

Remembering Klaus Hohenegger

Klaus Hohenegger, Managing Director of Sourcing Solutions and Co-founder and Director of Thrive Collaborative, Switzerland, died suddenly of natural causes on 25 October 2022. Klaus was 51 years old.

A native of Austria and a resident of Switzerland, Klaus spent much of his adult life travelling and working abroad. After living and working in Asia in the late 1990s with his wife Angie, Klaus acquired a command of the inner workings of the garment industry from nearly every angle. At companies including KTC (Laos), Eybl International (Romania), Skins and Odlo (Switzerland), Klaus managed garment factories, coordinated brands' supply chains, and oversaw quality assurance. In his consulting roles since 2010, he worked closely with many brands to upgrade their business practices to align with their values.

A major focus for Klaus was human rights in the workplace. Klaus's experiences both as a buyer and as a supplier in countless price negotiations (a claim few in the world of human rights due diligence can make) positioned him to create unique, practical solutions to persistent human rights problems – including inadequate wages, forced overtime, and, notably, the low prices that threaten nearly all human rights in global supply chains.

Klaus sparked a series of innovations that would jumpstart brand action on living wages. With his 2011 presentation at the Annual Conference of the Fair Wear Foundation, he shared detailed living wage calculations for a t-shirt, based on his own factory data, and advanced new thinking in the field. In ensuing years, for organizations including Fair Wear, GIZ, ACT and Clean Clothes Campaign, Klaus and his collaborators produced numerous publications, trainings, and pilot projects. Klaus' co-creations (including the Thrive Methodology, Fact-based Costing, and Klaus's "baby", the [Fair Price App](#)) are cutting-edge tools with the potential to upend business practices that lie at the root of human rights violations in the garment industry – and with the potential to offer clear benefits to workers around the world.

Yet for those who worked with Klaus, his greatest impact was on us as people. Klaus was not one to shy away from working long hours or diving deep into numbers and concepts. Yet his work ethic never stopped him from *connecting* with the people around him. Regardless of the seniority, background, age, or experience of the person Klaus worked with, he approached them with openness and curiosity. No question was too basic, despite the depth of his expertise and the range of his creative practicality. Not surprisingly, the most common refrain among his colleagues is: "I've learned so much from Klaus."

Klaus loved a good joke and would find the perfect moment (for example, in the middle of a long presentation) for a funny image to pop up on co-workers' screens. And during COVID, he would find little moments to delight colleagues' children who were stuck at home due to lockdowns. An avid sailor, paraglider, SCUBA diver, and skier, Klaus loved the freedom he found in the mountains and the sea. His favorite place to be, however, was always with his wife Angie and three children Sidney, Quentin, and Liam.

Indeed, despite the lasting impact Klaus's innovations will have on the global garment industry, it is his strong, tightknit family that is Klaus's greatest legacy. At this time, our hearts and energies go out to them. *In lieu of flowers, Klaus's close colleagues are organizing a collection to support Klaus's family at this difficult time. If you would like to learn how to make a contribution in Klaus' memory, please contact anne@thrive-collab.com.* Colleagues will be welcomed to a memorial event for Klaus (details to follow).

Through all that Klaus gave to us, he will always be present in what we do and how we do it.