platforms, it has become much easier to maintain contact and discuss issues as if you are in the same space. This facilitates the exchange of information and cooperation and is therefore a positive aspect in a difficult year. We have been able to implement most of our activities as planned.

In 2020 we also have been working on a new strategic plan, in which we reaffirm our commitment to work on the defence of human rights in global supply chains that originate in India and South Asia, in collaboration with local organisations.

This report is structured according to the strategic principles of our organisation. We will briefly introduce each principle and describe some concrete examples of our work in this field. Our aim with this report is to highlight our work and the successes we have achieved, based on concrete examples.



Working conditions for female migrants in Indian garment factories, source *Edith-made-it / Labour without Liberty*

Arisa in 2020 at a glance

13

PROJECTS



6 projects focused on garment and textile



5 projects focused on natural stone



1 project focused on cotton-seeds and vegetable seeds



1 project focused on leather¹

8

INDIAN PROJECT PARTNERS

SAVE, READ, MV Foundation, HPPI, Manjari, ARAVALI, CLRA and Glocal Research.

5

PROJECTS IN COOPERATION WITH COMPANIES

Arisa cooperated with eight garment and textile companies, four natural stone companies and one textile recycling company to address human rights issues in their supply chains.

3

REPORTS

[Sowing Hope](#) (on cottonseed and vegetable seed), [Textile Recycling unravelled](#) (on garment and textile) and [Between a Rock and a Hard Place](#) (on natural stone).



A SERIES OF TOOLS FOR COMPANIES TO ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

in the garment supply chain.



DONATION CAMPAIGN FOR MIGRANT WORKERS AFFECTED BY COVID 19

€ 16.000 was raised to support partner organisations in India with their relief work.



FOCUS EXTENDED TO PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

Through the participation in the '[Together for decent leather](#)' project, Arisa extended its focus to Pakistan and Bangladesh.



CAMPAIGN FOR MANDATORY DUE DILIGENCE LEGISLATION FOR COMPANIES

Arisa, together with a coalition of civil society organisations, trade unions, religious organisations, companies and academics campaigned for [mandatory due diligence legislation](#) for companies to ensure that human rights and the environment are respected.

¹ One project focuses on both natural stone and garment and textile.

40 years Arisa – India Committee of the Netherlands



40 years ago, on August 15 1980, the India Committee of the Netherlands (ICN) was officially founded.

The immediate reason for the establishment of ICN was the Emergency proclaimed in 1975 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, because she could no longer manage the protests against her economic policy. Many political organisations were banned, thousands of people were imprisoned for political reasons and the press was heavily censored. Because the Dutch media and politicians remained uncritical towards the Indian prime minister, a group of Dutch scientists and students decided in 1976 to provide better and critical information about developments in India for the Dutch public. A decentralised organisation was created, consisting of regional groups in different parts of the Netherlands, coordinated from a national secretariat that became the ICN in 1980. A documentation folder was compiled, and the India Newsletter was published, which turned into a bimonthly magazine.

In addition to providing information, lobbying activities were undertaken. The first success was achieved in 1981, being the action against the supply of shrimp trawlers as development aid. These trawlers, destined for the deep sea, would cast their nets in the already over-fished coastal waters and thus destroy the livelihood of traditional fishermen. Ultimately, the Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation decided to cancel the supply of shrimp trawlers. The success of this campaign made ICN well-known nationally. In the following years, several issues related to development cooperation to India were raised, such as fertilizer deliveries as development aid, human rights, the influence of the pharmaceutical industry, the Bhopal disaster and dairy aid.

