

TRAINING FICHE

03. CLOTHING AND THE CITIZENS, THE SOCIETY AND THE CULTURE

(Sections in italic only for internal use, not to be published)

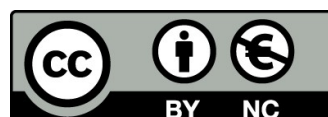
Area	<i>Clothing</i>										
Level	<i>ADVANCED</i>										
Topic	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>3. Social and cultural concerns and implications</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>						3. Social and cultural concerns and implications				
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Keywords	Clothing; Social and Cultural Concerns; Fair wages; Fast-fashion; Labour rights; Reuse; cultural appropriation										
Introduction (500-1000 characters including spaces)	With the liberalization of markets, fast-fashion brands do not, as a rule, have their own production, although, under the current law, they must be responsible for the social conditions of their working chain. Fashion brands were able to benefit from outsourcing services in countries that offered										

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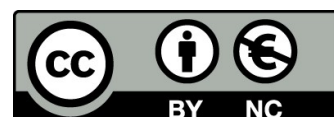
	<p>them the best quality-price ratio, crushing production prices in more vulnerable economies, thus exempting themselves from responsibilities on the negative externalities affecting local communities. Examples of abusive advantages were lack of labour protection, moral, physical, and sexual harassment, forced or child labor, unsafe working conditions. The International Labor Organization estimates that a large percentage of 170 million child are forced to work to satisfy the demand of consumers worldwide. The weak labor protection legal framework in these countries is thus an essential part of the fast-fashion business model, still a common practice due to under-budgeting and demanding deadlines that are impractical in the long run, in an already precarious and highly competitive market.</p>
<p>Impacts/Benefits (1000-1500 characters including spaces)</p>	<p>More responsible consumption, which invariably involves the limiting or suspension of consumption in fast-fashion clothing stores, does not make the consumer responsible for the reduction of salary, dismissal, or any other consequence that may happen to the workers of the factories of these stores. The way these professionals are exploited is due solely and exclusively to the precariousness with which they are employed by the factories and the disastrously low price that brands demand to pay for orders, as a strategic generalized procedure. The big fast-fashion brands have the economic and often political power to pay fair trade values. Groups like H&M or Inditex earn billions of euros in annual net profits that have been growing since the turn of the century. The power that the citizen has to contribute to greater social justice in this sector is through the political awareness and civic participation of the individual that converges in collective action - such as voting, making a public</p>

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	<p>consultation, joining movements or organizations for transparency and sustainability of this sector – and thus directly question companies and producers about their practices. Organization and participation in events or training sessions also raise and awareness on these topics. Collective behaviors such as these have more impact on the systemic change of the Fashion industry than isolated consumption behavior.</p>
<p>Good practices (1000 -1500 characters including spaces)</p>	<p>As far as good practices are concerned, consumers can consult, among other sources, the Fashion Transparency Index to be informed on the position of companies with regard to the transparency of their operations.</p> <p>Campaigns like those from Fashion Revolution, namely “Who Made My Fabric?” or “Good Clothes, Fair Pay” are good practices to raise awareness and educate citizens, while encouraging them to be active and to pressure brands to be more transparent in their practices, eventually by changing them.</p> <p>On the part of companies, it is urgent that they change their production methods and certify that the factories where the garments are produced comply with the required working conditions, implementing practices for the protection and sustainable use of water, soil and raw materials.</p> <p>One of the biggest examples on bad practices was the disaster at Rana Plaza. In 2013, this garment factory in Bangladesh collapsed due to structure problems. More than 1000 people died and over 2000 were injured. This incident brought attention to the working conditions these people had to accept every day, but no major changes were made and on the next day workers had to return to work.</p>

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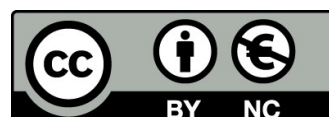
	<p>Another common malpractice is the cultural appropriation carried out by the big fashion firms on the ethnic, folkloric and traditional elements of other cultures, using their ancestral designs as their own. Firms like Zara, Nike, Louis Vuitton, Carolina Herrera, Mango, Rapsodia, and others have been accused of taking indigenous designs from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Panamá and other countries.</p>
<p>Current and future challenges (1000 -1500 characters including spaces)</p>	<p>Faced with the unsustainability and lack of social and climate justice for communities along the entire supply chain of the fashion industry, the European Union presents some measures to reuse waste and reduce carbon emissions, but frankly less measures to eradicate modern slavery on which this sector currently depends.</p> <p>The proposals for the Circular Economy directives even aim to scale up activities related to resale and reuse and decouple growth from resource exploitation through efficiency. The efficiency of production should, however, result in a better quality of life - as today's degrowth policies advocate - and not in an increase in profits.</p> <p>Future challenges include, among others: to promote a regulation of profits and their more equitable distribution along the supply chain; to establish minimum production prices by law, in order to guarantee a fair labor system that includes decent wages and allows the intellectual, creative, and economic development of communities; to implement a profound economic, political and cultural revolution that will have to be leveraged by a solid legislative-based transition.</p> <p>While the economic purpose of the corporate world is growth, culture is mostly absorbed by consumerism, and the fashion product is</p>

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	technically dependent on labor. The social justice of the working population represents a challenge rarely mentioned within the scope of governmental policies or summits.
Language	<i>English</i>
Partner	UA
Further references	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/284227534_Sustainable_clothing_Challenges_barriers_and_interventions_for_encouraging_more_sustainable_consumer_behaviour https://www.fairwear.org/stories/fair-wear-and-tiww-at-made-in-bangladesh-week https://shilpaahuja.com/cultural-appropriation-in-fashion/

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