

Responsible Mica Initiative Publishes 2020 Annual Report Detailing Progress Empowering Communities and Eradicating Child Labor

Paris, France - March 10, 2021 - The [Responsible Mica Initiative](#) (RMI) is pleased to announce the publication of its [2020 Annual Report](#) detailing the organization's mission, milestones and key achievements over the course of the past year in India's Bihar and Jharkhand states.

Establishing a fair, responsible and sustainable mica supply chain, free of child labor, remains the ultimate goal of RMI. In 2020, RMI adapted its programs to circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic that led to a nine-month interruption of the mica supply chain. Despite a difficult year for the entire sector, RMI made significant progress in 2020 thanks to the commitment and involvement of its 66 members and others devoted to achieving RMI's mission.

Multiple stakeholders ranging from local civil society organizations (CSOs) and businesses to RMI members, program partners and government officials maintained their shared commitment to implement each of RMI's three program pillars. Community Empowerment Programs were sustained in 80 villages, improving the living conditions of more than 30,000 children and adults in mica-dependent villages. RMI and its CSO partners adapted community programs to meet nutrition and health needs exacerbated by the pandemic. To scale up the adoption of responsible workplace practices, in collaboration with the Responsible Minerals Initiative RMI developed a Global Mica Standard that aimed to be used not only in India but also in other countries with poor working conditions in the mica sector. To promote compliance with workplace standards, RMI program partners developed an audit protocol for local mica supply chain members. Because local governments shifted their focus to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, RMI had little means to move its Legal Framework program forward. RMI did, however, pursue direct engagements with local governments and even managed to strengthen relations with them when, for example, RMI submitted the Sustainable Mica Policy Framework and Vision to the Jharkhand government.

In 2021, RMI will reinforce its Executive team by hiring a supply chain officer who will provide handholding support to processors in implementing the Global Mica Standard. RMI will also strengthen its approach by quantitatively tracking and assessing program implementation. Community Empowerment Programs are scheduled to accelerate thanks to the development of a model-village concept that will enable partners replicate implementation in additional communities. A taskforce established in 2020 which aims to align on a definition of a living income for mica pickers in Bihar and Jharkhand will study mechanisms that would ensure effective payment of a living wage to all mica workers. Engagement of government leaders with the support of local business owners will continue to promote the significant impact that a legal framework for the mica industry will have on the entire value chain. Finally, by leveraging existing members and partnerships and developing new ones RMI will be able to offer its approach as a tool for change in mica mining communities outside of India. In Madagascar and [as part of a UNDP-led consortium that was awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Labor](#), RMI will address ways to engage downstream supply chain players, formalize mica mining activities and support the adoption of responsible workplace standards among mica pickers and at mica processing facilities.

About the Responsible Mica Initiative

The Responsible Mica Initiative is a non-governmental organization created to establish a fair, responsible and sustainable mica supply chain in India by promoting responsible sourcing practices, and eradicating child labor and unacceptable working conditions. RMI members are drawn from industries associated with the mica supply chain in partnership with civil society organizations and local stakeholders. The Responsible Mica Initiative is an association, established in accordance with the French Law of 1901 concerning non-profit organizations, with its head office located in 44-46 rue de la Bienfaisance, 75008 PARIS - France.

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