

BEYOND TRANSPARENCY

Building Safe, Accessible Digital Tools for Supply Chain Accountability

Findings from our consultation with trade unions
and civil society organizations

OCTOBER 2025





Agenda

01 Welcome and Logistics

Hannah Lennett, Open Supply Hub

02 Framing the Conversation

Natalie Grillon, Open Supply Hub

03 Highlights from Beyond Transparency

Nandita Shivakumar, Open Supply Hub

04 Panel: Centering Rightsholders in Digital Supply Chain Accountability Tools

Moderator: Nivedita Jayaram (Women's Fund Asia)

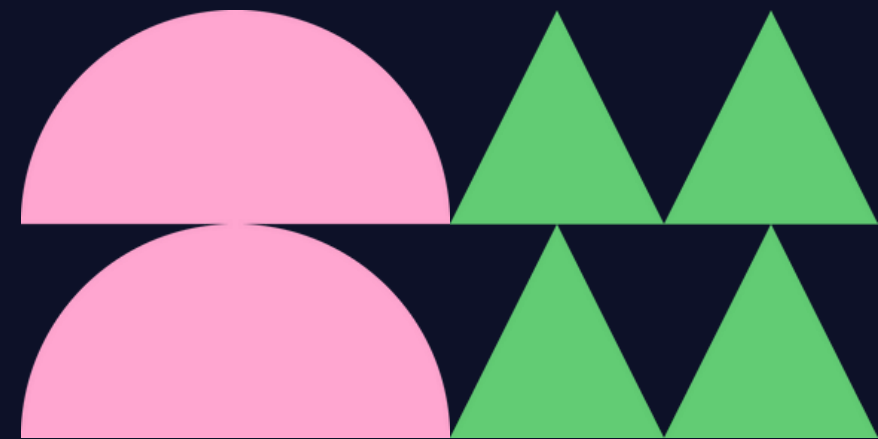
Shikha Silliman Bhattacharjee (Equidem)

Paul Roeland (Clean Clothes Campaign)

Mora Sar (Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions)

