
MULTISTAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES AS PANACEA FOR THE UNSUSTAINABLE FASHION INDUSTRY?

**Examining the Potential
Contribution of these Initiatives
towards Just Transitions**

**Master Thesis - Master Sustainable
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Abstract

Introduction

This study examines the potential contribution of multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) towards Just Transitions (JTs) in the fashion industry. This industry is known for its unsustainable character, harming the environment and workers across the supply chain. This underscores the need for JTs, where not only the environment, but also workers are protected. To achieve JTs, collaboration between various actors is necessary. As such, this research assesses the contribution that collaborative platforms such as MSIs can make towards JTs. The specific focus is put on the contribution they can make towards improving the livelihoods of garment workers, since they hold a vulnerable position in the supply chain. Before going into the specific contribution these MSIs can make, this research starts with examining the impact of sustainability transitions on these workers.

Theory

Since MSI and JT theories have never been used in the same study before, this research drafted a novel framework specifically combining Burke's (2022) criteria for the future of JTs and Mena & Palazzo's (2012) MSI input and output legitimacy framework. This final framework was specified to fit the context of garment workers operating in the fashion industry.

Methods

This research uses multiple research methods and multiple units of analysis. The impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers has been assessed by means of desk research and qualitative interviews with five experts. The contribution of MSIs towards JTs have been, by means of the drafted framework, examined through five expert interviews and by conducting a document analysis on four MSI cases, respectively the Fair Wear Foundation, Sustainable Apparel Coalition, Fair Labour Association and Ethical Trading Initiative.

Results

The results indicate that the current impact of sustainability transitions of garment workers is not clear and limited. The expert interviews on MSIs and case studies highlight that the overall contribution towards JTs is inadequate. Specifically, the inclusion of garment workers in terms of decision-making and the effectiveness of MSIs in safeguarding and protecting garment workers' rights are limited and unclear.

Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis adds to the literature on the relative effectiveness of Multistakeholder Initiatives (MSIs) by integrating MSI and Just Transition (JT), providing a novel perspective. In addition, it provides an insight into the potential impact of sustainability transitions of garment workers, but more research is necessary in this area. Overall, this research recommends that MSIs should be reformed to make a meaningful contribution towards JTs.

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Multistakeholder Initiatives as Panacea for the Unsustainable Fashion Industry?

Examining the Potential Contribution of these Initiatives towards Just Transitions

1 Introduction

To date, the fashion industry is known for its complex, untransparent, and unsustainable supply chains. The low price driven and fast paced nature of the industry, with some retailers designing and producing collections within a month, has resulted into environmental pollution across supply chains, poor working conditions, and consumers that increasingly start to regard clothing as an easily disposable item (Desore & Narula, 2018; Niinimäki et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2021). In terms of environmental pollution, it is estimated that the fashion industry is responsible for approximately 8.1% of global emissions, uses 79 trillion cubic meters of water annually, produces 92 million tonnes of textile waste per year, and is highly intensive in terms of chemical use (Niinimäki et al., 2020). These impacts contribute to climate change and lead to health related hazards for those working across the supply chain as well as nearby communities. Since labour tends to be cheaper in countries in the Global South, and environmental regulations less strict, many fashion retailers have subcontracted garment factories in these countries in the last decades (Niinimäki et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2021; Turker & Altuntas, 2014). Often, these factories subcontract orders of brands to other factories. In addition, there is a large distance between the headquarters of fashion retailers, which are often situated in the Global North, and these garment factories. This has resulted in a lack of oversight by the headquarters and severe workplace violations (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). Arguably, these violations culminated in the Rana Plaza disaster in 2013, where approximately 1000 garment workers lost their lives due to the collapse of a garment factory, which produced clothes for many large fashion retailers (Barua & Ansary, 2017; Kabeer et al., 2019).

After the collapse, many large fashion companies have been under increasing scrutinization for their unsustainable behaviour (Barua & Ansary, 2017; Kabeer et al., 2019). As a response, companies outlined ambitious sustainability targets and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies (Turker & Altuntas, 2014). These targets are often aimed at reducing emissions across the supply chain, using relatively more environmentally friendly and recycled materials, and initiating supplier code of conducts to ensure safe working conditions for garment workers. In an attempt to reach these targets, many (large) retailers have participated in multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs) in the last decade (Fransen & Kolk, 2007; Kabeer et al., 2019). For instance, after the Rana Plaza disaster approximately 200 fashion brands, together with trade unions and other labour rights groups, cooperated in drafting and signing the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh (Clean Clothes Campaign, n.d.). Other prominent examples of MSIs that operate in the fashion industry are the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Fair Wear Foundation (FWF) and Fair Labour Association (FLA). These MSIs are private governance initiatives in which actors from diverging backgrounds are brought together to form a partnership to address a particular sustainability challenge (Gurzawska, 2020; Jastram, 2018;

Machek, 2019; Mena & Palazzo, 2012; Tanimoto, 2019). One of the main perceived benefits of these partnerships is that they are transnational in nature, overcoming the limitations of national governments to manage the impacts of these global supply chains, as well as contributing to inclusivity, by for instance including representatives of garment workers (Machek, 2019; Tanimoto, 2019).

Scholars have challenged the alleged benefits of MSIs (Merk & Zeldenrust, 2005). First of all, scholars question whether MSIs are truly “multistakeholder” in their operations, as the perspective of the garment worker is not always represented in decision-making (Fransen & Kolk, 2007). Another point of critique has been devoted to evaluating whether the motivation of (fast) fashion companies to transition to more sustainable industry is genuine in nature (Kabeer et al., 2019; Schneiker, 2018; Webber Ziero, 2018). For instance, fashion retailers that participated in two MSIs that have been set up after the Rana Plaza disaster (Accord for Fire and Building Safety and Alliance for Bangladesh Workers’ Safety) have, on the one hand, imposed strict codes of conducts on their suppliers, improving working conditions. On the other hand, retailers have been gradually reducing the prices they offer to their producers (Kabeer et al., 2019). Similarly, retailers often pride themselves for their participation in MSIs and their “sustainable” behaviour and achievements. They often launch “green” collections, using for instance sustainable materials (certified by MSIs), and stress that they “care” about their garment workers (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020). However, during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, large fashion retailers cancelled their orders of which some were already shipped, leaving suppliers unable to pay their garment workers (Brydges et al., 2020). It must be noted that due to the severe backlash retailers received, the majority did eventually end up paying their suppliers. Yet, due to a drastic decline in demand for clothes because of the pandemic, millions of garment workers lost their jobs nonetheless, often without severance pay or adequate social protection (Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, 2020). Thus, it seems that the sector cannot deliver on its promises in terms of improving working conditions. This also calls the overall governing power of MSIs into question.

Nevertheless, it is paramount for environmental and social reasons that these sustainability transitions in the industry take place. A sustainability transition is defined as “a fundamental transformation towards more sustainable modes of production and consumption” (Markard, 2012, p. 955). A relatively new strand of academic theory focuses on how these transitions can be achieved, under the term Just Transitions (JTs). JTs entails that “shifting to an environmentally sustainable economy needs to be well managed and contribute to the goals of decent work for all, social inclusion and the eradication of poverty” (Brydges et al., 2020, p. 299). Various scholars also stress that collaboration between diverging actors is a prerequisite for achieving these JTs (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020; Burke, 2022; Lawreniuk et al., 2022; Repp et al., 2021; Wilgosh et al., 2022). To illustrate, Lawreniuk, Sok, and Buckley (2022, p. 5) mention specifically that “a just transition must be developed in true partnership with workers’ organizations; it cannot be designed and implemented by corporations alone. Without unions, a transition can never be just.” As such, it is interesting to assess what role MSIs, which are arguably inherently collaborative, can play in achieving JTs. In the fashion industry specifically, the

globally dispersed supply chains necessitate collaboration across multiple dimensions. The International Labour Organization (ILO) therefore even mentions explicitly that collaborative platforms, such as MSIs, could play an important role in achieving JTs in the fashion industry (Sharpe et al., 2022).

The importance of JTs has been increasingly stressed in previous research (Burke, 2022; Heffron & McCauley, 2018; Henry et al., 2020; Wang & Lo, 2021; Wilgosh et al., 2022). Similar to the concept of sustainability, JTs can be interpreted in multiple ways, making it difficult to develop a universally accepted definition of the concept (Wilgosh et al., 2022). Officially, JTs originated in the 1980s by the US trade union movements in an effort to prevent job losses after a proposed closure of polluting, high-carbon industries due to environmental regulations (Henry et al., 2020). To date, the concept has been primarily applied to energy transitions (Burke, 2022; Schröder, 2020). In relation to the fashion industry, JTs is mentioned in only two academic articles. Schröder (2020) analysed the potential of utilizing the concept of JTs considering the Circular Economy (CE) and textile industry. He highlighted that it is important when circular business models are applied and the demand for clothes changes, the dependence of the workers on the industry should not be neglected. Similarly, Brydges et al. (2020) examined JTs with respect to the (post) COVID-19 fashion industry. They stress that if sustainability transitions within the industry continue to neglect the fundamental inequalities that are inherent to the industry, it will never become a “just” industry.

Previous research on MSIs in the fashion industry focused on the effectiveness of standards in the industry (output), as well as on analysing the process behind the formulation of MSIs (input). Huber and Schormair (2021) found, by researching the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, that the outcome of an MSI is shaped by tensions between conservative and progressive companies. While progressive companies aim to make MSIs more stringent, conservative companies strive to counteract this. Machek (2019) researched the perceived benefits of Swedish apparel brands to participate in MSIs. He found that these companies mainly found MSIs beneficial because they are an important source of knowledge for addressing environmental issues and are an important way to improve credibility towards stakeholders. Riisgaard et al. (2020) analysed the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), a MSI standard aimed at making the cotton industry more environmentally and socially sustainable. They discovered that stakeholder inclusion in the formation process was limited, and that it was difficult to formulate a more collaborative approach, since industrial and market values continue to play a dominant role in the standard setting process.

Overall, it appears that there are several gaps in literature that need to be addressed. First of all, JTs has been primarily studied in the context of the energy transition, while it could also be applied to the fashion industry. Sharpe et al. (2022) mention that decarbonization of the fashion industry might follow similar pathways compared to the energy industry. For instance, millions of workers depend on the industry and it is, therefore, important to analyse how sustainability transitions impact these workers. Burke (2022) stresses that JTs not only pertains to energy transitions, but should encompass fundamental, holistic societal transformations rather than focusing solely on one industry. Despite the

research of Schröder (2020) and Brydges et al. (2020), there is no further literature available that analyses in-depth what a JT in the fashion industry could look like. Secondly, there is no literature that combines both MSIs and JTs. Even though MSIs could be a useful instrument through which JTs in the fashion industry are achieved, since these MSIs are, allegedly, inclusive in nature. Nevertheless, MSIs have been critiqued by scholars about the true nature of their inclusiveness, which makes it necessary to further explore whether these MSIs contribute to JTs in the first place.

In sum, scholars question the relative effectiveness of MSIs, and highlight the need for safeguarding the livelihoods of garment workers in the industry when (sustainability) transitions in the industry occur. Therefore, this research aims to assess the governing abilities of MSIs to safeguard the interests of garment workers through the lens of JTs. The need for JTs is increasingly stressed, which makes it important to assess whether MSIs can contribute to this goal. Specific focus is put on the impact MSIs have on improving working conditions in garment production factories. This particular subsection of the supply chain is chosen, because these mostly female garment workers often hold a very vulnerable position in society, have a low wage, and are subject to a high workload (Hearson, 2009). Therefore, sustainability transitions potentially have a large impact on these workers (Schröder, 2020).

Consequently, the following research question has been drafted: *What role can Multistakeholder Initiatives play in fostering Just Transitions in the fashion industry?* This question is answered by firstly focusing on what the impact of sustainability transitions will be on garment workers. Secondly, the potential role of MSIs within these sustainability transitions is assessed by integrating the MSI legitimacy framework of Mena and Palazzo (2012) with the JT criteria of Burke (2022), by which the input (how the MSI is set up) and output (the relative effectiveness of the MSI) legitimacy can be assessed. The benefit of this framework is that it can analyse JTs in terms of (a) whether garment workers are included in the process of creating the MSI (procedural justice), and (b) whether the MSI effectively contributes to safeguarding the interests of garment workers. After this framework has been established, interviews are conducted with experts on MSIs and JTs in the fashion industry. Consequently, prominent MSIs active in the fashion industry are analysed by means of a document analysis. Specifically, the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF), Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), and Fair Labour Association (FLA) are chosen. Finally, these MSIs will be compared. To summarize, this research will address four guiding sub questions:

1. What is the potential impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers' interests?
2. To what extent are garment workers included in the decision-making process of MSIs?
3. To what extent do the selected MSIs contribute to ensuring safe working conditions and a living wage for garment workers?
4. What are the differences and similarities between the selected MSIs?

The theoretical relevance of this thesis pertains to contributing to the existing body of literature on JTs. This is achieved by extending the applicability of JTs to other realms, such as the fashion industry, especially since various scholars highlight the importance of investigating the impact of circularity and downsizing on garment workers in the industry (Brydges et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2021; Schröder, 2020; Suarez-Visbal et al., 2022). In addition, by examining whether MSIs can potentially play a role in ensuring JTs, this thesis adds to the literature since MSIs and JTs theories have never been integrated before. In terms of societal relevance, private governance mechanisms such as MSIs are rising in the industry. Therefore, it is important to assess whether they are effectively improving the livelihoods of garment workers or whether they are used as mere window-dressing for participating companies.

This thesis is structured as follows. First, the theoretical framework goes deeper into JT literature and the MSI legitimacy framework, after which both are integrated to be able to thoroughly analyse the MSIs (Chapter 2). Secondly, the methodology justifies and outlines the chosen research methods (Chapter 3). Next, the results section is subdivided into three chapters. Chapter 4 provides insights into the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers, Chapter 5 outlines the general perception of experts on MSIs and Chapter 6 compares and contrasts the findings of the aforementioned chosen MSIs. The discussion consequently evaluates the results by comparing it with previous literature, after which a conclusion is provided (Chapter 7 and 8).

2 Theoretical Framework

To thoroughly construct the analytical Just Transition and MSI Legitimacy framework and incorporate both conceptualizations of JTs and MSIs, it is necessary to first start with a general explanation on both of these theories. Therefore, the first section starts with a general explanation on JTs and particularly its origins in different strands of justice. Next, it zooms into different interpretations of JTs, particularly a worker- and governance-oriented perspective, which are particularly relevant for the context of this thesis. This section consequently provides criteria necessary for the future of JTs, which are based on Burke (2022). In the second part of this chapter, MSI theory and specifically the MSI Legitimacy Framework based on Mena & Palazzo (2012) is elaborated upon. Finally, both these theories are merged into the JT and MSI legitimacy framework, specifically integrating Burke's (2022) criteria for the future of JTs and Mena & Palazzo's (2012) input and output legitimacy framework.

2.1 *Just Transitions*

JTs is generally interpreted as an integrated framework for justice “integrating” climate, energy and environmental justice (CEE) (Heffron & McCauley, 2018; McCauley & Heffron, 2018; Wang & Lo, 2021). The concept of a sustainability “transition” can consequentially be seen as an intersectoral dimension where these three elements overlap (McCauley & Heffron, 2018). Environmental justice

argues that disadvantaged communities should not bear a disproportionate burden of environmental related issues and argues for the equal treatment of citizens in terms of environmental decision-making (e.g., in designing policies) (Wang & Lo, 2021). A key theme in environmental justice is the proximity that some communities have to polluted areas or industries, integrating the notion of class and/or race differences between these communities (McCauley & Heffron, 2018). In sustainability transitions specifically, environmental justice grapples with balancing social and environmental dimensions of the transition. For instance, environmental justice stresses that also in “sustainable” industries, it is essential that workers, especially in low-income and minority communities, have decent (green) jobs where they receive an adequate pay and work in safe environments (Bullard, 2007; Outka, 2012).

Similar to environmental justice, climate justice focuses on sharing the burdens of climate change but has a more global view by focusing on the discrepancy between impacts of climate change on the Global South and Global North. Attention is also devoted to the fact that countries in the Global South participate the least in decision-making on climate change (Wang & Lo, 2021). Consequently, in terms of sustainability transitions, climate justice grapples with the implications of transitions on vulnerable groups (mostly) situated in the Global South (McCauley & Heffron, 2018). This justice strand is essentially a reflection of the distribution risks and responsibilities of climate change mitigation between more vulnerable and more resilient communities.

Energy justice is similar to climate justice, but specifically focuses on injustices across the energy lifecycle, and aims to promote energy policies that incorporate justice considerations (Sovacool et al., 2017). These considerations are evaluated from the production and consumption point of view in achieving “just” energy systems, effectively assessing where communities stand in terms of access to energy. At the same time, these communities should not endure the negative effects associated with energy production.

All CEE elements share distributive (sharing the burdens) and procedural (who is included in decision-making) notions of justice. In addition, McCauley and Heffron (2018) state that next to these elements, a restorative perspective focusing on repairing damages that have been done to individuals, rather than focusing on “punishing” offenders is required. Another justice perspective that comes back in CEE is a recognitional justice perspective, which generally focuses on the recognition of differences that exist between groups in terms of socio-economic status, gender, and ethnicity (McCauley et al., 2013; Newell et al., 2021; Schlosberg, 2004). To account for these differences, recognitional justice posits that it must be ensured that all groups and individuals have an even capacity to exercise and defend their rights, and be respected in terms of their values and culture. Consequently, a recognitional injustice may manifest itself as an invisibility of a particular social group in terms of decision-making or as a misinterpretation of social group’s point of view (McCauley et al., 2013; Newell et al., 2021; Schlosberg, 2004).

A summary of the distributive, procedural and restorative justice elements within CEE is provided in Table 1. Since recognitional justice is virtually the same across the three categories, it is not included in the table below.

Table 1

Description of Procedural, Distributive, and Restorative Justice Elements in CEE, based on McCauley & Heffron (2018)

Environmental Justice	<i>Procedural</i>	Focus on long-term engagement processes within communities affected by pollution (by e.g., a factory), to resolve (potential) conflict.
	<i>Distributive</i>	Focus on the proximity of (minority, low-income) communities to polluted areas.
	<i>Restorative</i>	Focus on restoring the environmental damage done by heavy industry.
Climate Justice	<i>Procedural</i>	Similar to Environmental justice, but also focus on the capacity building elements within communities for climate change adaptation/resilience.
	<i>Distributive</i>	Focus on the “ inversed ” distribution of risk and responsibilities associated with climate change between the Global North and South.
	<i>Restorative</i>	Focus on adequate investments (of Global North) in climate change mitigation and adaption measures.
Energy Justice	<i>Procedural</i>	Similar to Environment Justice, but also focuses community-led initiatives to ensure acceptance of renewables (such as wind turbines) in affected communities.
	<i>Distributive</i>	Focus on identifying vulnerable communities in terms of access to and affordability of energy.
	<i>Restorative</i>	Focus on “polluter pays” principle for energy providers as well as environmental and social impact assessments before they commit to building new infrastructure in a particular area.

Climate, environmental and energy justice have been critiqued for treating their justice perspectives as separate entities. To overcome this issue, scholars have proposed a joint JT perspective, which combines climate, energy, and environmental justice, ensuring that labour-oriented sustainability (and specifically energy) issues are analysed through a more holistic lens (Heffron & McCauley, 2018; Wang & Lo, 2021). Nevertheless, this justice perspective of JTs has been criticised, since it remains rather conceptual, instead of producing concrete actionable approaches for JTs (Bazilian et al., 2021).

2.1.1 Just Transition Themes

1. JTs as being Worker-Focused

One of the key themes relevant to sustainability transitions in the fashion industry concerns the labour oriented concept, stressing the importance of “decent green jobs” when fossil fuel based industries are declining (Burke, 2022; McCauley & Heffron, 2018; Wang & Lo, 2021). This perspective originated out of the United States labour movement in the 80s, where a large number of fossil fuel industry workers jobs were threatened due to the introduction of environmental regulations in particular states. This induced some polluting industries to move to states with less regulations. This perspective initially emphasized social protection programs for these workers and nearby communities. It was the first time the term JT was coined, and primarily implied that those working in polluting industries should not be neglected over environmental gains. Rather, a joint perspective should be taken where both jobs and the environment are protected (Evans & Phelan, 2016; Wang & Lo, 2021). A worker focused JT model would consequently focus on stimulating green jobs (in for instance the solar panel industry) and ensuring that there are sufficient investments made in innovating these new technologies (Burke, 2022). Furthermore, it is necessary to consult with and adequately represent these workers, ensure social dialogue, and safeguard that there is a fair distribution of the costs associated with closing down a particular industry.

This primarily worker-based view of JTs has often been criticized (Burke, 2022, McCauley & Heffron, 2018; Wang & Lo, 2021). First, despite the wish to create “decent green jobs”, it is a difficult task to achieve this in reality. Namely, it is not always easy to re-educate workers to fit jobs in green industries and these jobs might not be situated in the area where these workers live to begin with (Bazilian et al., 2021; McCauley & Heffron, 2018). This difficulty in achieving adequate alternatives for workers, might then lead to an unfavourable job versus environment narrative nonetheless, rather than the initially proposed joint perspective. Secondly, the perspective has been critiqued for having a narrow interpretation of a JT. Instead, wider, systemic JT should occur across entire societies, since decarbonization and sustainable development applies to a lot more sectors than solely the fossil-based industry. Burke (2022, p. 8) adds to this stating that a few practical measures that could be taken:

“Rather than simple and often ineffective worker compensation packages, just transition would focus job protections and recruitments on people who need high quality employment, through

instruments such as local hiring standards, supports for minority-owned businesses, public-sector hiring and relocation, wage replacement, worker-industry matching, and expansion of education, training, healthcare, childcare, and housing for the expanding workforce.”

Thus, instead of focusing primarily on job protections, a JT would then enable a decent life for people dependent on mining, fossil fuel extraction and other related industries. This also presupposes an active role of government in regulating these transitions, rather than leaving it primarily to labour unions and individual businesses (Wang & Lo, 2021). This term resonates with a more activist interpretation of JTs to advocate for the impact that energy transitions have on workers. This is also relevant in the fashion industry, since garment workers generally hold a vulnerable position, and the effect of sustainability transitions on them remains unclear.

2. JT as a Governance Strategy

JTs have also been interpreted as a governance strategy (Burke, 2022; Wang & Lo, 2021). Particularly, public policy (governance) should not only consider job protection but must also ensure that sustainability transitions contribute to the wellbeing of all communities. For instance, a governance strategy aimed at improving the environment does not necessarily imply that the outcome of the strategy produces just results for all (Wang & Lo, 2021). Specific attention should also be devoted to the discrepancies between the Global North and South, and it should be ensured that wealthier countries share the burden of climate change with poorer ones.

To achieve these governance-led JTs, efforts should be made to include different perspectives in democratic decision making. This can be accomplished by ensuring that governmental coalitions are diverse and by actively engaging with community and social movement actors (Burke, 2022; Evans & Phelan, 2016). In addition, there should be “alliances that include a range of stakeholders, such as labour unions, social movements, non-state actors, and some firms and international organizations” (Wang & Lo, 2021, p. 3). Even though it is not explicitly mentioned, these alliances could refer to MSIs, which effectively also represent a coalition between various stakeholders.

A drawback of coalitions and including multiple perspectives in sustainability transitions is that they may slow down the transition process, while to avert the most dangerous impacts of climate change, transitions need to occur rapidly (Wang & Lo, 2021). Nonetheless, including multiple perspectives and/or creating coalitions does contribute to meaningful discussions between environmentalist, unions, and others, broadening the acceptance for certain policies. A longer process may ultimately even speed up the process, as the outcomes are not (or less) contested. Therefore, a balance should be found between rapid and efficient decision-making on climate change mitigation and adaptation and the inclusion of different stakeholder groups (Wang & Lo, 2021).

The governance strategy perspective interprets JTs in a broader sense, by focusing not only on decent green jobs, but the wellbeing of entire communities. In addition, the focus is put on inclusive

decision-making and creating alliances that justify JTs. It is interesting to assess to what degree MSIs could be regarded as one of those alliances.

2.1.2 *Burke’s criteria for the future Just Transition*

As mentioned, the (CEE) justice perspective of JTs has been criticised for a lack of concrete actionable approaches necessary for attaining a JT. Burke (2022) overcomes this critique by outlining practical criteria necessary for the future of JTs. These criteria are categorized in three main categories. The first category, “framing and context” consist out of acceptance, planning and support; leadership and solidarity; and legitimacy, trust, and transparency. This category aims to establish the context and framing necessary to form a solid and legitimate basis for the transition. Secondly, “goals and outcomes” of JTs encompasses quality work; social protection; and inclusivity and ownership. Burke has drafted the final category, “modes of governance” to navigate the (governance) tensions that exist within JTs, such as for instance the need for both (timely) inclusive decision-making processes as well as the rapid phase out of fossil fuels. The specific criteria, therefore, consists out of regional regeneration; coordination and diversity; and rapid reduction to long-term engagement (Burke, 2022). An overview and description of these criteria are given in Table 2.

