

Learning and Implementation Community

Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices

Purchasing practices are at the heart of business and are vital in efforts to improve labour standards. The focus on responsible purchasing practices is a key priority for many purchasing companies and multi-stakeholder initiatives. The MSI Working Group of the Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices (CFRPP) is now inviting textile/garment companies committed to improving their purchasing practices to join our 'Learning and Implementation Community' (LIC). The Community will facilitate companies wanting to take new steps towards progress in their purchasing practices, develop solutions and share learning with peers, experts and supply chain partners.

If you want to know more about the Common Framework for Responsible Purchasing Practices, how it has been developed and who is involved, please see details [here](#).

Aims and desired outcomes of the LIC

The overall desired outcome of the community is improved purchasing practices, in order to give scope for improved working conditions in the supply chain, through peer learning and practical action.

The aims of the community include:

- Encouraging and supporting companies in implementing positive changes in responsible purchasing practices (RPP), through sharing case studies of companies' experience, expert input, tools and guidance.
- Collecting and sharing best practice and strategies in implementation of responsible purchasing practices.
- Ensuring the elements of the framework are workable in practice. This includes testing the practical applicability of version 1 of the framework, as companies start to apply it within varying commercial environments, leading to an adjusted version of the framework if necessary.

What are the benefits of the LIC to companies?

The main benefit of the LIC is an opportunity for peer learning with other companies, to hear about examples of what other companies are doing, have input and advice from experts and to have a safe environment to trial changes, discuss and problem solve on overcoming obstacles and give feedback on learnings along the way.

Being part of the community will also mean companies gain support from the MSIs involved in terms of mentoring and discussing possible actions to be trialed and how to grow internal buy-in.



Practical details

- **Organisers:** Fair Wear¹, ETI², Ethical Trade Norway³, PST/GIZ⁴, AGT/NGA⁵.
- **Timeline:** The community will run for about two years, starting in September 2022.
- **Finance:** There is no cost for companies to join the Community, if they are already members of one of the MSIs involved. However, companies need to make sure they have sufficient resources budgeted (time and finances) to be able to participate and implement follow up. The community is funded by GIZ and STITCH⁶.
- **Facilitation:** The community's activities will be facilitated and organised by an independent Responsible Sourcing consultant, supported by the MSIs in the Working Group.
- **Activities of the Community:**
 - online workshops and sub-meetings (more details below)
 - support and mentoring by MSIs (more details below)
 - signposting to relevant resources that are already available e.g. training
 - developing practical tools/guidance on good practice
- **Confidentiality:** The participants will agree to confidentiality, so that companies can engage freely in discussions.

¹ Fair Wear is an MSI working with 140+ member brands to improve worker rights in textile supply chains, engaging directly with factories, trade unions, NGOs and governments. <https://www.fairwear.org/>

² The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is a UK based alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs that promotes respect for workers' rights around the globe. <https://www.ethicaltrade.org/>

³ Ethical Trade Norway is a member based organization and resource center for sustainable trade. The around 170 members include some of Norway's largest companies, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), public enterprises and organizations. <https://etiskhandel.no/en/dette-er-etisk-handel-norge/>

⁴ The Partnership for Sustainable Textiles (PST) is a multi-stakeholder initiative with around 130 members from companies, associations, trade unions, civil society, standard setting organisations and the German Federal Government: <https://www.textilbuendnis.com/en/>

The Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federally owned enterprise and supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. It hosts among others the Initiative for Global Solidarity: <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/104594.html>

⁵ The Dutch Agreement on Sustainable Garments and Textile (AGT) ran until the 31st of December 2021. A broad coalition of businesses and other organisations worked together during the term of 5.5 years to improve working conditions, prevent pollution, and promote animal welfare in production countries. The Next Generation Agreement (NGA) is currently being negotiated as a next step for the Dutch garment and textiles sector.

