The responsible management of global value chains in the garment sector

An overview of garment-relevant development cooperation initiatives and activities, prepared by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission

The European Commission has taken action on the responsible management of global value chains through different external and internal policies, including on transparency, employment and labour conditions, environment and climate change, social dialogue, public procurement, trade, development cooperation and international relations.

With regard to international cooperation and development policy, work by Commission services on the responsible management of the value chain in the garment sector is ongoing. This was encouraged by the Council conclusions on Responsible Global Value Chains of 12 May 2016, supporting efforts undertaken in promoting responsible supply chains through initiatives such as an EU Garment Initiative.¹

An optimal way is sought to ensure improvements in terms of environmental impact, labour conditions, and human rights. This includes working together with governments, businesses and civil society, and improving the transparency, coherence and effectiveness of relevant policies and actions.

There is a particular role for development cooperation in engaging on responsible garment value chains, including guidance material, programmes and projects, international cooperation and communication. This summary, which focuses on development cooperation, demonstrates the significant geographical and sector wide engagement, also taking into account textiles, cotton, and leather.

Selected general guidance and policy documents²

Communication on the role of the private sector

The Commission adopted a Communication on the role of the private sector³ in May 2013, which highlights the potential for closer engagement with the private sector as a partner in the

¹ “The Council supports efforts undertaken in promoting responsible supply chains through initiatives such as an EU Garment Initiative […]. The Council strongly encourages the Commission and Member States to share best practices, including the promotion of new and innovative approaches, and to scale up such initiatives and expedite their delivery.”

² Under the lead of Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO).

³ Communication COM(2014) 263 ‘A stronger role of the private sector in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth in developing countries’.
financing and delivery of development assistance, as well as by encouraging positive development impacts through companies' core business strategies.

In its overall guidance and framework, the Communication refers in its Action 10 to the promotion of "international Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines and principles through policy dialogue and development cooperation with partner countries, and enhance market reward for CSR in public procurement and through promotion of sustainable consumption and production".


The **Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015-2019** aims at mainstreaming human rights in EU external policies, including in development cooperation, through the systematic and coordinated use of all available instruments, with a particular emphasis on ownership by local institutions and better policy coherence among key sectors.

The Action Plan, to be implemented with the involvement of the European Parliament and civil society organisations (CSOs), includes actions on the fight against the worst forms of child labour. It supports, for example, "the ratification and implementation of key international conventions concerning trafficking in human beings and the issue of forced labour", including the framework of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP+), CSR, and advancing business and human rights.

**Development funding**

The Commission is cooperating with partners, including international organisations and civil society organisations, on a wide range of projects related to responsible value chains. These include activities to improve living wages, human and labour rights for workers, and to develop an enabling business and investment environment for both local and international investors through domestic reforms and good governance.

EU actions also include multilateral programmes, such as the G7 Vision Zero Fund, for which the Commission announced its support in October 2015. The Fund supports, amongst other things, enhanced government capacities and private sector initiatives that promote decent work with a specific focus on occupational health and safety in developing countries in line with relevant guidelines for cooperation between the International Labour Office (ILO) and private businesses.

The Commission also welcomes the close cooperation between the ILO and international trade unions, fashion brands and factories to improve labour conditions for garment workers in producing countries.

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4 Council conclusions of 20 July 2015, 10897/15
Concrete examples on specific programmes conducted in a number of countries and regions are provided below.

**Ongoing projects**

**SWITCH-Asia**

The SWITCH-Asia programme promotes sustainable consumption and production in 19 Asian countries. The programme contains three key components which reinforce each other during implementation: the Regional Policy Support Component, Grant Projects and a Network Facility. The EU-funded SWITCH-Asia programme was initiated in 2007 with an overall budget of EUR 150 million until 2014 and EUR 120 million until 2020.

SWITCH-Asia promotes economic prosperity and helps reduce poverty in Asia by encouraging sustainable growth with low environmental impact from industries and consumers, in line with international environmental agreements and processes. SWITCH-Asia tackles environmental issues and encourages Asian countries to transform into greener economies.