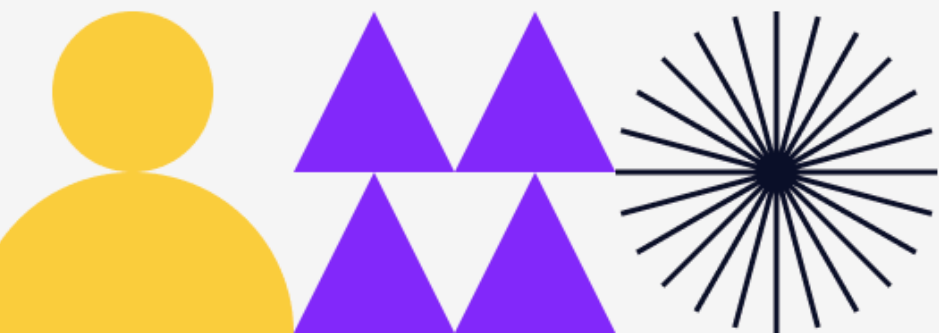
05 Closing and Next Steps

Hannah Lennett, Open Supply Hub



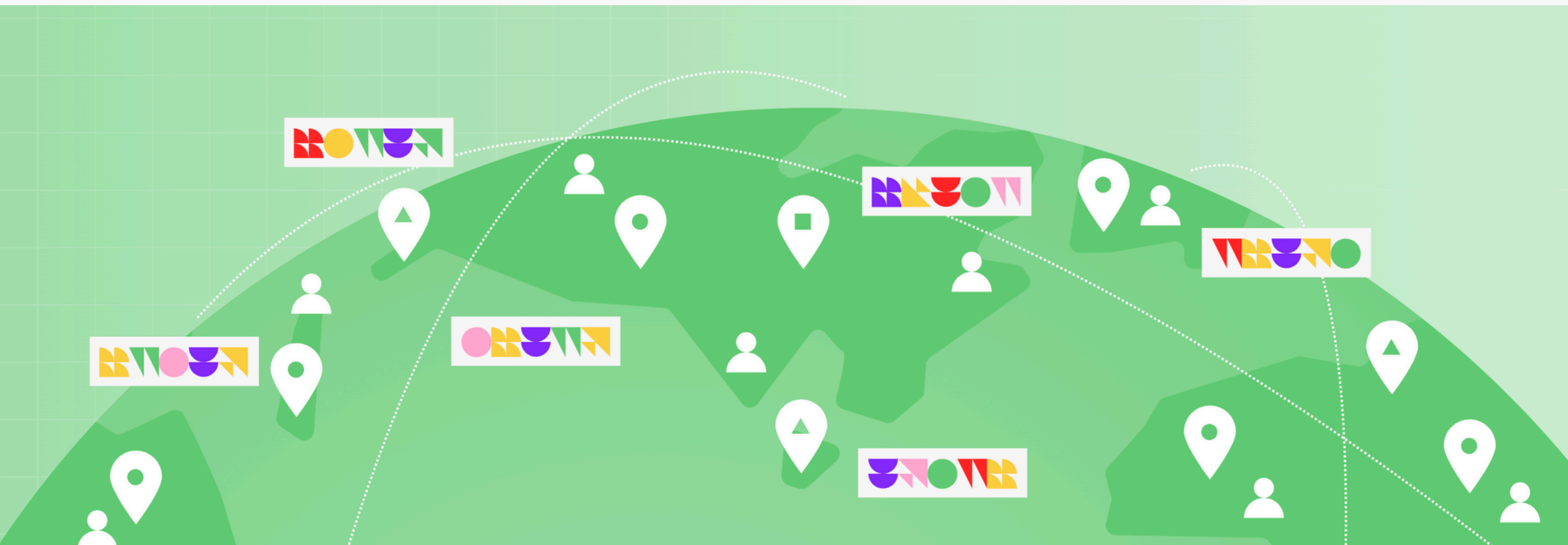
Logistics

- You can [turn on live captions on at the bottom of your Zoom window](#).
- [Recording is in progress](#) – the session will be shared on our Youtube account and with everyone who registered.
- Please [drop questions in the Q&A box](#).
- For any [technical support, reach out in the Zoom chat](#).
- The session will be conducted in English. If you would like a similar session organized in another language, please reach out to info@opensupplyhub.org.
- Feel free to introduce yourself in the chat – [share your name, organization, and where you are joining from](#).



Who are we?

Open Supply Hub is a non-profit powering the transition to safe and sustainable production with the world's most complete, open and accessible global supply chain map.