Table 2

Criteria for the future of Just Transitions, based on Burke (2022)

Just transition category and criterion	Description
<i>Framing and context</i>	
- Acceptance, planning and support	Acknowledgement of the need to move away from the fossil-fuel era and commitment to adhere to climate targets.
- Leadership and solidarity	Active role of trade unions, industry, governments and social movements to implement a just transitions process.
- Legitimacy, trust and transparency	Legitimation of the need to transition among involved social groups coupled with commitments made to establish trust, transparency, and accountability.
<i>Goals and outcomes</i>	
- Quality work	Just transitions must provide opportunities for meaningful work, both in number and quality
- Social protection	A commitment to securing both targeted and widespread social protections through transition

	processes is a basic requirement for overcoming reluctance to support a just transition, enabling a transition for those with formal employment and providing assurances and opportunities to those without.
- Inclusivity and ownership	Inclusion and participation are widely recognized as procedural and distributive goals for just transitions, commonly enabled through formal processes of social dialogue, and further institutionalized through shifts in ownership and control of key actors and industries for transition.
- Remediating of justice	A just transition has the purpose to remedy and redress existing injustice that emerged out of unjust and unsustainable energy and economic systems.
<i>Modes of governance</i>	
- Regional regeneration	A just transition cannot proceed from one standard to the next, needs to be adapted to regional context.
- Coordination and diversity	Commitments made to coordination of timely decline fossil fuels, and an establishment of new or reformed systems of governance and comprehensive package of measures for just transitions.
- Rapid reduction to long-term engagement	Implementation of actions and policies to mitigate short-term impacts and prepare for long-term engagements.

2.2 *MSI Legitimacy*

MSIs are defined as “private governance mechanisms involving corporations, civil society organizations, and sometimes other actors, such as governments, academia or unions, to cope with social and environmental challenges across industries and on a global scale” (Mena & Palazzo, 2020 p. 528). In most cases, MSIs aim to fill a regulatory gap by issuing “soft law” voluntary standards, (mostly) not enforced through governmental mechanisms.

Based on previous analyses of MSIs, it appears that it is not set in stone how MSIs are designed (Fransen et al., 2019; Fransen & Kolk, 2007; Mena & Palazzo, 2012; Riisgaard et al., 2020; Tanimoto, 2019). Consequently, this leaves room for interpretation in terms of how they can be set up, though four general forms of MSIs can be identified (Baumann-Pauly et al., 2017; Mena & Palazzo, 2012):

- MSIs as learning platforms
- MSIs that develop behavioural standards (e.g., code of conduct)
- MSIs that develop auditing and compliance mechanisms.
- MSIs that issue certifications and labels (for those complying with its standards)

Various scholars have tried to assess the effectiveness of MSIs (Fransen & Kolk, 2007; Mena & Palazzo, 2012; Riisgaard et al., 2020; Tanimoto, 2019). The framework of Mena & Palazzo (2012) (Table 1) which is concerned with the democratic legitimacy of MSIs, arguably provides the most comprehensive overview by which individual MSIs can be assessed. It must be noted that the first type of MSI is excluded from this analysis, since it does not explicitly regulate activities of business. Democratic legitimacy concerns “the ‘socially shared belief’ that the regulator has the capacity and the authority to impose rules on a community of citizens” (Mena & Palazzo, 2012, p. 528). It can further be subdivided into input legitimacy (whether rules are perceived as justified) and output legitimacy (to what extent a rule solves the respective issues). In that sense, legitimacy concerns governance by the people (input), for the people (output).

In terms of input legitimacy, MSIs require to be regarded as legitimate by brands that adhere to the MSIs “rules” as they need to accept the “authority” of the MSI (internal accountability). In terms of external accountability, stakeholders such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments, and workers also need to perceive the MSI as legitimate. Accordingly, MSI input legitimacy is determined by stakeholder inclusion, procedural fairness of deliberations, promotion of a consensual orientation, and transparency. Inclusion is important since the MSIs should represent those who will be affected by the MSI, which enhances the legitimacy. Important here is that the *relevant* actors are chosen, since simply including many stakeholders does not necessarily make a MSI more legitimate. Procedural fairness concerns whether the involved stakeholders can affect the decision-making process. An example to achieve this is to engage an equal number of “type” of stakeholder groups in the board of directors (e.g., 3 NGO representatives, 3 industry representatives, and 3 academic representatives). Consensual orientation refers to the importance of a cooperative culture between different stakeholder groups. Finally, transparency is a vital criterion because if an MSIs (as a political process) is more transparent, more stakeholders can gather knowledge on this process and can judge whether their perspectives have been adequately represented (Mena & Palazzo, 2012).

MSI output legitimacy concerns coverage, efficacy, and enforcement. Coverage entails the number of corporate actors that are bound by the MSI’s rule. When the number of participating firms is high, participation can be considered as a competitive advantage making non-participating firms more inclined to participate in the MSI. Efficacy implies that the MSIs should be able to deal with the

problems which it intended to solve. Furthermore, it is necessary that a MSI not only targets the easiest and cheapest issue, but aims to make a fundamental difference. Enforcement of an MSI often concerns a monitoring mechanism to ensure that the regulations of an MSI are adhered to by participating companies. There are four types of monitoring: self-monitoring (companies control their own compliance), first-party monitoring (MSI monitors compliance), second-second party monitoring (company pays for external auditor to assess compliance), and third party (monitoring by independent governmental or civil society organization) (Mena & Palazzo, 2012). Table 3 provides an overview of the framework of Mena & Palazzo (2012).

Table 3

Legitimacy Framework of Mena & Palazzo (2012)

Dimension	Criterion	Definition	Key Questions
Input	<i>Inclusion</i>	Involvement of stakeholders affected by the issue in the structures and processes of the MSI	Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake? Are important stakeholders excluded from the process?
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Neutralization of power differences in decision-making structures	Does each of these categories of stakeholders have a valid voice in decision-making processes?
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	Culture of cooperation and reasonable disagreement	To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement among participants?
	<i>Transparency</i>	Transparency of structures, processes and results	To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent? To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent?
Output	<i>Coverage</i>	Number of rule-targets following the rules	How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?
	<i>Efficacy</i>	Fit of the rules to the issue	To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?

	<i>Enforcement</i>	Practical implementation of the rules and their verification procedures	Is compliance verified and noncompliance sanctioned?
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2.3 *Integrating JTs and the MSI Legitimacy Framework*

This section aims to establish a coherent analytical framework, integrating Burke’s criteria for the future of JTs and the MSI legitimacy framework of Mena and Palazzo (2012). This integration is necessary in order to be able to analyse JTs in the context of MSIs, to consequently answer the sub questions 2 and 3. In academic literature, JTs and the MSI legitimacy framework have not been integrated before. Even though the legitimacy framework incorporates procedural and distributive notions of justice which are also prominent in JTs. For instance, Burke (2022) outlines criteria that are necessary for the future JTs, such as legitimacy, trust and transparency, adequate social protections, inclusivity and ownership. To some degree, these criteria are also present in the MSI legitimacy framework.

Burke’s criteria for the future of JTs (Table 2) are specifically chosen to integrate into the MSI legitimacy framework. They provide a rather concrete, practical set of elements for JTs considering that the concept is rather broad and has been interpreted in multiple ways (Burke, 2022; Heffron & McCauley, 2018; Wang & Lo, 2021; Wilgosh et al., 2022). As such, previous interpretations have remained rather abstract and theoretical (Wang & Lo, 2021), whereas Burke’s conceptualisation is highly practical. Also, Burke’s criteria aim for decarbonization and sustainable JTs across all elements of society rather than focusing solely the energy transition. Consequently, integrating JTs with MSI legitimacy aids in operationalizing the concept JTs and placing it in a different context. The framework of Mena & Palazzo (2012) is chosen since it, similar to Burke (2022), provides concrete questions by which MSIs can be analysed. The final framework will also be adapted to fit the context and unit of analysis, as it will be specified to garment workers in particular.

To coherently integrate the framework of Burke (2022) and Mena & Palazzo (2012), it is necessary to outline their similarities. Arguably their most important similarity is legitimacy, since it one of the foundational elements of Burke’s JT criteria, as well as a key mechanisms to assess MSIs. This and other conceptual similarities are outlined in Table 4, providing a justification for the further integration of JT and MSI theory.

Table 4

Conceptual Similarities between Just Transitions and MSI Legitimacy Framework

Just Transitions	MSI Legitimacy Framework	Overlapping element
Legitimacy as foundation for creating just transitions, as the need to move away from fossil-fuel era and commitment to adhere to climate targets.	Input-output legitimacy needed to ensure that MSIs can be considered as effective governing mechanisms.	Legitimacy
Inclusion and participation are widely recognized as important means to achieve just transitions.	Inclusion that stakeholder groups have in MSI decision making.	Stakeholder Inclusion (input legitimacy)
Transparency is necessary to achieve legitimation among involved social groups.	Transparency of structures, processes and results.	Transparency (input legitimacy)
Procedural justice as important element for a just transitions process to succeed.	Procedural fairness, neutralization of power differences in decision-making structures.	Procedural Justice (input legitimacy)

From the table above, it appears that there is mostly overlap in terms of input legitimacy. In terms of output legitimacy, there are not necessarily concrete similarities, but there are important principles of Burke that can be categorized under output legitimacy, and consequently need to be added to the MSI legitimacy framework. Specifically, these are social protections, remedying of injustices and quality work. Finally, regional regeneration, coordination and diversity, and rapid reduction to long-term engagement can be categorized under input legitimacy, since they also focus on ensuring that regulations are perceived as justified. It must be noted that not all the principles of Burke can be directly integrated into the MSI legitimacy framework. Some have to be adapted to the MSI context specifically, mainly because they cannot be integrated into the framework in the literal sense, but need to be integrated indirectly. In addition, since the focus specifically is on garment workers, the elements in the framework are specified to this subgroup of stakeholders. The final MSI Legitimacy and JT framework is depicted in Table 5.

Table 5*MSI Legitimacy and Just Transition Framework based on Burke (2022) and Mena & Palazzo (2012)*

Dimension	Criterion	Definition	Key Questions
Input	<i>Inclusion</i>	Involvement of garment workers affected by the issue in the structures and processes of the MSI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake? - Are important stakeholders excluded from the process?
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Neutralization of power differences in decision-making structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do (representatives of) garment workers (representatives) have a valid voice in decision-making processes? Do representatives of garment workers have a (permanent) seat in decision-making boards?
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	Culture of cooperation and reasonable disagreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement among participants?
	<i>Transparency</i>	Transparency of structures, processes and results and specific actions taken to ensure high levels of trust, transparency, and accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent? To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent? - What specific actions are taken to ensure transparency? Is transparency structurally embedded into the organization?
	<i>Leadership and solidarity</i>	Active and direct role of trade unions, industry (and governments) at all levels of the MSI, and organizing and solidarity with other social groups (garment workers), and demonstrated leadership and differentiated responsibilities among diverse social groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent are (representatives) of garment workers involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI?
Output	<i>Coverage</i>	Number of rule-targets following the rules.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?

	<i>Quality Work</i>	Commitments made to ensure that garment workers' rights are protected, principles of decent work and vulnerability are in place, quality of work standards are abided by, agreements are made to expand workers' rights and decent work opportunities are provided, and work quality standards are improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which garment worker's rights are protected with the MSI? Where are these rights based on? - Are there agreements made to expand garment workers' rights? - Are there efforts made to go from minimum wage to living wage?
	<i>Social Protections</i>	Adoption of short-term social protections for workers and respective vulnerable populations and expansion of stakeholders involved in long-term processes, and public and social ownership and control of energy systems and key economic sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are social protections for garment workers in place? - Are efforts made to ensure that garment workers have a long-term say in the MSI decision-making process?
	<i>Remedying of injustices</i>	Commitments made to identify and remedy existing inequities for vulnerable and marginalized garment workers and specific actions taken to reduce existing inequities and address historical legacies of injustice and demonstrated improvements in measures of social equity, human rights, and ecological indicators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there commitments made to remedy existing inequities for garment workers? - Are there specific actions taken?
	<i>Efficacy</i>	Fit of the rules to the issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?
	<i>Enforcement</i>	Practical implementation of the rules and their verification procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is compliance verified and noncompliance sanctioned?

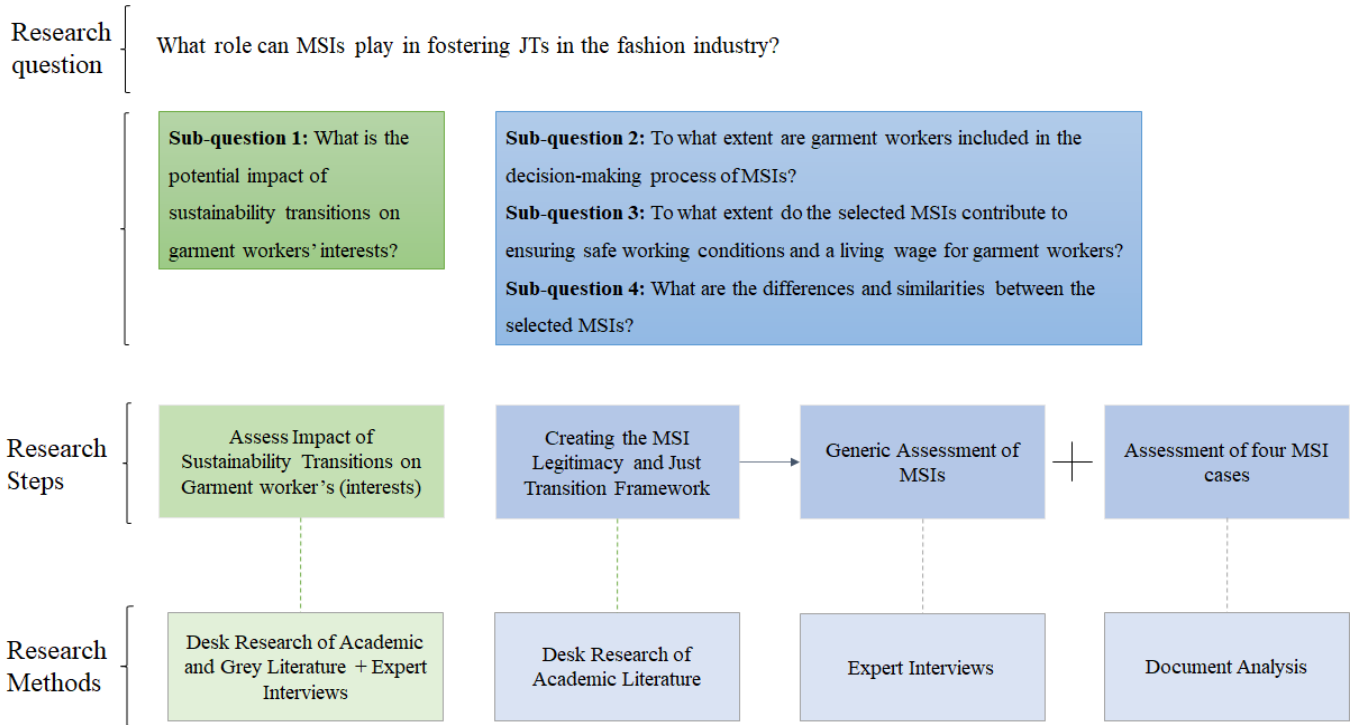
3 Methodology

This section outlines the research design, data collection, and analysis. The research design explains the different components of the research, while the data collection goes deeper into the specific research techniques used to generate the results. Finally, the chosen methods for analysing the data are elaborated upon.

3.1 Research Design

This research aimed to answer the main research question by (1) assessing grey and academic literature and conducting expert interviews on the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers interests, (2) adapting the aforementioned MSI legitimacy framework by integrating the notion of just transitions by which MSIs can be assessed, (3) conducting expert interviews on the effectiveness of MSIs *in general* the fashion industry and (4) operationalizing the framework (Table 5) by conducting a multiple case study document analysis on the four *specific* MSIs cases. Figure 1 provides an overview of the different elements of the research design.

Figure 1
Research Design



The research associated with sub question 1 (highlighted green in Figure 1) is more exploratory in nature, mainly due to the lack of (academic) literature in this area. Therefore, the desk research needed to be supported by expert interviews. Sub questions 2, 3, and 4 are more deductive in nature, as these questions are answered by operationalizing the theoretical framework (Table 5). This framework has

been created by means of theory adaption, by which an existing theory (MSI Legitimacy Framework), was altered by integrating it with new perspectives (JTs), to better explain an existing phenomenon (MSIs in the fashion industry) (Jaakkola, 2020). Data for the framework development has been gathered by utilizing secondary sources, specifically peer-reviewed journal articles found on search engines such as Google Scholar or ScienceDirect. Since the focus is specifically on garment workers, the “key questions” (see Table 5) have been adapted to, for instance, “do garment workers have a valid voice in decision-making processes” instead of “does each of these categories of stakeholder have valid voice in decision-making processes?”. The “Generic Assessments of MSIs” and “Assessment of MSI cases” consequently operationalizes the framework that has been drafted.

It must be noted that initially, this research set out to interview employees within a MSI to corroborate the results of the document analysis, yet it was proven difficult to contact these MSIs. Repeated phone calls and emails were set out, with no response. To overcome this issue, the academic and industry experts, who would be initially interviewed solely on the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers, were also interviewed on MSIs. They were specifically asked about their perception on the input and output legitimacy of MSIs active in the fashion industry, constituting the “Generic Assessments of MSIs” part.

Despite this limitation, this chosen research design is beneficial because the subject is analysed from different angles, using multiple sources of data. Essentially, this research design enables triangulation of the data, where one or more types of data and data collection methods are used to study a phenomenon (Bowen, 2009; Bryman, 2016). Since the combination of JTs and MSIs with the fashion industry as unit of analysis has never been researched before, these different angles provided multiple insights that supplemented each other. This would not have been possible when relying solely on one data collection method. For instance, the expert interviews conducted on MSIs in general provided an overview of the main issues and benefits associated with MSIs in terms of input and output legitimacy. The four different cases consequently provided deeper insights into the specific elements of JTs. Therefore, using these different methods also contributed to the validity (accuracy of measure) of the overall research, since the results of the different subsections of the research could be compared with one another. The usage of multiple cases (MSIs) instead of one, provided relative reliability (consistency of measure), since the same measure (the drafted framework) was repeatedly operationalized across multiple cases.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

3.2.1 Desk Research

As mentioned, sub question 1 has been answered partially by means of an academic and grey literature review. The academic literature was gathered utilizing search engines such as Google Scholar, and databases such as ScienceDirect and Nexis Uni. Various combinations of words were used as search terms, such as “Sustainability Transitions Garment Workers”, “Impact Circular Economy Garment

Workers”, “Impact Garment Workers Sustainability”, and “Just Transitions Garment Workers”. The academic articles that directly addressed the social impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers were highly limited. Therefore, additionally articles that covered sustainability transitions in the fashion industry in general were searched for the term “garment worker” or similar terms to assess whether they covered the impacts on garment workers. Only a few articles briefly highlighted (the potential) social impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers. An overview of the relevant academic literature found with these terms is outlined in Table 6. A distinction is made between articles that primarily focus on impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers (highlighted in green), and articles that only briefly highlight the issue.

Table 6

Academic Literature

Author	Title
Suarez-Visbal et al. (2022)	Assessing through a gender-inclusion lens the social impact of circular strategies in the apparel value chain: The Dutch case.
Schröder (2020) Repp et al. (2021)	Promoting a Just Transition to an inclusive circular economy. Circular economy-induced global employment shifts in apparel value chains: Job reduction in apparel production activities, job growth in reuse and recycling activities.
Bhandari et al. (2022)	Barriers to sustainable sourcing in the apparel and fashion luxury industry.
Brydges et al. (2020)	Will COVID-19 support the transition to a more sustainable fashion industry?
Henninger et al. (2021)	Collaborative fashion consumption – A synthesis and future research agenda.
Koide et al. (2021)	Prioritising low-risk and high-potential circular economy strategies for decarbonisation: A meta-analysis on consumer-oriented product-service systems.
Schröder et al. (2020)	Making the circular economy work for human development.
Buchel et al. (2022)	Disrupting the status quo: a sustainability transitions analysis of the fashion system.
Wren (2022)	Sustainable supply chain management in the fast fashion Industry: A comparative study of current efforts and best practices to address the climate crisis.
Jia et al. (2020)	The circular economy in the textile and apparel industry: A systematic literature review.
Clube (2022)	Social inclusion and the circular economy: The case of a fashion textiles manufacturer in Vietnam.

Note: Authors that address the subject directly are highlighted in green.

The academic literature was supplemented by grey literature, entering similar search terms in the search engine “Google” and Nexis Uni. These results generated mainly (non-peer reviewed) research documents of (non-profit) organizations. An overview of these articles/documents, respective authors/organizations, and the “type” of document is provided in Table 7.

Table 7

Grey Literature

<i>Author/Organization</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Type of article/document</i>
Chan (2022) / Vogue	Why Garment Workers Must Be Included In The Sustainability Conversation	Website article
Sharpe et al. (2022) / ILO	Opportunities for a Just Transition to environmental sustainability and COVID-19 recovery in the textile and garment sector in Asia.	Research/Policy Document
Buchel et al. (2018) / Drift	The Transition to Good Fashion	Research Document
Lawreniuk et al. (2022)	Hot Trends. How the global garment industry shapes climate change vulnerability in Cambodia.	Research Document
Abou-Chleih (2022) / European Environmental Bureau	Textile strategy contains green ambition, but forgets workers from the equation .	Website article

3.2.2 *Expert Interviews*

To provide more insights into the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers as well as the potential contribution of MSIs, expert interviews were conducted. An expert is classified as someone who is knowledgeable on the topic on sustainability in fashion supply chains, in addition to the working conditions of those working in the garment industry, as well as MSIs. As mentioned, this research initially aimed to interview employees working for MSIs, yet many experts were familiar with (specific) MSIs or had previously worked for one. These experts are anonymized, but the organization and field in which they work has been conveyed in Table 8.

The interviewees were gathered by means of convenience and snowball sampling, in which contact with one interviewee has led to a contact with other potential interviewees (Bryman, 2016). 45 emails were sent out to different organisations, varying from NGOs, trade unions active in the fashion industry, and research institutes. Examples of these organisations were the Clean Clothes Campaign, Fashion for Good, MVO, IndustriALL, Fashion for Good, Solidaridad. Despite (repeated) attempts to reach these organisations, only five expert interviews were conducted.

The interviews itself were semi-structured in nature, which allowed some flexibility for the researcher e.g. to probe for more detailed answers (Bryman, 2016). The interviewees were asked to sign a consent form, agreeing to their participation but also to the storage and use of the data gathered. In Appendix 1 the specific data management and storage regulations are outlined.

As mentioned, interviewees were both asked about their knowledge on the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers, as well as their knowledge on the effectiveness of MSIs, which led to one interview guide divided into separate parts. Part 1 focused on general information on the job of the expert (in relation to the fashion industry), part 2 focused their perceived impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers, part 3 on their general perception of MSIs in the fashion industry. This final part specifically concentrated on whether the interviewees perceived MSIs as being effective, and whether they thought MSIs adequately included the voices of garment workers in the decision-making process. The questions of part 3 were mostly based on the drafted framework, but were simplified, due to the fact that questions were not asked about specific MSIs. Nevertheless, to clarify the answers given by the experts, they were asked to provide examples of MSIs. The interview guide in its entirety can be found in Appendix 2.

All the results were coded in the coding software NVivo. Due to the fact that part 2 is more exploratory in nature, these results were coded by means of open coding. This means that the coding was not based on a set of predefined concepts, but that concepts arose out of the data (Bryman, 2016). Since part 3 was based on the framework, the researcher relied on thematic coding, where a set of predefined codes were used to classify the data (Bryman, 2016). The used codes are provided in Appendix 3.

Table 8

Overview of the sample

Experts	Profession	Organization	Date
Expert #1	Academic	Utrecht University	1-6-2022
Expert #2	Journalist	De Correspondent	1-6-2022
Expert #3	Academic	Utrecht University	3-6-2022
Expert #4	NGO employee	Solidaridad	9-6-2022
Expert #5	Academic	Technological University of Sydney	14-6-2022

3.2.3 Document Analysis on Multiple Cases

The assessment of the MSIs relied predominantly on primary data collection. This data has been gathered by means of the document analysis, in which reports of the selected MSIs, websites, and other available data sources were analysed. A document analysis “is a systematic procedure for reviewing or

evaluating documents” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). This type of analysis is particularly useful in qualitative case studies, as has been the case in this research (Bowen, 2009). In addition, predefined codes (i.e., the framework in Table 5), are used to categorize findings that are generated in the document analysis.

Bowen (2009) states that documents should not be treated as necessarily accurate or complete, but that the researcher should critically evaluate these documents. Particularly, the absence of certain information should also be taken into account. Therefore, when framework questions could not be answered adequately due to a lack of information provided by a MSI, this was also noted down. This was done by coding the questions where information was absent with a 0, and questions where information was present with a 1. Whenever a gap of information occurred, secondary literature (not provided by the MSI) was searched for by researching academic studies done on a certain MSI, or looking into critique by NGOs/Civil Society organisations.

Overall, to systematically and coherently perform these analyses, a table per MSI was created incorporating the framework questions, the provided answers, the absence-presence coding, and the sources used to analyse these MSIs. These tables are provided in Appendix 4. Summarized versions of these tables are provided in the result section.

The MSIs were selected on the basis of several criteria. The first criterion is whether they classified their organisations as a MSI (i.e., whether it was mentioned on the MSI’s website). The second criterion is whether or not they intended to contribute to safeguarding the working conditions of garment workers. This criterion was selected, since the unit of analysis is garment workers. The final selection criterion was whether the MSI issued governing tools in the form of a code of conducts, compliance mechanisms, auditing or monitoring scheme, or the issuing of a label or standard. This criterion was chosen since the JT and MSI Legitimacy framework also assesses output legitimacy, presuming that the selected MSI aims to achieve some level of governance within an industry.

