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Fashion Evolution towards Sustainability

WORKSHOP PLAN UNIT 2

By UPV



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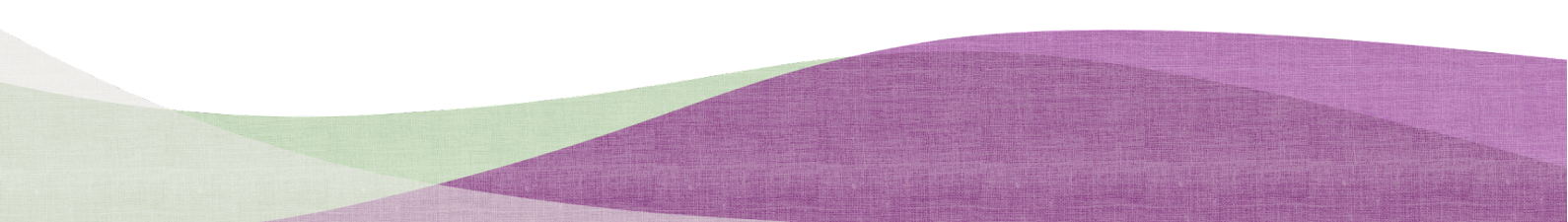
THE SUSTAINABLE FASHION BOOKLET

UNIT 2

Who Makes the Clothes We Wear

WORKSHOP PLAN

DEVELOPED BY UPV



THE SUSTAINABLE FASHION BOOKLET

UNIT 2: Who Makes the Clothes We Wear – WORKSHOP PLAN

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1. General Instructions

This comprehensive Workshop Plan will provide a structured framework for workshops that delve into the raw and current situation of the fashion and textile industry and its future towards sustainability and respect for the environment and the sector's employees.

By following this plan, youth workers will obtain an overview of a potential structure to follow in the implementation of a workshop that combines and explores the connections between the fashion industry and sustainability. It aims to equip youth workers with the tools and resources needed to facilitate thought-provoking activities and interactive workshops focusing on the importance of achieving sustainable fashion.

On the other hand, more details on the activities foreseen and mentioned in the Workshop Plan are found in the [Activity Sheet Unit 2](#).

2. Workshop Plan

Unit Reference Code	<i>Sustainable Fashion Booklet: Unit 2</i>
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Title	Who Makes the Clothes We Wear
Workshop Duration	3 hours
Target Groups	Young people aged 16-25

Introduction
<p>This workshop provides useful insights into the fashion industry and its production processes, inviting participants to reflect on who makes the clothes we wear, where they are made and why. This reflection will facilitate the understanding of the link between the fashion industry and human rights, particularly focusing on current conditions faced by many workers in the sector.</p>

Lastly, an overview of the various measures that several brands have taken to take care of their workers and their rights is provided.

Workshop Objectives

Identify the skills and learning objectives acquired during the workshop.

At the end of the workshop, the participants will:

- ✓ Recognise and understand the situation and working conditions of workers in the textile industry.
- ✓ Critically analyse fast fashion production practices and their impact on the quality of life of workers.
- ✓ Recognise the need for collective action to advocate for meaningful change in the fashion industry and ensure a fairer and more sustainable future for all involved in its production and consumption.

Preparation

The workshop plan requires the trainers to be familiar with the textile industry and its social impact, in relation to who produces the clothes we wear, what their labour situation is, the problems that exist and which companies are committed to solving them. The facilitator has here a list of preliminary tasks that should be taken into account to conduct a successful workshop:

- ☐ prepare notes, keywords, phrases and questions for the different parts of the workshop for better organisation.
- ☐ check before starting the proper functioning of the technical devices you may need (laptop, projector, screen, etc).

- ☐ if the space does not have electronic devices such as laptops for all participants, notify participants days in advance to bring their own devices.
- ☐ check beforehand whether there is an open wifi connection or how participants can connect.
- ☐ create a series of exciting and attention-grabbing questions to interact with the participants during the session.
- ☐ check beforehand that the PowerPoint is complete and additional resources/links are available.
- ☐ make sure the space is set up appropriately for the chosen activities.
- ☐ check that there is a whiteboard, corkboard, or wall where you can hang some documents in the space.
- ☐ inform yourself in advance of the approximate number of participants to prepare and print the necessary resources for the development of the workshop (Large world map, ANNEX I, ANNEX II and ANNEX III).
- ☐ gather all materials for the group activity (pushpins or post-its, markers, coloured pencils, crayons, bag or box).
- ☐ prepare the material for reflection and feedback gathering.

Methods

This workshop aims to analyse the production chain of the fashion industry, reflecting on who is behind it and their working conditions. The exploration of ethical implications is supported by visual elements such as videos, PowerPoint presentations and images, blending learning and entertainment. In addition, group activities will be included to deepen the knowledge of the subject and encourage skills such as critical thinking, debate, creativity, peer communication, time management and public speaking.