The programme works directly with governments on their national plans for sustainable consumption and production. In addition, SWITCH-Asia encourages Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Asian countries to take up various models of sustainable consumption and production, for example cleaner production, sustainable value chains, green certificates to increase the trading value of locally produced goods, sustainable food production and consumption, the sustainable design of products, or awareness-raising on sustainability issues.

The regional policy support component aims at building the capacity of partner countries in establishing, implementing, and evaluating supporting policies for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), which vary from support for implementing international legislation, to creating new policies. Such supporting policies are generally linked to climate change adaptation and to helping governments meet international climate pledges. Regional policy support is supplemented with a few targeted national policy support components in the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

So far, SWITCH-Asia has funded 95 grants in the region with an average EU contribution of EUR 1.3 million and is active in 18 of the 19 target countries (there is no project yet in the Maldives). The grants work across the whole value chain in various sectors including the building, material, electrical, food and beverage, textile and garment, and wood-based industries sectors. The projects aim to raise awareness about sustainable consumption in the target countries, or to reduce greenhouse gas emissions either via energy efficiency or via overall resource efficiency for example.

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In addition, some of the grants have specifically addressed the issue of CSR across specific value chains, aiming at establishing transparent and responsible value chains. In this category projects like SMART Myanmar, CSR Vietnam, Sustainable textiles made in Jaipur (India), or Sustainable Carpet and Pashmina in Nepal are examples of the implementation of CSR policies in the targeted countries.

**SWITCH-MED**

The SWITCH-MED programme covers the EU’s Southern Neighbourhood. With an EU contribution of EUR 22 million, it is the EU’s regional flagship programme on green economy and SCP, following the same objectives and structure as SWITCH-ASIA.

Up until 2017, SWITCH Med is carrying out a comprehensive set of activities directly supporting policy makers, industries, would-be green entrepreneurs and civil society. The activities cover the policy dimension, demonstration activities and a networking facility. The programme is implemented by several partners with proven expertise: UNIDO, UNEP, various entities under the Barcelona Convention framework, as well as a number of local partners and service providers.

**Support to the improvement of the business environment in Southern Mediterranean**

With regard to other regional programmes in the Southern Neighbourhood, the "Support to the improvement of the business environment in Southern Mediterranean" project of EUR 12 million for 2014-2017 should also be mentioned. The objective of this project is to contribute to the development of micro and SMEs by the improvement of the regulatory environment in line with European and international best practice. The base line for the improvement and development of activities in each country is the 2013 Evaluation of the Euro Mediterranean Charter for Enterprise conducted in cooperation with the OECE.

**EUROMED INVEST**

Under EUROMED INVEST, the EU supports business and investment partnerships in the Southern Mediterranean under the ANIMA Investment Network with EUR 5 million for 2014-2016. The aim is to boost private businesses and investment within the Euro-Mediterranean region and to contribute to inclusive economic development, including in the textile and garment sector.

Activities empower Euro-Med businesses and investment networks to implement targeted strategies in support of SME development in specific sectors including textile and fashion. For instance, in May 2016, the first edition of the Euro-Mediterranean business meetings was held for the textile and fashion sector.
Support for the development of cultural and creative industries and clusters in the Southern Mediterranean

This project, implemented by UNIDO, aims to encourage entrepreneurial co-operation in the cultural and creative industries, and to demonstrate the potential of new sectors to stimulate inclusive growth through the development of SMEs. The EUR 5.6 million for 2014-2017 provides financial and technical support to pilot SMEs clusters which have the potential to develop the cultural and creative industries in the Southern Mediterranean.

Adequate replication and larger scale support from financial institutions could promote new employment opportunities and inclusive growth in the region. Several carpet, garment and home textile clusters have been identified in the context of the project.

SWITCH-Africa

SWITCH-Africa is a project for EUR 248 000 for 2015-2016 on the greening of SMEs in Leather Clusters and the Leather Tanning Industry. Implemented by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA LLPI) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the project seeks to improve SMEs' competitiveness through energy, space and machinery optimisation; promoting recycling and reduction in the use of chemicals; and developing a roadmap for improving effluent management and the quantification of carbon footprint of the leather sector.