Accordingly, four MSIs were selected: the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF), Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), Fair Labour Association (FLA), and Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI). It must be noted that the ETI and FLA are not solely dedicated to the fashion industry. However, both have their origins in the fashion industry, and both their member base consist predominantly out of apparel companies.

4 Potential Impact of Sustainability Transitions on Garment Workers Interests

This section describes the most important findings with regard to the potential impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers. This section is subdivided into the findings that arose out of desk research and interviews. The final section compares and contrasts these commonalities, and provides an overview of the main findings of this part of the research.

4.1 Desk Research

Despite the fact that many authors acknowledge that more research on the social impacts of sustainability transitions is paramount, academic literature on the impact of sustainability transitions of garment workers is limited (Clube, 2022; Henninger et al., 2021; Jia et al., 2020; Koide et al., 2021; Schröder et al., 2020; Wren, 2022). These authors acknowledge that sustainability transitions, often specifically CE strategies, will have an impact on garment workers. However, what this impact will entail is something that is most often not elaborated upon.

This research identified three main articles that do focus on this impact, often specifically in the context of the effects of circular strategies on garment workers (Repp et al., 2021; Schröder, 2020; Suarez-Visbal et al., 2022). Suarez-Visbal et al. (2022) created an extensive framework through which the social impacts in the Apparel Value-Chain (AVC) can be assessed, as a response to the lack of knowledge on the social impacts of CE strategies. According to them, these social impacts of circular strategies are often solely described in terms of the number of jobs created. Since CE strategies in general often focus primarily on the development of technical innovations, the CE does not automatically create new jobs across the entire supply chain. Rather, there is a possibility that at various AVC stages these innovations can displace, create, or eliminate jobs. As such, they argue that the social impacts of these circular strategies should be examined through a broader lens. Specifically, through a quality of jobs (decent pay, work-life balance, working conditions), sustainable livelihood (living standards, community wellbeing, poverty alleviation), and gender equality and inclusion (type of jobs and economic opportunity, access to agency, empowerment and autonomy, intersectionality, existing power dynamics causing work discrimination) dimension. Overall, their results indicated that CE strategies do not automatically improve existing working conditions for those depending on the industry. New jobs created (in e.g., used textile sorting) might emulate the current (poor) working conditions in the AVC and reinforce existing gender inequalities, while the working situation of garment workers does not improve either.

Repp et al. (2021) confirm these findings. In their article, they assessed the potential impact of EU CE strategies on employment along the value chain. They highlight that CE strategies could have distributed benefits and drawbacks across the value chain. Specifically, developing countries relying on apparel manufacturing could experience job losses due to a decrease in a demand. EU countries, having advanced industries, could reap economic advantages as a result of a potential increase in jobs and new value creation caused by circular innovations. Similarly, Schröder (2020) argues that existing textile

manufacturers might go out of business due to a change in demand for clothes. In addition, it is possible that production will be recentred in developed countries, which will negatively impact mostly female workers in low-income countries situated in mostly Asia or North Africa.

In addition, Repp et al. (2021) state that corporations which currently hold the most power in the value chain will, despite their new sustainability strategies, most likely reinforce their power and demand for cheap garments, perpetuating the vulnerable position of garment workers. In line with this reasoning, Brydges et al. (2020) argue that these power dynamics that reinforce unjust conditions for workers need to be addressed to reform the fashion industry and improve the livelihoods and working conditions of garment workers. Arguably, the powerful position of these buying corporations leads to hesitation by manufacturers to participate in sustainability initiatives or partnerships with the buying company, because of their lack of trust and fear of losing their own agency even more so (Bhandari et al., 2022). A striking example as to why manufacturers distrust these companies is the enormous cancellation of orders during the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving these manufacturers unable to pay their garment workers (Brydges et al., 2020). Another issue that hampers improvements for garment workers is that the industry is ultimately driven by growth, whereas to achieve social and environmental sustainability the opposite might be necessary (Brydges et al., 2020). That is why most large companies, rather than addressing their social and environment issues systemically across the entire value chain, often focus on technical innovation and present circular strategies that do not affect their core, linear business model (Buchel et al., 2022; Repp et al., 2021).

To overcome these issues and safeguard and improve garment worker's rights, Repp et al. (2021) state that, firstly, the new EU CE strategy should shift their regional (EU centred) focus to a more global one, to account for the potential effects that a CE strategy has on vulnerable workers in the value chain. Essentially, it is necessary to include social dimensions in their strategy, which is currently lacking (Abou-Chleih, 2022; Repp et al., 2021). Secondly, policies could be dedicated to provide reskilling opportunities for workers, public awareness campaigns, as well as facilitating collaboration opportunities with partner countries along the value chain. Also, Repp et al. (2021) states that companies should take up an active, collaborative role with regard to their suppliers/manufacturers across the value chain, and consider their impact on garment workers from procedural and distributional justice dimensions. This is necessary to mitigate negative impacts of circular strategies on garment workers. To conclude, to ensure a transition that safeguards the rights of garment workers, new value chain models based on collaboration and mutual understanding between actors are necessary. Workers should be able to voice their rights, working conditions should be publicly disclosed and monitored, and the industry should be held accountable by governments to protect garment workers against pollution of their livelihoods, health hazards, and exploitation (Buchel et al., 2022).

Grey literature on the potential impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers yields similar conclusions (Chan, 2022). Various NGOs critique the sustainability campaigns of brands,. According to them, these campaigns serve only for the promotion of a brands "green" image, while

simultaneously brands cannot guarantee that garment workers are paid a fair wage (Chan, 2022). Similar to the situation garment workers were exposed to during the pandemic, the increasing focus on less consumption and reducing overproduction might put garment workers in an equally vulnerable position. Chan (2022) outlines that providing workers with a living wage could be a way to solve both social and environmental problems. Namely, the reason as to why overproduction and consumption is prominent in the industry, is that the price of clothing remains cheap. Brands enable this by structurally demanding low(er) prices from manufacturers, leading to underpaid garment workers.

Another impact, albeit more indirectly, is the climate change impacts that garment workers are already enduring to date. Lawreniuk et al. (2022) conducted research on these climate change impacts on garment workers in Cambodia. They found that these workers experienced extreme heat as well as floodings as a consequence of climate change. As a consequence, garment workers reported that they sometimes were unable to attend work, leading to a decrease in wage. Despite these increasing challenges, the industry is focusing mostly on decarbonization, neglecting these day-to-day struggles of garment workers. Moreover, due to the structure of the industry, factories often cannot bear the costs to place extra fans and other heat adaptation measures. Lawreniuk et al. (2022) suggests that in order to achieve JTs within the industry, centring garment worker's voices is fundamental so that they do not (continue) to bear the costs of climate change.

To further address this power disbalance and facilitate a JT, Sharpe et al. (2022) stress that green jobs and decent wage jobs needs to be actively organised, as economic restructuring away from carbon intensive industries might lead to job displacements and losses. It also might be difficult to create connections between green and brown industries and jobs. In addition, since the environment and social impacts of the fashion industry are often localized "hotspots" of vulnerable (garment) worker communities need to be identified, after which they "can be turned in to opportunities for accelerated community action for building back better" (Sharpe et al., 2022, p. 1). This needs to be achieved by focusing on capacity building and deep supply chain collaboration. In their view, MSI could be important mechanisms to achieve these outcomes and move away from "top-down" decision-making. Finally, they have drafted nine key policy dimensions necessary for achieving a JT: labour rights; industrial and sectoral policies; skills development; macroeconomic and growth policies; occupational safety and health; enterprise policies; social protection; active labour market policies; social dialogue and tripartism. Similarly, Buchel et al. (2018) argue that transition pathways to transform the industry are by drafting new value chain models (based on collaboration and dialogue), by working exercising their rights, and by holding the industry to account.

4.2 *Expert Interviews*

Systemic sustainability transitions are not occurring in the industry

To better understand the impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers, first the experts were asked about which transitions are happening in the industry to date. All interviewees mentioned that large scale sustainability transitions are not really present in the industry. They addressed three main reasons as to why this has been the case. First, all interviewees mentioned that efforts that are taking place are isolated and occur on a small-scale, rather than being systemic and industry-wide. Expert 3, 4 and 5 stated that a lot of (temporary) “impact projects” are being set up, but that they lack a systemic, structural approach to solving the issues in the sector. Expert 2 also mentioned that brands often showcase their “sustainable” collections, but that this does not fundamentally change the way brands are producing their clothes. This interviewee argued that this fundamental change is not happening, since the industry is primarily driven by (economic) growth. According to Expert 1 and Expert 3, this lack of structural, systemic approaches is also visible in attempts to achieve circularity in the sector. Namely, these circular initiatives are applied to linear business models. To summarize, the system in itself is not challenged or changed. This is illustrated in the following interview excerpts:

“A lot of good initiatives exist, and are trying to make their social impact stronger. But for some reason we still are seeing the same problems, and I think it's because we are focusing on small efforts in asylum [...] If you have a building that is already bent on the structure, you can try to fix things, but it's always going to look bent. You know at some point you need to remove things and rebuild it again to make sure that the bases are solid.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2022)

“I think in all the links of the supply chain, there are actors that are working to be more sustainable, whether that's more in terms of ethical purchasing practices, better sourcing, the way they conceptualize their business or regenerative or circular business models. But unfortunately, they are really small and small in number, small in impact. And they don't seem to have any impact in the main, because I think the rest of the industry is just growing so phenomenally that it cancels out any of the impact that they might be having.” (Expert 5, 14-6-2022)

In addition, these niche efforts might produce even contradictory results, since “even agencies who want to protect the workers” are not talking together and only execute their efforts in isolation (Expert 3). Thus, to change the industry, it needs to be rebuilt and sustainability transitions need to take place on a much bigger scale to have an impact in the first place.

This also resonates with the second reason as to why sustainability transitions are not really prominent, which has to do with the overall power asymmetries present in the industry. Essentially, brands hold a tremendous amount of power over manufacturers (and consequently garment workers) in the supply chain (Expert 2, 3, 4, 5). Specifically, brands often dictate the prices, can cancel their orders last minute, and switch from suppliers or manufacturers if they are not satisfied (Expert 2). Expert 2 mentioned that consequently the costs of these cancelled orders, even after the clothes have been already been made or sometimes after they have been shipped, are at the expense of the manufacturer. As a

consequence, this leads to manufacturers that are unable to pay their workers living or even minimum wages (Expert 2, 3, 5). Four interviewees mentioned that this practice of cancelling already made orders was exacerbated in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also, brands simultaneously try to pressure manufactures into becoming more sustainable or adhere to their code of conducts, rather than reflecting on how their own behaviour contributes to the bad working conditions in the first place (Expert 2, 5). Expert 2 mentioned specifically in this regard:

“If you look at the conversation that is currently being held concerning sustainability and fair production, it mainly pertains to “how can we as a brand ensure that those manufactures stick to our norms and values”, rather than “how does our own behaviour cause the violations/issues present in the industry”. That is something that is discussed way less. Yet, it is a crucial question to ask if we want to achieve systems change.” (Expert 2, 1-6-2022)

Similarly, brands seem to have the idea that there are manufactures that “make a mess” of things, because that is the way they are, or because of their culture, but this is simply because they do not have the means to implement changes (Expert 2). Expert 5 mentioned that due to this structure of the supply chain, manufactures almost have no profit margin. This makes it impossible for them to invest in new technologies, such as for instance solar panels on their roofs. Thus, it seems that brands can “dictate the rules” which manufacturers simply have to abide by, even though they do not always have the means to achieve these changes.

Overall, these power dynamics were explicitly mentioned by four interviewees, and were seen as the root cause for the current industry’s unsustainability and as an explanatory why the system is so difficult to change. One interviewee mentioned that the current conversations on sustainability in the sector do not address this power relationship at all (Expert 2). This interviewee stated specifically that this is not discussed because “this is where it hurts” for brands, since the current system and structure of the industry is beneficial for them. To illustrate, this interviewee mentioned the following:

“Why do brands do not make their own clothing? It’s bizarre that Zara does not even know how to produce their own shirt to put it bluntly. Why don’t they do that? When you ask that question, you realise that they outsource their production because they do not want to take the risks that are associated with making their own piece of clothing.” (Expert 2, 1-6-2022)

In essence, it appears that brands externalize their risks to weaker actors in the supply chain. In addition, these manufacturers and garment workers are then not really asked for their input and expertise with regards to sustainability, despite the fact that they are the ones making the clothes and are very knowledgeable on these issues (Expert 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

As a final reason hampering sustainability transitions, a lot effort is put into “diagnosing” the issues and gathering data on what should be changed in the industry, rather than effectively working towards a solution (Expert 1, 4, 5). To illustrate, Expert 4 mentioned the following:

“In the end we are constantly collecting data for the sake of collecting data, and all the data has to be complete, and if this data is complete, only then we dare to do something. This means that no one will do something if the data is never complete. [...] We already know what the issues in the chain are, let’s just start solving them rather than again measuring what is wrong.” (Expert 4, 9-6-2022)

To add to this, Expert 1 states that societies are good in pinpointing where the issues are, and identify what should be changed (e.g., by means of the Sustainable Development Goals), yet that there is a lack of evaluating whether these issues are tackled by societies. Additionally, Expert 5 questioned if more reporting actually contributes to better working conditions for workers in the garment sector.

Impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers

Due to the aforementioned power asymmetry, the fact that current sustainability transitions happen on a niche level, and the lack of effective action being taken, the positive and negative impact that these transitions have to date on garment workers appears to be highly limited. As a consequence, their generally bad working conditions persist regardless. Nevertheless, interviewees were still asked about the current impacts that sustainability transitions have on garment workers, as well as the impacts that sustainability transitions might have on these workers in the future.

According to Expert 1, 3 and 4, current and future efforts pertaining to CE implementations in the industry produce the same social conditions as the linear system. The CE might create new jobs in terms of remanufacturing, recycling or renting, but if there is no strong social base, it will produce the same social conditions as the linear system (Interview 1, 3). As mentioned by Expert 3:

“If you really want to aim for circularity to be this transition with this new paradigm shift, we're going to have to do something a lot stronger in the social side, because otherwise we're repeating the same problems that we're seeing today, and even perhaps exacerbating them. [...] If circularity is taken up in the sector, it is not even having the same bad jobs, but maybe more jobs that are worse.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2022)

From this excerpt it appears that the impact of the CE on garment workers will likely result in similar conditions than they already experience. It would at least not result in an improvement of their conditions. Expert 4 mentions that if the CE would lead to a job decrease of garment workers, alternative forms of employment should be looked into by for instance re-educated garment workers to work in a sorting factory or in waste management. On the condition that the worker conditions are good and they are paid a living wage.

The exclusion of the social aspects of sustainability is also seen on a larger level. Namely, brands tend to generally focus mostly on the environmental side for instance in the form of improving circularity and resource minimization (by increase e.g., automation) (Expert 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) Expert 3 mentioned that it is easier for a company of protecting the environment as they see it as a risk minimization, while they see protecting workers as a cost. In other words, it seems that by protecting the environment they can

even save resources and contribute to increasing their efficiency, while ensuring workers are paid a living wage only costs money. It is noteworthy that even on an EU (policy) level (Expert 4 and 5), the social conditions in the sector are not really taken into account. This is illustrated by the following interview excerpt:

“Yesterday I was at a policy roundtable with some parliamentarians and people from the DiGiCo Environment who will execute the strategy [EU Strategy for Sustainable Textiles]. We were all wondering, where is the social aspect in this ambition? It is very nice to look at requirements for eco-design, combatting greenwashing et cetera, but in all these ambitions the social aspects are not taken into account.” (Expert 4, 9-6-2022)

This quote highlights even more the lack of the social side of sustainability on virtually all levels. This might demonstrate that when improving the environment, the social side might not necessarily be included. As such, it indicates that the social impacts on garment workers will likely not change in the positive sense, or might even deteriorate since the protection of workers is seen as a cost.

Finally, two interviewees mentioned that the exact impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers is not clear, and that more research should be dedicated to this area (Expert 1 and 5). Expert 5 did mention that sustainability transitions will inevitably have an impact on garment workers and a proportion might be impact negatively, but that is something that has not been discussed a lot as of yet and often only in terms of the energy transition. To illustrate, this interviewee mentioned the following:

“If we just look at carbon emissions, which is kind of the focus of the most in the sector at the moment, we have this UN triple C commitment to 50% reduction by 2030. If you look at where the carbon emissions happen along the supply chain, it's very much in those countries that have high utilization of fossil fuel electricity generation. We know where that production happens in the supply chain. We know where those workers are going to be located. [...] 2030 is not very far away, and emission reductions will have a significant impact on those workers and those enterprises that are involved.” (Expert 5, 14-6-2021)

In general, it seems that it is paramount to start planning for the transition. To add to this, Expert 5 stated that in terms of climate change impacts, garment workers might be heavily impacted since climate change impacts might strike harder in countries where factories are located.

To summarize, it seems that the exact impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers are not really clear. Yet, it can be tentatively stated that the impacts that will be endured, will most likely lead to the same (or worse) working conditions for garment workers. This is predominantly because the focus is very much on the “environmental side” of sustainability in all transitions that are occurring in the industry. As mentioned repeatedly by some experts, if there is no strong social base, the position of garment workers will not improve.

Achieving a Just Transition in the Textile Industry

The interviewees were asked what, in their view, would be necessary to achieve a JT in the industry. Each expert had their own point of view on this matter, but they all outlined somewhat similar measures that should be taken to change the system and address the aforementioned power asymmetry (Expert 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

First of all, a JT should be achieved by changing the purchasing practices of brands (Expert 2 and 4). A focus should be put on creating equal partnerships between manufacturers and brands (Expert 4), where manufactures feel that they can speak freely to brands about what their needs and wishes are (Expert 2 and 4). In addition, the sector should stop focusing solely on compliance (Expert 2 and 4). Expert 3 added to this:

“You probably need to realize that this is not like a one program or one project, but it is kind of like a way of working together.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2022)

Thus, a long-term collaboration is necessary to bring about fundamental changes in the garment sector.

Consequently, the interviewees argued that is important safeguard garment worker’s livelihoods, by ensuring that they are paid a living wage and that they actually have time to work on their garments (Expert 2,3,4,5). As illustrated by Expert 2:

“People are saying if we are going to buy less or produce less, then there will be less jobs for those people. However, if you make sure that you make better products, or if people get more time to work on something, that does not need to be the case necessarily. [...] In the end, you want to enable decent jobs. Nobody wants to work 50 hours a week and still not make a living wage.” (Expert 2, 1-6-2022)

In addition, according to Expert 5 the focus should not only be on financial recompense, but also on creating sustainable and decent livelihoods for garment workers.

Creating these livelihoods should be context specific, since what is defined by success ultimately differs per country, community and sector (Expert 1, 5, 3). Expert 5 for instance mentions that in garment assembly, they maybe do not have to deal with reducing their emissions that much, but that they probably should focus on reducing the climate change impacts on garment workers. To achieve these context specific solutions, it is necessary that beforehand, clear success criteria of a JT should be established (Expert 1 and 5).

Expert 1 and 5 also explicitly mentioned that it is necessary that these communities need to define themselves what they mean by success, by including local governments, NGOs and (garment) workers (Expert 1 and 5). Expert 3 stresses that it is important that especially the most vulnerable workers are also included, since they are the ones who are the most affected.

Finally, to ensure that workers voices are represented there should be adequate policies and legislation in place that is more aligned between international and national levels (Expert 2, 3, 4). Interviewees questioned current policies and legislations whether they are (a) adequate enough to

safeguard workers (Expert 4 and 5) and (b) aligned enough (Expert 2, 3, 4, 5). Therefore, there should be policies and legislation in place with a strong social base. In addition, a JT requires constant monitoring and evaluation (Expert 1).

4.3 Overall identified impacts on garment workers

To come back to the sub question, “what is the potential impact of sustainability transitions on garment worker’s interests?”, this research has found that potential (industry-wide) sustainability transitions are not clear in terms of impact. Overall, there is a lack of fundamental transitions happening in the industry in the first place. It seems that due to this lack of systemic change, the situation of garment workers will remain the same or become worse. The most important findings are outlined in the table below.

Table 9

Identified impacts sustainability transitions on Garment Workers

Sustainability Transition	Potential Impact Garment Workers
Circular Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Might not change anything about the (bad) working conditions of garment workers. - Job losses due to a change in demand of clothes (relocating garment workers to other jobs in the CE might become potentially difficult, due to relocating/opening recycling facilities in the Global North). - Production might be recentred back to the Global North, potential job losses for garment workers.
Sustainability Initiatives initiated by Brands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Primary focus on technical/environmental innovations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on compliance of manufacturers, while brands continue to demand cheap clothes, nothing changes for garment workers. - Working situation garment workers remains the same.

5 Contribution of MSIs Towards Just Transitions: Expert Interviews

This section outlines the general perception of the Experts on MSIs and their potential contribution towards JTs. These findings are explained along the lines of the JT and MSI Legitimacy Framework. Accordingly, this section is further subdivided in input and output legitimacy.

5.1 *Input Legitimacy*

As mentioned, input legitimacy describes the set-up of an MSI, and predominantly focuses on (procedural) inclusiveness and transparency. In terms of this input legitimacy, it was mentioned most often that the aforementioned power asymmetries are also present within MSIs (Expert 1, 2, 3, 5). Expert 2, 3, and 5 stated that there is already a power imbalance present before people are invited to the table, and that this imbalance is not addressed within these MSIs. Expert 3 mentioned specifically:

“Then again, you can keep those power imbalances even in those collaborations, it's kind of like an invisible thread that you don't see, and then you keep on doing the same thing, and that thread keeps you from moving forward because you're not acknowledging that there is a tension there.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2022)

These tensions are manifested in various ways and seem to have an impact on the input legitimacy of MSIs. First of all, (representatives) garment workers (and manufacturers) may be invited to the table, but they may not feel that they can voice their concerns freely (Expert 1, 2, 3, 5). Namely, manufacturers are afraid that if they express critique about a brand, this brand can cancel their orders (Expert 2). This fear is grounded, since cancelling orders is something that happens continuously in the industry (Expert 2). Expert 1 and 3 mentioned that these brands also have their own interests and motivations for participating in a MSI and want to make profit as a company. Therefore, they do not necessarily focus on what is best for the manufacturers and garment workers.

To overcome this issue, it is necessary to ensure that there are mechanisms in place which guarantee that these manufacturers (and garment workers) feel that they can speak freely (Expert 2 and 5). According to Expert 5, ensuring this starts with recognizing that not every stakeholder is equal to begin with, as this expert mentioned:

“So some people, some representatives might require more resources or more skill development just to get up to the same level, to be able to have the conversation. And we probably need to set aside time for that to happen when forming these multi stakeholder initiatives” (Expert 5, 14-6-2022).

Nevertheless, it still might be difficult to invite individual garment workers to the table in the first place. Expert 2 stated that that it might be better to not invite garment workers directly to the table, but rather invite the manufacturers. Other interviewees also stated that due to practicality reasons it might be difficult to invite garment workers (Expert 1, 4, 5). Again, because they might not dare to participate because they are afraid that if they voice their concerns, they might lose their jobs (Expert 4 and 5), but

also simply because they cannot devote the time to these initiatives (Expert 1, 4, 5). Various experts expressed that too often, it is assumed (by the Global North) that everyone can and will speak freely, yet this assumption is based on a privileged position (Expert 2 and 5).

Also, when inviting representatives, it can be questionable to what degree they actually represent the workers. Firstly, it is questionable whether large organisations representing garment workers truly know what is happening on the ground and what the concerns and wishes of these workers are (Expert 5). Country level representatives might then be more suitable to voice the concerns of garment workers, yet they are hardly included in MSIs (Expert 5 and 3). Secondly, in many countries, union representatives are generally males, while the workers are female. As is illustrated by Expert 4:

“Well, I know that sometimes in India a lot of union representatives are elder males, you can then wonder whether these truly represent the interests of garment workers, since the workers are usually female and young.” (Expert 4, 9-6-2021)

This interviewee further added that this gender disbalance is difficult to change in these countries, since, for instance in India, society is set up in a way that continues to make females generally subordinate to males. Trainings can then be given to women to become more resilient, but if a society does not change, women will not dare to speak up either way (Expert 4). Overall, it seems that garment workers are not really represented well in these MSIs.

In terms of inviting manufacturers, Expert 5 questioned whether these manufacturers that participated in MSIs, were not already performing relatively well to begin with, as this expert mentioned:

“I guess my thinking is that most the big international initiatives are targeted at those kind of production facilities that are usually foreign owned, very well run, comply with all the domestic laws in terms of labour standards and environmental standards, and want to go further. They want to put solar on their roofs and stuff like that, but they are a very small percentage of the number of the types of firms in the sector. And they're probably not the firms that need the help.” (Expert 5, 14-6-2022)

In other words, it seems that these manufactures that are already highly motivated and possess significant knowledge, participate in these initiatives, whereas the majority of the industry consists out of small factories. These factories might not have the same amount of resources and knowledge compared to these larger ones (Expert 5). Thus, it is necessary that all types of manufacturers are effectively included. To achieve this, it is necessary to make sure that participating facilities feel respected also in terms of the aforementioned purchasing practices of brands.