Icebreaking Activity

In which country were our clothes made?

To begin the workshop, the trainer will show a world map on a corkboard or blackboard. Afterwards, the trainer will hand out push pins or post-its to the students and ask them to look at the labels of the clothes they are wearing (T-shirts, jackets, trousers, shoes, etc.) to see where they were made. Then they have to stand up and put a pushpin on the world map over the country where each of their clothes was made.

If they don't know where that country is, they can look it up on the internet.

Afterwards, based on the results, the facilitators can encourage a discussion on whether this was the expected result and why they think clothes are made in those countries.

Workshop Plan

Nr.	Activity name (title and description) brief	Duration (min.)	Method (presentation, discussion, roleplay, storytelling, gamification, art creation, etc.)	Materials (paper, pencils, boards, laptop, speakers, chairs, etc.)
1	Introduction	10	Presentation	//
2	In which country were our clothes made?	15-20	Ice-breaking	Large world map, corkboard or whiteboard, pushpins or

				post-its and markers. Internet connection and laptop
3	Who makes the clothes?	15	Presentation	PowerPoint, laptop, screen and projector
4	Clothes are very versatile!	40	Reflection and creative activity	Printed leaflets with the figures (ANNEX I), crayons, coloured pencils, crayons...
5	Working conditions and human rights	15	Presentation	PowerPoint, laptop, screen and projector
6	Are my clothes the right ones?	25	Reflection Debate	ANNEX II paper, markers, bag or box to put all the papers in.
7	Disastrous events	15	Presentation	PowerPoint, laptop, screen and projector
8	Brands that care for their employees' rights	15	Presentation	PowerPoint, laptop, screen and projector
9	Good practices in the fashion industry!	15	Research	Internet connection and laptop
10	Conclusion	10	Discussion	//
11	Workshop Awards	10	Feedback	ANNEX III , markers/pens.

Evaluation

Trainers should give each participant a card and a pen.

Each participant must answer the questions in ANNEX III honestly and anonymously, and then give them to the trainer.

Once the trainer has all the participants' answers, he/she will begin to record the results obtained in Excel or similar to determine the winners.

After the tally, the trainer will say aloud what has won each statement, for example, the most interesting part of the seminar, which activity has been the most liked, etc.

Finally, a discussion can take place where the participants can express their opinions on the results obtained and justify their votes if they consider it necessary.

Facilitator's Notes

Reflect on the effectiveness of the workshop. Use this section to take notes for future adjustments. Below are some inspiring questions to guide you in the process of self-reflection on organisation and development during the workshop.

- ❖ Did the activities create a comfortable, interactive and conducive space for participants' learning and communication?
- ❖ Did all learners participate equally? Was equal participation helped in any way?
- ❖ Did the activities foster an understanding of the theoretical part of the workshop?
- ❖ Was the time allocated to each activity adequate?

Theoretical Framework

This section serves as the introductory page for the theoretical presentations. Here, we offer a summary and overview of the theoretical components integrated into the workshop plan. Its purpose is to guide youth workers and trainers regarding the topics covered in activities that *do not* follow non-formal education methods.

The content outlined here is also included in the PowerPoint presentation.

❖ **Introduction**

Welcome to our workshop on 'Who makes the clothes we wear'. In today's world, the fashion industry spans the globe, involving every continent and a large network of manufacturers, workers, designers and consumers.

But have you ever wondered who designed the clothes you wear today, and who made them, and have you ever wondered if the working and economic situations of the designer and the factory worker are similar?

This workshop explores the stories behind our clothes, analysing how they affect society, the environment and the economics of fashion production.

Join us as we unravel the threads of global supply chains, uncovering the faces and situations behind the clothes we choose to wear every day.

❖ **Who makes the clothes? (introduction)**

Fast fashion has led to an increase in consumer demand, causing a major transformation of the global textile industry. However, behind the pretty image of fashionable clothing lies a horrific reality of exploitation and injustice to workers' rights.

The industry has undergone a geographical shift in production. While in the past production was also scattered around the globe, nowadays many well-known fashion brands are opting for countries with cheap labour, hence poor working conditions. This shift has created a major problem: child labour and child exploitation. Some countries such as Uzbekistan, India, Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan or China use children and minors as cheap labour in their industries.

Many girls from poor backgrounds are trapped in a cycle of work, misery and broken dreams.

Society is increasingly aware of the problem, but are we really doing anything to change it? The general answer is 'no', as we continue to buy new clothes every season to follow fashion trends. Of course, it is not all our fault, but a demand reduction could potentially decrease this phenomenon. By advocating for and supporting more sustainable practices, we can actively contribute to better conditions for garment workers.

It is striking that exploitation is not limited to children and minors, but expands to vulnerable women as well. Contrary to expectations of female empowerment in some countries where women have no rights, the garment industry becomes a horror for women workers, subjected to back-breaking work, miserable wages and continual harassment by their bosses.