⁶ Sustainable Textile Initiative: Together for Change (STITCH) is a partnership with a common vision: a global textile and garment industry that contributes to an equal and just society by respecting human rights in the world of work. STITCH consists of 6 partners: two labour rights organisations – CDI in Vietnam and Cividip in India; two Dutch unions – CNV Internationaal and Mondiaal FNV; and two multi-stakeholder initiatives – Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) in the UK and Fair Wear in The Netherlands. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided the financial support for the programme and is aligned as strategic partner for STITCH. www.stitchpartnership.org

Commitment of members of the Community

Each company that is a member of the LIC is committed to:

- Taking action to improve their purchasing practices, in order to improve working conditions in the supply chain.
- Allocating relevant staff time/resources, to attend at least the main 6 online sessions, their choice of optional sub-meetings, to participate in support/mentoring/follow-up meetings with their MSI and to take relevant actions they've decided on. Although this is likely to be Responsible Sourcing/CSR staff initially, it is important that the company is committed to engaging leadership and commercial teams, and that representatives of commercial teams will be able to join some of the sessions.
- Work with their MSI to develop a learning plan, to define what they want to gain from the LIC and what areas they want to focus on.
- Engaging with suppliers on these topics, including discussing possible changes in purchasing practices with some key suppliers. This may involve nominating a key supplier to have more in depth discussions with, to trial possible changes.
- Sharing examples of progress, challenges and learnings regarding RPP with other participants in discussions (all sharing is voluntary and will not cover commercially sensitive information).
- Contributing best practice and learnings to the development of guidelines and tools.
- Tracking, sharing and discussing their progress and learnings with the MSI they are a member of.



What will happen in the community?

Implementation of Responsible Purchasing Practices

- The purpose of the framework and the LIC is to support companies to make practical improvements in their purchasing practices.
- Companies are expected to be committed to and working towards the 5 core 'Principles' outlined in the framework, and have a willingness to improve and to take active steps towards those principles.
- The 'Practices' listed under each principle are a collation of existing materials to outline what good practice looks like in terms of steps companies can take to implement those principles. We understand that some of the practices/lines in the framework will be more or less applicable to different business models and sizes. If a company thinks a practice does not apply to their business, we would encourage them to focus on practices they feel will make an impact and where they can get traction to make change.
- The framework is not a compliance mechanism, it is a description of what responsible practices look like, to be used by companies to stimulate practical action.

Online workshops

- 6 main workshops over the 2 years, attended by all the members of the community.
- Each workshop will focus on one of the five principles of the CFRPP.
- The format of the workshops will involve the following:
 - companies sharing case studies on actions taken and what they have learned
 - brief input from experts to explain the practices in that principle and give advice on how to implement them
 - facilitated break out rooms, with exercises/materials to guide discussions about ideas of actions to take and about overcoming obstacles
 - facilitated reflection at the end of each workshop on what actions each company wants to take and who you need to talk to, to take steps forward
- As the community progresses, there will be space within the workshops for companies to give feedback on what they are learning as they are making efforts to implement RPP.

- Ahead of each workshop we will send guidance to support your internal conversations to help you to understand current status, actions and obstacles, so that you can make the most of each session.

Sub-meetings

- 6 optional sub-meetings over the 2 years.
- These will dive into more specific topics, with more solutions focused discussion, aiming to develop guidelines to be shared with the wider group.
- Varied, more specific topics will be considered, such as payment terms, internal incentives for buying teams, integrating supplier feedback into PP. The exact list of sub-meeting topics will be decided with the input of participating companies and suppliers.
- The sub-meetings will involve suppliers/manufacturers or their representatives, where appropriate.
- The format of the sessions will involve the following:
 - brief input from experts and case studies, focused on the specific topic in question
 - exercises and case material will be provided for discussion
 - discussion in break out groups, facilitated by members of the MSI Working Group and consultant, on how to practically implement certain aspects and develop solutions
 - feedback from the break out groups
 - aiming to produce guidelines/ ideas for sharing after the meeting

Mentoring

- The MSIs will work with their member companies, in between the workshops, to support implementation.
- This might include action plans and tracking progress, giving support and advice on implementation. The specific scope and content of the support is to be agreed between brands and the relevant MSI, depending on the approach and available resources of the MSIs.
- Another role the MSIs could play is to potentially connect the company with other companies who are working on a similar practice/element, so they can share experience and learn from each other.