Activities include conformity assessment tests of SMEs' products against international quality standards; training of SMEs in footwear production processes, pollution, recycling and waste management processes, and how to meet international environmental standards; training of effluent managers, technicians, and officials from relevant government departments; and the development of a national roadmap for improving effluent management and carbon emissions quantification.

The Technical Barriers to Trade Programme for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP-EU TBT programme)

Under the EU-ACP TBT Programme to overcome technical barriers to trade, the COMESA LLPI implements a second programme in the leather and tanning industry of EUR 200 000 for 2016-2017. The purpose of the 10-month project involving several key experts is to support selected tanneries and SMEs of Ethiopia and Sudan in their compliance with EU REACH Directive on chemicals.

There are three major components: research on standards in the field of footwear for all COMESA LLPI Member States and the related support in the drafting of regional standards and/or adoption of existing international ones; capacity building for tanneries and selected SMEs to comply with EU REACH certification; support to national laboratories active in testing services for the leather sector.
EU-Africa Partnership on cotton

The EU-Africa Partnership on cotton is funded under the ACP-EU partnership framework. It was created in 2004, involving African cotton producing countries and Member States of the European Union. It aims to achieve sustainable improvements in competitiveness, and the added value and viability of African cotton value chains, in order to maximise the impact on the income of producers.

At the end of 2015 there were 40 programmes amounting to EUR 226.5 million under implementation in 28 African countries. These programmes are mainly targeting increased productivity along the cotton value chain development, while promoting sustainable agriculture, food security, women's empowerment, and youth integration. EU funding represents about 70% of the support.

Cooperating with the ILO

The Commission is cooperating with the ILO on several projects to improve labour standards in partner countries. Some examples include projects supporting GSP+ countries under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR); a EUR 5.3 million project to assess and address the effects of trade and trade policies on employment, including fundamental principles and rights at work; and in-country based projects such as Thailand and Pakistan (see below).

The EU contributes EUR 6.5 million for 2014-2018 to the Commission-ILO project "strengthening the perspective on employment of trade and sectoral policies". This project is financed under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) thematic programme Investing in People. The project is implemented in ten partner countries across all regions: Benin, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Morocco, Guatemala, Honduras, Philippines, and Myanmar.

The overall objective of the projects is to strengthen the capabilities of partner countries to analyse and design sectoral and trade policies and programmes that enhance job creation in terms of both quantity and quality.

The current Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic programme also includes a joint Commission-ILO global project to promote labour conditions in the garment sector (see below).

In addition, an EU Expert Facility on Employment, Labour and Social Protection (SOCIEUX+) is being implemented under the same GPGC thematic programme for a total cost of EUR 9 million for 2016-2020. It supports the mobilisation of peer-to-peer short-term expertise from EU Members States and partner countries’ administrations to enhance the capacities of partner countries to better design, manage, and monitor effective, inclusive, and sustainable employment and social protection strategies.
From September 2016, the existing SOCIEUX project on social protection is widening the scope of its services to include the mobilisation of experts in the field of employment and labour, including labour standards.

**European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)**

Through the EIDHR, social partners and civil society organisations have been supported worldwide to become an effective force for political reform and to defend human rights in the workplace. More specifically, the Commission supported the Clean Clothes Campaign to increase civil society's bargaining power and leverage in their negotiations with global brands and governments in Asia, and to ensure the observance of garment workers' rights and the right to a living wage.

As of 2015, the annual EIDHR global call for proposals includes a recurrent lot every year dedicated to economic, social, and cultural rights (ECOSOC). Under the 2015 EIDHR global call for proposals, EUR 5 million were dedicated to supporting civil society and social partners' actions in ensuring that EU GSP+ beneficiary countries meet their commitments to ratify and effectively implement the relevant core human and labour rights international conventions included in the GSP+ process. The selected projects to start in 2016 cover actions in all of the GSP+ beneficiary countries: Armenia, Bolivia, Georgia, Cape Verde, Mongolia, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines and Kyrgyzstan.

