



SUMMARY: Mapping and analysis of environmental initiatives and tools in the garment sector in Asia

Date: 15th September, 2020
Time: 1:00 – 2:00 (Bangkok time)
Location: Online
Presented by: Dr Samantha Sharpe and Fiona Berry, Institute for Sustainable Futures,
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Summary of Meeting – See accompanying presentation for additional detail

1. Overview of the Decent work in the garment sector supply chains in Asia project:

- a. The study presented in this session falls under Outcome 4, which focuses on Environmental Sustainability.

2. Background of research study:

- a. This study is a systematic review for the types of initiatives related to environmental sustainability throughout the garment sector.
- b. The purpose of conducting this research was to broadly map the many multi-stakeholder initiatives, tools and assessment platforms have been developed and implemented throughout the supply chain.
 - i. There is a great deal of diversity in these initiatives, including differences in their focus, the actors involved, who the beneficiaries are, the longevity of the activities and how they define and measure success.
- c. The study was completed through desktop research.

3. Findings of research study:

- a. The study identified 35 different initiatives, and of these, further analysed 17 initiatives.
- b. Among the selected initiatives, three dominant operating models each with different areas of focus, definitions of success, longevity and impact for firms in Asia were identified.
 - i. Performance standards
 - ii. Program offerings
 - iii. Social dialogue/ knowledge generating
See presentation for list of initiatives and comparison chart
- c. Results from rapid review of common barriers for SMEs in adopting eco-innovation include:
 - i. Awareness: lack of awareness about environmental issues and their impacts as well eco-innovation options;
 - ii. Environmental regulatory compliance: responsibilities in complying with environmental legislation, and know-how in investing beyond compliance;

- iii. Access to knowledge, skills and networks: seeing how best practice is implemented in other businesses and capacity to adapt and adopt;
 - iv. Access to finance: affordable and accessible;
 - v. Poor infrastructure: access to water systems and waste-water filtration systems
- d. Gaps identified within the three types of operating models in supporting enhanced environmental sustainability in SMEs include:
- i. Performance standard model: lack of internal absorptive capacity to bring in, integrate and use the performance standards in a way that develops the environmental sustainability of the firm, also lack of access due to costs associated with the model.
 - ii. Programme offer model: if SMEs are within the target group for the initiative they will benefit due to mix of offerings, but due to resource intensity only small number of firms benefit.
 - iii. Social Dialogue, Knowledge Sharing and Advocacy model: useful in sharing 'best practice', but limitation on who is included and considered 'best practice' (e.g. SMEs) and need for processes to address and moderate other issues of inclusive such as power imbalances and knowledge base.

4. Discussion

- a. Discussions on linkages between models and how each of the models could be improved
- b. The role of consumers, and the difficulties consumers face in being able to make informed choices or influence the market, was raised.