

A close-up, monochromatic photograph of several spools of thread on a sewing machine. The spools are arranged diagonally across the frame, with some in sharp focus and others blurred in the background. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the thread and the metallic components of the machine.

Supply Chain Labor Rights and Independent Monitoring in the Global Apparel Industry

W R C

WORKER RIGHTS
CONSORTIUM



The Workforce

20 million workers
80% women



The Industry

20,000+ Export
Garment Factories

Export Apparel Production for the USA: Some Key Countries



China



Vietnam



Mexico



India



Pakistan



Honduras



Thailand



Indonesia



Bangladesh

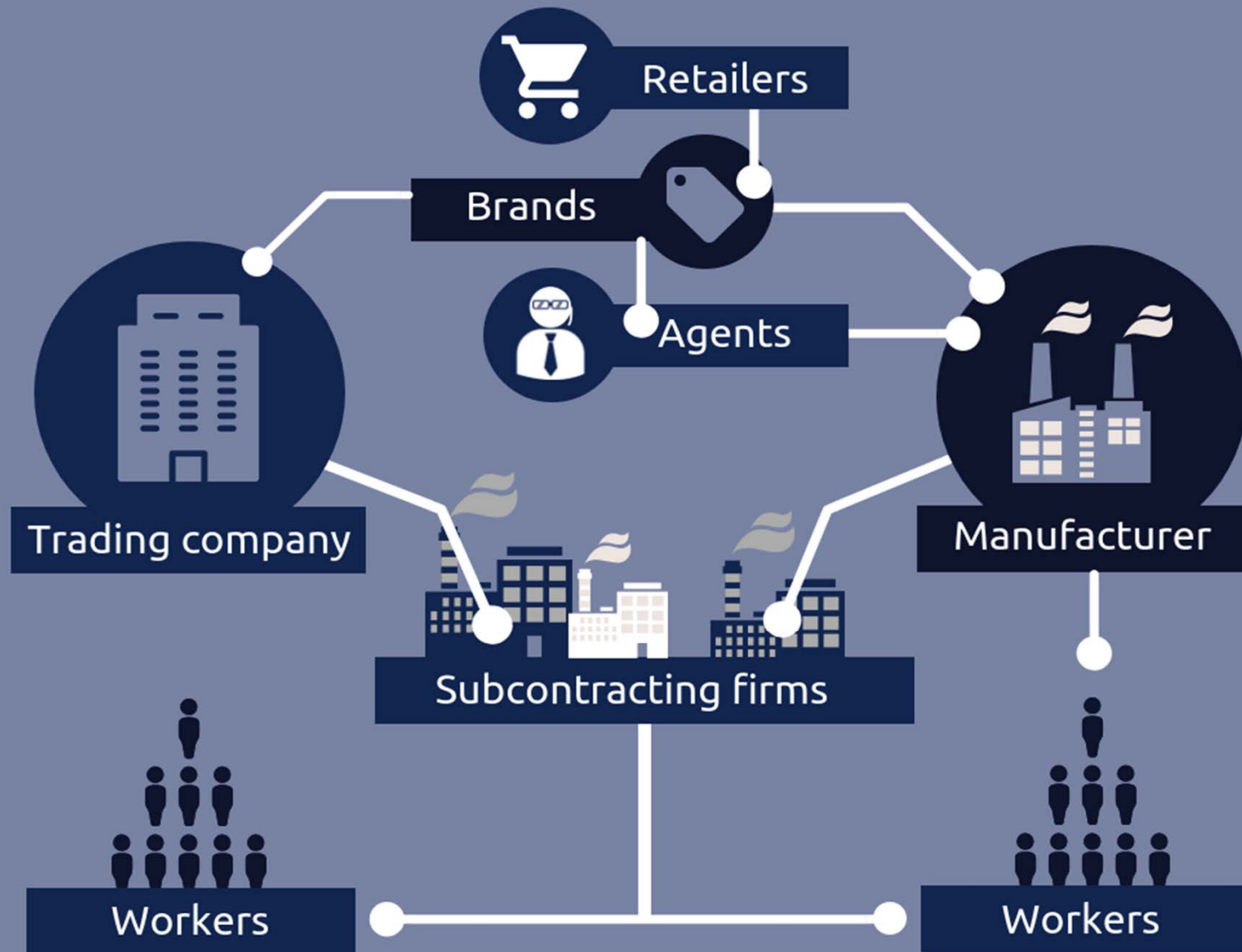
Setting the stage for
sweatshop abuses



A globalizing industry...



and a worker rights crisis



Key Dynamics of Global Garment Production





Enormous pressure to drive down costs

Governments believe foreign buyers care more about low prices, fast delivery than worker rights

Cost of cloth/energy/transport is fixed; labor can be squeezed

Factories know they can use illegal means to control labor costs and speed delivery times

Factories skirt wage laws, oppose unions, cut corners on safety

Result: poverty wages, poor working conditions, dangerous factories

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Industry Audits & Certifications Fail Workers

Audits and certifications are purchased by factories and buyers.