In the early nineties, ICN became an active member of the newly established Clean Clothes Campaign, which is dedicated to the rights of mostly female workers in the garment industry. Later, attention shifted to the cotton seed and vegetable seed sector, natural stone and other sectors. Since the mid-1990s, the focus of ICN campaigns has been on caste discrimination (as member of the International Dalit Solidarity Network), child labour (as member of the Stop Child Labour coalition) and responsible business conduct (especially related to labour rights). This involved close collaboration with several Indian NGOs. This work resulted in more than 20 reports on the abuses in global supply chains in India, showcasing child labour, bonded labour, severe working conditions, sexual harassment, and payment below the minimum wage. These reports were used in activities and campaigns aimed at companies and political decision-makers. ICN frequently tried to influence trade missions and asked Dutch ministers to draw attention to human rights when visiting India. Questions, triggered by research and reports by ICN, were asked several times in the Dutch Parliament and in the European Parliament. Companies have been encouraged by ICN's reports to take measures to combat child labour and poor working conditions.

Since February 1, 2019, ICN was relaunched under the name Arisa: Advocating Rights in South Asia in order to include the more regional focus on South Asia. Arisa continues to advocate for responsible business conduct by companies in their global supply chains, respecting the human rights of all workers and other stakeholders involved. The work is conducted together with many partner organisations, in the Netherlands, Europe and in India and South Asia. The ICN's core values, developed during a turbulent time in India, continue to inspire and inform Arisa and her partners.

Cooperation with partners

Arisa partners with NGOs and trade unions, both in India and South Asia and in the Netherlands and at European level. We develop and implement projects together, we carry out research together and we cooperate in lobby and advocacy efforts. Our focus is on long-term partnerships, based on mutual trust and equality.

R. Venkat Reddy, National convener of the Indian NGO M.V. Foundation (MVF) had this to say about the collaboration with Arisa:

“MVF values its partnership with ARISA because it is built on the conviction to end child labour globally and ensuring children’s right to education. ARISA’s support through its lobbying and advocacy, building networks with like-minded partners including civil society, corporates and governments across continents, has enhanced MVF’s vision to carry on with hope.”

in the next section we will showcase two further examples of Arisa’s cooperation with partners in 2020.

“MVF values its partnership with ARISA because it is built on the conviction to end child labour globally and ensuring children’s right to education. ARISA’s support through its lobbying and advocacy, building networks with like-minded partners including civil society, corporates and governments across continents, has enhanced MVF’s vision to carry on with hope.”

Call for action on migrant labourers

At the end of March 2020, the Indian government implemented a complete lockdown of the country in response to the emerging Covid-19 pandemic. The economy closed down and public transport was cancelled. Millions of migrant workers lost their jobs and were stuck in their workplaces, without money and food. Partners of Arisa immediately reacted to this emergency situation and supported migrant workers and their families with food and hygiene articles. These relief activities needed financial support and therefore Arisa decided to compile a call for donations and distribute this through its network. Approximately € 16.000 was collected and transferred to our partners SAVE, READ and Manjari for their support work, thus providing several thousands of families in the garment and natural stone sector with the necessary means to survive during the first weeks of the crisis. The partners not only focussed on emergency relief, but also on connecting the migrant workers to government provisions, so that they gained access to the support that was provided by the government.

Arisa’s Indian partner SAVE interviewed an Indian tenant from the city Tiruppur in TamilNadu, who was struggling with the effects the pandemic was having on her life: *“My husband is working as a contractor. It is very difficult to run our family without job and income due to the lockdown. The government provided INR 1000/- and relief materials, but how do we pay our house rent?”*

A garment industrial worker: *“My husband and I are working in the garment industry. We have three children. We can meet our family needs only if we work. We could not pay our house rent as we have no job. We thought that we will give March month rent in the next month. But, situation has become worse due to the lockdown extension. It is very difficult to meet food needs these days.”*

“My husband and I are working in the garment industry. We have three children. We can meet our family needs only if we work. We could not pay our house rent as we have no job.”

Work: No Child's Business (WNCB)

Arisa participates in the Work: No Child's Business programme as a member of the Stop Child Labour coalition (SCL). In alliance with Save the Children and UNICEF the WNCB programme contributes in six countries to the elimination of child labour: India, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Mali, Uganda and Vietnam. Arisa heads the Netherlands chapter within the India programme and it collaborates with Indian partners ARAVALI and Manjari to improve the situation regarding child labour in the natural stone sector in Rajasthan. Information and evidence from the ground is shared with natural stone companies in the Netherlands and Europe. At the same time, information on the Dutch/Flemish sector agreement [TruStone](#) is shared among local businesses in Rajasthan, thus facilitating a dialogue on responsible business conduct and improving the labour conditions of the natural stone workers.