A call for proposals including a component of EUR 4.6 million aimed at reinforcing human rights due diligence in global value chains through the promotion and implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights closed on 21 October 2016.

The Commission has also signed under the EIDHR an **ILO targeted initiative** of EUR 1 million for strengthening the capacity of countries that are GSP+ beneficiaries, Free Trade Agreements partners with Trade and Sustainable Development chapters, or others relevant treaty parties with specific labour concerns in the EU trade relations, in order to meet their commitments under fundamental labour conventions. This initiative aims to complement other ongoing EU-ILO projects, including those run by DG TRADE.

**Horizon 2020**

Under the EU Research and Innovation programme: **Horizon 2020, the Sustainable Market Actors for Responsible Trade (SMART) project**, with an EU contribution of EUR 2.5 million for 2016-2020, addresses the challenge of how to achieve the UN SDGs, while meeting the global target of staying within two degrees global warming and avoiding transgressing other planetary boundaries.

Trans-disciplinary research ought to provide insights on the regulatory complexity in which EU private and public market actors operate, in particular concerning their interactions with private and public actors in developing countries, in the form of specific product life cycles, including ready-made garments.
Development education and awareness raising (DEAR)

Projects under the **DEAR programme** are implemented in all EU Member States and several partner countries, with calls for proposals open to projects dealing with the garment industry.

The "**Creating Change Agents in the European Garment Industry**" project is implemented by the Fair Wear Foundation with an EU contribution of EUR 492 512 for 2013-2016. The overall objectives are to improve respect for human rights; eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; and promote gender equality and women’s empowerment among clothing workers in low-cost production countries who manufacture clothing purchased in the EU. Actions include holding supply chain awareness (SCA) sessions for employees of European clothing companies and procurement officers at organisations which buy large amounts of clothing.

The "**Mobilising Europe for a Living Wage for Garment Workers**" project was implemented by the Clean Clothes Campaign with an EU contribution EUR of 995 638 for 2013-2015. This project aimed at achieving decent wages and acceptable working conditions in the global garment industry by increasing European civil society's capacity to lobby and pressure companies, and policy makers to fulfil their duty to protect and respect garment workers' human rights in the global supply chains, with a particular focus on women workers' human rights, and brands and retail companies with significant market share in Europe.

**Partnership Instrument**

Under the **Partnership Instrument**, in line with the objectives of the Trade for All Communication, EUR 9 million are allocated to a project on responsible business conduct (RBC) and supply chains in several Asian trading partners: China, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan.

It is designed to support responsible supply chain management, addressing notably environmental protection, decent working conditions and the respect of human rights, and to encourage smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the region. The project promotes RBC policies and enhances their uptake by the private sector in key strategic sectors, such as garment/textiles; contributes to increase awareness and strengthens capacity of all relevant actors and in particular businesses and public authorities in the region in relation to RBC; develops and disseminates CSR/RBC approaches; and enhances the sustainability contribution of businesses operating in Asia, based on internationally agreed principles and guidelines. The OECD and ILO are the main implementers.

**Country-based support**

In terms of country-based support, in addition to the above programmes and projects that cover several beneficiary countries or are defined via their thematic scope, there have been development cooperation programmes and projects in several countries.
The EU supports Bangladesh on education and skills development, and adopted at the end of 2015 the "Skills 21" programme for EUR 20 million on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) reform.

The programme aims at strengthening the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) by improving the national qualifications frameworks, linking TVET with higher education, placing more emphasis on skills development for "green jobs", and by transforming existing institutions into a Centre of Skills Excellence with an associated National Instructional Materials Development Institute.

Furthermore, it works with TVET institutions to introduce the entire reform package of new quality-assured programmes, newly trained instructors, and management and services for career guidance and job placement. Good governance and human rights are an important crosscutting issue, and training and activities relating to decent work and workers' rights are covered by the project.