Nevertheless, all experts stressed that (representatives) of garment workers should be invited to the table, and that the inclusion of their voices is paramount. All interviewees stated that they thought that most MSIs are not inclusive enough. In terms of decision-making all interviewees argued that garment workers were generally not adequately included. Interesting to note is, that these garment workers and communities do want to participate in MSIs and JTs, as outlined by Expert 5:

“We've been doing this work in this project and talking about a just transition and talking about what that means. There has been an incredible appetite within the workers community, with their unions, or kind of the NGOs that support workers, about finding out what it means and what essentially their role should be. [...] I think they want to and have the capacity to be able to participate in the dialog, especially at country level, because they know that there's going to be big changes [...] So they definitely want to scale up and be able to be part of the conversation.” (Expert 5, 14-6-2021)

Thus, this indicates that if the right conditions are there, local representatives and garment workers might be able and willing to participate in these MSIs.

A final tension manifested within MSIs lies in the Global North – South dynamic, which is not adequately addressed in these MSIs (Expert 2, 3, 4, 5). Generally, predominantly Western brands are invited to participate (Expert 2 and 4). Expert 4 stated that MSIs should not be the Global North dictating what should happen in the Global South. Overall, in terms of input legitimacy, due to persisting power imbalances, the Global South perspective and particularly garment workers are not invited to the table.

5.2 *Output Legitimacy*

Output legitimacy regards to what degree the MSI is able to solve the issues its “rules” try to address. Again, the aforementioned power asymmetries also influence the degree to which these initiatives can improve the working conditions for garment workers. Except for one interviewee, the experts did not really think that the majority of MSIs achieved something substantial, since significant changes in the industry have not occurred as of yet, and working conditions for the majority of workers are still poor (Expert 1, 2, 3, 5). This has to do with the fact that MSIs are often executed in asylum and are short term efforts, which leads to “incremental changes at the edges” (Expert 2, 3, 4, 5). Each MSIs approaches issues differently, and each MSIs tries to tackle a certain part of the supply chain. Therefore, brands often need to be a member of various MSIs (Expert 4).

Another issue limiting the relative effectiveness of MSIs is that they are voluntary in nature (Expert 3 and 5). Brands need to go out and actively choose participate in a MSIs. Furthermore, they need to be made better with more representation and accountability. As is illustrated by Expert 4:

“We need a diverse array of actors and we need kind of some mechanism that holds people accountable for the things they say in these platforms, that they then need to actually go ahead and deliver on their promises.” (Expert 5, 20-7-2022)

In addition, interviewees mentioned that the MSIs could be used by some brands as greenwashing. Namely, brands tend to broadly interpret the meaning of sustainability. Expert 3 for instance mentioned:

“It's like, oh yeah, we're working on sustainability. But when you look closer, they're only working on the environmental side, so the social part gets like, but what about your workers? Well, we're actually

working in X thing, you know? And those initiatives can also reinforce that pattern. [...] So there's this like big multistakeholder collaboration of companies that think they're working on the sustainability part, but they're just working one part of it, and then that could also reinforce itself.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2022)

From this excerpt it seems that there is a danger that MSI could be a way for brands to (falsely) communicate about their sustainable behaviour, even though they are working only on the environmental side. Brands can simply say that they participate in an initiative and are sustainable, whereas the actual efforts they are making are highly limited (Expert 1, 3, 4). Furthermore, two interviewees mentioned that many brands want to get a certificate for their sustainable behaviour (or the sustainable behaviour of their manufacturers), so that they can say they “covered” that area (Expert 2 and 4). Expert 4 added to this that a certificate is a “snapshot” of their good of a brand or manufacturer, and it is not clear whether this sustainable behaviour is effectively implemented systemically. Overall, it is highly important that MSIs should hold brands accountable for their behaviour (Expert 3 and 4).

To summarize, MSIs (and companies) might have good intentions, but based on the interviews it seems that they do not provide systemic solutions to the industry’s sustainability issues, making their potential contribution towards JTs limited (Expert 1, 2, 3, 4). To illustrate, Expert 3 mentioned:

“You know the path to hell is full of good intentions, right? I think we are kind of falling short in what we need to do in that regard. [...] So what I'm trying to say is that I think that there are good initiatives but the way that it is being put together it still kind of permeates the system.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2022)

However, if the set-up of these initiatives would change, they could become important mechanisms for collaboration to aid in achieving JTs (Expert 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). MSIs could then offer a space to reflect and decide on sector level directions, rather than individual strategies (Expert 5). Currently, many MSIs already provide a space where smaller companies are able to learn from larger companies (Expert 3, 4). Expert 3 mentioned why this is the case:

“If a bigger company has done that and there are things that can be shared and replicated, there's a power. Especially, we have to also realize that most of the industry is full of a few very big companies and a lot of very small companies. Those small companies can when working together with the big ones, really have a way to move faster and adapt to the new system.” (Expert 3, 3-6-2021)

Also, Expert 3 and 4 mentioned that there are quite some difficulties for brands to solve large issues alone, and a MSI might have more leverage. Expert 4 adds to this that if every company would develop an (auditing) tool by themselves, manufacturers then have to deal with all these different auditing requirements.

To conclude, Expert 5 stated that MSI are necessary to achieve some level of supply chain governance. However, this section has shown that the relative impact of MSIs is severely limited due to

the aforementioned power asymmetries which are not dealt with in these platforms. In order to achieve more impactful level of supply chain governance, MSIs should therefore be reformed.

6 Multiple Case Studies of FWF, SAC, FLA and ETI

This section presents the results of the selected cases. First, a description of each individual MSIs is given. Next, the results are explained along the lines of the analytical JT and MSI Legitimacy framework, where first input legitimacy and secondly output legitimacy is explained. Finally, a conclusion on the overall main results on the potential contribution of MSIs towards JTs is given, by comparing chapter 5 and 6.

6.1 Description of MSI cases

1. The Fair Wear Foundation

The FWF was founded in 1999 when the FNV (Dutch trade union), and the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) joined forces with four Dutch clothing companies, in an effort to improve the working conditions of garment workers. To date, FWF consists out of 140 member brands who all have to abide by 8 main Labour Standards, based on International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention, and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. To implement these standards, these member brands are consequently required to form partnerships and work actively together with their manufacturers. To ensure member compliance, the FWF performs Brand Performance Checks, to figure out whether the member is actively working towards improving the working conditions. The FWF also uses factory guidelines (by means of a code of conduct), factory training and complaints helplines (FWF, n.d.-a).

Table 10

General Information on the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF, 2019; FWF, 2022; FWF, n.d.-a; FWF, n.d.-b; FWF, n.d.-c)

Origin	1999, Netherlands
Vision	Fair Wear Foundation’s vision of success is a planet where workers in the garment industry see their rights to, dignified, safe, and properly paid employment realised.
Headquarters	Netherlands
(Governance) Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Codes of Conduct - Brand Performance Checks - Factory Training - Complaint Helplines
Rule targets	Brands
Members	148 members, of which 49 Leader Brands
How to become a member	FWF concentrates on the European market. Membership is open to brands with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 50% production of the brand’s production is in countries where

	<p>FWF is active, or in what FWF categorises as low-risk countries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A minimum annual turnover of €10 million. <p>Basic Membership Requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send in a work-plan and production location data for the upcoming financial year. 2. Pay the membership fee. 3. Submit the definitive production locations for the past financial year. <p>After the brand performance check is completed, the brand is assigned to one of the following performance benchmarking rank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader - Good - Needs Improvement - Suspended
FWF’s interventions to change the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dialogue facilitation by including different parties - Verification of member brands - Knowledge sharing - Practical guidance to factories of member brands - Practical guidance to member brands - Verification of suppliers - Sharing information sharing with other stakeholders (other brands and industry) - Lobby and advocacy
Organisation has staff in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Germany - India - Bangladesh - Vietnam - Myanmar - Indonesia - Bulgaria - Romania - North Macedonia - Tunisia - Turkey <p>FWF’s in-country teams are responsible for setting out the strategy for their country to ensure member brands can implement their human rights due diligence.</p>

2. Sustainable Apparel Coalition

The SAC was founded in 2009. Its origins lie with Walmart and Patagonia, who wrote a joint letter to CEO’s asking to convene to design a standardized tool to asses the environmental impact of their products. Consequently, the SAC was developed as a joint effort between 19 apparel companies and

other stakeholders in the supply chain. They developed a standardized tool, which measures environmental and later also social (labour) impacts. With this data, members can address damaging practices and achieve transparency. It is made up of approximately 250 fashion brands, manufacturers, trade associations, NGOs, and academic institutions (SAC, n.d.-a).

Table 11

General Information on the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC, n.d.-a; SAC, n.d.-b; SAC, n.d.-c; SAC, n.d.-d)

Origin	2009, US
Headquarters	Netherlands & Hong Kong
Mission	To transform business for exponential impact through ground breaking tools, trusted leadership for industry sustainability and collaborative partnerships.
Vision	A global consumer goods industry that gives more than it takes – to the planet and its people.
(Governance) Output	Higg Indexes: various tools that standardizes value chain sustainability measurements for all brands and manufacturers. These tools measure environmental and social, labour impacts across the supply chain.
Rule targets	Brands and manufacturers
Members	250 members, fashion brands, NGOs, trade associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academia 4 - Affiliate 2 - Brand 110 - Foundation 1 - Government 5 - Industry/Trade Association 17 - Manufacturer 66 - Not for Profit 16 - Retailer 41 - Service Provider 27
How to become a member	<p>When SAC members join the coalition, they commit to tool adoption, transparency, sharing best practices, and making meaningful improvements.</p> <p>There are two membership types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate members (Holding Group, Brand & Retailer, Third Party Retailer, Manufacturer) - Affiliate members (Service Provider, Trade Association and Non-Profit Organization, Grantor and Investor, Academia, Government Organizations, Non-Government Organisations) <p>New membership requirements (since 2021) that require members to advance through four levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foundational: Kick off first year of adoption by developing a 3-year plan to deploy Higg Index self-assessments and verification with own operations and value chain partners, and communicate Higg performance.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Progressive: Commit to SAC coordinated goals and publicly disclose goals for Higg FEM and Higg FSLM. Continue driving adoption and verification with value chain partners. 3. Strategic: Deploy Higg Index tools to business partners supporting 80% of business volume and publicly disclose performance and traceability using Higg BRM, Higg FEM, and Higg FSLM data. 4. Leader: Demonstrate industry leadership by driving impact as measured through Higg Index data.
SAC's interventions to change the industry	<p>Higg Indexes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Higg Brand Tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ From materials sourcing to a product's end of use, the Higg BRM assesses the following life cycle stages of a product as it goes through a company's operations, identifying sustainability risks and impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management System ▪ Product Supply Chain ▪ Packaging ▪ Use & End of Use ▪ Retail Stores ▪ Offices ▪ Transportation ▪ Distribution Centres 2. Higg Facility Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Higg Facility Tools offer standardized social and environmental assessments that facilitate conversations among value chain partners to socially and environmentally improve every tier in the global value chain. 3. Higg Product Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Higg Product Tools assess a product's environmental sustainability impacts. 4. Higg Index Use Cases 5. Higg Support 6. Transparency Program
Organisation has staff in	Amsterdam & Hong Kong
Organisation operates in	36 countries

3. Fair Labour Association

The FLA was founded in 1996, when President Clinton set up a meeting between multinational companies and NGOs. He asked them to cooperate in improving the working conditions in the fashion industry. Three years later, this group evolved into the FLA. They have set up a Code of Conduct, but also aid in the implementation of this code, filling the gap between standards and implementation. Specifically, their members include companies, suppliers, universities, civil society organisations. Approximately 38 apparel companies are part of the FLA (FLA, n.d.-a).

Table 12

General Information on the Fair Labour Association (FLA, 2021; FLA, n.d.-a; FLA, n.d.-b, FLA, n.d.-c; FLA, n.d.-d)

Origin	1996, US
Headquarters	Colombia, US
Mission	Promote and protect workers' rights and to improve working conditions.
Vision	FLA's vision is that workers in affiliate supply chains will earn compensation that is sufficient to meet their basic needs and have some discretionary income.
(Governance) Output	Workplace Code of Conduct
Rule targets	Brands
Members	Members include companies (of which 38 apparel), universities, and civil society organizations. Specific member types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accredited Companies: these companies are strictly assessed on an continuing basis and must demonstrate continuous and lasting improvements. 31 - Participating Members: these companies join FLA on a voluntary basis but agree to strict labour standards and work to improve working conditions through sustainable solutions. 20 - Participating Suppliers: make a commitment to meet the highest labour standards in their facilities.11 - Colleges & Universities: 17 - Civil Society Organisations: 10
How to become a member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Adopt the Workplace Code in the manufacture of its products; B. Formally convey the Workplace Code (in the applicable local language) to its factories; C. Implement a system of internal monitoring that complies with the Monitoring Principles; D. Submit applicable facilities to monitoring visits conducted by Monitors assigned by the FLA staff; E. Pay annual assessments to the Association. F. Provide a report to the Association every twelve months.
FLA's interventions to change the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code of Conduct - Root Cause Analysis - Supplier Engagement - Living Wages - Responsible Purchasing Practices
Organisation has staff in	US
Organisation operates in	Participating companies locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canada - Egypt - Finland - Germany - Honduras - Hong Kong - Israel - Italy - Japan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Malaysia - New Zealand - Pakistan - Singapore - Sweden - Switzerland - Taiwan - Turkey - UK - USA - Vietnam
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4. Ethical Trading Initiative

The ETI was created in 1998 by a group of UK companies, NGOs, and trade union organizations and was backed by the Secretary of State for International Development, with the purpose of “making a difference” in the lives of workers in global supply chains. The aim of the ETI was to form a coalition of organisations working together in implementing their codes of labour practices, to improve the working conditions and livelihoods of workers. Companies who want to become a member of the ETI have to abide by their “Base Code of labour practice”. Currently, 90 companies are a member of the ETI, of which 63 are apparel companies. In addition, trade unions and NGOs are members. With this Base Code, they argue that they have affected the lives of 10 million workers (ETI, n.d.-a; ETI, n.d.-b)

Table 13

General Information on Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI, 2016; ETI, n.d.-a; ETI, n.d.-b, ETI, n.d.-c; ETI, n.d.-d)

Origin	1998, UK
Headquarters	UK
Vision	ETI’s vision is of a world where human rights at work are enjoyed by workers, respected by business, and protected by governments.
Mission	ETI’s mission is to advocate for the most vulnerable workers, by harnessing the power of growing and diverse membership.
(Governance) Output	ETI Base Code of labour practice
Rule target	Brands
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 90 companies, of which 63 are Apparel Companies - 22 NGOs’ - 4 Trade Unions
How to become a member	<p>Members commit to principles of implementation, consisting out of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment 2. Identifying labour rights issues 3. Prevent, mitigate, remedy, 4. Track & Communicate <p>Members have to pay a fee based on their annual turnover.</p> <p>Different member types:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundation stage members (companies that are new ETI member). - Full members - Trade Union members - NGO members
ETI's interventions to change the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define good practices in ethical trade. - Help workers to help themselves. - Build strategic alliances that make a difference. - Persuade and influence key players. - Drive improvements in member companies' performance.
Organisation has staff in	London
Organisation operates in (in terms of the apparel industry)	UK, Ireland, Netherlands, China, Bangladesh, Malaysia

6.2 Input Legitimacy

Table 14 provides an overview of the aforementioned codes, including a brief answer of the question. To reiterate, code 1 means that the MSI provided sufficient information to answer the respective question, code 0 indicates that there was an absence of information and a (complete) answer could not be provided. More detailed answers to these questions, and comparisons between MSIs in terms of input legitimacy are given below. Appendix 4 contains the tables with detailed answers, and sources associated with each question.

Table 14

Overview of Input Legitimacy of MSIs. Code 1 = information was present, Code 0 = information was absent

		FLA		SAC		FLA		ETI		
	Criterion	Key Question	Code	Answer	Code	Answer	Code	Answer	Code	Answer
Input	<i>Inclusion</i>	Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake?	1	YES	1	YES	1	YES	1	YES
		Are important stakeholders excluded from the process?	1	NO	1	YES, garment worker representatives are not included.	0	NO	1	NO
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Do (representatives of) garment workers have a valid voice in decision-making processes?	1	YES	0	NO	1	YES	1	YES
		Do representatives of garment workers (representatives) have a (permanent) seat in decision-making boards?	1	YES	1	NO, no board member represents (garment) workers.	1	YES	1	YES
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement among participants?	1	“We consider Social Dialogue to be key towards creating sustainable changes in the supply chain. In such a dialogue, the most important stakeholders are at the table to negotiate improved working conditions.”	1	“To ignite the change required to redefine how the industry is run, peers and competitors come together as a united front.”	0	No information disclosed.	0	No information disclosed.

	<i>Transparency</i>	To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent?	1	Detailed procedures on how the board function in terms of decision-making processes are outlined, but no board minutes, why the board made a specific decision, are not provided or transparent.	0	Why the board has made a specific decision, board minutes etc., are not transparent or provided.	1	Detailed procedures on how the board function in terms of decision-making processes are outlined, but no board minutes, why the board made a specific decision, are not provided or transparent.	1	Detailed procedures on how the board function in terms of decision-making processes are outlined, but no board minutes, why the board made a specific decision, are not provided or transparent.
		To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent?	1	FWF publishes the annual Brand Performance Checks of each member brand.	1	Transparency is not required for a membership, so information is not available on individual brand performance.	1	Detailed assessments of companies, including each company's "corrective action plan" are outlined the FLA's website.	1	Not transparent.
		What specific action are taken to ensure transparency? Is transparency structurally embedded into the organization?	1	Brand Performance Checks (see <i>above</i>) Complaints (by workers, NGOs etc) on FWF manufacturer performance, are outlined on the website (in detail).	1	"By 2025, we're aiming to have all SAC members participate in public-facing ratings of sustainable performance that are credible and trusted."	1	FLA adopted a requirement for factory list transparency in February 2019 with a vote by its board of directors. FLA members must make public their Tier 1 factory list by March 2022.	1	"We want to take a leadership position on transparency and encourage and support our members to do the same."

	<i>Leadership and solidarity</i>	To what extent are (representatives) of garment workers involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI?	1	“FWF’s approach is designed to integrate workers wherever possible.”	0	No information found on this matter.	0	Not clear, maybe in the sense that they are represented in the board, but no information provided on how they are directly involved.	1	“We help workers to help themselves: Codes of labour practice can, and should, help create space for workers to bargain with management through trade unions.”
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Inclusion

Inclusion is assessed by examining to what extent the involved stakeholders are representative for the issues at stake, and whether important stakeholders are excluded from the (decision-making) process. In terms of the origins, each MSIs was founded based on a collaborative initiative between companies, government, NGOs and/or labour unions. Arguably, these companies, labour unions, NGOs, governments are important actors in the process and representative for the issues at stake. Therefore, for all MSIs, these questions were answered with “yes”. The MSIs only briefly outlined on their website about how the MSI came together, and it is not clear to what extent garment workers were included in the foundation process (ETI, n.d.-a; FLA, n.d.-a; FWF, n.d.-d; SAC, n.d.-e). Some NGOs/labour unions might have represented these garment workers and consulted with these stakeholders but, again, this is not clear. Table 15 provides an overview of the organizations involved in the set-up of the MSIs.

All MSIs highlighted that they want to improve the working conditions in the garment sector (ETI, n.d.-a; FLA, n.d.-a; FWF, n.d.-a; SAC, n.d.-b). As such, garment workers are a key stakeholder in the process, since they are the ones who will “experience” certain regulations. The FWF, ETI and FLA include garment workers to a certain (limited) degree. The FWF is relatively the most inclusive as it includes garment workers in terms of worker remediation through voicing complaints, as well as receiving worker training, and asks for their input in dialogue platforms where local stakeholder (including garment workers) come together (FWF, 2019).

The ETI has a Social Dialogue Program, bringing worker and managers together. This leads to, according to the ETI, increased participation in workplace processes by garment workers (ETI, 2019). It is not clear to what extent the ETI includes garment workers in other processes. The FLA can only be regarded as inclusive in that there is a Third Party complaint channel through which workers can voice their complaints (FLA, n.d.-e). Other than that, it is not clear to what extent garment workers are included in processes and asked for their input. The SAC does not include garment workers in any of their processes (SAC, n.d.-e).

Table 15

Organizations involved in the set-up of the MSIs (ETI, n.d.-a; FLA, n.d.-a; FWF, n.d.-d; SAC)

FWF	SAC	FLA	ETI
1. 4 companies	1. 19 Apparel brands	1. Apparel & Footwear Companies	1. UK Companies,
2. FNV (Dutch Labour Union)	2. Environmental Defence Fund	2. Labour and human rights groups	2. NGOs
3. Clean Clothes Campaign	3. US Environmental Protection Agency	<i>(information about the amounts of companies and NGOs involved is not given)</i>	3. Trade Union Organizations
	4. Verite (Labour Rights Group, civil society organization)		

Procedural Fairness

Procedural Fairness focuses on whether (representatives) of garment workers have a valid voice in the decision-making process, and whether these representatives have a permanent seat in decision-making boards. Each MSI holds general staff, as well as a board that goes over the most important decision-making, and/or judge participating member companies. The FWF, ETI, and FLA have tripartite boards, where key stakeholders holders consist generally out of industry associations, trade unions, and NGOs, which are equally represented within the board (ETI, n.d.-f; FLA, n.d.-f; FWF, n.d.-f). The FLA also includes university representatives in its board (FLA, n.d.-f). An overview of the boards of each MSIs is given in Table 16.

The FLA is the most detailed in terms of voting procedures, how long board members take place in the board, and how they are chosen (FLA, 2021). They have a procedure for ensuring that there is no conflict of interests between board members. Within the FLA, ETI and FWF board members hold an equal vote and no member has a veto right (ETI, n.d.-f; FLA, n.d.-f; FWF, n.d.-f). The FWF is the only organization that additionally uses a (tripartite) Committee of Experts (consisting of employer’s organization for the garment retail sector, employers’ organization of the garment suppliers, trade unions and NGOs), which provides external advise to the board. Interesting to note is that in the past the FWF also included manufacturer representatives within its board, it is not clear why this is not the case anymore (FWF, 2016).

The SAC has board members originating from different backgrounds, but has no garment or even general worker representatives in its board. Two NGOs are part of the board (Good on You and Solidaridad), but the Good on You is part of the board as an Advisor on Transparency and the Solidaridad representatives fulfils a Secretary function, so it is not clear to what extent they are there to

represent garment workers. Thus, regarding procedural fairness, it is clear that the SAC board is the only MSI that evidently excludes representatives of (garment) workers (SAC, n.d.-f).

Despite the fact that, except for the SAC, the MSIs *technically* represent these garment workers by involving trade unions and NGOs, information is missing on *how* these NGOs/Trade Unions are *specifically* representing these workers, i.e. how frequently do they consult with these garment workers? Are there specific procedures associated with these consultations? Do they truly know what their interests are? Additionally, except for the NGO Cividep India (FWF and FLA) and union Sommilito Garmnet Sramik Federation (FLA), all organizations representing garment workers are rather large and western-based.

Table 16

Constitution of the Boards of each MSI (ETI, n.d.-f; FLA, n.d.-f; FWF, n.d.-f; SAC, n.d.-f)

	FWF	SAC	FLA	ETI
(Current) Boards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Chair 2. Vice Chairperson (Representing Trade Unions) 3. Treasurer (Representing Business Associations – MODINT.) 4. Board Member (Representing Business Associations – Inretail) 5. Board Member (Representing the NGO community – Founding member of Cividep India) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair (TAL Apparel, President & Chief Technology Officer) 2. Vice Chair (Head of Sustainability, H&M) 3. Secretary (Senior Policy Advisor Sustainable Fashion, Solidaridad). 4. Treasurer (Chief Operating Officer, Better Cotton Initiative) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair 2. Company representatives (Adidas, New Balance, Under Armour, Patagonia, Delta Galil, Hanesbrands Inc, Nestlé (observer)) 3. Civil Society Representatives (Sommilito Garment Sramik Federation, National Consumers League, Cividep India, GoodWeave, Oxfam, Global 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Chair 2. ETI Representatives (4 people) 3. Corporate Representatives (Beeswift, Tesco, Inditex, Princes) 4. NGO representatives (Banana Link, Homeworkers Worldwide, Oxfam GB) 5. Trade Union Representatives (ITUC, ITF, TUC)

	<p>and was its General Secretary since its inception in 2000)</p> <p>6. Board Member (Representing NGO-s Clean Clothes Campaign)</p> <p>7. Board Member (Representing industry – CEO of the German Sporting Goods Industry Federation)</p> <p>8. Frank Zach (Representing Trade Unions – DGB, German Confederation of Trade Unions)</p>	<p>5. Director, Manufacturer Category (Head of Sustainability, Arvind Limited)</p> <p>6. Director, Affiliate Category (Chief Development & Policy Officer, Global Fashion Agenda)</p> <p>7. Director Brand/Retail Category (VP GM Technical, Quality, and Sustainability, Walmart)</p> <p>8. Director, Manufacturer Category (Executive Vice President, Epic Designers Ltd.)</p> <p>9. Advisor Technology</p>	<p>Fairness Initiative</p> <p>4. University Representatives (University of Michigan, Syracuse University, University of Utah, University of Notre Dame, University of California, University of Texas)</p> <p>5. FLA Counsel (Arnold & Porter LLP)</p>	
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		(Global Business Industry Sector and Corporate Lead Sustainability, Esri) 10. Advisor Transparency (Co-Founder, Good on You) 11. Immediate Past Chair (Vice President, Global Supply Chain and Responsible Sourcing VF Corporation) 12. Co-Founder of the SAC (Sustainability Mentor)		
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Consensual Orientation

Consensual Orientation focuses on the extent to which the MSI promotes mutual agreement among its participants. No information on this regard was found within the FLA, SAC, and ETI. The FWF mentions that Social Dialogue, where important stakeholders are at the table to negotiate and come to an agreement, is key in achieving and implementing changes across the supply chain (FWF, 2019). Nevertheless, the FWF does not publishes minutes of these meetings. This makes it difficult to assess to what extent there is a focus consensual orientation within the boards and board meetings. The SAC states that competitors “come together as a united front” (SAC, n.d.-k). What this exactly entails and how this works in practice, is not elaborated upon.