Girl breaking stones in a quarry (India), source *Alamy*

Cross-cutting issues: caste discrimination

Caste discrimination has always been a prominent issue for Arisa. Caste-based discrimination involves violations of human rights, including but not limited to labour rights, land rights, and gender equality rights as well as the right to access health, education and justice systems. Caste systems divide people into unequal and hierarchical social groups. Both state and non-state actors exclude those at the bottom of the caste system – known in South Asia as Dalits – from resources, services, and development, keeping most Dalits in severe poverty. Caste-based discrimination is found in every sphere of life in caste-affected countries, including the workplace. In 2020 Arisa increased its efforts to combat caste discrimination, integrating it into research guidelines, project proposals and advocacy activities. Through this, we contribute to raising awareness on how caste discrimination manifests itself in global supply chains and how this can be addressed. In the next paragraph we highlight some examples.

Together for Decent Leather

In April 2020, Arisa joined the project [Together for Decent Leather](#), aimed at improving the working conditions of leather workers in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. The project is part of a consortium of European and South Asian NGOs. It has a specific focus on discrimination based on caste, religion, and gender. In India, the leather industry is inextricably linked to Dalits and Muslims, due to the Indian context of segregation in job opportunities based on these identity markers. The research on the situation of leather workers in the three countries will include specific questions related to caste and religious background. Arisa is responsible for a specific paper that will be written on caste discrimination in the leather sector, planned for 2021.



© Asim Rafiqui

Research on forced labour in spinning mills in Tamil Nadu

Together with SOMO and local Indian researchers, Arisa contributed to a research project on forced labour in South Indian spinning mills. Over 700 interviews were conducted with mill workers. A caste component was included when the data was analysed, for example by looking at wages, working hours, and conditions such as harassment, possibilities for promotion and rank of workers in relation to the workers' caste background. Local organisations that were part of the research had extensive experience with addressing caste-based discrimination in the garment sector. The research findings will be presented in a report in 2021.

Urgent appeals

Violations of human rights take place in global supply chains, and it is important that the people affected by these violations have access to grievance mechanisms and remedies. Where needed, Arisa takes up urgent appeal cases and engages in dialogue with involved brands and multi-stakeholder initiatives in the Netherlands and Europe. In 2020 Indian NGOs and trade unions informed us about several human rights violations in the garment and textile sector and we presented these complaints to international brands. Covid-19 has brought specific cases to light, such as the non-payment of wages to workers during the lockdown. Every complaint requires a different approach, depending on the local situation and on brands' responding and taking action. In the next paragraph we will present an example of a complaint raised.

Complaint against C&A Netherlands

In May 2020, Arisa filed a complaint with the Complaints and Disputes Committee (CDC) of the Dutch Agreement on Sustainable Garments and Textile (AGT) against C&A Netherlands, a member of the AGT, for serious human rights violations at one of its suppliers in Tamil Nadu, India. Arisa had been in contact with C&A since October 2019 to arrive at a solution. This was the first complaint handled by the CDC and therefore set a precedent. After a hearing, the Complaints Committee published [ruling](#) in December 2020.

Arisa welcomes the CDC decision that C&A did not share enough information with Arisa, which meant that no meaningful dialogue could take place. In doing so, the CDC clearly indicated that companies affiliated with the AGT must share information with relevant external parties about possible abuses and risks in their supply chain and how they address them.

Although a number of points put forward by Arisa were acknowledged, we still see room for improvement to ensure access to redress for workers in international production chains. Based on the experience with this complaint, Arisa provided [a number of recommendations](#) to improve the complaints mechanism of the AGT.

Multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSI)

Arisa is involved in several multi-stakeholder initiatives, where NGOs, trade unions, sector associations, businesses and governments cooperate to address risks related to human rights, workers' health and safety, environmental impact and animal welfare. Arisa has different roles in these MSIs, working in cooperation with businesses, acting as an expert on human rights issues and being a critical watchdog. Arisa's overall goal is to promote the defence of human rights in global supply chains. In this chapter Arisa's role in two sector agreements is further explained.

Dutch Agreement on Sustainable Garment and Textiles

As an NGO party to the [Agreement on Sustainable Garments and Textile](#), Arisa is regularly in contact with affiliated garment brands to provide input on their risk assessment and prioritisation of risks of human rights violations in their supply chain. In 2020 different issues were discussed, e.g. mapping out the supply chain beyond immediate suppliers and how to engage with workers, trade unions and NGOs. Several webinars were organised, e.g. on the relaxation of Indian labour laws during the lockdown.

Trustone Initiative

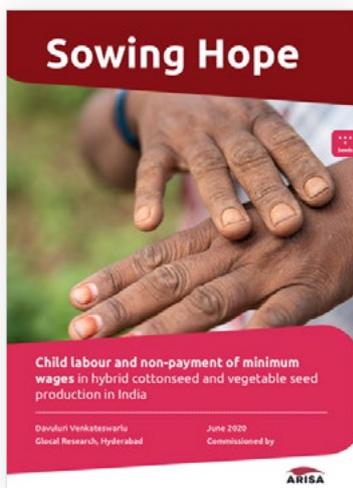
Arisa is an important member of the [Trustone](#) Initiative that started in 2019. With this agreement, set up by the Dutch and Flemish natural stone sector, the Dutch and Flemish government, NGOs and trade unions, have agreed to realise a more responsible production and procurement of natural stone. TruStone is aimed at both importing and non-importing companies, as well as at procurement agencies within the government e.g. municipalities. Arisa is active in the steering committee of this covenant as well as in a number of working groups. In 2020 Arisa stimulated the involvement of more Dutch municipalities with the Initiative by writing to the responsible policy makers and/or council members. In September 2020 Arisa participated in a conference in Stuttgart on public procurement of natural stone, where the experience of Trustone was shared. The first annual report of the covenant can be found [here](#).



Research

Knowledge of the situation on-the-ground in production countries in South Asia is key to the work of Arisa in the Netherlands. Together with local partners Arisa conducts research on human rights issues in the garment, natural stone, seed production and leather sector. Through its research reports Arisa advocates for improvements with businesses and governments in the Netherlands and at the European level. In 2020 three reports were published.

Sowing Hope



On 12 June 2020, the World Day Against Child Labour, Arisa published the report '[Sowing Hope](#)'. The report reveals that important steps have been taken over the past five years to combat child labour in cottonseed and vegetable seed production in India. The survey took place on farms in six Indian states where seeds are produced for international, and several large Indian companies. Child labour has declined, particularly in areas where substantial interventions took place. Nevertheless, children still work in seed production, especially during the cross-pollination season. In addition to child labour, the study also examined the payment of minimum wages. In this field, the situation has worsened: the gap between prevailing wages and minimum wages has increased in some regions. Particularly women are still paid below the minimum wage rates and are also discriminated against because they are often assigned different and lower paid tasks than men. In the

report, Arisa calls on the seed companies, Dutch seed association Plantum and the Dutch government to take steps to tackle the abuses by cooperating more closely and looking critically at their procurement policies and prices. Sector association Plantum responded to the report on its [website](#).

