Empowering ethical supply chains
Introducing Sedex

Sedex is a world leader in responsible sourcing. We empower companies with technology and insights to implement practices and policies to build a responsible business and supply chain.

Our solutions provide organisations with the practical tools and guidance needed to operate ethically, source responsibly, and work with suppliers to ensure fair working conditions for the people who make their products and deliver their services.

With Sedex, businesses can map, assess, analyse and report on their supply chains to better manage and improve their ethical performance and work with other businesses.
Our vision and purpose

Sedex’s **vision** is to drive organisations globally to improve the lives of the people they impact.

To deliver our vision, our purpose is to collaborate with organisations to provide the most trusted and efficient information, tools and services to manage risk and drive responsible business in global supply chains.

We believe all people have the right to equality, a safe workplace, and the means to support themselves and their families in employment free of bribery and corruption. This should be using sustainable methods that keep the environment intact for future generations.

We are passionate about helping businesses become truly ethical and sustainable across their operations and supply chains.

We work with business, government and industry partners to drive change.

Today, Sedex and our members reach **28 million people** globally.
Sedex at a glance

- 65,000 members
- 170 countries
- 7 regional offices
- 45+ industries across our membership
- Nearly 20 years of data
- 31,000+ audits added to our platform in 2021
- 28 million people reached

Our offices
Sedex member sectors

- Food, beverage and tobacco: 32%
- Apparel, textiles and luxury goods: 11%
- Retail: 11%
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing: 11%
- Perishables: 11%
- Containers, packaging and printing: 6%
- Stationery, toy and gift: 7%
- Household and personal products: 4%
- Manufacturing: 3%
- Other: 19%
- Household and personal products: 2%
Tackling social and environmental issues in global supply chains

Among businesses, investors, governments and consumers, there is a growing awareness of the risks to workers and the environmental risks present in business supply chains.

Businesses can play a vital role in combatting these global issues through their business practices to address the social and environmental risks in supply chains. Issues can include:

- Modern slavery and forced labour
- Gender inequality
- Poor working conditions with severe health and safety risks
- Low wages
- Mistreatment, discrimination and violence in the workplace
- Illegal and exploitative employment practices
- Environmental degradation, such as high greenhouse gas emissions or depletion of natural resources.

The decisions businesses make can have both positive and negative impacts through their supply chain operations. Sedex believes companies can be powerful agents for good – and make a positive impact on workers and the environment.
Supporting responsible business practices

Operating responsibly means that an organisation ensures their business practices – both in their own operations and across their supply chain – limit negative impacts or have a positive impact on people and the environment.

They will operate ethically – actively sourcing and procuring products and services in a sustainable and socially conscious way.

Operating responsibly brings financial and operational benefits, builds trust with investors, and strengthens credibility with consumers. It also benefits people working in the supply chain.

Sedex helps companies on their journey to become more responsible and enable these benefits.

Meeting global policies and goals

Sedex tools and services align with the United Nations Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), and support to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our solutions are built on the principles of these and meet the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code and conventions of the International Labour Organization.
Building supply chain transparency

Supply chain transparency is essential for sourcing responsibly and tackling ethical issues. A company must understand their whole supply chain in order to identify and address the risks to workers and the environment present within it.

Protecting workers through occupational health and safety

Businesses must protect their employees and support the wellbeing of the workers in their supply chains. Healthy, safe working environments help workers thrive, support operational success, contribute to the SDGs and are a requirement in many national laws.

Companies must be able to check that appropriate health and safety standards are in place throughout their supply chains.

Tackling forced labour

Forced labour is the most extreme form of labour exploitation, making it a salient issue for many companies where the risk is high. It’s estimated that 24.9 million people worldwide are victims of forced labour.

Forced labour is notoriously difficult to detect. Businesses need effective tools to detect, remedy and prevent forced labour risks in their supply chains.

Driving gender equality and women’s empowerment

Gender inequality is recognised as an endemic issue globally. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by many issues in global supply chains, including forced labour where they make up 58% of victims. Through the Sedex platform, companies can collect, analyse and make decisions using gender-disaggregated data.

Protecting the environment

Companies need to understand and manage the environmental impacts of their operations, maintaining environmental standards in their own business and supporting these standards across their supply chain.

Businesses have a responsibility to play their part in tackling climate change and meeting environmental targets. This is a legal requirement and a growing consumer and investor expectation.

Driving sustainable livelihoods, living wages, and worker benefits

Low wages are the fundamental reason for poor working conditions and a driver for exploitation globally. Many companies recognise that legal minimum wages are not sufficient in several countries.

Living wages and comprehensive benefits are critical components of decent work and directly impact several of the SDGs, with the gap between actual and living wages a key metric.

Engaging with suppliers to effect change

Businesses must collaborate with their suppliers to drive effective change through supply chains. Understanding suppliers’ situations and challenges is critical to resolving the issues faced by workers.

By engaging with suppliers, companies can make informed decisions about the best way to provide support or the changes they may need to make to their own practices. They can build lasting partnerships with suppliers to create long-term solutions with mutually beneficial outcomes for all.

Promoting worker representation through worker voices

Worker representation and engagement underpins all efforts to improve working conditions in supply chains. Amplifying workers’ voices empowers them and provides insight into their lived experiences.

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Challenges to overcome in the supply chain

Companies can face many difficulties in their efforts to build supply chain transparency, manage risks, and operate more responsibly.

- The complexity of global supply chains makes it harder to see where components, products and services originate and who the workers in supply chains are.

- Endemic societal issues, such as poverty or poor law enforcement contribute to the issues that workers face.

- Varying legal, social and economic standards across nations and industries make it harder for companies to enforce consistently responsible business practices and operations.

- Ethical standards are sometimes voluntary, and there are varying standards and levels of uptake amongst companies. This can lead to ineffective standards and excessive administrative burden for businesses.

Sedex supports businesses to solve these complex challenges, with a single universal standard and tools that can be used across industries, enabling businesses to collaborate and share information to reduce the administrative burden.
Our solutions

The Sedex platform and tools work together to help members manage their supply chains and detect, prevent and remedy issues.

Our leading tools include our pioneering ethical data exchange platform, which enables businesses to conduct risk assessment and self-assessment, data analysis, reporting and e-Learning. We also offer our social audit methodology SMETA, Virtual Assessment and Worker Voice tools.
Supply chain transparency

Organisations must understand their supply chain to identify ways to source more responsibly, and to identify, prevent and remediate negative impacts.

Supply chain auditing and assessment

Assessing suppliers to understand working conditions is an essential part of responsible sourcing. Our social audit methodology, SMETA, is used all over the world to help companies do this.

Risk assessment

Understanding inherent risks in supply chains helps organisations to prioritise taking action where risks are highest. Sedex’s platform also incorporates site-specific data on members’ and their suppliers’ sites to build risk profiles.

Reporting

To fulfil reporting requirements and help companies to demonstrate progress against their social and environmental commitments.
Supply chain mapping

Organisations need to understand how their products or services are produced, where and by whom.

Data storing, sharing and analysis

So organisations can draw insights and make informed business decisions.

Consulting, training and guidance

Supporting organisations to create responsible sourcing programmes that meet investor, consumer and legislative requirements.

Meeting legislation

Helping organisations meet legal reporting and supply chain due diligence requirements, as mandated by various national laws around the world.
Contact us to learn more about our work, our membership and our technology:

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