Transparency

The transparency of the MSIs has been assessed by evaluating to what extent decision-making and standard-setting processes are publicly disclosed, the extent to which the performance of member companies is transparent, and whether efforts are made to ensure and guarantee transparency. Overall, the MSIs varied in terms of transparency. The SAC was arguably the least transparent, and is contradictory in their communication. They highlighted the importance of transparency, but published no annual reports, except for their “Decade In Review” report which somewhat resembles a meagre evaluation of their achievements (SAC, 2020; SAC, n.d.-g). In addition, they have a general documents page on which they report on their respective achievements, but this page is difficult to navigate as there is no search bar available through which specific documents can be found (SAC, n.d.-h). In terms of decision-making, the SAC is not clear on what and why they make certain decisions. Individual company performance is also not published and reported on, they state on this matter that “we’re aiming to have all SAC members participate in public-facing ratings by 2025” (SAC, 2020, p. 34).

The ETI is more transparent as they outline in a bit more detail how their decision-making processes function. For instance, on its website decision-making processes are outlined, and including the role of Trade Union and NGO “Caucus Groups” who feed into the board’s decision making (ETI; n.d.-g). The board also evaluates the performance of companies. These companies are subdivided in various “stages” by the board, ranging from foundational to leadership stages. In which stage a certain company is, is reported upon on the website of the ETI. However, companies are not required to publish their performance, so it is not clear how members perform specifically. They do outline that they “want to take a leadership position on transparency and encourage and support our members to do the same” (ETI, 2017, p. 12). They did publish an annual report in 2019-2020, but this report is a bit outdated and highlights individual projects instead of actual brand performance (ETI, 2019).

The FWF is transparent in decision-making to the extent that they actively elaborate upon their new programmes that they launched, changes they made to their auditing system and publishes elaborate annual reports. However, why the board has made a specific decision, and board minutes are not transparent. Contrary to the SAC and ETI, the individual performance (by means of Brand Performance Checks) of each company is reported upon and can be found on the FWF’s website (FWF, n.d.-g). In addition, the FWF has an extensive procedure for voicing complaints (FWF, n.d.-h). These complaints are outlined in detail on their website in terms the brand, the factory, the specific complaint, and how it was handled. They are working towards expanding the transparency of businesses, but the FWF acknowledges that transparency is among one of the most difficult requirements for companies (FWF, 2013).

The FLA is similar in transparency compared to the FWF. They report detailed procedures for decision-making processes and screening processes to ensure that board members act without conflicts of interests (FLA, 2021). However, the implementation, including board minutes, is something that has not been outlined as of yet. Individual member performance is extensively published on and factory

assessments are conducted on an annual basis. If violations are found, a corrective action plan is made which is also publicly available on the FLA's website (FLA, n.d.-g). As of March 2022, FLA members are obligated to make their Tier 1 factories (direct suppliers of brands) published (FLA, 2019). In terms of annual reporting, not all annual reports can be found on their website and their latest report is from 2019.

Leadership & Solidarity

This aspect of input legitimacy describes the extent to which (representatives) of garment workers are involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI. As mentioned in *Procedural Justice*, the FWF, FLA, and ETI aim to represent garment worker in their tripartite boards. These MSIs boards evaluate the performance of member brands and in that sense, it can be stated that garment workers are included in enforcing the standard (ETI, n.d.-f; FLA, n.d.-f; FWF, n.d.-f). Again, it must be noted that the extent to which these boards members are truly representative is not clear.

Additionally, the ETI states that they “help workers to help themselves”. On their website, they mentioned the following in this regard:

“We help create space for workers to bargain with management through trade unions. In several countries around the world, we are supporting initiatives that raise workers' awareness of their rights and helping create work cultures where workers can confidently negotiate with management about the issues that concern them. We also broker resolutions where there are major breaches of trade union rights by companies that supply our members.” (ETI, n.d.-b, we help workers section)

This can be interpreted in the sense that workers are stimulated towards getting involved enforcing the standard. However, specific information and reporting on these work cultures are not included. The FWF provides more detailed information on this matter. They state that they want to ensure that local stakeholders in production countries are “driving the information and prioritisation of actions that brands and international organisations are taking” (FWF, 2022, p.16). To achieve this, they are focusing on creating platforms for these local stakeholders (including garment workers) where they provide direct input into the FWF and its members. As mentioned, FWF encourages garment workers to voice complaints if violations occur, and in that sense, they are involved with enforcing the code of conduct (FWF, n.d.-h).

Thus, to some limited degree the FLA and ETI involve garment workers in enforcing the standard. The FWF more actively stimulates the enforcement of the standard. The SAC does not disclose any information in this regard.

6.3 *Output legitimacy*

Table 17 provides an overview of the aforementioned codes, including a brief answer to the questions. More detailed answers to these questions, and comparisons between MSIs in terms of output legitimacy are given below. Appendix 4 contains the tables with detailed answers and sources associated with each question.

Table 17

Output legitimacy of the selected MSIs

			FLA		SAC		FLA		ETI	
	Criterion	Question	Code	Answer	Code	Answer	Code	Answer	Code	Answer
Output	<i>Coverage</i>	How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?	0	The performance of each brand can be checked individually, HOWEVER no overview of the performance of specific brands (and comparisons) can be found.	0	The SAC does not report on individual member performance.	0	The performance of each brand can be checked individually, HOWEVER no overview of the performance of specific brands (and comparisons) can be found.	1	89% of its members improved its ethical trade performance score, with an average of 6%
	<i>Quality Work</i>	Which garment worker's rights are protected with the MSI? Where are these rights based on?	1	Code of Labour Practices: 1: Employment is freely chosen; 2: Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; 3: There is no discrimination in employment; 4: No exploitation of child labour; 5: Payment of living wage; 6: Reasonable hours of work; 7: Safe and healthy working conditions;	1	Brand Facility Module, scores on: 1: Child Labour 2: Wages and Benefits 3: Working Hours 4: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 5: Health and Safety 6: Access to Water and Sanitation 7: Decent Work 8: Discrimination, Harassment, and Abuse 9: Sexual Harassment &	1	FLA Fair Labour Code: 1:Employment Relationships: Employers shall adopt and adhere to rules and conditions of employment that respect workers and, at a minimum, safeguard their rights under national and international labour and social security	1	1:Employment is freely chosen 2:Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected. 3: Working conditions are safe and hygienic 4: Child labour shall not be used. 5: Living wages are paid

				8: Legally binding employment relationship;		<p>Gender-based Violence</p> <p>10: Bribery and Corruption</p> <p>11: Right to Health</p> <p>12: Right to Privacy</p> <p>13: Right to Security of the Person</p> <p>14: Minorities' and Communities Rights</p> <p>15: Land Rights</p> <p>Higg Facility Social & Labour Module</p> <p>Focuses on:</p> <p>1: Recruitment and Hiring</p> <p>2: Working Hours</p> <p>3: Wages and Benefits</p> <p>4: Employee Treatment</p> <p>5: Employee Involvement</p> <p>6: Health and Safety</p> <p>7: Termination</p> <p>8: Management Systems</p> <p>9: Empowering People and Communities</p>		<p>laws and regulations.</p> <p>2: Non-discrimination</p> <p>3: No harassment or Abuse</p> <p>4: No forced Labour</p> <p>5: No Child Labour</p> <p>6: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining.</p> <p>7: Health, Safety and Environment</p> <p>8: Hours of Work: Employers shall not require workers to work more than the regular and overtime hours allowed by the law of the country where the workers are employed.</p> <p>9: Compensation</p>		<p>6: Working hours are not excessive</p> <p>7: No discrimination is practiced</p> <p>8: Regular employment is provided</p> <p>9: No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed</p>
		Are there agreements made to expand workers' rights? Are there efforts made to	1	YES & YES	0	NO & NO	1	YES & YES	0	YES, but there is a lack of information how

		go from minimum wage to living wage?								they act upon this.
	<i>Social Protections</i>	Are social protections for workers in place?	1	YES	0	NO	1	YES	1	YES
		Are efforts made to ensure that garment workers have a long-term say in the MSI decision-making process?	1	YES	0	NO/Not clear	0	NO/not clear	0	NO/not clear
	<i>Remedying of injustices</i>	Are there commitments made to remedy existing inequities for garment workers?	1	YES	0	NO/Not Clear	1	YES	1	YES
		Are there specific actions taken?	1	YES Based on the risk assessment outcomes, a factory risk profile can be determined with accompanying intervention strategies. In addition, see <i>Transparency</i> , garment workers can voice complaints.	0	NO/Not clear	1	Complaints Procedure	1	Complaints Procedure
	<i>Efficacy</i>	To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?	1	FWF is known to be one of the most stringent MSIs that are operating in the	0	Not clear, they make bold statements, but do not report on performance. They	0	Not clear to what extent their factory assessments are executed at	1	Difficult to verify (critique by Connor et al. (2016))

				<p>fashion industry to date, the level of requirement for participating in the MSI is relatively, high.</p> <p>However, their efficacy is questioned by Egels-Zandén and Lindholm (2015)</p>		<p>are heavily criticised by the Clean Clothes Campaign.</p>		<p>random. (Sethi & Rovenpor, 2016)</p> <p>Assessments on Accredited companies are sometimes outdated, and do not adhere to the rules.</p>		
	<i>Enforcement</i>	Is compliance verified and noncompliance sanctioned?	1	<p>YES, if members do not improve, they will be suspended.</p> <p>First-party verification.</p> <p>Extensive Complaints Procedure.</p>	1	<p>NO, companies are not assessed or through limited, voluntary self-verification.</p> <p>As of 2021, the SAC tracks member progress and hold members into account for their commitments (so far nothing is published about this).</p>	1	<p>YES, if the brand does not adhere adequately enough and/or if gross human rights violations are identified to these requirements a brand becomes suspended/or the membership is terminated.</p> <p>Second-party verification.</p> <p>Third-Party Complaints Procedure.</p>	1	<p>NO, ETI relies on self-verification, performance of brands is not reported upon, but brands can be suspended if the ETI is concerned about serious failures by brands to adhere to the ETI code.</p>

Coverage

Coverage describes how many member organizations (rule-targets) are complying with the rules. As mentioned, the SAC does not require companies/manufacturers to publish and report on their data. In one of their reports, they outlined the results of the social performance of 752 manufacturers. Important to note that these were self-assessments, and that participating in these assessments was voluntary (SAC, 2020). Taking into account the large number of companies they represent, it is questionable whether 752 is a representative number. Considering the pandemic, the self-assessments also produced very high scores (almost all above 70 out of 100). Due to the voluntary nature, participating manufacturers might already regard themselves as performing “good”, whereas “bad” factories would then likely not participate in the first place (SAC, 2020). The CCC heavily criticized the SAC for their positive report. They specifically mentioned the following:

“In a cheerful graphic on page 30, we discover that in 2020, over 750 factories have scored in the 90% range for 'Wages and Benefits,' 'Working Hours,' 'Employee Treatment' and 'Termination.' There are no words for how out of touch with reality this is; 2020 was the year the pandemic hit and the reaction by brands - many proud members of SAC – caused hunger, wage theft and labour rights violations on a massive scale. These scores represent a complete disconnect with garment workers' realities.” (Nahtigal & Roeland, n.d., in a cheerful graphic section)

Moreover, the SAC “decade in review” report outlines “Higg Index Use” cases that portray how SAC members are using the Higg index (SAC, 2020). These represented cases are highly positive, and it is difficult to assess to what extent this is not simply cherry picking the most successful cases. Thus, it is difficult to identify how member brands/manufacturers are performing.

The ETI states that they “helped change the lives of millions of workers by driving improvements in company policies and practices and through campaigning for change” (ETI, n.d.-i, first para). In their firstly released impact report, they mention that 89% of members improved their ethical trade performance score. However, when examining the data more closely, the ETI states the improvement rate was only a meagre 6% on average (ETI, 2019). Moreover, the individual performance of companies is not clear, and it is difficult to assess to what extent companies are abiding by the code of conduct and make an impact. Nagaraj (2017) adds that this lack of transparency on the ETI’s impact makes it impossible for global advocacy organizations to pressure these companies to take more action to ensure that labour rights are respected.

As mentioned, the FWF performs its Brand Performance Checks on an annual basis for their member brands (FWF, n.d.-i). All the complaints can be accessed on the website of the FWF. 32 Leaders brands, who uphold to the most stringent FWF standards, were identified (FWF, n.d.-j). In 2021, the FWF states that five “Leader” brands were added and three were placed in the “Good” category, which brings the total number of leaders to 28 (out of the 148 members) (FWF, 2021). Unfortunately, there exists no further overview of the performance of these companies, as they for instance do not mention

in their annual reports which companies were sanctioned. They do state that garment worker wages were “stumbling blocks” for brands amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, yet no specific overview of which companies were having issues with this was reported upon (FWF, 2021). To assess all these companies, they would need to be looked up individually on the FWF’s website.

The FLA reports that approximately 31 clothing companies have accreditation, which meant that they underwent rigorous assessment and are forced to undergo continuous improvements in their supply chains (FLA, n.d.-h). The remainder of the member companies (20) also abide by strict regulations. Their individual performance is also outline on the FLA’s website, and a corrective action plan is formulation when violations occurred. Similar to the FWF, there exists no overview where the performance of these companies is compared and contrasted. The FWF does at least provide an overview of scorings compared to benchmarks per company, but for the FLA has not been provided. MSI Integrity (2020) criticizes the FLA for this lack of an overview of their data.

To summarize, for the SAC it is virtually impossible to assess to what extent members adhere to the MSIs rules. The FWF and FLA are more detailed and publish on the performance of their member brands and check the performance of these brands by means of factory audits, and assign Accredited/Leader Brands. Nevertheless, there exists no overview on the (social) performance of these companies, which makes it difficult to come to a general conclusion to come to a coherent conclusion on the overall coverage of these MSIs. The ETI does provide this overview, but does not provide any more detailed information on the specific company performance, which makes it difficult to verify the data.

Quality Work, Remediating of Injustices & Social Protections

Quality Work focuses on which garment worker’s rights are protected within the MSIs, and whether efforts or agreements are made to expand these rights further to for instance a living wage. Generally, these rights are embedded in the MSI through their Code of Conducts which participating manufacturers and brands have to abide by. FWF, FLA, and ETI based these Code of Conducts the ILO, outlining important elements which should achieve decent and humane working conditions (ETI, n.d.-j; FLA, n.d.-I; FWF, n.d.-k). The SAC functions a bit differently, in that it offers a Brand & Retail Module and a Facility Module which brands/manufacturers have to use to score their social (and environmental) impact (SAC, n.d.-i; SAC, n.d.-j). The categories of these scores reflect the areas where these brands/manufacturers should make improvements in. Thus, the SAC does not necessarily protect garment workers’ rights but the SAC does explicitly state that members *commit* to making “meaningful improvements”. They for instance claim that “The Higg Facility Social & Labour Module (Higg FSLM) promotes safe and fair social and labour conditions for value chain workers all over the world” (SAC, n.d.-j, Higg Facility and Social Labour Module section). They do state that they want to work towards enabling and supporting worker’s rights, safety and livelihoods in the future (by 2025) (SAC, 2020). The CCC mentioned the following with respect to this ambition:

“If that had been a goal in 2010, it would have been more than fashionably late. At this point it is nothing if not quite telling of SAC’s lack of actual impact so far and of their continued disregard for garment workers’ urgent needs.” (Nahtigal & Roeland, n.d., SAC enables and supports workers section)

An overview of these requirements is provided in Table 17. Overall, they appear to be quite similar, but vary to which companies are effectively held accountable for ensuring that companies are also abiding by these regulations (see *Enforcement*).

Quality Work also assesses specifically whether there are efforts made to expand the rights of garment workers, specifically with regard to Living Wage. The ETI, FLA and FWF have already included the Living Wage as a requirement in their Codes of Conducts (ETI, n.d.-j; FLA, n.d.-I; FWF, n.d.-k). The ETI for instance mentioned that

“Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standard, whichever is higher. In any event, wages should always be enough to meet basic needs and provide some discretionary income.” (ETI, n.d.-k, 5.1 section)

The ETI consequently does not really state how it acts upon ensuring these living wages, since they do not report and verify brand performance. The FWF is more elaborate in this regard and has various tools such as the Living Wage Ladder, identifying to what extent a factory falls short in terms of wages (FWF, n.d.-k). The FLA has drafted a five-year Fair Compensation Strategy to ensure that all their accredited member brands pay their workers a living wage by the end of the five years (FLA, 2021a). The SAC does not report explicitly on Living Wages.

Another requirement of output legitimacy is the extent to which *Social Protections* are in place for garment workers. Essentially, this describes the degree to which the regulations at hand effectively protect the garment workers. As mentioned, the FLA, ETI and FWF have specific complaints mechanisms set up for their garment workers (ETI, n.d.-l; FLA, n.d.-e; FWF, n.d.-h). The ETI states that workers can seek remedy and non-compliant members can be sanctioned. They also state that any stakeholder can contact the ETI with regards to complaints (ETI, n.d.-l). Though ETI’s complaints are, unlike the FLA and FWF, not visible on its website. The FLA has a Third Party Complaint process which allows any stakeholder to request investigations into violations of the FLA’s Code of Conduct (FLA, n.d.-e). The FWF states on the matter that workers can file complaints with a local FWF complaints handler, via telephone, in written or verbal, or via (e)mail (FWF, n.d.-h). Despite these complaint procedures, it would be interesting to assess to what extent these garment workers feel free to voice these complaints. The SAC does not have a specific complaints program set up.

Remedying of Injustices focuses on whether there are commitments made to compensate for existing inequities experienced by garment workers. FWF defines remediation both in terms of the action that is needed to improve current violations, as well as to improve labour rights to prevent potential future violations (FWF, n.d.-m). Based on their risks assessments, a factory risks profile is set

up, which are accompanied by specific intervention strategies. Similarly, when the FLA finds violations in a certain factory, Corrective Action Pathways are set up to remediate these violations (FLA, n.d.-e). For example, a factory violated the non-discrimination standard outlined in the FLA's code of conduct. Specifically, two female workers who were seven months pregnant did not receive the mandatory one-hour break, and one other three months pregnant worker had to work excessive overtimes (FLA, 2021b). Consequently, the factory corrected their behaviour and provided the pregnant workers with these breaks, and ensured they did not have to work overtime. However, from this example it is not clear to what extent the women received compensation for the harm done (i.e., no extra breaks and overtime). The ETI provides, in their Principles of Implementation process, a Prevent, Mitigate and Remedy step which includes a detailed guide on how to ensure that factories/brands have adequate remedy mechanisms in place (ETI, n.d.-m). Though, it is not sure whether establishing these mechanisms are voluntary or mandatory. Connor et al. (2016) mention that the remedy procedures of the ETI hardly protects garment workers.

Efficacy

This part of output legitimacy is concerned with to what extent the MSI's interventions address the issues at hand. Overall, all MSIs regard themselves as being effective and making an impact. To varying degrees, all MSIs have been critiqued in terms of their effectiveness.

The FWF states that in their vision, their control and verification mechanisms ensure that member brands safeguard the rights of their garment workers (FWF, 2016). Overall, the FWF closely monitors the effectiveness of their programs. They for instance found that trainings of factory supervisors lead to reduced violence and harassment of garment workers over time. They do acknowledge that there is no such thing as 100% fair clothing as of yet, but that their brands are working hard to achieve this, since change does not happen overnight (FWF, n.d.-n). It would have been interesting though, if the FWF would have had provided an overview or synthesis on their members performance to be able to assess the overall progress made by the FWF. Furthermore, Egels-Zandén and Lindholm (2015) conducted research on the relative effectiveness of the FWF. They showed that codes of conduct improve (although marginally) worker rights on an overall level but that few significant results are found for specific worker rights. They examined 43 audits, and found a significant difference between the interviews conducted with factory workers (who expected that the audit would yield numerous violations of rights) and the audits themselves who turned out to be generally positive (and not identify overall rights violations). Overall, they concluded that even the stringent audits of the FWF are unable to identify process rights violations. It must be noted that this article dates from 2015 and it is unclear to what extent the situation has changed since.

The FLA outlines that since its inception, the organisation has served as “a safe space for honest dialogue that breaks down barriers and gets to the core of issues critical to improve worker conditions and ensure better lives for their workers and their families” (FLA, 2019, p. 3). However, it is not clear

to what extent the FLA even involves garment workers in this honest dialogue. The FLA also faced some other criticisms. Firstly, Sethi and Rovenpor (2016) state that it is not clear how the FLA randomly samples assessments of factories, making it difficult to determine extent to which the MSI chooses factories that are the least likely to have serious problems. Moreover, they argue that the overall MSI has no “endgame strategy”, which means that they fail to show how their audits would lead to a systemic change in the industry. Sethi and Rovenpor (2016) suggest that manufacturers that perform “good” in comparison to their code of conduct, should at least be rewarded or incentivised financially. In addition, MSI Integrity (2020) mentions that brands are supposed to be reaccredited every three years, but that this does always not happen in practice, which makes it difficult to determine whether a company can truly carry the “accredited” label. Adidas for instance became an accredited member in 2017, but has not been reaccredited since. It is also questionable to what extent their accredited status is valid, since in 2021 Cambodian garment workers who made clothes for Adidas, did not and still have not receive their wages in April-May, because Adidas cancelled its orders amidst the pandemic (Clean Clothes Campaign, 2022). The revenue in that particular year increased with 15%. This is no exception, since other accredited brands (such as Hugo Boss) portrayed similar behaviour, seemingly facing no consequences on their accredited status (Clean Clothes Campaign, 2022a). This weakens the claim that the FLA gets to the core of issues critical to improve garment workers’ conditions.

The ETI claims that they are “touching the lives of more than 15 million workers annually” (ETI, n.d.-h). However, as mentioned, it is difficult to assess this contribution since their individual member performance is not publicly available. As such, it is difficult to determine to what extent they are “touching” the lives of these workers. In addition, Conner et al. (2016, p. 7) mentioned that this might lead to greenwashing by member companies, since:

“Just by joining the ETI a company acquires a valuable shield against public criticism of its labour practices, since it can claim that it is working with well-respected civil society organisations to address human rights issues. This creates the risk that the ETI could undermine, rather than increase, pressure on companies to cooperate in ensuring that human rights grievances are properly addressed.”

As mentioned, the ETI states that the improvement rate of member brands was only 6% on average.

The SAC claims that “they help the industry shift its focus from compliance so companies can focus on improving the well-being of workers who produce billions of garments, textiles, and footwear each year” (SAC, n.d.-j). The SAC also states that its member brands represent \$845 billion in annual revenue, but does go into detail on the progress their brands are making towards “improving the well-being of workers” (SAC, n.d.-g). They are heavily criticized by the CCC:

“If SAC wants to show itself as relevant, the only way forward is to replace meaningless CSR smokescreens with concrete action. That would mean SAC members immediately sharing a

much larger part of that \$845 billion pie with the women and men whose labour powers the industry and on whose backs those profits were made. Only then will SAC produce a report worth reading.” (Nahtigal & Roeland, n.d., final section)

Furthermore, a subsidiary of Walmart, one of the founders of the SAC, cancelled its orders to their suppliers, leading to a wage loss of these workers (Worker Rights Consortium, 2020). Thus, their degree of effectiveness towards safeguarding garment workers is questionable if even founding members fail “behave” in an ethical manner. Another member brand of the SAC, Levi’s, claims that “they believe in being a force for positive change in their communities.”, yet refuses to pay and ensure that factory workers have basic safety protections (Clean Clothes Campaign, 2022b). These violations portray that the efficacy of the SAC is highly limited and unclear.

Enforcement

This aspect of output legitimacy describes the extent to which compliance is verified and noncompliance sanctioned. This is the case for the FWF, where relevant stakeholders enable the effective enforcement of their Code of Conduct. In addition, the FWF has one of the most rigorous (first-party) auditing mechanisms to date. All factory audits are done by three local experts affiliated with the FWF. These audits are preannounced but workers are interviewed off-site without factory management present. These worker interviews are consequently supplemented by local stakeholders (e.g., local trade unions) interviews who are asked about their perception and expectation on whether there might be workplace violations. The overall conclusions as to what extent the factory adheres to the Code of Conduct, are then based on information of stakeholders, workers, management, inspection of facilities and documents. After these checks, brands are placed in a specific category, by calculating a benchmarking score and the percentage of production under own monitoring). These categories are respectively: suspended (improve conditions significantly within one year, brand is not allowed to communicate that they are a FWF member); improvement necessary (improvements must be made within one year, otherwise the brand will be suspended); good (member companies who are making serious efforts to implement the Code of Conduct); and leader (perform exceptionally well, show best practices, are operating on an advanced level) (FWF, n.d.-i).

