

## Sedex Statement

Sedex is deeply concerned about recent reports investigating the recruitment and employment of Uighur and other Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang Region. We are firmly against all forms of modern slavery, exploitation and forced labour, and support all activity to combat these issues.

There are reported challenges in conducting supply chain due diligence and audits within the Xinjiang Region, regarding the topic of state sponsored forced labour. As the [Centre for Strategic and International Studies report](#) documents, the particular conditions surrounding the recruitment and employment of these workers mean that obtaining reliable information by interviewing the workers and their employers is difficult. There are also constraints on access by independent auditors to the region.

Audits and Sedex's audit methodology SMETA are designed to collect data at a country, sector, and site level, rather than track worker ethnicity. Our tools and SMETA methodology, as developed by our membership, provide an assessment of working conditions at site level, and can help businesses trace whether the business is linked to sites based in a specific city or town.

We understand that many businesses have already taken important steps to map their supply chains and prevent or mitigate risks of forced labour wherever they can, in line with the UN Guiding Principles. We recognise this is a very complex and sensitive situation and needs to be addressed by multiple parties.

During an audit all workers at a site are taken into consideration within the scope of a SMETA audit. The methodology ensures migrant and other vulnerable worker groups can participate in the audit, including the interviews, without outside interference by enabling independent auditors to arrange the sampling needed for document reviews and interviews (rather than site management). Where possible, auditors will try and arrange group interviews by language groups or similar recruitment journeys to help with building rapport and making workers feel more comfortable discussing their shared experiences.

In regards to [Responsible Sourcing Tool's Supplier Self-Assessment](#) and [Responsible Sourcing Tool's Migrant Worker Interviews](#), there are many parallels between these tools and the scope of SMETA. Many of the areas covered within the Supplier Self-Assessment are covered during the course of a SMETA audit.

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