Textile recycling unravelled

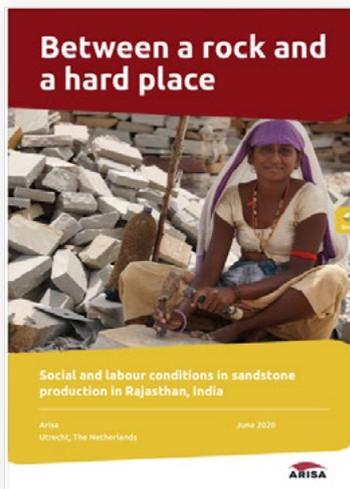


From January 2018 till June 2020, Arisa joined textile collector Sypany and NGO Humana People to People India in a project on post and pre-consumer textile recycling in India. The focus was on eliminating child labour in the textile recycling sector in Panipat, the largest textile recycling hub in India. Research was conducted on several aspects of the textile recycling sector, which led to the publication '[Textile recycling unravelled](#)'. Textile recycling in India is still an area that has remained largely unexplored. The report provides an initial insight into the textile recycling industry in Panipat, the handling of imported post-consumer textile in India, and into what happens to the pre-consumer textile generated in Indian garment factories. It also addresses the prevalence of child labour and labour rights violations in this industry. The draft report was sent to all companies and organisations that are mentioned in the report, which led to a dialogue with several companies on the

issues raised and how to address them. The Dutch newspaper [Trouw](#) referred to the report in a news

article. In general, ideas on circular textile with more emphasis on recycling and the use of recycled material are becoming more and more widespread. Arisa receives various requests for input on circular textile activities, such as studies and strategies. For Arisa it is important that also in the sourcing of recycled materials responsible business criteria need to be addressed. Both the post and pre-consumer textile process is part of the supply chain of garment brands, and therefore they should take their responsibility to include these aspects into their due diligence efforts.

Between a rock and a hard place



The third report that Arisa published in June 2020 is called '[Between a rock and a hard place](#)'. This study shows that there are still difficult working conditions in the sandstone industry in Rajasthan. The report reveals that progress has been made compared to research carried out in 2005. Child labour has been greatly reduced in the quarries, but still occurs in cobblestone making by home workers. The research also looks at the payment of minimum wages. Here the situation is a lot less positive. A lot of workers get paid by piece. Their income is dependent on the number of pieces they produce, therefore reaching the legal minimum income becomes almost impossible, let alone a living wage. A logical consequence for a family is to enlist the labour of their children in the cobblestone industry to help provide a better income. Furthermore, the report shows that silicosis, an incurable lung disease, is a major problem that still garners far too little attention. A draft of the report

has been shared with 112 companies from five European countries. With several companies we had a meaningful dialogue about the content of the report. The report is also available in [French](#) and has been brought to the attention of French natural stone companies.

Cooperation with businesses

Arisa aims to contribute to human rights improvements in global supply chains. In addition to producing critical research and advocacy, we cooperate with businesses in joint projects and programmes that aim to improve working conditions in specific sectors. Arisa involves local partners in these projects, as they have the on-the-ground expertise and can share their knowledge and advice with the businesses. An important aspect for Arisa's participation with businesses in joint programmes, is Arisa's continued critical and independent role regarding human rights issues and policies of the businesses involved. In the next paragraph we will provide an example of our work with businesses. In 2020 Arisa also collaborated with natural stone companies Arte Group, Michel Oprey & Beisterveld, Jetsone and Stone NV in two different projects.

Factory support programme

After a first experience from 2017 – 2020, Arisa joined a new programme with garment brands in Tamil Nadu, India. This 'Factory Support programme' aims to improve business processes and labour conditions of workers in the garment industry in Tamil Nadu. Arisa works together with the Secretariat of the Agreement on Sustainable Garments and Textile (AGT), Mondiaal FNV and Indian NGO SAVE, together with seven garment companies affiliated with the AGT: Euretco, Fabienne Chapot, HEMA, O'Neill, Prénatal, The Sting and WE Fashion. The focus of the programme is to support garment and textile suppliers in Tamil Nadu in improving worker-management relations through fostering the awareness of worker rights and responsibilities. A training programme to establish and strengthen worker-management committees in 75 factories is the main component of the programme, which is in compliance with Indian labour laws and regulations. Good worker-management relations help businesses grow sustainably. Functioning worker-management committees that foster meaningful dialogue between workers and management help the factory management to understand the root causes and solve problems in a co-operative manner inside the factory. In addition to training workers, a regional helpline for workers has been upgraded and linked to the complaints and dispute mechanism under the Agreement. This will allow the participating companies to take specific action to combat malpractices in their supply chain.