The competency skills log book used in informal apprenticeship already contains a Code of Practice reflecting workers' and employers' responsibilities and expectations. Meanwhile, training programmes delivered in Enterprises Based Training (EBT) have modules including workers' rights and occupational safety and health (OSH).

The programme draws lessons from experiences since 2003 in the area of improving standards in the garment industry in Bangladesh, particularly with the EU financed Better Work and Standards Programme (BEST) which had a total of EUR 16.9 million, with EUR 15 million from the Commission and EUR 660 000 form Germany for the period from 2008-2015.

It played a crucial role in providing assistance to Rana Plaza victims. The project included a Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) component on the "Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry" (PSES) in order to design and implement inclusive skills training and to promote disability inclusion in the garment sector.

In the past, the "Partnership to combat child labour through corporate social responsibility in Bangladesh" with Save the Children where the EU contributed EUR 997 467 for 2011-2014, looked at the working standards and conditions of child labourers in 220 small companies and three business associations in both the formal and informal sectors.

6 A flagship autonomous initiative is the Bangladesh Sustainability Compact to promote continuous improvements in labour rights and factory safety in the Ready Made Garment and Knitwear Industry in Bangladesh that was established between the European Union and the Government of Bangladesh with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to improve labour rights and health and safety in the ready-made garment sector in the country in 2013. DG Trade closely follows the implementation of the Compact.
Private sector companies and government agencies are increasing their capacity and accountability to implement and monitor CSR-policies focusing on decent and appropriate jobs and the needs of child workers. The target group was 1500 child workers and 220 companies that have improved working conditions, with a special focus on hazardous labour.

**Cambodia**

Trade-related assistance (TRA) is provided to the Trade Development Support Programme (TDSP) of the Cambodian government through a multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank. The EU is the main contributor with EUR 11.65 million for 2008-2016.

TDSP assists trade facilitation through the automation of customs, and the streamlining and automation of export procedures, and is therefore highly relevant to the garment and footwear industry, as the sector constitutes 84% of total exports. This sector particularly benefits from improved logistic performance resulting from TDSP supported reforms.

TDSP also included support to strengthen the mechanism for national minimum-wage setting, specific to the garment industry. It included support for an alternative labour dispute mechanism which, although not specific, has had a particular impact in the garment and footwear industry.

There are currently three ongoing projects financed from thematic EIDHR and civil society organisations and local authorities (CSO-LA) programmes that support labour rights promotion, and advocacy and strengthening of trade unions. This includes a grant to a trade union confederation of relative weight in the garment and footwear sector.

**India**

The project "reduce workplace violence and economic discrimination against women in the export-oriented garment industry in south India", with an EU contribution of EUR 170 000 for 2014-2017, aims at demonstrating that women can serve effectively as line supervisors in garment factories, thereby helping to change a widespread culture of discrimination. It also aims at providing male and female line supervisors with the human resources skills and knowledge of Indian law needed to reduce harassment in garment factories. The project is implemented by the Fair Wear Foundation.

The project "Going Green" targets the textiles, leather and substitutes sectors to build a sustainable businesses for textile artisans and improve their working conditions through efficient eco-friendly processes, access to resources and increasing the demand for 'green' products. The Commission contributes EUR 958 000 from 2014-2017.

The project "Sustainable Textiles for Sustainable Development", with EUR 1.9 million from 2009-2014, promoted the production and consumption of textiles from Rajasthan which are both environmentally friendly and have a positive impact on poor workers and their communities.
Lesotho

A completed European Development Fund project, of EUR 2 million for 2012-2014, provided HIV/AIDS and TB prevention and care treatment programming to workers in the textile and apparel industry of Lesotho. The Apparel Lesotho Alliance to Fight Aids (ALAFÁ) project's overall objective was to provide a comprehensive, professional and effective response to the disease in the apparel industry, with specific objectives to: reduce the rate of new HIV and TB infections amongst industry workers; and to keep the economically active poor healthy and at work in the industry by providing access to quality care and treatment services for those who are infected thereby reducing the effects of the disease on the global competitiveness of the industry.