The FLA distinguishes between accredited and participating members, where accredited companies are submitted to more stringent monitoring and assessments. These (re)accreditations occur on a three year basis, but as mentioned, it appears that they are not executed on this basis. “Supporting” members are checked annually, by randomly assessing manufacturing facilities associated with the brand. These checks are done by a third party, chosen by the board. As such, the brand makes use of second-party verifications/audits. If a brand does not improve its performance when violations are found, the brand is suspended or its membership is terminated (FLA, 2021).

The SAC specifically states that “when a member joins the coalition, *they commit* to tool adaptation, transparency, sharing best practices, and making meaningful improvements” (SAC, 2020, p.

13). Yet, only as of 2021 member brands “will work towards meeting new membership requirements”, were members are place in a foundational, progressive, strategic or leader stage (SAC, 2020, p.13). Thus, they have not been sanctioned so far, and enforcements of brands that are not committed towards “making meaningful improvements” are not reported upon.

The ETI says that when code violations and serious failures by members to showcase the required level of commitment and implementation of the code or other member commitments are identified, they have a procedure in place in which they first explore the concern (ETI, 2017a; ETI, n.d.-.l). Consequently, they await an improvement letter by the brand. If no further action is taken, the brand is first suspended and later on the membership can be terminated if no more improvements are made. They additionally instigated a whistle blow helpline were ETI stakeholders can contact the ETI with regards to code violation (ETI, n.d.-m). However, the board decides on these violations, and it is unclear what is meant with “serious failures”, since generally the MSI does not check the behaviour of its members.

6.3.1 Contribution of MSIs towards JTs: comparison document analysis and interviews

The input legitimacy of most MSIs is limited, due to the fact that the SAC, ETI, and FLA do not really include garment workers in decision-making. The ETI and FLA do have tripartite boards, but most NGO/Union representatives are western-based and it is not clear to what extent and how often they actually consult with garment workers. Interviewees also highlighted the extent to which these organizations are truly representative. The FWF is more transparent on how it involves garment workers on all levels (decision-making and enforcement). Though, the FWF it also is not clear on how “heavily” the input of garment workers is weighed. All MSIs should be more clear on how they include garment workers. Currently, it seems that the MSIs “rules” are made *for* them, but not *by* the garment workers. This is something that also came back in the interviews, as the experts questioned the extent to which were actually included in terms of decision making.

In terms of output legitimacy, there is a lack of clarity in their overall performance and the impact that MSIs have on garment workers. There are some varying degrees of stringency within these MSI. The FWF is being more rigorous and consistent in its assessments compared to the FLA, whereas the ETI and SAC do not report on member performance at all. For the FLA, ETI and SAC members that were at the cause of significant violations, sometimes continue to remain (accredited) members. This questions the extent to which these MSIs can actually enforce the regulations they set up. The expert interviews also addressed this contradictory behaviour of firms, where they want their suppliers to perform according to their code of conducts, but simultaneously demand lower prices for their clothes.

MSI legitimacy and JTs underline governance *by* the people, *for* the people. Translating that to the context of this research, it seems that governance (particularly concerning the FLA, SAC, and ETI) is not really happening by the garment workers and the actual improvements on their livelihoods are not

clear or severely limited. This sentiment was also reflected in the expert interviews, something which they addressed to the existing power imbalances in the industry.

7 Discussion

This research aimed to identify the impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers and assess the potential contribution of MSIs towards JTs in the fashion industry. In terms of the first sub-question, “*what is the potential impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers’ interests?*”, it seems that these future impacts are not clear and (seemingly) not really endured by garment workers as of yet. Overall, the results indicated that sustainability transitions are not happening on a systemic level, and the transitions that are happening within brands focus predominantly on the environmental, technical aspect of sustainability. As such, it seems that the working conditions of garment workers do not necessarily improve. There are some tentative indications that the conditions may worsen, yet there seems to be a lack of knowledge on the *precise* impacts of (future) sustainability transitions on garment workers.

The results of the expert interviews on MSIs and the four case studies showcased that the potential contribution of MSIs towards JTs is limited. This is highlighted by the answers to the sub-questions. The answer to the second sub-question, “*to what extent are garment workers included in the decision-making process of MSIs?*”, is that there is limited input legitimacy since there is an overall lack of inclusion and adequate representation of garment workers in decision-making. The third sub-question, “*to what extent do the selected MSIs contribute to ensuring safe working conditions and a living wage for garment workers?*”, is answered by assessing the output legitimacy of MSIs. Generally, the contribution of these MSIs towards these safe working conditions and a living wage was limited. This was showcased by the contradictory behaviour of some member firms of the FLA, SAC and ETI. The answer to the final sub-question, “*what are the differences and similarities between the selected MSIs?*”, is that FWF was relatively the most stringent, transparent relatively effective on all grounds, followed by the FLA and ETI. Finally, the SAC’s “performance” was the least on these grounds, predominantly due to a lack of transparency and enforcement.

The underlying cause for this lack of systemic transitions happening in the industry, *and* input and output legitimacy issues of MSIs seems to relate to an overall power dynamics present within the entire industry, including MSIs. The power dynamics are manifested in that brands continue to force their demands on their suppliers. To a certain extent, this power dynamic relates to Global North – South dynamics, where Global North rules (try to) dictate over the Global South, since the MSIs and the brands represented were predominantly based in the Global North. To summarize, these above- mentioned legitimacy issues with *current* MSIs, tend to point towards a limited potential contribution of MSIs towards JTs in the future.

7.1 Contribution to academic literature

This research showed similar results to previous literature on MSIs, but added to the literature by combining JT and MSI Legitimacy theories. This allowed for the identification of the potential contribution of initiatives towards JTs. The usage of multiple cases and multiple research methods aided in showcasing larger societal trends within the entire industry, such as the aforementioned power dynamics. Identifying these dynamics is paramount in coming up with systemic solutions to the fashion industry's issues. Finally, this research contributed to academic literature by providing a first outlook into the impacts of sustainability transitions on garment workers.

Specific similarities to previous literature are, firstly, a lack of inclusion of workers in terms of decision-making (Fransen & Kolk, 2007; Riisgaard et al., 2020). In terms of origins of the MSIs, the inclusion of garment worker's voices was seemingly absent. Schneiker (2018) attributes this to the fact that organizations that are involved with the MSIs might already have the same ideas about (how to solve) a particular issue in the first place. In other words, stakeholders with contradictory views are likely not invited to the table. The danger of this is, according to Schneiker (2018), by not allowing for different viewpoints those in marginalized positions are likely not invited to participate in these MSIs, reinforcing the pre-existing power dynamics between the Global North and South. Webber Ziero (2018) warns for these types of regulations as becoming "neo-colonial instruments". He stresses that it is too simplistic to think that by just including some social actors (NGOs/Unions) the input legitimacy is fully accounted for. Indeed, participating organizations representing (garment) workers involved in the foundation of the MSI cases, were predominantly large and Western based to begin with. Even though the production of garments and thus also risks are endured by the Global South, in terms of negative environmental and social impacts. CEE literature, therefore, stresses that there should be a focus on the "inversed" distribution of risk between the Global North and South (Heffron & McCauley, 2018).

Additionally, this research identified possible instances of recognitional injustices within MSIs, since the perspectives of garment workers are generally not adequately included or even recognized as an important stakeholder, rendering garment workers an invisible stakeholder. Adequate inclusion would tend to recognizing the differences between stakeholders in their ability to participate, something which is stressed in recognitional justice (Schlosberg, 2004).

In terms output legitimacy, other studies also identified contradictory behaviour of firms the majority of the MSIs. Kabeer et al. (2019) and Riisgaard et al. (2020) attributed this to the current market values that remain to be predominant, also within the standard setting of these initiatives. That is why MSIs tend to "force" code of conducts on suppliers, while brands simultaneously demand lower prices for their garments. MSI Integrity (2020) states that the focus on suppliers shifts the attention away from the extent to which the purchasing practices of brands contribute to violations in the supply chain in the first place. This was also identified in the expert interviews.

Fransen et al. (2019) state that there are indications that initiatives are moving away from forcing these CSR standards on suppliers, by focusing on capacity building programs and training and

supporting manufacturers to move to more sustainable behaviours. CEE literature underscores this importance of capacity building for building resilience within (garment industry) dependent communities (Heffron & McCauley, 2018). This research identified that especially the FWF is already focusing a lot of providing trainings to manufacturers and workers. It is not completely clear to what extent the SAC, ETI, and FLA are working on this.

7.2 *(Policy) Recommendations*

If nothing changes within these MSIs in terms of input and output legitimacy, it is questionable to what extent they can contribute to JTs, now and in the future. As such, certain aspects of MSIs ought to be reformed to ensure that they can support JTs in the fashion industry. First of all, addressing the aforementioned power dynamics is fundamental in enabling systemic changes (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020; Burke, 2022). These systemic changes could be accounted for when the voices of socially marginalized i.e., garment workers are actively included. Specifically, Webber Ziero (2018) states that including these voices in both rule-making as monitoring “enables them to occupy spaces to which they usually do not have access” (p. 224). Thus, rather than involving garment workers *passively* through for instance complaints channels, workers should be able to *actively* participate in decision-making.

Another recommendation, which was highlighted by one of the interviewees, is that “uncomfortable questions” should be asked within MSIs. In essence, this means that the power dynamics in the industry should be brought to the surface and actively discussed when MSIs are being set up. If that tension between brands and manufacturers/garment workers is brought to the surface, more meaningful MSIs could be set up. A precondition for these discussions is that every stakeholder feels free to voice their concerns without indirectly suffering repercussions.

Therefore, a third recommendation is that MSIs should have clear procedures in place for including these garment workers. There are a plethora of difficulties associated with inviting garment workers to the table. Namely, whether they want to participate, have the time, get paid during participation, and who (and how many) to invite. An option could be to have, per factory, a garment worker that stands representative for these workers. These worker representatives could stand in contact with country-level representatives who can dedicate their time to participating in these initiatives, as a direct representative of workers. Again, there should be clear procedures for how often frequent and to what extent these representatives consult with garment workers.

Another recommendation pertains to changing the purpose of MSI altogether. Instead of being governing bodies, MSI’s contribution to JTs might be more meaningful if they would solely serve as platforms of discussion and collaboration between industry actors and stakeholders. This would also mitigate the critique that MSIs are effectively the Global North dictating what the “Global South should do”. On the precondition that the MSIs are “truly” inclusive, they could evolve into sources for information for (country-level) policy makers and legislators.

Furthermore, a more effective way to ensure that garment worker's livelihoods are safeguarded, could be through binding legislations. To date, there is some legislation on the garment sector on EU level in terms of sustainability of garments produced in global supply chains, but the social element is completely missing (Abou-Chleih, 2022). The Global North should instigate legislation and policies that holds global brands accountable for their behaviour and the effects it has on the Global South. Legislation could include that clothes coming to the market in for instance Europe, should have a guarantee that workers in the supply chain were paid a living wage. Legislation should also be made on MSIs, by for example having a set of standards to which MSIs have to abide by to guarantee their inclusiveness and effectiveness.

Finally, the majority of these recommendations all point to the necessity of including JT principles in MSIs. As such, this is the final summarizing recommendation of this this research. Every MSIs wants to bring about a transitions at its core, they should more actively reflect on what is necessary for this transitions to be truly "just". This research provided a starting point in integrating JTs standards within MSIs. As such, MSIs should actively seek to integrate JT elements (e.g. Quality Work and Inclusion principles). Therefore, already in their origins, JT principles should be adhered to by safeguarding that every stakeholders is brought up to the level that they can actively participate in a discussion. In addition, it could be helpful that from the beginning, the MSIs closely examine the issues they want to address from the CEE justice principles, to fully account for and prevent human rights violations of workers.

7.3 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite these insights and contribution to the theory, the generalizability and validity of the research is limited on several regards. In terms of reliability of the data, the framework aided in providing a structured analysis and data collection method, allowing for a systemic comparison between the different cases. Nevertheless, several gaps of information were identified, limiting the validity. These gaps could have been filled by interviewing MSI employees or organizations affiliated with particular MSIs. This would also allow for a verification of data generated by the document analysis. As mentioned, this research initially did set out to interview these employees, but unfortunately there was no response within these MSIs. It must be noted that these insights of MSIs employees might have given a biased view of the MSIs they were working for, therefore including them would have also led to a potential limited validity within the results. Another limitation in terms of data is the fact that only five experts were interviewed. More generalizable insights could have been generated if more were interviewed. Again, despite repeated efforts to reach out to experts, only five were willing to participate in an interview. The interviews were similar in terms of the insights they provided. Overall, the gathered data on these interviews might not allow for broad generalizations, but generated important insights adding to the MSI case studies.

Regardless of these limitations, this research extended current literature on MSI Legitimacy as well as JTs, but it became clear that more research should be dedicated towards how JTs can be achieved in the industry. In terms of impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers, it became evident that more research should be dedicated to this area, as much of the impacts are not really known as of yet and it is unclear what the future will hold. In terms of MSI legitimacy in the fashion industry, this research provided novel insights by integrating the notion of JTs. However, to fully account for the impacts of MSIs on garment workers, interviews should be held with these workers, to see how they perceive these initiatives and to identify what they need for a JT. This was unfortunately out the scope of this research, but could be an important avenue for future research in understanding the local contexts associated with these JTs.

8 Conclusion

This research aimed to provide an answer to the following research question: “*what role can Multistakeholder Initiatives play in fostering Just Transitions in the fashion industry?*” This question has been answered by focusing on what the impact of sustainability transitions is on garment workers in the first place and by assessing the input and output legitimacy of four MSIs active in the fashion industry. The multiple research methods used, ranging from literature reviews, five qualitative interviews, and a document analysis generated multiple insights. Despite the promising claims of MSIs, it seems that role of their potential role in achieving JTs is severely limited due to the fact that the actual inclusion of garment workers in decision-making is insufficient. It also seems that, except for the FWF, it seems that companies are not really held accountable if they do violate garment worker’s rights. This research identified that these issues can be accounted to persisting power dynamics within the fashion industry that also dominate within these MSIs.

Addressing these power dynamics is fundamental if MSIs want to make lasting changes in the industry. These changes need to happen now for environmental and social reasons since countries where clothes are manufacturers are generally more vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and rights violations of garment workers continues to be commonplace in the industry. Contrary to what some MSIs proclaim, they might not be the silver bullet to solving all the industry’s problems. Therefore, to increase their contribution towards JTs, MSIs should be restructured in order to be able to truly call themselves a “multistakeholder” initiative. This needs to happen not only for garment workers, but for all workers holding a vulnerable position in the supply chain.

Finally, to further reform the fashion industry and achieve JTs, brands and Global North societies need to take a look in the mirror and be reflective of the impact of their behaviour and purchasing practices on the Global South. This does not only pertain to the fashion industry, but all industries having globally dispersed supply chains. So far, the majority of MSIs might have a genuine

motivation to tackle this issue, but as one interviewee mentioned: the path to hell is full of good intentions.

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Data Usage and Storage

1. Will this project involve re-using existing research data?
 - Yes: Are there any constraints on its re-use?
 - No: Have you considered re-using existing data but discarded the possibility? Why?

Data on my research questions is not readily available as it dives into something that has not been done before in literature, which is applying just transition theory to Multistakeholder Initiatives (MSIs) in the Fashion Industry. I have used existing data (grey and academic literature) to gain a good understanding of what just transition theory is and to gain relevant information about the MSIs in the fashion industry. An existing MSI framework has been integrated with just transition perspectives. This framework needs to be operationalized by gathering “new” data, by means of conducting interviews.

2. Will data be collected or generated that are suitable for reuse?
 - Yes: Please answer questions 3 and 4.
 - No: Please explain why the research will not result in reusable data or in data that cannot be stored or data that for other reasons are not relevant for reuse.
3. After the project has been completed, how will the data be stored for the long-term and made available for the use by third parties? Are there possible restrictions to data sharing or embargo reasons? Please state these here.

Data collected during the proposed research project

Data collected will consist of recorded interviews with both academic and industry experts on MSIs, and those working for MSIs. The interviews of academic and industry experts can be completely anonymised. The names of MSI representatives can also be anonymised, but names of the respective itself MSI cannot be anonymised. This is because partially the purpose of this research lies in comparing and contrasting the selected MSIs. As such, the names of the MSI itself needs to be known. It goes without saying that this will be clearly communicated to the MSI representatives *before* the interview will take place.

Use of data

The data will be used in (academic) publications and presentations once the interviewee has consented to the use of the data. Interviewees will have to consent to this use, and can opt-in the use of the data for other research projects or educational purposes. Before participation, interviewees will receive an Information and Consent Form, explaining the goal of the research project, the aim of the interview, confidentiality arrangement, storage of data and whom to contact for more information.

Interviewees are then asked to sign the consent form, agreeing to their participation, but also agreeing to the storage and use of the data gathered. The consent form will provide the interviewee with several options:

1. storing the recording or the transcript
2. using name and other identifying data or anonymized/pseudonymized before publishing and archiving;
3. using the documents/data gathered as research data and for the purpose of academic publishing, yes or no;
4. consent to re-use of the data for other research projects, yes or no;
5. use of excerpts from the interview in presentations or education material, yes or no.

If the interviewee cannot consent to one of the options presented in question 1 or 2, he/she/they will not be involved in the research project.

Publication of data sets

The use of the data can consist of two options in relation to academic publishing: using excerpts in data analysis sections and or publishing the complete data set as appendix to the article. Interviewees consent to either option when agreeing to question 3 of the consent form.

In line with FAIR principles, I will only publish open access, allowing also – if applicable – for the data sets to become open access. If only excerpts will be used for the purpose of an article, all data will be archived and accessible once the project is completed.

Storage of data

Once the interviewee has consented to store the recorded interview or the transcript, there are two steps to storage of the data: during and after completion of the project.

The data will be stored on the personal computer of the researcher *during* the project in Onedrive files that are 2fa secured, meaning that both a password and mobile phone verification are needed to get into the account. Once *the project is completed*, the data will be archived for a minimum of 10 years in secure Utrecht University archives.

Appendix 2 - Interview Guide “Experts”

First of all, thank you that you want to participate in my research! As a quick recap, my name is Inge, and I am a Sustainable Business and Innovation Student at Utrecht University. The research that I am doing focuses on the extent to which Multistakeholder Initiatives can contribute to Just Transitions, In addition, I am investigating the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers. Initially, I wanted to cover aspect by means of desk research, but I found that almost no literature exists on this topic, that is why I am also interested in your perception and knowledge in this regard. Just Transitions is a relatively new concept, but implies that sustainability transitions should not only focus on the environmental aspect of the transition, but also consider the social impacts that the transition will yield.

The interview will probably last approximately 1 hour, and consists out of multiple parts, the first part will concern some general information. The second part will focus specifically on the impact of sustainability transitions on garment workers, and the final part will comprise out of questions concerning the impact on garment workers in this regard.

Also, I would again like to reiterate that at any point, you can terminate this interview at any point.

Part 1 – General Information

1. what does your job entail?
2. How long / to what extent have you been working on topics concerning the fashion industry?

Part 2 – Sustainability Transitions

3. What are, according to you, important/impactful transitions with regards to sustainability that happening in the industry to date?
4. Do these have an impact on garment workers? Or will these have an impact on garment workers in the future?
 - a. If yes, what does this impact entail specifically?
 - b. If not why not?
5. Do you know if these transitions and the impact of these transitions are measured and monitored? (E.g., the impact of a new circular design strategy in a company)
6. Do you expect, for instance, that less consumption as well as circular strategies will have an impact on garment workers? If yes, what kind of impact?
7. How would you explain a Just Transition within the fashion industry?
 - a. Do you think MSIs can play an important role in this regard?

As mentioned, I am interested in finding out what role MSIs can play in fostering Just Transitions in the fashion industry. Therefore, I will ask you in a bit some questions on MSIs **in general**. MSI are of course different, but I am curious to see what you think of such initiatives in general nonetheless, for instance whether you are sceptical towards their impact, or whether you feel generally positive about them! I’m specifically focus on MSIs active in the garment industry. In addition, I will ask you about whether those kinds of initiatives can contribute to Just Transitions.

Part 3 – MSI in general

8. How would you describe an MSI?
9. What do you consider as benefits of MSIs operating in the fashion industry?
 - a. Do you have examples of “successful” MSIs in the fashion industry? Why did you chose for this one?
10. What do you think are the drawbacks of these MSIs?
 - a. Do you have an example of an “unsuccessful” MSI operating in the fashion industry? Why did you chose for this one?

11. This is maybe a bit repetitive but MSIs have, on the one hand, been described as important collaborative mechanisms to bring about change in the industry (and important for Just Transitions) as well as a “tool enabling brands to dictate the rules, while shielding the industry against responsibility and criticism, rather than protecting the workers. What is your stance on this matter?

Part 4 – Input Legitimacy (involvement of garment workers with regard to establishment MSI)

Inclusion

12. Do you think that the rights of garment workers are adequately protected in MSIs?
 - a. Which rights (also in relation to the impact of sustainability transitions) should be protected within MSIs?
13. Do you know whether (and to what extent) garment workers are generally included in the decision-making process of MSIs?
 - a. If yes, do you think garment workers have a big influence in terms of decision-making in this regard?

Part 5 – Output legitimacy: effectiveness MSIs

14. Very broad question, but what is your perception of MSIs operating in the fashion industry, do you think that are effective?
 - a. In terms of safeguarding the rights of garment workers?
15. Do think that there are noticeable improvements in terms of working conditions of garment workers when companies participate in an MSI?
16. Do you see a general improvement in terms of working conditions occurring in the industry?
 - a. If yes, do you think MSIs played a role in these improvements?
17. Do you think that MSIs can “make a difference” in the fashion industry and contribute towards Just Transitions?

Conclusion

18. So, I have asked a lot about your perception of MSIs and the role they can play in safeguarding garment workers’ rights in sustainability transitions. But what would you consider as the most important way forward the garment/fashion industry should be taking?

Closure

Thank very much for your answers! Do you have any questions for me? Or would you like to add something to this interview?

Appendix 3 – Interview Codes

Table 1

Codes for Impact Sustainability Transitions Garment Workers.

Main Code	Subcode
Sustainability efforts are incremental and not systemic.	Large transitions are not really happening. Preference to tackle environmental issues over social issues.
	Applying circular strategies to linear systems.
Power Dynamics	Brands risks and responsibilities is externalized to the manufacturer
	Manufacturers and garment workers are not asked for their vision.
Suggestions for Improving the Industry	Ensuring that garment workers are paid adequately
	Defining what is necessary for successful JTs
	Constant monitoring and evaluation of the MSI
	Local solutions are necessary
	Ensure a level playfield among stakeholders
	Importance of taking actions instead of constant monitoring/auditing
	Geopolitical solutions and legislation is necessary

Table 2

Codes on viewpoints MSIs

Main Code	Subcode
Input Legitimacy	
Power asymmetries persist in MSIs	Manufacturers and garment workers if invited, may not feel that they can voice their concerns freely
	Manufacturers are afraid that if they express critique about brands, they will face backlash by these brands
	Brands have their own interests
	Global North (brands) hold a privileged position over Global South (manufacturers and workers)
	Garment workers voices are not included (but they should be)
Output Legitimacy	
MSIs are generally not effective in improving the working conditions of garment workers	MSIs are voluntary in nature
	There are still substantial workplace violations, hence their impact is limited.
	MSIs are not held accountable for their behaviour.
	MSIs are generally small efforts that occur in isolation.
	Participating manufacturers are probably already performing quite good, whilst “bad” manufacturers likely do not participate at all.