Lobby and advocacy

Advocacy directed at businesses and governments is an important activity for Arisa. Based on evidence emanating from local research and activities of partners, Arisa addresses human rights issues in global supply chains of businesses in the Netherlands and other European countries. At the same time, Arisa asks governments to hold businesses accountable for violations in their supply chains and to implement the **six steps of due diligence**. The government itself is an actor in terms of public procurement, both in garments and textile and in natural stone. Advocacy is carried out through direct conversations with policy makers, through parliamentary questions and through lobby platforms such as the CSR Platform and the human rights network BMO. In the next paragraph, Arisa will provide some examples of lobby activities.

Municipalities on public procurement

Between June and October 2020, Arisa together with trade unions FNV and CNV contacted 81 Dutch municipalities to enquire about their purchasing policy with regards to natural stone and to raise awareness about the Trustone Initiative, motivating them to join. The contact was made both through

the municipal council and through municipal policy makers responsible for sustainability issues. Several municipalities responded enthusiastically and expressed their interest to put the issue on the agenda in their municipal council. In most municipalities the problems surrounding the extraction of natural stone were still unknown to them. As a result of this advocacy activity, questions were raised in 22 municipalities or discussions started about the potential risks related to the procurement of natural stone. The municipalities of The Hague and Alkmaar have subsequently joined the Trustone Initiative. With the remaining 59 municipalities follow-up contact needs to be made.

Webinar on labour law reforms India

In 2020, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, a relaxation of labour laws was implemented in India in order to stimulate the economy and to stimulate investments. In a number of states, including Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, several labour laws have been suspended for up to three years. These include laws related to industrial disputes, occupational health and safety, working conditions of workers, freedom of association, contract labour and the position of migrant workers. These relaxations are a gross violation of several ILO conventions. In June 2020, Arisa organised a webinar with Mondiaal FNV to discuss the worrying developments regarding labour legislation, and Indian speakers and Dutch stakeholders reacted to it. The webinar led to a heightened awareness among businesses, NGOs and other stakeholders that this relaxation adversely affects the workers in their supply chains and that they should address this issue with their suppliers.

Mandatory human rights due diligence legislation

Arisa is actively contributing to the advocacy efforts on mandatory human rights due diligence legislation in the Netherlands through its participation in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) platform. In June this led to the presentation by four political parties of the memorandum [Against slavery and exploitation – a legal minimum for corporate responsibility](#) in Parliament, which basically contained a plea for a law. The aim is to develop broad due diligence legislation in order to prevent and address actual and potential human rights violations and negative impact on the environment caused in the production chain of companies. To support this process, a coalition of companies, academics, churches, trade unions and civil society organisations, including Arisa, launched the [Initiative for Sustainable and Responsible Business Conduct \(IDVO\)](#). Parallel to this initiative, civil society organisations are involved in providing input on the main contours of the law and in discussing the possible content with lawyers and parliamentarians. A further developed proposal is expected in Jan - March 2021.

Child labour

The elimination of child labour in global supply chains is an important objective in the work of Arisa. As a member of the [Stop Child Labour coalition](#)

Arisa has worked with different partners in India to implement so-called 'Child Labour Free Zones' (CLFZ). In a designated village or neighbourhood all children that are out-of-school are targeted to be (re)integrated into formal, full-time education. No distinction is made between various forms of child labour, as the principle is

that every child has the right to education. The CLFZ-approach works with a community-based approach, where all stakeholders in a community collaborate, to stress the importance of education for children. Local business owners are also part of the approach, and in the case of international supply chains also the international buyers. The CLFZ-approach was developed 30 years ago by Arisa's partner MV Foundation and successfully implemented in India and also in various African countries. It has proven to be a sustainable way to get children out of labour and into school. Arisa tried to motivate international brands to adopt this approach and support child labour free zones in the areas where they source materials. An example is mentioned below.



