

WRC Factory Investigation

# Hong Sen Textile

**Factory:** Hong Sen Textile

**Key Buyers:** Next

**Last Updated:** 2021

## Case Summary

Hong Sen Textile, a Next supplier factory in Takeo province, Cambodia, suspended operations in August 2020, when its owner fled the country. More than 900 workers were left without an estimated \$497,644 in legally owed severance and other terminal compensation.

Hong Sen workers took to the streets in protest. Nop Sokha, who worked at the factory for seven years, said: “They do not pay, but we have expenses.” The factory’s head of administration, Tang Heng, said: “I have not seen [the boss]. We tried to contact him but could not reach him. So we consider him to have run away.”

In October, Hong Sen workers received \$138,999, a little more than one-fourth of the arrears, from the proceeds of the sale of materials and equipment left in the factory at the time of closure.

In January, after outreach to Next by the BHRRC and the Cambodian nongovernmental organization CENTRAL, Next made what it calls a

“charitable” contribution to the workers. The WRC estimates that the total amount of this contribution was \$35,000, which represents about 10 percent of the outstanding arrears. It is positive that Next has taken a degree of responsibility. However, effectively acknowledging an obligation to address the harm to workers, by choosing to contribute, and then making a contribution so small that it covers only a small fraction of the money owed, constitutes a woefully inadequate financial effort by Next, a corporation that reported six billion dollars in revenue in 2020. It remains Next’s responsibility, under its own labor standards, to ensure that the former Hong Sen workers receive the remaining \$323,645 they earned making Next’s clothes.

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