Madagascar

The textile sector in Madagascar is supported through a programme under the Regional Integration Support Programme of the 10th European Development Fund for EUR 250 000. This programme, which runs until end 2017, supports the "Groupement des Entreprises Franches et Partenaires" (GEFP) through various activities including capacity-building in textile engineering and the preparation of the event Origin Africa 2016.

Myanmar

The project SMART Myanmar promotes and supports the sustainable production of garments "Made in Myanmar", striving to increase the international competitiveness of SMEs in this sector. The project supports SMEs in increasing their productivity and reducing the environmental impact of their production processes.

SMART also runs programmes to step up security measures at factories and enhance their social standards. SMART entered a second phase in January 2016, with an allocated budget of around EUR 2.8 million, to which the EU contributes EUR 2.5 million for 2016-2018. It aims at scaling-up and institutionalising successful practices developed and implemented during SMART's first phase, to which the EU contributed EUR 1.8 million for 2013-2015.

The Commission is also closely working with the ILO in Myanmar through two ongoing actions, one of which is a project on the "Promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work as tools for peace in Myanmar". With EUR 1.2 million for 2014-2016, the project addresses forced labour through restorative justice and enhanced respect for International Labour Standards and national laws, which promotes CSR in particular with regard to labour standards.

The Myanmar Trade Development Programme supports the government in promoting trade, which can benefit the emerging garment export sector in Myanmar. For 2015-2017 the Commission contribution is EUR 10 million, and Germany contributes EUR 0.5 million.

7 A flagship autonomous initiative is the multi-stakeholder Myanmar Labour Rights Initiative (Government, EU, US, Japan, Denmark, and ILO) which aims to promote fundamental labour rights and practices in Myanmar. The EU's ongoing support to Myanmar already covers areas related to the Initiative.
The **Myanmar Climate Change Alliance** for EUR 4.2 million launched in 2013 aims to initiate a formal capacity development programme which includes energy Life Cycle Assessments with the private sector. Significant discussions have taken place with the garment sector, in particular with one large clothing-retail company.

**Pakistan**

An EU-ILO project funded through the Asia regional envelope, the **International Labour and Environmental Standards Application in Pakistan's SMEs** (ILES), has a budget of EUR 12.6 million for 2016-2022. The programme's overall objective, in the framework of the country commitments under the GSP+ scheme, is to promote sustainable and inclusive growth by supporting the economic integration of Pakistan into the global and regional economy, by improving compliance with labour and environmental standards and increased competitiveness.

This will be achieved through two specific objectives focusing on: assisting public sector institutions to improve the enforcement of existing legislation and compliance of international labour and environmental standards in Pakistan; and supporting textile and leather sectors' SMEs to institutionalise the implementation of and compliance with ILES legislation through their active engagement.

**Vietnam**

In Vietnam, support to the garment sector is provided under the European Trade Policy and Investment Support Project (**EUMUTRAP**) of EUR 15 million for 2012-2018. As garments are an important export sector for Vietnam, there are many activities in the project that assist the sector both directly and indirectly with capacity building in both trade promotion and facilitation.

In the context of the Free Trade Agreement between the EU and Vietnam (EV-FTA), experts will carry out an analysis of the garment sector to understand their challenges in exporting to the EU. Some planned activities relevant to the garment sector include: capacity-building by implementing the provisions in the Chapter Country of Origin (C/O) of EV-FTA; measures to improve workers' social conditions, including workers with disabilities, and support to low-income workers with a focus on workers supplying raw materials for processing and export to EU; and a training course on gender issues in trade and investment activities.

Under EUMUTRAP there is also a grant component, one of which supports the Leather and Shoes Institute (LEASHORESIN) with an amount of EUR 276 000. The main objective is to improve compliance with the export market requirements for Vietnam's footwear SMEs, to improve advisory and testing services for international standards, to have accreditation by reputable service providers, and to support them to improve CSR performance in factories.