	MSIs could be used as greenwashing
MSIs could be important for collaboration	Small companies can learn from larger ones.
	Reduces (repeated) auditing on individual firms

Appendix 4 - Document Analysis Data

1. Fair Wear Foundation

Table 1

General Information on Fair Wear Foundation

		Sources:
Origin	1999, Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://www.fairwear.org/join-the-movement/become-a-member/who-can-join/ - https://www.fairwear.org/join-the-movement/become-a-member/how-to-become-a-fair-wear-member/ - https://fairwear.force.com/s/become-a-member - https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/FairWear-newmembership-guidelines01.pdf - https://www.fairwear.org/brands - https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Brand-performance-check-guide-2022.pdf - https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Joint-position-paper-EU-Strategy-for-Sustainable-Textiles.pdf
(Governance) Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand Performance Checks - Codes of Conduct - Factory Training - Complaints Helplines 	
Members	148 members, including brands such as Zeeman and Jack Wolfskin	
How to become a member	<p>Fair Wear Foundation focuses on the European market. Membership is open to garment companies with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 50% production of the brand's production is countries where FWF is active, or in what Fair Wear categorises as low-risk countries. - More than 50% production is the brand's own production. This implies good that are commissioned from a factory by the Fair Wear members, directly or through an agent or other intermediary, normally to the design of the Fair Wear affiliate. As a FW member, you would 	

	<p>have direct responsibility for the working conditions at production sites making “own production” goods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A minimum annual turnover of €10 million. This is because, as an organization, the FWF wants to achieve the biggest possible impact on the working conditions in the garment industry. Our impact achieved through the work by and with our member brands and to have impact requires a certain volume of production. We invest a great deal of time in working with our member brands. With internal resources at our disposal we need to prioritise our efforts and ensure we have a good mix between large and medium-size brands. We applaud any company that wants to take steps towards sustainability and help change our industry for the better. <p>Basic Membership Requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit a work plan and projected production location data for the upcoming financial year. 2. Submit definitive production location data for the previous financial year. 3. Pay the membership fee. <p>After the initial brand performance check, the brand is assigned to one of the following performance benchmarking categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leader - Good - Needs Improvement - Suspended
Different Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joining forces with industry influencers - Ending gender-based violence - Remediating worker issues - Taking action production countries - Supporting worker empowerment - Creating change on the factory floor

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pushing for living wages
FWF's interventions to change the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practical guidance to member brands - Verification of member brands - Knowledge sharing (directly and through joint communication with member brands) - Practical guidance to factories of member brands (collective and individual) - Verification of suppliers - Dialogue facilitation by convening different parties - Tools and information sharing with other stakeholders (other brands; industry) - Lobby and advocacy
Headquarters	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Organisation has staff in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Germany - India - Bangladesh - Vietnam - Myanmar - Indonesia - Bulgaria - Romania - North Macedonia - Tunisia - Turkey <p>As well as diverse group of auditors, trainer and complaints handlers that work in the garment-producing countries where Fair Wear is active.</p> <p>FWF's in-country teams are responsible for setting out the strategy for their country to ensure member brands can implement their human right due diligence.</p>
Structure	<p>Fair Wear is an independent not-for-profit foundations. Independence is guaranteed by a tripartite (multi-stakeholder) board, in which industry associations, trade unions and (labour) NGOs are equally represented. The board represent three types of stakeholder organisations, with an independent chair.</p>

Table 2

MSI Legitimacy and Just Transition of Fair Wear Foundation

Dimension	Criterion	Key Questions	Code	Answer	Source
Input	<i>Inclusion</i>	Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake?	1	<p>YES:</p> <p>According to FWF they envision sector changes along different actor groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fair Wear Member Brands 2. Other Brands 3. Member brands of responsible business conduct platforms 4. Suppliers 5. Workers and their representatives (unions) 6. Policy makers and regulatory oversight organisations <p>As such, FWF tries to include these stakeholders in their processes, but specifically works together with brands, who consequently, form partnerships with supplier so enforce the Code of Labour Practices guaranteeing that garment workers' rights are well represented, garment workers are involved through Social Dialogue.</p>	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWear_ToC_Narrative_DESIGNED-converted.pdf
		Are important stakeholders excluded from the process?	1	NO.	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWear_ToC_Narrative_DESIGNED-converted.pdf
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Do (representatives of) garment workers have a valid voice in decision-making processes?	1	<p>YES:</p> <p>Independence is guaranteed by a tripartite (multi-stakeholder) board, in which industry associations, trade unions (labour) NGOs are equally represented. The board represents three types of stakeholder organisations, with an independent chair. Board members hold an equal vote, no member has a veto right. To date, the board specifically consists of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair Person 2. Trade Union Representative 3. Business Association Representative 4. Business Associations Representative 5. NGO Representative 6. NGO Representative 7. Industry Representative 8. Trade Union Representative <p>In addition, there is a Committee of Experts providing external advise to the boards, employers' organisation for the garment retail sector, employer' organisation for the garment suppliers, trade unions, NGOs.</p> <p>HOWEVER</p> <p>It is unclear what, and <i>how</i> these members of trade unions represent the garment workers, i.e.</p>	https://www.fairwear.org/about-us/our-team/#board

				how frequently do they consult with garment workers? Do they truly know what their interests are?	
		Do representatives of garment workers (representatives) have a (permanent) seat in decision-making boards?	1	YES , see answer above. HOWEVER , a report in 2010 portrayed, explicitly, that garment manufacturer business associations also held a seat in the board. To date, it appears that this is no longer the case, only (somewhat) generic trade unions are part of the board.	https://www.fairwear.org/about-us/our-team/#board https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/thefairwearformula.pdf
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement among participants?	1	The only thing FWF mentions in this regard, is that “Relevant stakeholders engage in meaningful and effective social dialogue”, in terms of their Board no information is given on how mutual agreements are made.	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWearerToCNarrativeDESIGNED-converted.pdf
	<i>Transparency</i>	To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent?	1	They are transparent to the extent that they actively elaborate upon their new define programmes that they launched, or changes that they made in their audit system etc. HOWEVER , the specific processes behind it, why the board has made a specific decision, board minutes etc, are not transparent. And no documents with regards to this matter can be found.	https://www.fairwear.org/resources-and-tools/resource-documents
		To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent?	1	Transparency is an important value in the work of Fair Wear Foundation. Member companies are supposed to be transparent about their suppliers, sourcing practices and pricing. This is essential for their accountability and credibility. Transparency is essential for accountability and credibility. Yet it is also a challenge for garment and textile companies, who consider their competitive advantage to lie partially in their unique supply chain decisions – for example, where they are placing orders, prices paid, forecasting, etc. Indeed, transparency often can be among the most difficult FWF requirements for companies affiliated to FWF. But some pioneering companies are beginning to break this mould. CSR leaders now commonly report their factory lists, audit outcomes, and other data. We still have a lot to do in this regard, however. FWF continues to work with companies to balance transparency and business confidentiality in order to enhance accountability in supply chains. The performance brand checks of every member is publicly disclosed. The FWF has an extensive procedure for complaints that occur in supplier factories. Registered complaints, including country, brand	https://www.fairwear.org/programmes/complaints 1. https://fairwear.force.com/public/s/complaints 2. https://www.fairwear.org/resources/acc-ne-studios-performance-check-2021 3. https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/thefairwearformula.pdf

				and factory name are published and outlined on the FWF website's complaints page.	
		What specific action are taken to ensure transparency? Is transparency structurally embedded into the organization?	1	<p>FWF publishes the Brand Performance Checks of each company, and publishes where members source their factories from.</p> <p>FWF has the structure of its complaints procedure outlined on its website. This procedure is based on the UN and OECD's "Access to Remedy" Guidelines, which refers to the principle that when rights are violated, there should be a channel through which workers or their representatives can raise the issue and find solutions. Consequently, FWF's complaint's procedure is based on several principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Factory-level systems should be the first place to try to resolve complaints. 2. Support for Social Dialogue and the role of Trade Unions 3. Transparency 4. Shared Responsibility <p>The type of complaints concern Fire and building safety, Child labour, Payment below legal minimum wage, any other situations that represent an immediate risk to the health and safety of workers. Any other situations that present an immediate risk to the health and safety of workers.</p> <p>Workers and their legitimate representatives, trade unions, NGOs and others (including media) who are concerned about the implementation of labour standards at suppliers of Fair Wear Members can file complaints.</p>	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Fair-Wear-Complaints-procedure-V2.0.pdf https://fairwear.force.com/public/s/complaints
	<i>Leadership and solidarity</i>	To what extent are (representatives) of garment workers involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI?	1	<p>They are indirectly included in the sense that they can issue complaints (see <i>Transparency</i>). FWF's approach is designed to integrate workers wherever possible. Examples include our worker-focused interview methodology; the inclusion of worker representatives in monitoring and remediation discussions when possible; worker complaint and training programmes; and worker surveys.</p>	4. https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ClimbingtheLadderReport.pdf
Output	<i>Coverage</i>	How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?	0	<p>514 complaints can be found registered on the website.</p> <p>They state this in their 2020 report on complaints:</p> <p>The number of complaints we received from garment workers in 2020 was comparable to previous years. There were 33 admissible complaints related to COVID were received in 2020, but there was limited worker access to our complaints system during national lockdowns. Notably, we saw an increase in management</p>	5. https://fairwear.force.com/public/s/complaints https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annual-Report-2020.pdf

				<p>complaints against brands, such as invoices not being paid or cancelled orders.</p> <p>As mentioned, the performance of each brand can be checked individually, HOWEVER no overview of the performance of specific brands (and comparisons) can be found.</p>	
	<i>Social Protections</i>	Are social protections for workers in place?	1	<p>YES, FWF members are obligated to ensure that members rights are safeguarded through the following labour standards, which are based on the Code of Labour Practices of the ILO.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employment is freely chosen; 2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; 3. There is no discrimination in employment; 4. No exploitation of child labour; 5. Payment of living wage; 6. Reasonable hours of work; 7. Safe and healthy working conditions; 8. Legally binding employment relationship; <p>ALSO in the sense that they can issue complaints (see <i>Transparency</i>). Complaints can be filed with a local FWF complaints handler, via telephone, in written or verbal form, through complaints@fairwear foundation, and in some countries via social media or messaging apps.</p> <p>To help brands and factories take their first steps towards workplace awareness, are several training models required by the FWF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workplace Education Programme Basic: Management, supervisors and workers are trained in separate, two-hour sessions where they learn about worker's rights and the resources available to them. To meet a member brand's Brand Performance Check requirements, at least 10% of production workers must receive the training. Depending on the size of the factory, this may require several worker training sessions. ○ Workplace Education Violence and Harassment Prevention Programme: aim of the programme is to establish effective systems to address and prevent violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work. ○ Workplace Education Programme Communication: Before workplace 	<p>https://www.fairwear.org/programmes/workplace-education</p> <p>https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/fwcodeoflabourpractices.pdf</p> <p>6. https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018_FWF_Breaking-the-silence.pdf</p>

				<p>issues can be resolved, workers and management need to know how to effectively communicate about issues. Our communication module helps by teaching workers and management how to voice their concerns constructively and problem solve together to reach agreements. The module also teaches workers how to best represent the concerns of their colleagues when meeting with factory management, and in turn, trains factory management on how to deal with those concerns in a positive way. The training includes separate sessions for management and workers as well as where management and workers come together to discuss issues.</p> <p>HOWEVER, despite that they can remain anonymous in voicing complaints, is there an implicit pressure or enforced stigma by supplier to not voice complaints?</p>	
		Are efforts made to ensure that garment workers have a long-term say in the MSI decision-making process?	1	<p>FWF states this on the matter: We consider Social Dialogue to be key towards creating sustainable changes in the supply chain. In such a dialogue, the most important stakeholders are at the table to negotiate improved working conditions. For a dialogue to be meaningful and effective, all stakeholders should have sufficient capacities and mechanisms to engage in the process. Workers should be sufficiently organised, and suppliers should have functioning grievance and dialogue mechanisms in place. Social Dialogue is successful if workers of member brands' suppliers are making use of (internal) grievance mechanisms and if trade unions systematically negotiate working conditions and monitor remediation.</p> <p>In addition, garment workers' representatives are included in the board. See <i>Transparency</i></p> <p>HOWEVER, This does not imply that garment workers are directly involved in FWF's decision-making processes, simply that brands and suppliers should be involved in meaningful dialogue with their suppliers.</p>	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWear_ToC_Narrative_DESIGNED-converted.pdf
	<i>Remedying of injustices</i>	Are there commitments made to remedy existing inequities	1	<p>YES. FWF states that the provision of remedy for adverse impacts. Fair Wear considers remediation in a broad sense – it can cover both the action needed in response to harm and the</p>	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Brand-performance-

		for garment workers?		action needed to improve a labour rights situation before potential harm occurs.	check-guide-2022.pdf
		Are there specific actions taken?	1	Based on the risk assessment outcomes, a factory risk profile can be determined with accompanying intervention strategies. Fair Wear is in the process of building a risk assessment tool that will give an automated risk profile. Until then, the risk profile can be based on the scoping exercise, general risks, and factory-specific risks evaluated in layer 2. Also, general understanding and identification of repetitive findings and systemic risks, including Fair Wear’s enhanced monitoring programmes, will guide this exercise. In addition, see <i>Transparency</i> , garment workers can voice complaints.	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Brand-performance-check-guide-2022.pdf
		Are there measured improvements in terms of social equity, human rights, and ecological indicators? & How is this measured?	1	Through annual Brand Performance Checks, the relative progress of member brands is closely outlined and monitored, see <i>Quality Work</i> , but, no generally overview of progress exists. Ecological indicators are not included.	
	<i>Quality work</i>	Which garment worker’s rights are protected with the MSI? Where are these rights based on?	1	See <i>Social Protections</i>	
		How are these rights “monitored”?	1	The efforts of member companies towards better working conditions in their supply chains are publicly assessed and serve to inspire the whole of the industry. In all we do, our membership is of crucial importance for the impact we have. A key tool FWF’s uses is their Brand Performance Check, where the Fair Wear investigates the level of social compliance into the core business practices of each member company and assesses how the management and purchasing practices of member companies support the Fair Wear Code of Labour Practices. They do this via three steps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member brands have an effective risk management and monitoring system in place. 2. They have a sourcing and pricing strategy that facilitates good working conditions. 3. The member brands are internally aligned on the relevance and viability of sustainable purchasing practices. 	https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWear_ToC_Narrative_DESIGNED-converted.pdf https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FairWear-Member-Brand-Communication-Guide -v08-DEF.pdf

				<p>If, after a Brand Performance Check, there is not enough social compliance measured, the brand will be placed in the “Needs Improvement Category” if, a year later, during the next performance check, this situation has not changed, the brand’s will be placed in the “Suspended” category and lose the rights to communicate to their members that they are a part of the FWF. Members can remain a maximum of one year one the Suspended list, otherwise their Membership to FWF will has to be cancelled.</p>	
		Are there agreements made to expand workers’ rights further?	1	<p>YES, as mentioned, there are different types of agreements out there see Social Protections In addition, the FWF have made a Living Wage Ladder. In which they state the wish to consult more with garment workers to do research (per country) on what exactly a living wage should entail.</p> <p>Also, FWF facilitates decision-making with other MSIs, continuously creates new programmes (for instance to focus on gender inclusion)</p>	<p>https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ClimbingtheLadderReport.pdf https://www.fairwear.org/stories/breaking-the-silence</p>
		Are there efforts made to go from minimum wage to living wage?	1	<p>YES, this is part of their FWF Code of Labour practices, which participating brands have to abide by, as is stated by FWF: Brands continuously improve their internal mechanisms, including purchasing practices to facilitate working conditions according to the Fair Wear Code of Labour Practices.</p>	<p>https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWearToCNarrativeDESIGNED-converted.pdf</p>
	<i>Efficacy</i>	To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?	1	<p>According to FWF, their multi-stakeholder organisation ensures that member brands ensure that the rights of garment workers (see Social Protections) are safeguarded. In addition, it sets an example to other brands. In their vision, their (control) mechanisms relatively improve the situation of garment workers.</p> <p>FWF is known to be one of the most stringent MSIs that are operating in the fashion industry to date, the level of requirement for participating in the MSI is relatively, high.</p> <p>They closely monitor the effectiveness of their programs, and as mentioned, they are highly transparent. E.g. Their trainings of supervisor, has lead to reduced violence and harassment in the workplace over time in the monitored factories.</p> <p>HOWEVER,</p> <p>They mention on their FAQ page that: There’s no such thing as 100% fair clothing – yet. But Fair Wear’s member brands are working hard to get there. Supply chains are complicated and international – which means no single factory, brand or government can improve things alone. And this kind of change doesn’t happen</p>	<p>https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/FWF-ISP-THE-FAIR-WEAR-SUPERVISORY-SKILL-BUILDING-PROGRAMME-v4-1.pdf https://www.fairwear.org/support/frequently-asked-questions</p>

				<p>overnight. So no, we don't certify. We report, so you can check on how your favourite Fair Wear member brands https://api.fairwear.org/brands/ are performing.</p> <p>Also, Egels-Zandén and Lindholm (2015) show that codes of conduct improve (although marginally) worker rights on an overall level but that few significant results are found for specific worker rights. They examined 43 audits, and found a significant difference between the interviews conducted with factory workers (who expected that the audit would yield numerous violations of rights) and the audits themselves who turned out to be generally positive (and not identify overall rights violations). Overall, they concluded that even the stringent audits of the FWF are unable to identify process rights violations. (note: this article dates from 2015 and it is unclear to what extent the situation has changed since.)</p>	
	<i>Enforcement</i>	Is compliance verified and noncompliance sanctioned?	1	<p>YES, relevant stakeholders, including policy makers and regulatory oversight organisations, enable effective enforcement of the CoLP in the garment sector. As mentioned, FWF holds one of the most stringent auditing mechanisms, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All factory audits are done by three local experts who each are specialized in one of the following areas: worker interviews; health and safety, or document inspection. ○ The audits are preannounced, but in contrast to most corporate-driven audits, worker off-site interviews without the involvement of factory management are conducted prior to the factory audit. ○ Interviews with local stakeholders are also conducted as complements to worker interviews. ○ Stakeholders' are, thus, specifically asked to identify what violations are likely to be found in the audited factories. This interview procedure assures both a high correspondence between the definitions used in stakeholder interviews and audits, and that likely non-compliance areas are prioritized in audits. <p>During the audits, information is gathered from inspection of production facilities, interviews with management and workers, and document inspection. Conclusions are drawn regarding legal and FWF code</p>	<p>https://api.fairwear.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FairWearer_ToC_Narrative_DESIGNED-converted.pdf</p>

				<p>compliance based on these five sources of information (stakeholder, workers, management, documents, and inspection of facilities). On average, nine and a half person-days are used for each factory audit.</p> <p>After these checks, brands are placed in a specific category. The “lowest” categories: “improvement necessary” and “suspended” category, imply that a member brand must undergo significant improvements within one year. In the suspended category, brands are not allowed to communicate to e.g. customers that they are a fair wear member, to prevent greenwashing.</p>	
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2. Sustainable Apparel Coalition

Table 3

General Information on SAC

Origin	2009, as an initiative launched by Walmart and Patagonia, who invited CEOs of leading global companies to come together to develop an index to measure the environmental impact of their products.
Mission	To transform business for exponential impact through ground breaking tools, collaborative partnerships, and trusted leadership for industry sustainability.
Vision	A global consumer goods industry that gives more than it takes – to the planet and its people.
(Governance) Output	Higg Index: The Coalition has developed the HiggIndex, a suite of tools that standardizes value chain sustainability measurements for all industry participants. These tools measure environmental and social labour impacts across the value chain. With this data, the industry can identify hotspots, continuously improve sustainability performance, and achieve the environmental and social transparency consumers are demanding. By joining forces in a Coalition, we can address the urgent, systemic challenges that are impossible to change alone.
Members	250 members, fashion brands, NGOs, trade associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academia 4 - Affiliate 2 - Brand 110 - Foundation 1 - Government 5 - Industry/Trade Association 17 - Manufacturer 66 - Not for Profit 16 - Retailer 41 - Service Provider 27
How to become a member	When SAC members join the coalition, they commit to tool adoption, transparency, sharing best practices, and making

meaningful improvements — a full-circle collaboration that benefits all involved. By coming together as a coalition, we can create a more sustainable industry focused on reducing environmental impacts and promoting social justice. Manufacturers and small and medium businesses can use the HiggIndex suite of tools without formally becoming a member of the SAC.

There are two membership types:

- Corporate members (Holding Group, Brand & Retailer, Third Party Retailer, Manufacturer): companies that are directly involved in the manufacturing or sale of global consumer goods.
- Affiliate members (Service Provider, Trade Association and Non-Profit Organization, Grantor and Investor, Academia, Government Organizations, Non-Government Organisations): Companies and organization that have direct influence and participation in the global consumer good value chain through policy making, formal education, and/or providing capacity-building services around environmental and social global issues.

Member benefits:

- HiggIndex Tools
 - o Through our collaboration with our technology partner HiggService Plan on Higgplatform with additional HiggFacility Brand & Retailer/Product Tool modules included
 - o Opportunity to upgrade to HiggService Plan
- Equal Partnership
 - o Piloting and early adoption of HiggIndex tools
 - o Engaging in SAC governance, guidance, and feedback
 - o Voting rights on critical SAC decisions
 - o Eligibility to sit on SAC Board of Directors
- SAC community & support
 - o Dedicated member support from member engagement team and member network
 - o Focused training and guidance on using HiggTools
 - o Access to member-only platforms (SAC Connect and LinkedIn Group)
 - o Benefits from the shared relationships of the SAC's ecosystem and partnerships, including Apparel Impact Institute (Aii), Policy Hub, and Social & Labour Convergence Program.
- Strengthen supply chain relationship
 - o Exclusive invitation to events (e.g., Global Member Meeting Summits for HiggIndex Tools, etc.) to gain best practices, build your network, and take advantage of collaboration opportunities.
 - o Public-facing feature opportunities through SAC communication channels (e.g., business case study and quotes in communication materials)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote as sustainability leader through outreach materials (logo and press release) <p>New membership requirements (since 2021) that require members to advance through four levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Foundational: Kick off first year of adoption by developing a 3-year plan to deploy HiggIndex self-assessments and verification with own operations and value chain partners, and communicate Higgperformance. 6. Progressive: Commit to SAC coordinated goals and publicly disclose goals for HiggFEM and HiggFSLM. Continue driving adoption and verification with value chain partners. 7. Strategic: Deploy HiggIndex tools to business partners supporting 80% of business volume and publicly disclose performance and traceability using HiggBRM, HiggFEM, and HiggFSLM data. 8. Leader: Demonstrate industry leadership by driving impact as measured through HiggIndex data.
Different Programmes	- H
SAC's interventions to change the industry	<p>HiggIndexes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. HiggBrand Tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ From materials sourcing to a product's end of use, the HiggBRM assesses the following life cycle stages of a product as it goes through a company's operations, identifying sustainability risks and impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management System ▪ Product Supply Chain ▪ Packaging ▪ Use & End of Use ▪ Retail Stores ▪ Offices ▪ Transportation ▪ Distribution Centers 8. HiggFacility Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consumer goods production takes place at thousands of facilities around the world. Each facility plays a key role in the overall sustainability of the industry. The HiggFacility Tools offer standardized social and environmental assessments that facilitate conversations among value chain partners to socially and environmentally improve every tier in the global value chain. 9. HiggProduct Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the HiggProduct Tools assess a product's environmental sustainability impacts. There are two HiggProduct Tools: the HiggMaterials Sustainability Index (HiggMSI) and the HiggProduct Module (HiggPM). These tools empower designers, brands, retailers, and manufacturers, to use life cycle assessment data

	<p>to make informed decisions to create more sustainable products.</p> <p>10. HiggIndex Use Cases</p> <p>11. HiggSupport</p> <p>12. Transparency Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The program provides a consistent way for brands, retailers, and manufacturers to share sustainability information on apparel and footwear products, across impact categories such as water use, greenhouse gas emissions, and use of fossil fuels.
Headquarters	Amsterdam & Hong Kong
Organisation has staff in	Amsterdam & Hong Kong
Organisation operates in	36 countries
Structure	The SAC is part of an ecosystem of three organizations, together with HiggCo and the Apparel Impact Institute (Aii). The organizations collaborate, with each serving a unique purpose to advance social and environmental sustainability within the industry. The SAC brings the industry together to develop the HiggIndex; HiggCo manages the HiggIndex platform, Higg.org ; and Aii uses HiggIndex data to scale impact improvement programs globally.
Noteworthy to mention:	<p>https://assets.website-files.com/5dcda718f8a683895d9ea394/5df141c17f7e4e59af1c8eea_Building%20blocks%20for%20a%20sustainable%20circular%20economy%20for%20-%20December%202019.pdf</p> <p>In their Building Blocks for a sustainable circular economy for textiles and footwear as being part of the Policy Hub (in collaboration with other organizations): Circularity must, above all, bring genuine benefits to the environment, as we fight the global warming crisis, and generate innovative and sustainable economic opportunities for Europe. → NOTE: benefits for Europe, but what about the drawbacks for the Global South countries?</p>

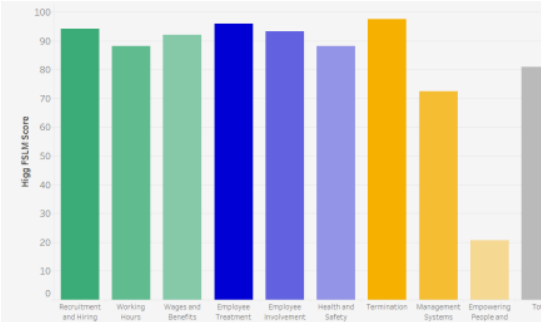
Table 4

MSI Legitimacy and Just Transition of Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC)

Dimension	Criterion	Key Questions	Code	Answer	Source
Input	<i>Inclusion</i>	Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake?	1	Today, the SAC is a diverse, multi-stakeholder coalition with eight categories of members. The SAC brings together expertise from across the globe to develop solutions that redefine the industry and we're proud of the progress our members have made. For example, 40 members have set science-based targets to take ambitious climate action in line with climate science. → Generally YES, since the FWF is a member of the SAC, several manufacturers and NGOs are members. HOWEVER, NO, DIRECT garment	http://rz5632gw5fl13116k1nospb4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf