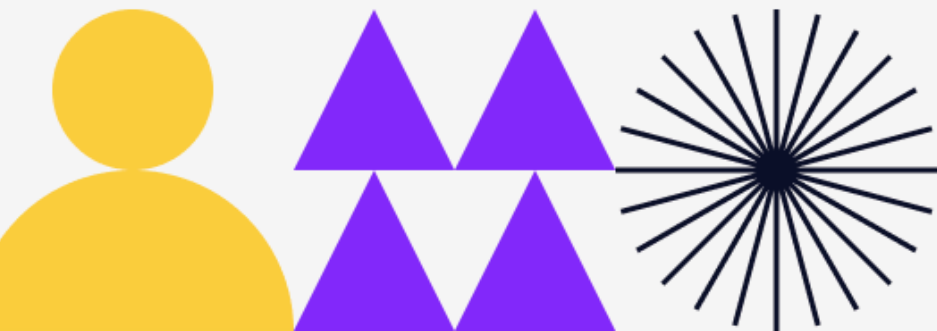
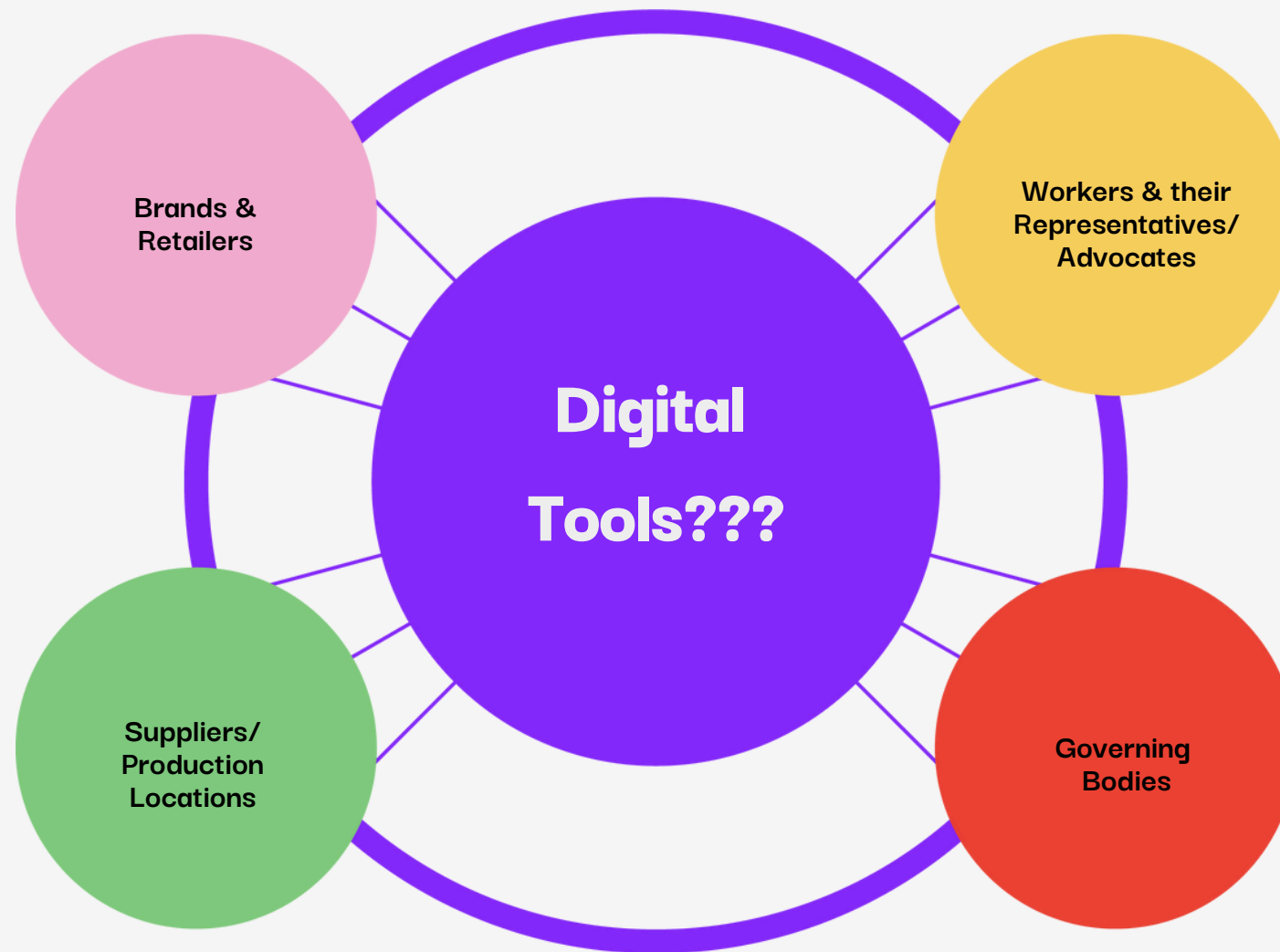
Framing the Conversation

Natalie Grillon

CEO, Open Supply Hub



Why This Consultation



All 65 organizations talked about:



