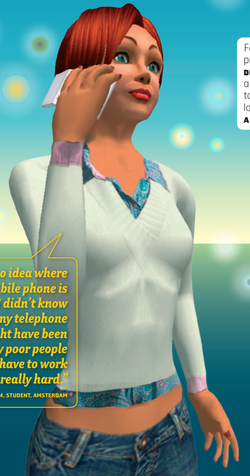
MAKE IT FAIR

FIND OUT THE TRUE COST OF A PHONE CALL...



Fourteen-year-old Charlotte got her first mobile phone in primary school. Since then, she has **ALREADY OWNED FOUR DIFFERENT PHONES**; she exchanges the old models each year for a shiny new version. Yet while she is busy sending sms messages to her friends in Amsterdam, the factory workers who made her latest phone probably **WORKED TWELVE HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK** just to earn enough money to feed their families.

Every day, electronics workers in countries like Thailand, China and Mexico are facing **LONG HOURS AND DANGEROUS WORKING CONDITIONS** to produce the phones, the MP3 players, the electronic games and the laptops we all love to use in our daily lives. Some workers are exposed to dangerous chemicals and earn as little as two Euros per day, while workers in Africa are **RISKING THEIR LIVES** in mine shafts to supply the metals needed to satisfy our desire for all the latest electronic gadgets.

It's hard to imagine a world without these gadgets. We all rely on Information Technology – IT – all day and every day, for work and for play. In fact, IT has improved our lives in so many different ways. Now the makeITfair campaign is calling on young people across Europe to **HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES OF WORKERS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD** who make our electronic dreams come true. Together, we can make IT fair for people everywhere!

"I have no idea where my mobile phone is made... I didn't know that my telephone might have been made by poor people who have to work really hard."

CHARLOTTE, 14, STUDENT, AMSTERDAM

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP AT WWW.MAKEITFAIR.ORG

COUNTING THE COSTS OF A CALL

Mobile phones have improved our lives in so many ways. But for the people who make mobile phones, the story is very different:

Paying the price

While teenagers in Europe use their mobile phones to keep in touch with their parents, 28-year-old Maew in Bangkok is so busy making components for the electronics industry that **SHE ONLY GETS TO SEE HER DAUGHTER TWO OR THREE TIMES A YEAR.**

Maew has asked us not to show her face in this photo as she is afraid of losing her job if she speaks out about working conditions in her factory.

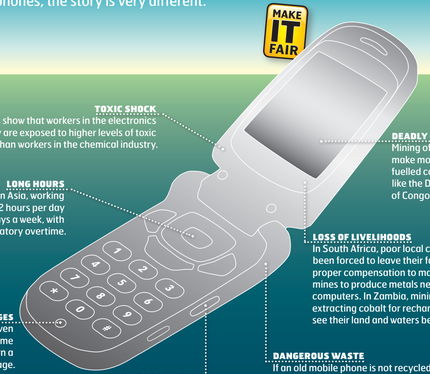
"I don't think Western consumers know how hard we work."

MAEW, 28, ELECTRONICS WORKER, BANGKOK

"I feel like **I'M BEING EXPLOITED** by the company, but I hope consumers will continue buying our products," she says. "If they didn't I would have to stop working, which would be worse."

"I don't think Western consumers know how hard we work," says Maew, who is **FORCED TO WORK OVERTIME** by factory bosses.

Maew comes from the north of Thailand and was forced to leave her daughter with her family so that she could find a job to pay off the family's farming debts. She is forced to work twelve hours a day, six days a week with hardly a break for lunch – and **EARNS 4,50 EUROS A DAY, JUST ENOUGH MONEY TO GET BY**. Each month she sends back a little money to her family.



TOXIC SHOCK
Studies show that workers in the electronics industry are exposed to higher levels of toxic chemicals than workers in the chemical industry.

LONG HOURS
In many factories in Asia, working hours are usually 12 hours per day for six or seven days a week, with mandatory overtime.

LOW WAGES
In most factories, even when working overtime workers cannot earn a living wage.

NO TRADE UNIONS
In China, where most of the production of electronic gadgets takes place, there are no real unions that protect workers' rights. Without unions, it is hard to make changes to improve working conditions.