“The CFRPP and the LIC is about learning and stimulating positive action, it’s not a compliance or accountability mechanism.”



Who is the community for?

We hope to include purchasing companies with a mix of sizes, locations and business models. We anticipate that the companies in the community will have already started their journey in implementing responsible purchasing practices. This means you will be in this peer learning community alongside other companies who have a good knowledge of their supply chain, an understanding of the company's own current purchasing practices, processes and systems and some level of knowledge of the potential negative impact of those on suppliers and workers (even if a formal risk assessment has not been carried out).

For the framework to support genuine progress in purchasing practices, the best practice solutions need to be mutually beneficial to both suppliers and purchasing companies, and to involve a two-way dialogue on ways forward. The CFRPP MSI Working Group is in active discussion with the Sustainable Terms of Trade Initiative (STTI) about the role of suppliers and manufacturers.

Desired end goal

The overall desired outcome of the community is improved purchasing practices, in order to give scope for improved supply chain working conditions. While the approach and solutions may differ among the participating companies, the aim is that at the end of the 2 year process:

- the company will have taken steps to translate framework practices into their company's practices, in a way that works with their business model.
- the company has a proposal to present to internal teams on potential feasible changes that could be made, with case studies and relevant information to back that up, ideally building on changes that have been trialled through the course of the community's duration.



Measuring progress and learning

The CFRPP and the LIC are about learning and stimulating positive action.

As part of the LIC, the MSI Working Group may suggest a few data points per principle, which could be a tool for companies to track their own progress. This data could be provided to the company's own MSI, and might be collated and shared in aggregate and anonymously with the other MSIs and the rest of the community, to give a general view of progress of the group over time. It's important to note that there won't be tracking or reporting publicly of individual companies' progress by the LIC.

Regarding questions that companies may have about accountability and reporting, we want to emphasise that the MSI Working Group and the framework are not a compliance or accountability mechanism. The framework is a reference point, which outlines what the MSIs agree that good looks like, in terms of responsible purchasing practices. Each MSI involved will integrate the framework into their own practices in different ways.

- Some MSIs (eg PST and Fair Wear) will integrate the CFRPP into their existing accountability frameworks, working together with the other MSIs in the Working Group to align this as far as possible.
- Other MSIs (eg ETI) will use the framework in a different way, as a basis for discussions, support and mentoring of companies, to stimulate ideas of improvements that can be made.

Key contacts

- The company's key contact will be their case manager/contact person at the MSI they are a member of. The key individuals in the MSI Working Group at the participating MSIs are:

- PST: Topsy Roedler, topsy.roedler@giz.de

- Fair Wear: Wilco van Bokhorst, Vanbokhorst@fairwear.org

- ETI: Elisa Shepherd, Elisa.Shepherd@eti.org.uk

- Ethical Trade Norway: Marthe Kielland Røssaak, marthe@etiskhandel.no

- AGT/NGA: Tamar Hoek at Solidaridad, tamar.hoek@solidaridadnetwork.org and Miriam Geelhoed at Modint, geelhoed@modint.nl

- The key contact for practical enquiries about Zoom meetings and arrangements is Milena Gropp at Fairwear gropp@fairwear.org

- The external consultant that is facilitating the CFRPP MSI Working Group and supporting the implementation of the LIC is Hilary Murdoch hilarymurdoch@gmail.com

If you are interested in finding out more about joining the LIC please contact the CFRPP MSI Working Group on info@cfripp.org



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