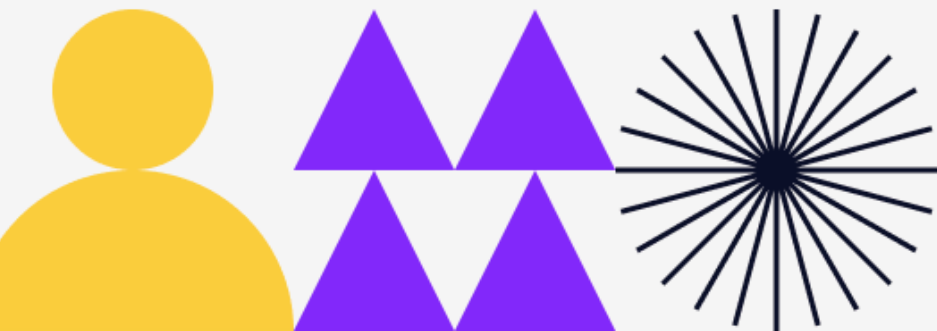
RISKS



ACCESS

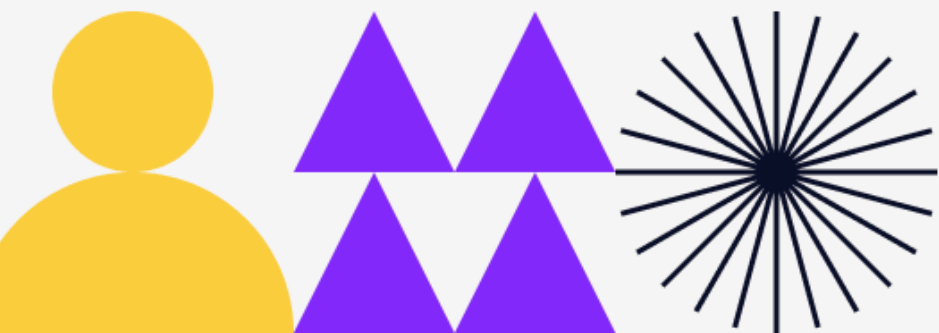


TRUST

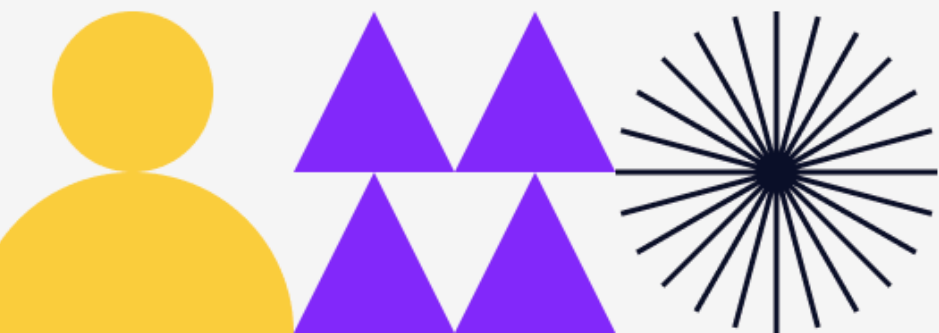


The future of supply chain accountability depends on building digital tools that are usable, accessible, and safe for the people most affected by supply chain harms – workers, grassroots trade unions, and civil society organizations.

If we fail to do that, we risk reproducing the very inequalities these tools were meant to dismantle.



**Let's design this
together.**



Highlights from Beyond Transparency

Nandita Shivakumar

Stakeholder Engagement Manager,
Open Supply Hub





Overview

01 Context

02 Methodology

03 Barriers to meaningful use of digital tools

04 Principles for worker-centered design of digital tools

04 Recommendations for the ecosystem





Context

- **On the rise:** ESG dashboards, AI traceability systems, public supplier databases, and digital grievance platforms, etc – expanding rapidly with HRDD legislation (e.g., draft CSDDD).
- **Progress made:** These tools have contributed to advanced transparency and strengthened advocacy efforts around labor rights and climate justice.
- **Governance role:** Many are now slowly evolving into ‘**de facto governance mechanisms**’ shaping sourcing, visibility, and accountability in supply chains.
- **Persistent exclusion:** Despite major policy support and investment, many rightsholder groups remain unable to engage fully with these digital tools.

This report focuses on the barriers rightsholders face and the remedies they propose to make these tools safe, inclusive and accountable to all.





Methodology

- Multilingual consultation carried out between May and July 2025 with 65 groups.
- Used a mixed-methods approach built around a semi-structured survey, administered primarily through in-depth interviews
- The consultation concentrated primarily on the garment and agriculture sectors.

By geography:

- **South Asia: 19**
- **Global (multi-region): 17**
- **Europe: 11**
- **West Asia: 7**
- **Southeast Asia: 7**
- **Latin America: 4**

By type of stakeholder:

- **30 national and international CSOs (NGOs)**
- **22 national-level trade unions and grassroots worker collectives**
- **6 academic institutions, funders, or development agencies**
- **4 global union federations**
- **3 other respondents (a journalist, a legal expert, and a technical consultant)**



Key Barriers to Meaningful Participation

The consultation identified four major, interconnected barriers that block rightsholders from using digital tools safely and effectively:

1. Structural Constraints

2. Usability Gaps

3. Data Governance Gaps

4. Performative Accountability



Data Highlights

“The right to freedom of association is our biggest challenge. Without it, there’s no organizing and without organizing, no safe data sharing,” - trade union leader, Bangladesh

“Companies have expensive legal teams to review terms and entire tech teams to audit platforms before uploading anything – we don’t. Most smaller unions and CSOs don’t even have a lawyer on staff. So how can we engage safely?” - European NGO

- **25% cited staffing shortages, limited digital literacy, and lack of core funding as primary barriers to engaging with digital tools.**
- **22% cited restrictive labor laws and state surveillance as barriers to contributing data to digital tools.**
- **19% cited fear of retaliation from employers or brands as a barrier to engaging with digital platforms, especially when sharing data.**
- **9% stressed the need to translate terms and conditions on data use, safety, and redressal mechanisms into local languages using clear, non-technical language.**
- **65% raised publishing information on Collective Bargaining Agreements.**
- **72% favored making facility-level grievance information (including brand contact details) visible provided that critical details regarding the mechanism were clearly indicated.**



Principles for Digital Tool Design



TRUST

Ensure transparency around data use.



