



CASE STUDY

Helping To Eliminate Child Labour From Global Supply Chains

Mica is a critical raw material for electronics, transportation and cosmetics, yet the mica supply chain often starts with artisanal mines. This unregulated mining carries significant risks for workers – unsafe working conditions, labour exploitation, illegal child labour and trafficking.

The Responsible Mica Initiative (RMI) is a global coalition for action comprising multiple organisations committed to establishing a fair, responsible and sustainable mica supply chain in the states of Jharkhand and Bihar in India. It aims to eliminate unacceptable working conditions and eradicate child labour by 2030.

“Child labour in supply chains is a complex issue that cannot be eliminated by enacting laws alone. Our approach was to address the underlying economic and social causes, and include them in a holistic multi-stakeholder advocacy programme, involving civil society, government and the industry.”

Amrit Singh Deo
Mumbai
Senior Managing Director,
Strategic Communications, India

SITUATION

Issues concerning the mica industry are complex and multidimensional with historical, social and economic causes which cover illegal mining, child labour in the supply chain, non-recognition and inadequate protection of mica pickers, lack of livelihood and economic development opportunities and poor education outcomes.

The development of a sustainable mica policy framework and reviving the mica economy in Giridih and Koderma, in the Indian State of Jharkhand, required taking into consideration multiple stakeholders’ perspectives – and active engagement with industry, government, local communities and civil society, as well as end-users, to direct attention and resources to resolve these issues.

FTI Consulting was appointed by RMI in 2019 to conduct a review of mica-related supply chain legislations in the states of Jharkhand and Bihar in India. This was followed by the development of an advocacy strategy to engage with the state governments, to advocate for the adoption of a sustainable mica mining policy to help eliminate child labour from the mica supply chains.

OUR ROLE

FTI Consulting partnered with a local law firm to review mica-related laws in four states and evolve a relevant policy advocacy strategy. This was followed by the development of policy advocacy messages and a multi-stakeholder engagement plan that would lead to the first sustainable mica policy response, voluntarily developed by the industry and civil society.

The team drafted the 'Ranchi Principles for Sustainable Mica Mining' and the world's first Sustainable Mica Mining Policy framework and presented it at a multi-stakeholder workshop to grassroots civil society actors, local elected representatives, local industry players, human rights activists and associations.

Our role was then to lead the engagement with the Office of the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary, the senior most political and administrative decision makers in the state of Jharkhand, along with the State Mines and Labour Departments.

FTI Consulting drafted and submitted the Sustainable Mica Mining Policy framework, which covered policy design and administration of a public-private sustainable mica taskforce, funding models and review mechanisms. The framework is a public document and is available [here](#).

“The FTI Consulting team worked as part of the RMI team to address the complex problem of child labour in the mica supply chains. We were impressed with the high level of integrity, diligence, and competence that we saw the team deliver.”

Fanny Fremont
Executive Director
Responsible Mica Initiative (RMI)

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OUR IMPACT



Since 2020, recommendations from the Sustainable Mica Mining Policy framework have been incorporated into the government response on addressing the issue of child labour in the mica supply chain in the Indian state of Jharkhand.



RMI and FTI Consulting shared the Sustainable Mica Mining policy framework at a multi-stakeholder event in Brussels, with representatives from the ILO, and the policy intervention work was presented at the European Commission in November 2020.



The policy advocacy effort in Jharkhand by the RMI has been reviewed by global multilateral agencies, civil society and industries. A UNDP-RMI joint consortium was awarded a grant of USD 4.5 million by the United States Department of Labour to replicate a similar framework in Madagascar, another global mica sourcing hub facing similar concerns.