

Online talk with Farida Akhter, human rights and tobacco control activist of UBINIG, Bangladesh

Date: Wednesday, 28 October 2020, 9:30-10:30 a.m. (CET)

The sewing factories of the garment industry in Bangladesh gained sad fame with the catastrophe of Rana Plaza seven years ago. Since then, compensation has been paid to workers and their families, but working conditions remain poor and violate human rights, especially those of women. In the wake of the Corona crisis, many garment workers in Bangladesh have lost their jobs as orders from garment companies have been cancelled on a large scale.

As wellknown as the garment industry's supply chain has become in Germany, it is little known that Germany also imports tobacco from Bangladesh. In the tobacco supply chain, too, women are affected by numerous human rights violations – as are children working on the fields. Germany is the fifth largest importer of raw tobacco from Bangladesh with a volume of 7.21 million US dollars (2018). Bangladesh mainly exports Virginia tobacco, which is dried over hot tubes in large kilns. To heat these kilns, fuel is needed. And this is where the circle is complete: farmers either clear the surrounding forest to gain firewood or they buy shredded clothes as fuel. We want to explore this link and give insights into the supply chains of clothes and tobacco.

To do this, we have invited Farida Akhter, human rights and tobacco control activist of the non-governmental organization [UBINIG](#), for an online talk. Farida Akhter is committed to human rights in Bangladesh since decades. She is also an extraordinary activist in the global tobacco control movement.

Important topics in our talk are among others:

- What is the current situation in the garment industry in Bangladesh?
 - Have working conditions improved in recent years?
 - What effects did the corona crisis have on the sector, especially on women?
- What are the conditions in which tobacco is grown in Bangladesh?
 - How are children and women involved in cultivation?
 - How does tobacco cultivation impact the environment and affect the living conditions of farming families?
 - What solutions to their problems do the women want?

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- How can a supply chain law change working conditions in Bangladesh?
 - Which regulations would be particularly important for the garment industry?
 - Which regulations would be important for the tobacco supply chain?
 - Could a supply chain law have unintended effects on these two sectors?

Speaker: Farida Akhter, [UBINIG](#), Bangladesh

Host: Dr. Gisela Burckhardt, [FEMNET](#)

Language: The talk will be held in English with simultaneous interpretation into German.

[Please register here to join the talk!](#)

This online talk is free of charge and is addressed to civil society actors in the fields of public health, human rights, tobacco control and sustainable development, to political decision makers, to the media as well as to the interested public.

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