SAFETY

Design with risks in mind from the outset



ACCESSIBILITY

Adapt tools to real-world conditions



SHARED GOVERNANCE

Include rightsholders in oversight & decision-making



REPRESENTATION

Ensure inclusive and equitable participation



RECIPROCITY

Recognize the effort & risk involved in participation



Recommendations for the Ecosystem

The consultation made one thing clear: no single actor can solve these challenges alone. Progress depends on coordinated action across the ecosystem.

This report offers targeted recommendations for four key stakeholder groups:

Platform Developers:

Build safety and accessibility into the core of your design. Ensure transparent data governance, embed rightsholder perspectives in governance structures, and design for reciprocal engagement.

Funders:

Provide flexible, long-term core funding directly to grassroots organizations. Invest in digital safety infrastructure and language justice so rightsholders can participate meaningfully.

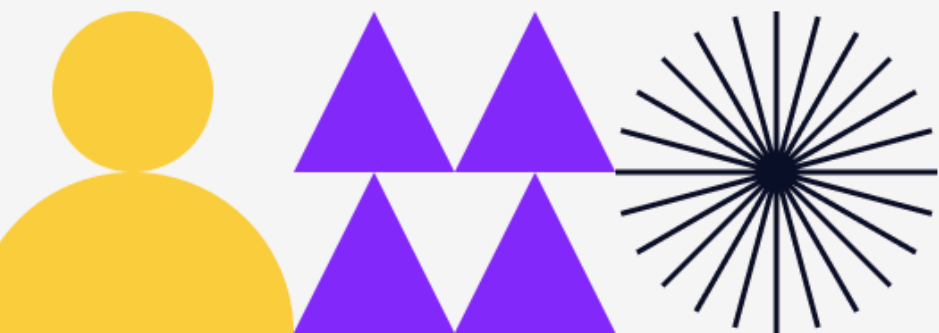
Regulators:

Set baseline standards for data ethics and governance in digital due diligence tools. Back these with independent oversight to prevent box-ticking.

Employers and Business Actors:

Use digital tools to complement – not replace – direct engagement with rightsholders. Share data responsibly and invest in platforms that are co-developed with communities.

Ultimately, the report finds that for digital supply chain tools to be effective instruments of accountability, they must evolve from being data repositories into platforms that actively protect, empower, and include the voices of those who have the most at stake.



Panel: Centering Rightsholders in Digital Supply Chain Accountability Tools



Nivedita Jayaram

**WOMEN'S FUND
ASIA**



Paul Roeland

**CLEAN CLOTHES
CAMPAIGN**



Mora Sar

**CAMBODIAN
ALLIANCE OF
TRADE UNIONS**



**Shika Silliman
Bhattacharjee**

EQUIDEM



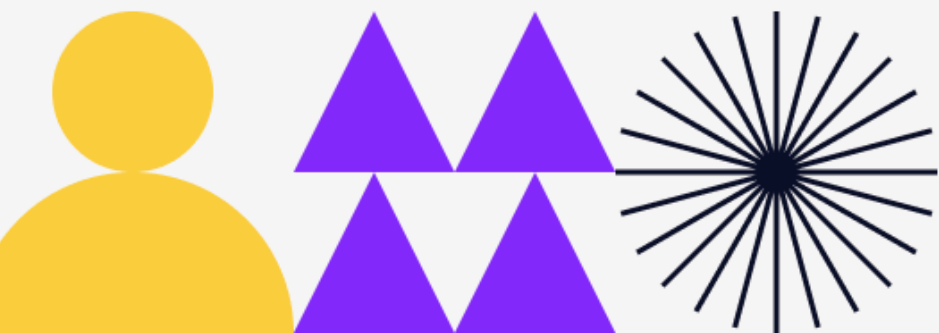
Q&A

**Please put your questions for the
panelists in the Q&A box.
We'll take as many as time allows.**



An Invitation for You

- Explore [Beyond Transparency](#) – link shared in the Zoom chat.
- We're looking to collaborate on these findings. Whether you'd like to [share data, co-develop new models of working, or tackle broader questions](#) about safer, more equitable data collection and use in supply chains – we'd love to connect.
- If you'd like to collaborate or share feedback, please reach out: info@opensupplyhub.org.





Thank you!

**Recording and resources will be
shared with all registrants.**

Contact Us:

info@opensupplyhub.org