Child Labour Free Zone in the granite sector

In 2017 Arisa started a Child Labour Free Zone project together with natural stone company Arte Group, MV Foundation and the local supplier of Arte in Andhra Pradesh, India. In 2020 the first project ended and a follow-up project started for four more years. It was difficult to implement the project in 2020, because of Covid-19. All schools were closed. Migrant workers who were able to leave, left the area to move back to their native places. Many migrant workers got stuck in the project area without a job as production was temporarily shut down. The strength of the Child Labour Free Zone model manifested as the local staff of MV Foundation was able to provide relief. When children are found working in the quarries, MV Foundation contacts the government and together they are able to take the children out of labour and warn the owners of the business that they should not employ children below 18 years. So also in challenging times the CLFZ model was able to showcase its strength.

Arisa in the media 2020

Media reports support the advocacy work of Arisa. In 2020 a total of 27 articles were published in newspapers and online news sites at national and international level. These articles reached millions of readers worldwide and they underline our call to respect human rights in global supply chains. Below we have included a list of news articles about Arisa, which are also listed on our [website](#):

- 21 Nov 2020: [Vier op de vijf kledingstukken belandt op de afvalberg, maar daar brengt deze ondernemer verandering in](#) (MO*)
- 24 Sep 2020: [Gemeenten nemen deel aan IMVO-convenant TruStone](#) (Vakblad Natuursteen)
- 9 Aug 2020: India: [New report released on prevalence on child labour and labour rights violations in the textile recycling industry in Panipat](#) (ww)
- Aug 2020: [Katoen- en zaadtelers in India: Minder kinderarbeid, maar nog steeds geen minimumloon](#) (FNV Agrarisch Groen)
- 24 Jul 2020: [Opinie: Het is tijd om ons afvalbeleid onder de loep te nemen](#) (Dagblad van het Noorden)
- 21 Jul 2020: [CAIF Curates: Industry Reports](#) (Circular Apparel Innovation Factory)
- 9 Jul: [Arisa-onderzoek: Minder kinderarbeid, maar slechtere beloning](#) (5e Nieuwsbrief Zaden, FNV Agrarisch Groen)
- 30 Jun 2020: [Kinderarbeid sterk verminderd in groeves India](#) (Vakblad Natuursteen)
- 29 Jun 2020: [Kende jij de inktzwarte bladzijden uit de geschiedenis van C&A al?](#) (De Correspondent)
- 27 Jun 2020: [Kind werkt in India aan recycling kleding](#) (Reformatorisch Dagblad)
- 26 Jun 2020: [Complexe keten van gebruikt Nederlands textiel in India met risico's op kinderarbeid en slechte arbeidsomstandigheden](#) (Duurzaam-Ondernemen.nl)
- 26 Jun 2020: [Kinderarbeid bij recycling van Nederlandse kleding in India](#) (afvalgids.nl)
- 26 Jun 2020: [Kinderarbeid bij recycling van Nederlandse kleding in India](#) (Trouw)
- 11 Jun 2020: [Rapport van ARISA over kinderarbeid en minimumloon in de zadensector in India](#) (Plantum.nl)
- 9 Jun 2020: [De mode is dood, lang leve de tragere textielketen?](#) (MO*)
- 22 May 2020: [Het alterego van Indiase zandsteen: Polycaro op bezoek in India](#) (Polycaro)
- 27 Mar 2020: [Examining Stigmatization of Leather Industry: By Focusing on the Labor Forms of Dalits and Buraku](#) (FINDAS)
- 2 Mar 2020: [Contre le travail forcé: l'approche ESG](#) (AGEFI)
- 12 Feb 2020: [Kinderarbeit in Indien: Unicef soll bei Vertuschung geholfen haben](#) (Deutschlandfunk Kultur)
- 31 Jan 2020: [Unicef relativiert fragwürdige Kinderarbeitsstudien](#) (Oldenburger Onlinezeitung)
- 31 Jan 2020: [Unicef relativiert fragwürdige Kinderarbeitsstudien](#) (Wallstreet-Online.de)
- 31 Jan 2020: [How industry bodies are using the NCPDR and UNICEF to whitewash accusations of child labour](#) (The Caravan)
- 31 Jan 2020: [Wie ausgerechnet Unicef half, Kinderarbeit zu verharmlosen](#) (Der Spiegel)

Website, newsletter and social media

In 2019, along with the name change and the introduction of our new logo, Arisa launched a new website. We see that more and more people are finding their way to the website to take a look at our news articles and our reports. Arisa also published six newsletters in 2020, in both Dutch and English, that were distributed to 4.700 interested persons and organisations in our network. The newsletters contained information about the activities of Arisa and our partners.