BEARDLY CONFLICT
Mining of metals needed to make mobile phones has fuelled conflicts in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo in Africa.

LOSS OF LIVELIHOODS
In South Africa, poor local communities have been forced to leave their farmland without proper compensation to make way for new mines to produce metals needed to make computers. In Zambia, mining communities extracting cobalt for rechargeable batteries see their land and waters being polluted.

DANGEROUS WASTE
If an old mobile phone is not recycled properly, harmful substances like arsenic and lead are discharged into the ground water or the atmosphere. Much of this e-waste is being exported to poor countries, where there aren't enough environmental regulations.

DID YOU KNOW?

- *More than 95% of young people in Europe own a mobile phone*
- *Last year, over 1 billion mobile phones were sold around the world*
- *More than half of the world's laptops and nearly half of the mobile phones are made in China*
- *Each year more than 100 million mobile phones are being discarded in Europe alone, often after being used for just one or two years*

Making IT better

When 13-year-old Sana gets home from school, **SHE LOVES TO WATCH TELEVISION OR PLAY GAMES ON HER COMPUTER**. She bought her first mobile phone when she was just ten. Sana is surrounded by IT, but she knows very little about the people who make her favourite gadgets in factories on the other side of the world.

Sana would even be **WALLING TO PAY MORE** for the products she buys, as long as it had been produced under better working conditions. Would you?

"**I HAVE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT WHO MAKES IT**, or how it is made, but I think my mobile phone was made in China," she says.

Sana has lots of ideas about what could be done to improve the working conditions for workers like Maew: "I don't think I could change these conditions by myself, but with a group I could," she says. "We could for example **PROTEST AGAINST IT**, try to bring it in on the television, start projects and demand that people earn more..."

"I don't think I could change these conditions by myself, but with a group I could."

SANA, 13, STUDENT, AMSTERDAM

Turn over to find out what you can do to help to make IT fair for workers like Maew...

MAKEITFAIR

In the drive to keep prices as low as possible, electronics factories have been shifting their production to countries where labour costs are low and environmental standards are not so strict.

Much of the production has been outsourced to China, where about half of the world's mobile phones and laptops are made. Other factories have moved to India, Thailand, the Philippines, Mexico and Eastern Europe.

Conditions in these factories are often appalling – especially for the suppliers of small component parts. The big brand electronics companies have little oversight over their supply chain and they often fail to take responsibility for unacceptable conditions and environmental pollution. The situation is even worse for miners in Africa, who risk their lives without proper safety measures to provide the metals needed for the electronics industry.

makeITfair is a campaign run by a group of European organisations to challenge these unfair practices. We don't think it's fair that workers in the electronics industry should be exploited. That's why we are asking young people across Europe to join our campaign, calling on governments and multinational businesses to improve working conditions for electronics workers in poor communities across the world. We are also urging the companies behind our mobile phones, laptops, MP3 players, game products and webcams to clean up their act when it comes to environmental pollution.

What can I do?

Multinational companies can influence their suppliers. And the people who buy their products **– PEOPLE LIKE YOU – CAN INFLUENCE THESE BIG NAME COMPANIES TOO.** It's time the companies took responsibility for better working conditions for IT workers everywhere. And this is how you can help:

If you are buying a new mobile phone or the latest game product, **ASK WHERE IT WAS PRODUCED** and whether good social and environmental standards were followed!

SUGGEST A PROJECT DAY ON THIS ISSUE at your school, college or with your local group or organisation!

Before you decide to buy a new product: think whether you can do with your old one for another year or two! Or if you don't reuse it – **TAKE IT TO A RECYCLING POINT** (or leave it in the shop).

TELL YOUR FRIENDS and your family what you have learnt and ask them to get active too!

Look out for future makeITfair leaflets on all these topics. Join in with the campaign activities at

www.makeitfair.org

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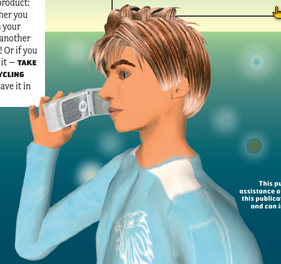

CONTACT DETAILS:
SOMO
Co-ordinator makeITfair

Sarphatistraat 30
1018 GL Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 639 12 91
info@makeitfair.org
www.makeitfair.org

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