These issues expose the great need for ethical reform in the fashion industry. We, the customers, are the first to make a change in our consumption, opting for fashion companies that are committed to the environment and that care for and respect the rights of all their workers.

❖ **Working conditions and human rights (introduction)**

We have talked about human rights and poor working conditions for garment workers before, but what exactly are these?

The fashion world hides a stark reality of exploitation and injustice suffered by a large number of garment workers around the world. Statistics reveal that only 2% of these workers earn a living wage, creating a cycle of poverty and limitations for the vast majority of them. Sadly, exploitation extends to the most vulnerable, as many families are forced to send their daughters into the garment industry to earn a living and help support the family economy.

However, the struggle to survive the industry is a difficult one. Workers endure inhumane conditions, working into the early hours of the morning to meet industry-imposed production targets. Their health is put at risk as they work in spaces where they inhale toxic fumes and endure the physical toll of high-pressure sandblasting and steam irons in poorly ventilated environments.

In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic showed how little regard for workers' rights was shown by their managers, as there were reports of mass dismissals without notice or compensation, leaving families destitute.

❖ **Disastrous events (introduction)**

In several countries, the fashion industry has faced serious humanitarian crises due to **poor working conditions and lack of safety measures in the workplace**. Over the years, a **multitude of disasters**, both natural and man-made, have occurred, killing many people and injuring many others. In 2011, a fire in a textile factory in Dhaka killed 111 people, while another fire in Karachi the same year killed more than 250 people.

The most famous textile industry accident that caused the most deaths was the 2013 collapse of the **Rana Plaza building** in Bangladesh, with 1134 dead and 2600 injured.

The authorities had already reported that the building was considered unsafe before the collapse due to **poor construction and non-compliance with building regulations**, but workers were still forced to report to work every day. A multitude of clothing items from internationally well-known brands were found in the rubble of the building.

The following years also saw several tragic incidents, including the drowning of 28 people in the basement of a factory in Tangier due to flooding in 2021, and the death of 6 workers in Casablanca in 2023 while new factories were being built on top of an existing textile facility despite safety warnings.

❖ **Brands that care for their employees' rights (introduction)**

Currently, the fashion industry is characterised by two main factors: companies seeking high profits through low-cost mass production and, on the other hand, consumer demand for cheap clothes, regardless of the methods used to achieve such low prices. However, consumers and some fashion brands are increasingly aware of the socio-economic impact of their practices.

Many fashion brands are concerned about the welfare and status of their workers and have joined the Fair Wear Foundation, which strives to improve working conditions, support unionisation, combat discrimination and ensure fair wages and reasonable working hours. Meanwhile, market-leading brands are initiating

awareness campaigns; for example, Spanish brand Patagonia is at the forefront of environmentally friendly fashion, promoting sustainability by encouraging product renewal through its 'Worn Wear' initiative.

Another example is Marks & Spencer, which has published its corporate policies that all its suppliers must comply with, covering workers' rights and working conditions, including pay, overtime and safety. In addition, M&S has its own offices in the countries where it produces, so it conducts regular audits to ensure that the conditions and rights of each worker are met.

❖ Conclusion

In short, the reality of the industry reflects a complex interplay between companies' pursuit of economic profit and consumers' demand for low prices, often without considering the social situation and working conditions of workers. Despite this, there is growing recognition of the importance of improving these conditions by consumers and some fashion brands. However, important challenges remain, such as the need for greater transparency and accountability throughout the fashion supply chain, as well as a cultural shift towards more conscious and ethical consumption.

Additional Notes

Add any additional notes or requirements the trainer/youth worker/educator should take into consideration, if applicable.

External resources

Add any external resource that a youth worker/trainer can use to enhance their understanding of the topic and support the implementation of the workshop.

- Clean Clothes Campaign (n.d.). Which brands have signed the Safety Accord? The International Safety Accord.

<https://cleanclothes.org/campaigns/the-accord/brand-tracker>

- Collective Fashion Justice. (n.d.). Garment workers' suffering in fashion supply chains. Collective Fashion Justice.
<https://www.collectivefashionjustice.org/garment-workers>
- Jurgen's checklist for Workshop Organizers,
<https://medium.com/@jurgenappelo/jurgens-checklist-for-workshop-organizers-9e53b658a492>
- Smestad, L. (2009). The sweatshop, child labor, and exploitation issues in the garment industry. Fashion Practice, 1(2), 147-162.
<https://doi.org/10.2752/175693809X469139>
- Stringer, T., Payne, A. R., & Mortimer, G. (2022). As cheap as humanly possible: why consumers care less about worker welfare. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal, 26(4), 717-737.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-06-2021-0158>
- World Vision Action. (n.d.). Forced and Child Labour in the Cotton Industry. World Vision Action.
<https://www.worldvision.com.au/docs/default-source/buy-ethical-fact-sheets/forced-and-child-labour-in-the-cotton-industry-fact-sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

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