Generally, projects on issues of labour standards, including in global value chains, build on the experience of past cooperation through several projects. These include projects such as the joint EU-ILO project "**Improving safety and health at work through a Decent Work**
agenda" with EUR 1.6 million for Honduras, Ukraine, Moldova, Zambia, Malawi for 2010-2012; and a project aimed at supporting partner countries for better "Monitoring and Assessing Progress on Decent Work in Developing Countries" with EUR 4.3 million for Bangladesh, Cambodia, Niger, Zambia, Indonesia Philippines, Peru, Ukraine, Brazil for 2009-2013.

Engagement on the responsible management of garment value chains also draws on the lessons learnt from projects in other sectors such as the EU-ILO project "Combatting Unacceptable Forms of Work in the Thai Fishing and Seafood Industry" in Thailand with EUR 4.2 million for 2016-2019. This project supports the Thai authorities and businesses to comply with core labour standards, in particular concerning the elimination of the worst forms of forced and child labour, and aims to establish a permanent platform for multi-stakeholder involvement and coordination.

**Upcoming projects**

**SWITCH-Asia**

The SWITCH-Asia programme is continuing the regional priority included in the work plan for 2014-2020, namely the Green Economy. There is increased and more focused policy support in the framework of Goal 12 of the new Sustainable Development Goals, which deals directly with Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).

Alignment with the 10 Years Framework of Programmes (outcome of Rio+20 and first target of SDG12 on SCP) on the global implementation of sustainable consumption and production is sought both at the grant level as well as at the policy level.

**Global Public Goods and Challenges Programme**

Within this programme, there are a number of activities relevant to the garment sector.

**Promoting responsible value chains in the garment sector** is a EUR 19.1 million project, which aims to improve working conditions in global garment value chains with a focus on Decent Work and Transparency and Traceability. Due to the scale and the profile of workers, the sector offers great potential to significantly contribute to economic and social development.

Specific objectives are improving compliance with labour standards in the garment sector, including addressing forced and child labour as well as occupational health and safety; strengthening knowledge, awareness and global advocacy on social and environmental conditions; and improving transparency and traceability in the garment value chain. Both responsible production and responsible consumption are also to be promoted.

The action includes a EUR 3 million contribution to the G7 Vision Zero Fund (VZF), managed by the ILO, with a priority focus on the textile and garment sector, in line with EU work on responsible value chains. The overall objective of the Fund is to reduce the number
of work-related fatalities and accidents and occupational diseases in selected developing countries, by improving occupational safety and health practices and conditions in sectors that link to global supply chains, as well as adequately compensating victims and their families in case of such accidents. The fund will target a selected number of pilot sectors and countries linked to global value chains, and the garment sector remains the first sector of intervention.

In the area of trade for development the EU contributes to ongoing programmes of the International Trade Centre (ITC), in particular to the ITC Standards Map with EUR 5 million for 2016-2021. It provides comprehensive, up-to-date and comparable information on more than 170 existing standards, codes of conduct and audit protocols, addressing sustainability hotspots in global value chains, through a freely accessible web-based portal, as well as training and capacity-building for local producers, organised in cooperation with EU Delegations. For the latter, one of the objectives would be to use customised data from the ITC Standards Map to support work on responsible garment value chains at the EU level.

Furthermore, an exchange of ideas is ongoing with the International Trade Centre (ITC) on how to contribute to economic development and employment opportunities by supporting marginalised artisans and small entrepreneurs, for example weaving and spinning, in selected African countries, including their integration into fashion value chains.

**Communication, dialogue and awareness raising**

*Online presence*

A dedicated group has been created on the online platform "Capacity4Dev". The group – "Platform on Responsible management of the Supply Chain in the Garment Sector" – was launched on 25 April 2016 and aims at connecting all relevant stakeholders. It is meant to be an interactive and collaborative tool where members' contributions improve knowledge sharing among all stakeholders and actors involved in the responsible management of garment value chains.

*Communication*

A short video was produced in early 2016 to raise awareness on sustainable production and consumption. It shows how much development and the 2030 Agenda are interlinked with people's everyday life through clothing. Another video on "Making the Garment Industry Sustainable and Ethical" and an article on Capacity4Dev were produced in 2016, discussing drivers of change in the garment sector.

