

In Africa for Africa: Weaving solutions for textile circularity challenges

October 12th, 14.30-15.20 CET

Introduction:

This workshop will focus on how to bridge the communication gap between brands/retailers and the SMEs in their supply chains through the different tiers. This involves SMEs involved in textile production, yarn and fabric production, as well as fibre production (see Figure 1). Importantly, this workshop will also consider how to deliver a more coordinated support structure for both brands/retailers and SME suppliers based on the variety of existing support services provided by national and international organisations.

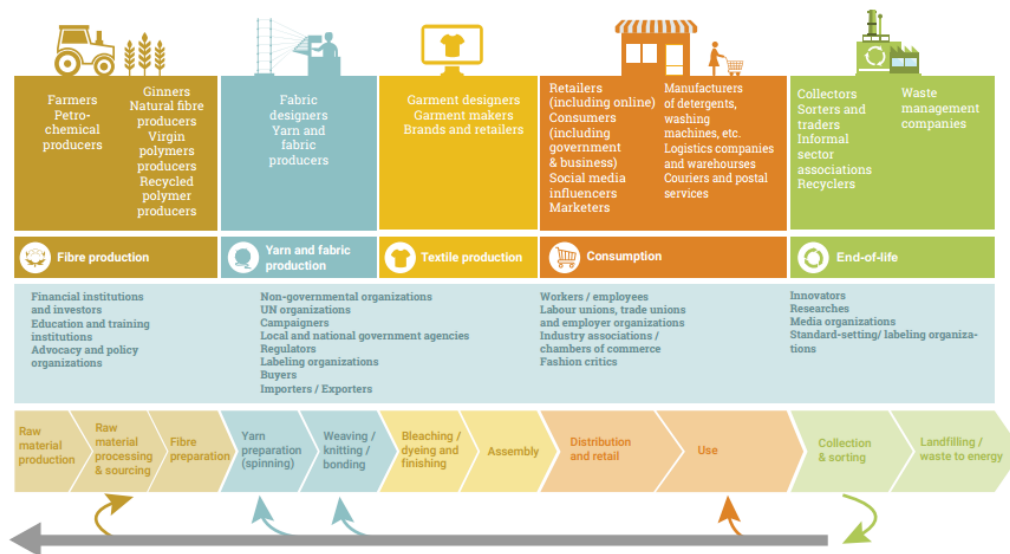


Figure 1: Stakeholders associated with the textile value chain (UNEP 2020)

The key objectives this workshop will address are:

- *The business driver:* How to support brands/retailers to collaborate on circularity efforts across shared value chains to provide a uniform and fair sustainability procurement process for SME suppliers
- *Becoming circular to improve business:* How to support SMEs in proactively benefiting from the business opportunities offered by circularity – both to stand out through their own business model innovations and to meet increasingly stringent requirements of their existing brand clients; with a view to helping SMEs access the most appropriate support services to improve their circularity

The workshop will bring together SMEs and brands/retailers from the textile sector in Africa to voice their aspirations and challenges, while also engaging with other value chain stakeholders such as intermediary organisations such as business associations, NGOs, government agencies, development organizations and financial institutions.

Agenda:

14:30 - 14:35	Setting the scene Introduction to GO4SDGS, I-GO and Eco-Innovation, and challenge of addressing circularity communication gap within supply chains.	Hannes Mac Nulty, Green Industry Platform
14:35 - 15:15	Panel discussion Moderated discussion between textile companies operating at different stages within supply chains. Key questions being addressed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the two main challenges you face when it comes to communication and partnerships along your value chain? - What are the most effective ways of communicating to potential brand clients about an SME's proactive sustainability innovation/performance given SMEs' lack of bargaining power and difficulties matching pricing of larger scale businesses? - How can we incentivise brands and SME suppliers to work together on circularity when there is so much pressure on keeping prices low for brands and suppliers alike? What kind of support do you need? - How can SMEs stand out to potential brand clients who are concerned about sustainability? Questions from the audience will also be used to support the panel discussion.	Moderator: Ms. Zubeida Zwavel, Executive Director, Centre for African Resource Efficiency and Sustainability (CARES) Panellists: Mr. Isaac Maluki, CEO, Shona EPZ Ltd. Mr. Karfa Yakoro, Director of Commerce et Artisanat pour le Bien Être Social (CABES) Ms. Fatouma Sawadogo Maiga, National Coordinator (Burkina Faso), Ethical Fashion Initiative Ms. Wandia Gichuru, CEO, Vivo
15:15 - 15:20	Wrap up and next steps	Moderator: Ms. Zubeida Zwavel, Executive Director, CARES