Auditing and certifying firms are for-profit entities relying on volume sales and repeat business.

Workers are never interviewed away from the factory, factories are never inspected by safety experts.

Auditing reports are kept confidential, no requirement for remediation of violations.

Result: Deadly fires, forced labor, rampant wage theft in audited and “certified” factories.

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WORKER-CENTERED SUPPLY CHAIN ACCOUNTABILITY



Legally-binding
Codes of Conduct

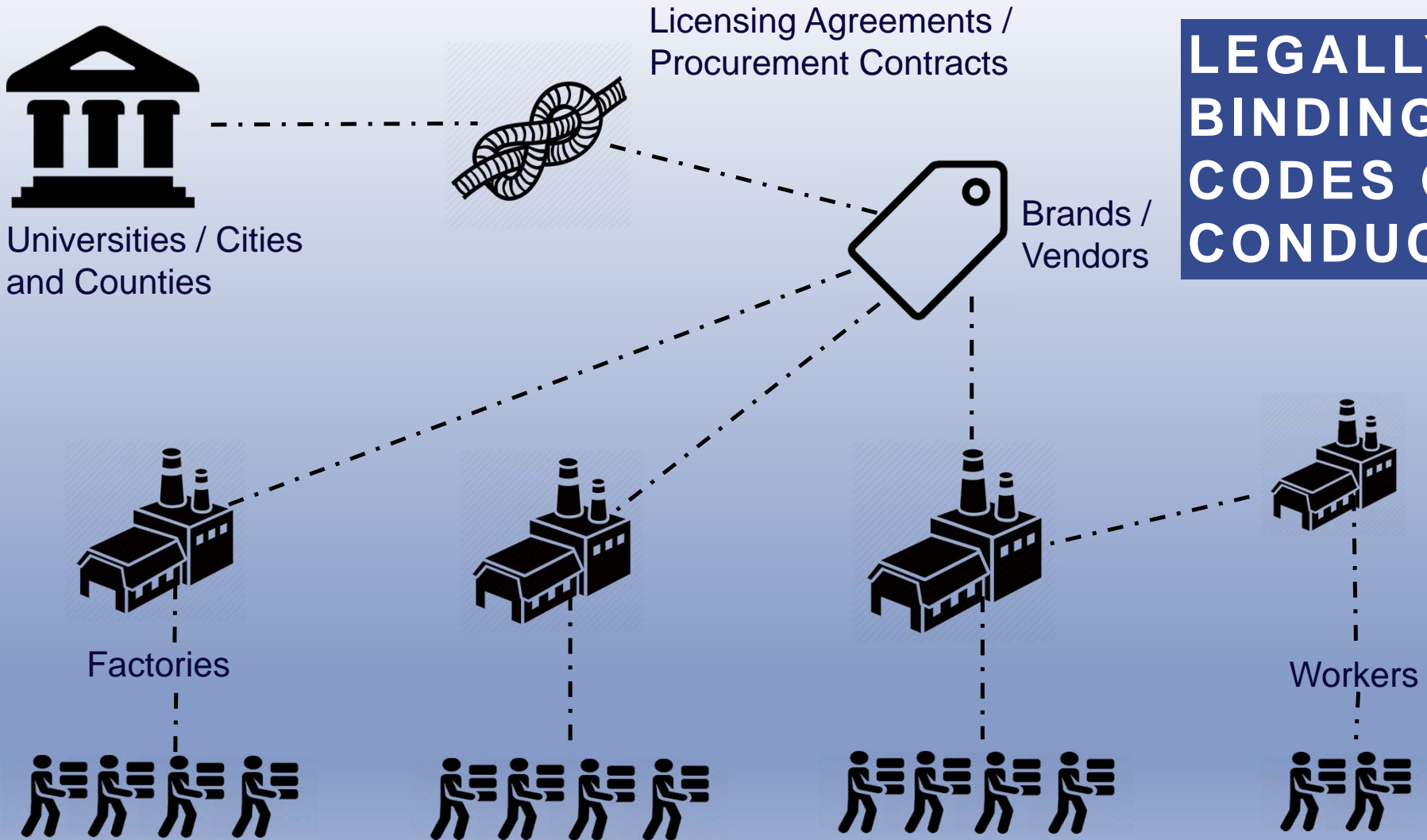


Transparent
Supply Chains



Independent
Monitoring

LEGALLY-BINDING CODES OF CONDUCT





Transparency

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Independent Monitoring

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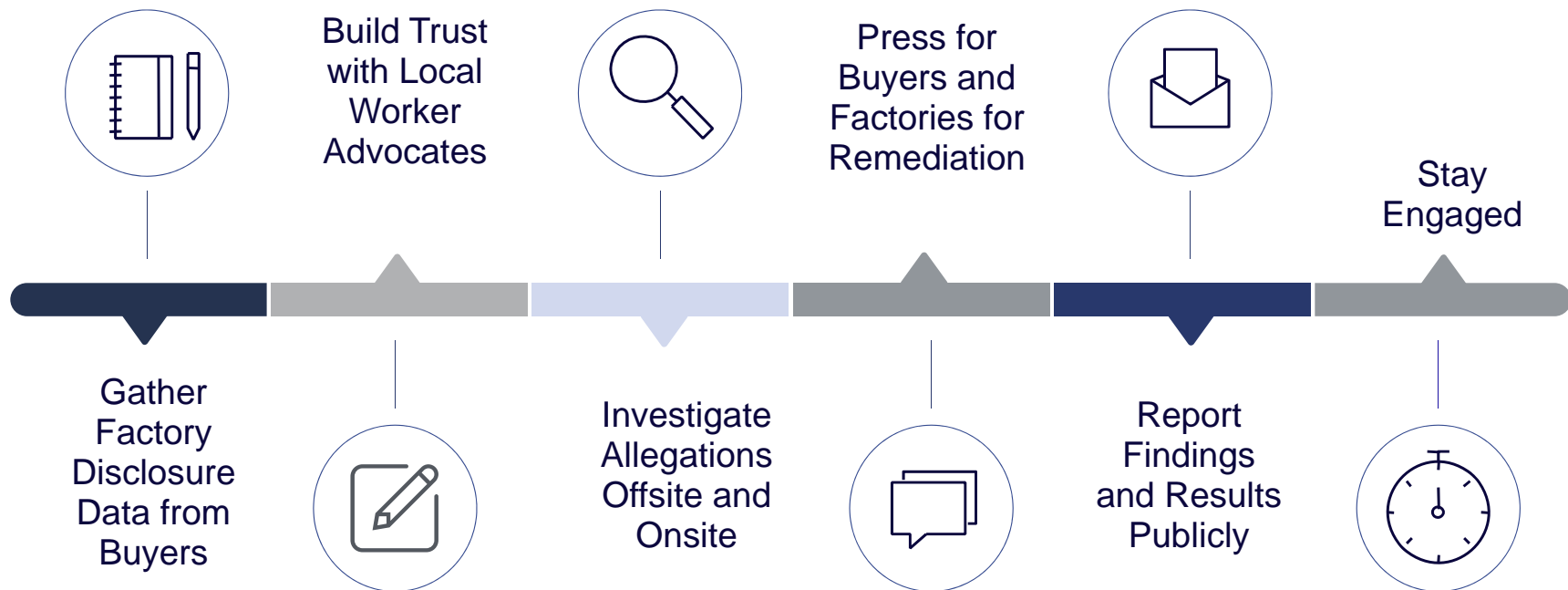
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How Independent Monitoring Works





Workers Helped



Each figure represents 2,500 workers

250,600
total workers the WRC has
helped directly

That's a positive
impact on

1,002,400
people when workers'
families are included.

Violations Addressed

WAGE THEFT

The WRC has helped workers recover wages stolen from them when their employers failed to pay them the correct minimum wage, severance, or overtime pay.

HOW MUCH BACK PAY HAS THE WRC WON FOR WORKERS?



\$25,463,280
Total back pay (USD)

\$74,280,000

Purchasing power of that back pay
in workers' countries

Case work involving back pay represents only
20% of the WRC's workload.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The WRC has helped workers eliminate dangerous—and usually illegal—safety hazards from their workplaces, such as toxic chemicals, dangerously high temperatures, or a lack of fire exits.

103,325

workers who now work
in safer factories due to
the WRC's casework



WRONGFUL TERMINATION

The WRC has helped win reinstatement for worker leaders who have been illegally or wrongfully fired in retaliation for exercising their associational rights, such as by forming a union or by asking for help from local women's or human rights NGOs.

1,500

worker leaders
reinstated after
they were
wrongfully fired



**IMPACT
FOR
WORKERS**

Why Independent Monitoring Works

Legally-binding Code Requirements Makes Labor Standards Enforceable

Public Reporting Creates Reputational Incentives for Compliance and Remediation

Focus on Remediation Deters Violations and Builds Trust of Local Worker Advocates

Broader Participation Creates Greater Leverage with Industry and Shared Resources for Monitoring.