Under the GPGC project on Decent Work and Transparency and Traceability mentioned above, activities are included to increase the awareness and visibility of EU work on responsible value chains in the garment sector and to promote responsible consumption in the EU. It would also enhance the capacity of groups to advocate for the rights of garment workers in the target countries.
Further communication material addressing the responsible management of garment value chains is currently under preparation.

**Events**

A first High-level Conference on responsible supply chain management in the garment sector took place in Brussels on 25 April 2016, one day after the third anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh, with the participation of more than 200 participants, including the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, and the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne Thyssen, Members of the European Parliament, high-level representatives from partner countries, EU Member States, businesses and civil society.

The objectives of this stakeholder event were to promote successful existing initiatives, including from Member States and industry, and to continue the dialogue at the EU level. It offered a platform for garment workers and their representatives to make their voices heard in Europe, and the 'marketplace of ideas' allowed stakeholders, including civil society organisations, to network, share knowledge and showcase their activities.

Alongside the event, the Chairman and CEO of Inditex and the Secretary General of IndustriALL Global Union signed a new unique cooperation agreement.

During the European Development Days (EDDs) in Brussels in June 2015, the Commission organised a debate on the "Responsible management of supply chains – the case of the garment sector". During the EDDs in June 2016, a brainstorming session was jointly organised with the European Network of Political Foundations (ENoP) and the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN) on "Responsible production and consumption in the garment value chain".

The Commission participates actively in conferences, meetings, and awareness-raising events, and is collaborating and exchanging with EU Member States, the European Parliament, civil society, existing initiatives and standards, industry, and actors in partner countries on their activities.

SWITCH-Asia regularly organises networking events which feature clusters of grants working on the same Sustainable Consumption Topic (CSR, access to finance, energy efficiency, resource efficiency) or industrial sector (energy, food, textile, and garment) from various Asian countries.

The events are organised by the Network Facility component of the programme (service contract) which is in charge, amongst other things, of disseminating best practice and making links with policy makers and possible financiers. Events are regularly organised based on the demands received from clusters of grants or countries.

2016 has seen networking events organised recently in Mongolia on the role of non-state actors in Asia, and in Cambodia on the role of the circular economy and waste management
within the realm of the Asia Pacific Roundtable on Consumption and Production which took place in July.

**Cooperation in relevant policy and dialogue mechanisms**

The Commission has been actively engaged in a number of policy forums dealing with development cooperation activities, for example, the G7 process to foster responsible global value chains, including in the garment sector; the OECD work on responsible supply chains in the garment and footwear sector supply chains, with a view to foster the responsible behaviour of multinational enterprises in these sectors; and International Labour Conferences organised by the ILO, including in the 105th Conference of June 2016 with its conclusions on decent work in global supply chains.

**Policy dialogue**

The SWITCH-Asia programme has established lasting links with the Asia Pacific Roundtable on Consumption and Production (APRSCP), which is an Asia-focused international, nongovernmental, non-profit, network that promotes sustainable consumption and production in the Asia-Pacific.

The APRSCP is a multi-stakeholder dialogue that aims to enhance and strengthen regional cooperation in the development and implementation of SCP strategies, and to promote best practice, programmes, local initiatives, and lessons learnt on SCP related projects in Asia and the Pacific region.

Furthermore, on the sub-regional level the programme has established the ASEAN SCP Forum, which attempts to identify common challenges and mechanisms for implementing SCP in the ASEAN region.

The SWITCH TO GREEN flagship project supports private sector-led inclusive green growth and aims to implement the EU’s commitment "to promote a green economy that generates growth, creates decent jobs and helps reduce poverty". SWITCH TO GREEN promotes the adoption of SCP practices, in line with the new 2030 Agenda.

The programme provides support to policy makers to develop enabling frameworks and to the private sector to promote SCP in key economic sectors in Asia, Africa and the Mediterranean region. The EU has allocated approximately EUR 200 million to SWITCH projects since 2008.