

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Established by UN Women and the UN Global Compact Office

2020 UN Women Asia-Pacific WEPs Awards Regional Awardee Profile



Kariwala Industries, India

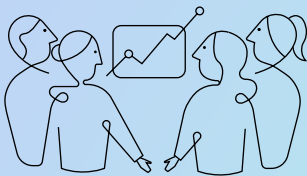


Anil Kariwala
Founder and CEO

Kariwala Industries, India

Country: India
Employees: 501-1000
Industry: Clothing and Accessories

Website
www.kariwala.com



Addressing Women's Participation in Apparel

For the past 31 years, Anil Kariwala, Founder and CEO of Kariwala Industries Ltd., has led and advocated for women's empowerment within India's apparel industry. Founded in 1989, Kariwala Industries Ltd. has grown from a small exporter of work garments to a manufacturer with a diversified portfolio of products and services including manufacturing of industrial workwear, corporate uniforms, personal protective clothing, eco-friendly bags, and sustainable fashion accessories.

As an apparel manufacturer in India, Kariwala Industries Ltd., recognizes their responsibility to bridge the existing skills gap in business and industry, particularly among women excluded from the workforce due to challenges including conservative social norms, gender bias, unsafe working environments, and a lack of low-skill jobs for those transitioning out of the agricultural sector. While these barriers are societal and cultural in nature, the apparel industry leads as a majority women employer, and holds the power to break barriers by providing access to skill development and employment opportunities for rural women.

Through his bold leadership, Anil initiated the Women's Centric Factory in West Bengal, India. Women's Centric is a factory run by women and led by women; no area is considered 'non-women friendly'. Anil believes in the power of business for social change; a vehicle used to accelerate gender equality and empower women as leaders.

“ *The biggest pleasure I get is when I hear that women workers in our factory, they advocate for girls' education in their family.*

- Anil Kariwala

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Anil's initiative serves as a compelling example of women's empowerment and has motivated others in apparel to follow Anil's footsteps. Moreover, women's participation at the factory has increased overtime as more women take the step to become self-sufficient.

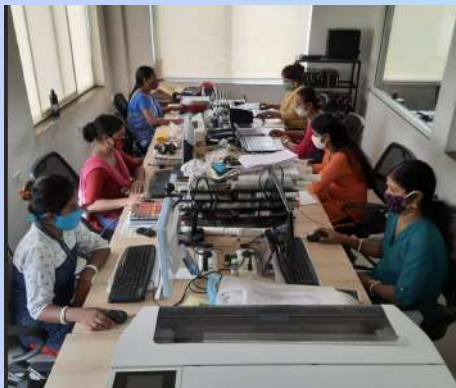
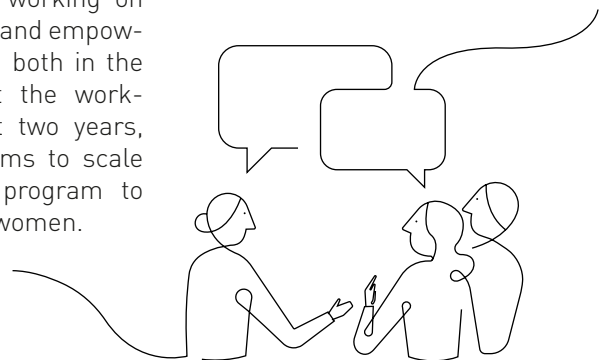
Impact and Partnerships: Leading by Example

Kariwala Group has spearheaded their skill training program, training more than 5,000 women, 90% of whom have been employed within Kariwala Industries Ltd. An active effort has been made to collaborate with other companies in the apparel industry and outsourcing trainees to their factories for employment. Kariwala Group has harnessed a dedicated skill development team of over 50 people who bring fresh ideas and perspectives to the upskilling ecosystem within the industry. The training curriculum is continually updated to cater to changing industry requirements, ensuring that trainees are job ready. At Kariwala Group training centers, the traditional 45-60 days technical training is supplemented with soft-skills training, along with IT and English-language programs.

The impact of Kariwala's actions goes beyond opening doors of employment. A noted trend includes women who have never used a sewing machine being trained and employed within 60 days. This is often their first formal and stable job, a key milestone toward economic independence. Access to skill building opportunities in rural areas is crucial for women who want to stand on their own feet and support their families' income.

However, Anil believes that the Group's responsibility does not stop at training and employment. As a company, they recognize that there are other challenges women face – from harassment in the workplace to competing demands at home.

Kariwala Industries Ltd., is continually developing new programs and policies to ensure women continue to thrive in the workplace and are currently working on the overall welfare and empowerment of women, both in the household and at the workplace. In the next two years, Kariwala Group aims to scale up their skilling program to train 15,000 more women.



“

We have adopted from core of our heart, the Sustainable Development Goals of UN global compact. Our biggest focus is gender equality and climate control. The activities we do for women empowerment and solar panels that we use in our factory are some examples.

- Anil Kariwala

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One of the barriers for women entering the formal workforce is a lack of opportunities in the labor-intensive manufacturing sector. In collaboration with their Europe based clients, Kariwala Group has incorporated the idea of women leading in a manufacturing unit, which is traditionally a role assigned to men. To enhance women’s independence at the workplace, Anil has established zero-interest bicycle loan to ensure women can transport to and from work safely.

Strategies for Sustainability

Watch the testimonial video to learn more

Seeking to amplify their work, QBO recently entered a three-year partnership with Investing in Women (IW), an initiative of the Australian Government that promotes women’s economic empowerment in South East Asia. The partnership will enable QBO to take meaningful steps

towards shifting gender norms, especially as it concerns the role of women as founders, workplace gender equality, and access to growth capital for women-owned and women-led enterprises in the Philippines.

A core activity of the partnership will be a campaign to shift gender norms that builds on Startup Pinay’s existing work to profile strong female founders in the country, highlighting the success stories and struggles of #Pinartechheroes. Through this, QBO aims to continue to increase female membership and encourage women to enter the startup space. In addition to opening doors for women, the campaign aims to reach millions of Filipinos and reinforce the message that startups are both aspirational and attainable, and that anyone, especially young women, can thrive in the tech industry.

Women’s Empowerment Principles



High-Level Corporate Leadership



Treat all Women and Men Fairly at Work without Discrimination



Employee Health, Well-Being and Safety



Education and Training for Career Advancement



Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices



Community Initiatives and Advocacy



Measurement and Reporting

asiapacificwepsawards.org

[@unwomenasia](https://www.instagram.com/unwomenasia)
[linkedin.com/showcase/weprinciples/](https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/weprinciples/)

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