Arisa is also active on social media, through Twitter and LinkedIn. In 2021 Arisa will further expand the use of social media to raise issues related to our work.

Outlook 2021

Although there is still no clear end to the Covid-19 crisis, the expectation is that things will improve in 2021 as restrictions are gradually relaxed. As Arisa we will continue our work to support the defence of human rights in South Asia. We will continue to collaborate with partners in India and we will further strengthen our contacts in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal.

A research report on forced labour in Tamil Nadu spinning mills, together with SOMO, is expected for publication in Spring 2021. With the information in the report, we expect to enter into a dialogue with several garment brands that source in the region and to discuss further improvements to the present situation. Another report that will be published in 2021 focuses on a bonded labour practice in cottonseed production in Gujarat, India.

Furthermore, in the Together for Decent Leather programme, which aims to improve working conditions for leather workers in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, there will be research and lobby activities. Arisa will work on mapping supply chains in India and develop a paper on caste and religion issues within the leather production industry. With the outcomes of this research, we will initiate advocacy and dialogue with the brands associated with the highlighted issues.

2021 is the last year of the Dutch Sector Agreement on Sustainable Garment and Textiles. Arisa has been actively involved in this agreement and will critically join the discussions about a second phase. Focus on stakeholder engagement and real impact on the ground will be important issues for us.

The work on natural stone will continue, both in Rajasthan and other regions in India. In the framework of the Trustone Initiative, Arisa will commission risk assessments together with FNV and CNV in other production countries as well, such as Zimbabwe and Vietnam.

The United Nations declared the year 2021 the International Year of the Elimination of Child Labour. Arisa will continue to participate through the Stop Child Labour coalition and the Work: No Child's Business programme in different activities to raise awareness of the issues at hand. We are excited about the prospect of continuing our cooperation with our partners and to further strengthen our network in South Asia and Europe.

Finances

Arisa receives funding for different projects and programmes, mostly in cooperation with other partners, both in the Netherlands and in South Asia. Furthermore, there is a group of long-term private donors that contributes to our work. In 2020 we asked for additional gifts to support migrant workers in India who were suffering because of the Covid-19 lockdown. Almost € 16.000 was raised and transferred to four different partners.

Statement of expenditure and income

To increase the impact of our activities a sustainable financial strategy is important. Although Arisa's income is almost entirely based on project funding, the aim is to receive multiple-year funding from different donors. In 2020, most of the funding originated from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for various projects. Furthermore, Arisa raised a relatively large amount of € 20.807 from gifts and donations, partly due to a donation campaign for migrant workers in India in relation to the Covid pandemic. For the coming years, Arisa aims to also approach private donors for our work.

The income of Arisa in 2020 came from government funding, gifts and donations and other sources. The total income was € 421.323. An amount of € 238.983 which had been received from donors prior to 2020 was released to income as it was attributable to this financial year. The total income attributable to 2020 thus amounted to € 660.306, whereas total 2020 expenditure amounted to € 653.065. Consequently, a positive balance of € 7.241 remained which has been added to the reserves.

	Realisation 2020	Budget 2020
	€	€
Government subsidies	397.058	358.300
Private donors	0	42.245
European Commission subsidies	0	17.896
Gifts and donations	20.807	10.000
Other income	3.458	0
Total income	421.323	428.440
Personnel costs	495.724	519.066
Activity costs	103.548	68.167
Office expenses and general costs	53.793	76.200
Total expenditure	653.065	663.432
Result before mutation of subsidies received in advance	-231.742	-234.992
Withdrawal from subsidies received in advance	238.983	238.983
Addition to organisations' assets	7.241	3.991