				<p>workers' voices/representatives are included, while (garment workers), and all workers in the supply chain for that matter bear the social and (a large part) of the environmental impacts on their livelihoods.</p> <p>CRITIQUE (Radhakrishnan, 2015): The organization should aim for representation from around the globe by way of membership and members in the organizational setup. Apart from the board of directors and the working team, there should be an intermediary board/system that has representatives from all parts of the world. This will enable better understanding of the data collected, problems interlinked with product development, supply chain activities and consumer attitude.</p>	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269098511_The_Sustainable_Apparel_Coalition_and_the_Higg_Index
		Are important stakeholders excluded from the process?	1	YES → garment worker's representatives are not included in the process.	
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Do (representatives of) garment workers have a valid voice in decision-making processes?	0	NO → as mentioned, some NGOs are part of the SAC, but no direct garment worker's representatives are part of the organisation, + nowhere clear mentioning of garment workers inclusion were mentioned. Even though the SAC mentions that	
		Do representatives of garment workers (representatives) have a (permanent) seat in decision-making boards?	1	<p>NO: The SAC Board of Directors includes leaders and experts from brands, retailers, manufacturers, NGOs, government, and academia. Some board members focus on decent work as being part of their field of expertise, but no board member specifically represents (garment) workers.</p> <p>NOTE: no minutes of board meetings were found.</p>	http://rz5632gw5f113116k1nospb4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf https://apparelcoalition.org/board-of-directors/
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement	1	<p>Every year, the SAC members come together to discuss ongoing projects, celebrate milestones, and develop stronger bonds through collaboration on SAC efforts and initiatives.</p> <p>Collaboration is the heartbeat of the SAC No company alone can shift the existing industry</p>	https://apparelcoalition.org/collaboration-impact/

		among participants?		<p>paradigms. To ignite the change required to redefine how the industry is run, peers and competitors come together as a united front, adhering to the Coalition’s set of core collaboration values that are designed to further impactful change across the industry. Through SAC membership, brands, retailers, and manufacturers commit to transparency, the sharing of best practices, and making meaningful improvements, a full-circle collaboration that benefits all involved.</p> <p>NOTE: garment workers are likely not well represented to begin with, plus the majority of members are global north based, so whether it is “true” collaboration is highly questionable in the first place.</p>	
	<i>Transparency</i>	To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent?	0	They highlight the importance of transparency, but there are no annual reports, only (albeit highly positive) decade in review report somewhat resembles an evaluation of their achievement. In addition, the reports page and other documents page is difficult in terms of user friendliness (e.g., no search bar to search for specific documents)	https://apparelcoalition.org/in-the-media/#reports
		To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent?	0	See below, so far, transparency is not required for a membership. But they recently released a transparency program: On May 27, 2021, the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), along with its technology partner Higg, launched the first phase of a transparency program for publicly sharing data on a product’s environmental impact, starting with its materials content. The program provides a consistent way for brands, retailers, and manufacturers to share sustainability information on apparel and footwear products, across impact categories such as water use, greenhouse gas emissions, and use of fossil fuels. Built on a decade’s worth of tool development, consumer testing, and contributed environmental impact data, this first phase of the HiggIndex transparency program is an important step toward a unified approach for industry-wide transparency – in order to provide shoppers with unprecedented visibility into a product’s real impact.	http://rz5632gw5f113116k1nospb4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf
		What specific action are taken to ensure transparency? Is transparency		By 2025, we’re aiming to have all SAC members participate in public-facing ratings of sustainable performance that are credible and trusted. To meet this goal, our work in 2021 and beyond will focus on developing a framework and standard for HiggIndex performance publication, communication,	

		structurally embedded into the organization?		and marketing use available for all core Higgtools. → NOTE : so as of yet, this data is not publicly available?	
	<i>Leadership and solidarity</i>	To what extent are (representatives) of garment workers involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI?	0	NO info found → so likely not at all.	
Output	<i>Coverage</i>	How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?	0	 <p>Note: This graph includes scores from 752 facilities that completed the FSLM self-assessment and verification in calendar year 2020. With the first version of FSLM scoring, we can get a sense of where facilities are performing well and where they should invest in making improvements. The results show that on average, the scores of facilities who completed and verified their FSLM in 2020 are almost all above 70 out of a total possible score of 100 for each section. The lowest scoring category, Empowering People and Communities, includes practices that go beyond social responsibility industry standards and are not required by national or international law. This demonstrates an opportunity for facilities to go above and beyond in their social practices.</p> <p>Top 5 high risk flags that were consequently identified: Conducting maintenance on live electrical equipment. Lack of safety measures for asbestos exposure. Discriminatory hiring decisions.</p>	http://rz5632gw5f113116k1nospb4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf https://cleanclothes.org/blog/a-decade-in-denial https://apparelcoalition.org/Higg-index-use-cases/

				<p>Lack of safety measures related to the storage of chemicals and hazardous substances. Electrical circuits show indication of overheating or burning.</p> <p>NOTES: this is self-assessments → how does the SAC make sure that these are actually true? Does the number 752 accurately represent the industry? Are those 752 facilities (who agreed to participate) more inclined naturally to regard themselves as “good facilities” → i.e. facilities that actively know they are violation their garment workers would not participate in the first place? it is stated that The HiggFSLM tool is verified via the Social & Labor Convergence Program no further information on both the SLCP and SAC website are given on this matter comment CCC on this graph: In a cheerful graphic on page 30, we discover that in 2020, over 750 factories have scored in the 90% range for 'Wages and Benefits,' 'Working Hours,' 'Employee Treatment' and 'Termination.' There are no words for how out of touch with reality this is; 2020 was the year the pandemic hit and the reaction by brands - many proud members of SAC – caused <u>hunger</u>, <u>wage theft</u> and <u>labour rights violations</u> on a massive scale. These scores represent a complete disconnect with garment workers' realities. There are HiggIndex Use cases which portray “How SAC members are using the HiggIndex”. Again, highly positive wordings, and to what extent isn't this cherry picking the most successful cases?</p>	
	<i>Social Protections</i>	Are social protections for workers in place?	0	<p>In the wake of COVID-19, there has been intense discussion around brand/supplier relationships, wages, and contracts, calling out those within the industry for harmful business practices. These recently highlighted issues and ongoing ones, including audit fatigue, can all be improved through the HiggFacility Tools. Apparel, footwear, and textile production takes place at thousands of facilities around the world. The HiggFacility Tools offer standardized social and environmental assessments that facilitate conversations among value chain partners to improve every tier in the global value chain. → NO</p>	<p>http://rz5632gw5f113116k1nospb4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf</p>

		Are efforts made to ensure that garment workers have a long-term say in the MSI decision-making process?	0	NO	
	<i>Remedying of injustices</i>	Are there commitments made to remedy existing inequities for garment workers?	0	<p>Protect Human Rights – The SAC enables and supports workers’ rights, safety, and livelihoods by 2025 → NOTE: only by 2025?? Comment of the Clean Clothes Campaign: To add insult to injury, the review lays out a new “strategic plan” with lofty goals, namely that “SAC enables and supports workers’ rights, safety, and livelihoods by 2025.”</p> <p>CCC: If that had been a goal in 2010, it would have been more than fashionably late. At this point it is nothing if not quite telling of SAC’s lack of actual impact so far and of their continued disregard for garment workers’ urgent needs.</p>	http://rz5632gw5fl13116k1nospb4-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf
		Are there specific actions taken?	0	<p>The SAC as founded with other MSIs the Social Labour Converge Programme (We provide the tools and system for a high-quality comparable data set on working conditions that can be used by all industry stakeholders. This increases transparency in supply chains, reduces the need for social audits and ultimately allows users to redeploy resources into improving working conditions.) NONETHELESS, this does not imply that workers are remedied for injustices, so overall the answer is NO</p>	https://slconvergence.org/
		Are there measured improvements in terms of social equity, human rights, and ecological indicators? & How is this measured?	1	<p>See <i>Coverage</i>, again most verification, even though they are trying to improve this, is based on self-assessment.</p> <p>The CCC mentions on this matter:</p> <p>There is only one page (33) in the entire report that contains actual results on environmental impact, but even these are minimal. Of the facilities that completed</p>	https://cleanclothes.org/blog/a-decade-in-denial

				<p>their flagship environmental module over the past three years, a whopping "<i>less than 5% completed verification</i>". And that only addresses the environmental impact of factories; the devastating effects that producing ever-more fast fashion has on the planet and its contribution to the climate crisis are carefully kept out of focus.</p> <p>In addition, there is increasing verification of self-assessments for the HiggFacility Environmental Module, but this is so far not the case for the social module.</p>	
	<i>Quality work</i>	Which garment worker's rights are protected with the MSI? Where are these rights based on?	1	<p>The HiggBRM enables brands and retailers to create stronger corporate social responsibility strategies that improve the well-being of workers across the value chain. By prioritizing employee well-being, companies support local communities, champion women in the workforce, and strengthen the global economy.</p> <p>The HiggBRM assess 16 social impacts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forced Labour and Human Trafficking 2. Child Labour 3. Wages and Benefits 4. Working Hours 5. Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 6. Health and Safety 7. Access to Water and Sanitation 8. Decent Work 9. Discrimination, Harassment, and Abuse 10. Sexual Harassment & Gender-based Violence 11. Bribery and Corruption 12. Right to Health 13. Right to Privacy 14. Right to Security of the Person 15. Minorities' and Communities Rights 16. Land Rights <p>HiggFacility Social & Labour Module: The HiggFacility Social & Labor Module (HiggFSLM) promotes safe and fair social and labor conditions for value chain workers all over the world. Facilities can use the</p>	<p>https://apparelcoalition.org/Higg-brand-tool/ https://apparelcoalition.org/Higg-facility-tools/</p>

				<p>scored assessment to understand hotspots and reduce audit fatigue. Instead of focusing on compliance, they can dedicate time and resources to making lasting systemic changes. It assesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and Hiring Working Hours Wages and Benefits Employee Treatment Employee Involvement Health and Safety Termination Management Systems Empowering People and Communities <p>HOWEVER, see <i>Enforcement</i> this does not mean that these rights are automatically abided by the member companies, IN ADDITION see <i>Remedying of Injustices</i></p>	
		How are these rights “monitored”?	0	See <i>Enforcement</i> , only since 2021 they are “working towards” enforcement.	
		Are there agreements made to expand workers’ rights further?	0	YES , see <i>Remedying of Injustices</i>	
		Are there efforts made to go from minimum wage to living wage?	0	NO	
	<i>Efficacy</i>	To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?	1	<p>See <i>Enforcement</i>, members arguably commit to tool adoption, transparency, sharing best practices, and making meaningful improvements. → HOWEVER, this is nowhere enforced, the SAC relies mostly on self-verification (although this will change), and there are no consequences for workers when they violate garment worker’s rights.</p> <p>Also, a subsidiary of Walmart (one of the founders of the SAC), cancelled orders of their suppliers.</p> <p>Asda is refusing to accept up to 20 percent of orders that suppliers had already shipped to Asda before the crisis began. Asda is also demanding 40 to 70 percent price reductions on orders completed but</p>	<p>https://www.workersrights.org/updates-and-analysis/#May01Asda https://cleanclothes.org/blog/a-decade-in-denial</p>

				<p>not yet shipped and on in-process orders. This makes Asda one of the worst actors in the industry. Suppliers have not reported similar problems with orders produced for Walmart, but Asda's misdeeds are nonetheless the responsibility of its American corporate parent. It is also important to note that Walmart, while it is apparently not canceling orders for its private label brands, has canceled orders placed with third-party, name-brand vendors with serious consequences for those vendors and the suppliers and workers that make their goods.</p> <p>Comment CCC: All in all, 'A decade in review' begs the question: What is the point of a methodology that delivers no results?! Sure, CSR sounds nice to consumers and lots of people get cushy white-collar jobs, but factory workers and their families still live in deprivation.</p> <p>If SAC wants to show itself as relevant, the only way forward is to replace meaningless CSR smokescreens with concrete action. That would mean SAC members immediately sharing a much larger part of that \$845 billion pie with the women and men whose labour powers the industry and on whose backs those profits were made. Only then will SAC produce a report worth reading.</p>	
	<i>Enforcement</i>	Is compliance verified and	1	When a new member joins the coalition, they commit to tool adoption, transparency, sharing best practices, and making	http://rz5632gw5fl13116k1nospb4-

		<p>noncompliance sanctioned?</p>	<p>meaningful improvements. Starting in 2021, all SAC members will work towards meeting new membership requirements designed to help achieve the goals in our new strategic plan and drive exponential impact. The SAC will track member progress and hold members accountable for their commitments. → before that, there were NO membership requirements (except for payment of the fee). These new requirements were set to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all SAC members are working toward aligned goals and increased collective action. Provide a framework and a pathway for members to deliver against the SAC vision, our targets, and commitments Allow the SAC to highlight and showcase members who are leading the way, especially at the Strategic and Leader levels <p>The SAC is committed to ensuring that the information that companies submit is as accurate as possible—that’s where verification comes in. It improves the consistency, comparability, and credibility of Higgdata. It also reduces the need for multiple, proprietary audits so that resources can be used in other areas, such as performance improvement. To support the accurate measurement of environmental and social impacts using the HiggIndex, the SAC is creating verification programs for each Higgtool. This is an essential part of the Higgframework because verified data provides companies with the trusted information they seek.</p> <p>The HiggFacility Environmental Module (FEM) verification program is the first of the HiggIndex tools at scale. Through our Verification Program Manager, Sumerra, companies and individuals go through a rigorous application training process on verification protocols and quality assurance, which ensures consistency of verified results at the program level.</p> <p>Through the Social & Labour Convergence Program, HiggFSLM Verification is offered in 30 countries worldwide. → NOTE: no further information was found on this matter. Also, mandatory or voluntary for businesses?</p> <p>The SAC is currently piloting a verification program for the HiggBRM, expected to</p>	<p>wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SAC-A-Decade-in-Review.pdf https://cleanclothes.org/blog/a-decade-in-denial https://www.sumerra.com/programs/sac/ https://www.tuv.com/world/en/Higg-brand-and-retail-module-brm-verification.html</p>
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				<p>launch in 2021. → this is currently done by TÜVRheinland</p> <p>HiggProduct Tools (HIGGMSI and HIGGPM) primary data is vetted by our third party gatekeeper and secondary data is independently peer reviewed. By SUMERA Additional HiggMSI and HIGGPM Verification will be available in 2022</p> <p>HOWEVER, CCC comment: in SAC's long membership list there are many brands that have been the focus of our public campaigns over the past decade, as well as of behind-the-scenes assistance to the workers whose rights have been violated while they were or still are producing those brands' clothing.</p> <p>IN CONCLUSION: NO</p>	
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3. Ethical Trading Initiative

Table 5

General Information on ETI

Origin	<p>ETI was created in 1998 by a small group of visionaries who believed in the power of collective action to make a difference to the lives of workers in companies' supply chains.</p> <p>In 1998, a group of UK companies, NGOs and trade union organisations, with the backing of the then Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short, launched a radical approach to protecting workers' rights in global supply chains. Their aim was to build an alliance of organisations that would work together to define how major companies should implement their codes of labour practice in a credible way - and most importantly, in a way that has maximum impact on workers.</p>
Mission	ETI's mission is to harness the combined power of business, trade unions and NGOs to realise that vision.
Vision	ETI's vision is of a world where human rights at work are enjoyed by workers, respected by business, and protected by governments.

(Governance) Output	ETI Base Code of labour practice
Members	<p>90 companies, collectively reaching nearly ten million workers across the globe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 26 large - 35 medium - 40 small <p>BUT: 63 apparel companies</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>Trade Unions</p>
How to become a member	<p>Members commit to principles of implementation, consisting out of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Commitment 6. Identifying labour rights issues 7. Prevent, mitigate, remedy, 8. Track & Communicate <p>Members have to pay a fee based on their annual turnover.</p> <p>Application process:</p> <p>Read about ETI - browse this site thoroughly Email the Membership team to discuss your application: membership@eti.org.uk Submit a draft application by the next application deadline Your draft application is reviewed by the NGO and Trade union members of ETI Supply any further information requested Your application is sent to ETI Board members for consideration ETI Head of Membership presents your application at ETI's Board meeting Board decision is confirmed to the applicant</p> <p>Different member types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundation stage membership is designed for companies that are new ETI members. During this stage, ETI provides members with structured support and direction as they establish the core elements of a credible ethical trading programme. We use our annual reporting mechanism to assess whether Foundation stage members have the right building blocks in place to become full ETI members. However, Foundation stage members have the same rights and obligations as full ETI members. They are expected to engage in member meetings, events and roundtables and encouraged to participate in ETI's supply chain programmes.
Different Programmes	<p>https://www.ethicaltrade.org/programmes/transitions-futures Working with companies, trade unions and NGOs to develop solutions to manage and mitigate the impact of change on workers and business in the future low carbon world of work.</p>

ETI's interventions to change the industry	See Governance Output
Headquarters	London
Organisation has staff in	London
Organisation operates in	UK, China, Bangladesh
Structure	We work out the most effective steps companies can take to implement the Base Code in their supply chains. We learn by doing, and by sharing our experience. Our projects and working groups develop and try out new ideas, often piloting these approaches on the ground in sourcing countries. By taking part in these groups as well as in roundtable discussions, our members collectively establish good practice in ethical trade. We then develop training and resources to capture this learning, providing practical tools to help companies to put their ethical trade policies into effect.
Noteworthy to mention:	They recognize that the trade union focus needs more attention: We know that fundamental principles, such as workers' rights to join a trade union and negotiate collectively, continue to need attention in order to be upheld. Other areas such as discrimination and harassment in the workplace need improving. Casual and informal sector workers are still receiving scant benefit from codes of labour practice. And global food and fuel inflation means that real wages are declining at an alarming rate in many countries. https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/our-impact-workers

Table 6

MSI Legitimacy and Just Transition of Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)

Dimension	Criterion	Key Questions	Code	Answer	Source
Input	Inclusion	Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake?	1	YES Company, trade union and NGO members play equal parts in shaping ETI's thinking and the way we work. This commitment strengthens trust and collaboration. And it builds better ethical trading practices to the benefit of workers in global supply chains. As such, within and between ETI and our members, we foster transparency and accountability. They are powerful drivers of change and key to seeing the Base Code implemented in global supply chains.	7. https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/accountability
		Are important stakeholders	1	YES , not clear how direct garment worker's (representatives) are <i>directly</i> involved in the process. I.e. how often do the trade union	

		excluded from the process?		representatives consult with garment workers? Do they directly consult with them, even outside the factory work floor?	
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Do (representatives of) garment workers have a valid voice in decision-making processes?	1	PARTIALLY YES , see below	
		Do representatives of garment workers (representatives) have a (permanent) seat in decision-making boards?	1	<p>PARTIALLY YES → a board member represents ITUC (The ITUC's primary mission is the promotion and defence of workers' rights and interests, through international cooperation between trade unions, global campaigning and advocacy within the major global institutions.)</p> <p>HOWEVER: it is not clear to what extent this garment workers (that are affected by the Code of Conduct of the ETI) are directly included in the board.</p> <p>The board consists out of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair 2. ETI representatives (4 people) 3. Corporate Representatives (Beeswift, Tesco, Inditex, Princes) 4. NGO representatives (Banana Link, Homeworkers Worldwide, Oxfam GB) 5. Trade union representatives (ITUC, ITF, TUC) 	https://www.ituc-csi.org/about-us https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-etiour-team/eti-board-members
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement among participants?	0	NOT CLEAR	https://apparelcoalition.org/collaboration-impact/
	<i>Transparency</i>	To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent?	1	<p>Our board:</p> <p>ETI is governed by a Board of Directors who represent our tripartite membership under an independent Chairperson. The Board and its sub-committees guide our strategic direction and provide approval for strategic businesses and annual work plans and large-scale projects. They also review the ethical trade performance of corporate members.</p> <p>Groups and roundtables Two Causus Groups feed into Board decision-making</p>	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/accountability

				<p>The Trade Union Caucus includes representatives from selected affiliate unions involved in ETI activities.</p> <p>The NGO caucus includes all member NGOs</p> <p>Companies are brought together at the corporate roundtable. There is a Food and Farming and an Apparel and Textiles Working Group as well as Programme Groups which focus on country-specific supply chains.</p> <p>Our Working and Programme Groups represent members with a common interest and tackle critical aspects of ethical trade.</p>	
		To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent?	0	<p>NOT CLEAR members are not required to publish their “results”.</p> <p>Members commit to principles of implementation, consisting out of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commitment 2. Identifying labour rights issues 3. Prevent, mitigate, remedy, 4. Track & Communicate <p>Although ETI is not a regulatory body, companies that join us commit to adopting credible and effective strategies to improve conditions in their supply chains. We meet regularly with our company members to discuss their progress in addressing working conditions in their supply chains and on their overall ethical trade performance. On occasion, full members will be reverted to Foundation stage if we have concerns over the level and pace of their progress, and if it is deemed that they need further support and guidance. If a company persistently fails to address concerns raised over its performance, we invoke our disciplinary procedure. This procedure is solutions-focused, and appropriate steps are taken to secure an improvement in the member’s commitment. The options are that a company either improves its performance, resigns or their membership is terminated. NOTE: what “type” of member they are and whether they are suspended is outlined on their website, HOWEVER, their specific performance is not reported on.</p> <p><i>See Enforcement</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. https://www.ethicaltrade.org/faq/how-do-you-hold-companies-to-account 2. https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/our-members

		What specific action are taken to ensure transparency? Is transparency structurally embedded into the organization?	1	Greater transparency is, therefore, a key strategic priority for ETI. The current energy around disclosure of supplier information is an essential and useful starting point, but we are committed to ensuring that transparency reaches beyond this in time. We want to take a leadership position on transparency and encourage and support our members to do the same. As such, we have set out in a separate paper, Towards greater transparency: ETI's direction of travel, the principles that will underpin the direction ETI and our members take in the journey towards increasing transparency.	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/accountability https://www.ethicaltrade.org/sites/default/files/shared_resources/eti_transparency_business_case.pdf
	<i>Leadership and solidarity</i>	To what extent are (representatives) of garment workers involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI?	1	We help workers to help themselves: Codes of labour practice can, and should, help create space for workers to bargain with management through trade unions. In several countries around the world we are supporting initiatives that raise workers' awareness of their rights and helping create work cultures where workers can confidently negotiate with management about the issues that concern them. We also broker resolutions where there are major breaches of trade union rights by companies that supply our members.	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/what-we-do
Output	<i>Coverage</i>	How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?	1	The Ethical Trading Initiative was founded in 1998 in response to growing concerns about the poor pay and conditions of workers in many international supply chains. Since then we have helped change the lives of millions of workers by driving improvements in company policies and practices and through campaigning for change.	https://impact-report.ethicaltrade.org/4
	<i>Social Protections</i>	Are social protections for workers in place?	1	Partially YES , since workers can seek remedy, and noncompliant members can be sanctioned (see <i>Remedy of Injustices & Enforcement</i>) HOWEVER, it is not clear	
		Are efforts made to ensure that garment workers have a long-term say in the MSI decision-making process?	0	No information was found on this regard, yet there is a tripartite board including representatives from trade unions. See <i>Inclusion</i> .	
	<i>Remedying of injustices</i>	Are there commitments made to remedy existing inequities for garment workers? Are	1	YES , in their Principles of Implementation process which members have to abide by, the 3 rd step consists out of Prevent, Mitigate and Remedy . They also have a detailed guide on how to ensure remedy mechanisms for company's,	3. https://www.ethicaltrade.org/sites/default/files/shared_resources/ETI%20Base%20Code%20

		there specific actions taken?		<p>HOWEVER not sure whether establishing these mechanisms is voluntary or mandatory.</p>	<p>4. 20%28English%29_0.pdf https://www.ethicaltrade.org/sites/default/files/shared_resources/Access%20to%20remedy_0.pdf</p>
		Are there measured improvements in terms of social equity, human rights, and ecological indicators? & How is this measured?		<p>CRITIQUE Conner, Delany, Rennie: our research indicates there is currently a significant accountability gap. when global companies, including ETI member companies, make purchasing decisions that increase the likelihood that workers in their supply chains will suffer human rights violations, there is rarely an effective remedy available to those workers. The ETI is not currently filling that gap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process of designing this programme was slow, london-centric and marked by significant internal conflict between eTi companies and eTi civil society organisations as to the programme scope and goals. The programme itself has been a significant disappointment to many civil society representatives in india and europe. These groups believe the programme—and in particular the focus on providing workers with training and information in their rights—will be of limited benefit because young indian women employed in forced laboursituations are not in a position to assert those rights. These groups believe the eTishould instead focus on persuading mill and factory ownersto allowworkersto make contactwith local trade unions and other advocacy 	<p>5. https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/our-impact-workers 6. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tim-Connor-2/publication/311838817-The_Ethical_Trading_Initiative_Negotiated_solutions_to_human_rights_violations_in_global_supply_chains/links/585c7aaa08ae8fce48fad2c3/The-Ethical-Trading-Initiative-Negotiated-solutions-to-human-rights-violations-in-global-supply-chains.pdf</p>

				<p>organisations,so that these organisations can investigate alleged rights violations, advocate on theworkers’ behalf, and support theworkersto organise and claim their rights. eTi staff argued eTi companies do not have sufficient leverage in relation to the textile millsto persuade mill ownersto allowadvocacy organisationsto visitworkersin the mills. However eTi companies have refused to share detailed supply chain information with eTi civil society groups, making the exact extent of their leverage in relation to the textile mills opaque.</p>	
	<i>Quality work</i>	Which garment worker’s rights are protected with the MSI? Where are these rights based on?	1	<p>ETI Base Code is founded on the conventions of the ILO and is an internationally recognised code of labour practice.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employment is freely chosen 2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected. 3. Working conditions are safe and hygienic 4. Child labour shall not be used. 5. Living wages are paid 6. Working hours are not excessive 7. No discrimination is practiced 8. Regular employment is provided 9. No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed 	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/eti-base-code
		How are these rights “monitored”?	1	<p>ETI works with and through our members in multiple, highly complex environments where there are many factors beyond our control.</p> <p>Furthermore, our outcomes relate to ‘hard to measure’ issues such as tripartite collaboration,</p>	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/accountability

				<p>influencing business practices and the treatment of workers through a cycle of continuous improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Consequently, our ME&L framework is designed to help us gather relevant information in flexible and creative ways. . It supports our membership reporting system, uses participatory monitoring tools in our supply chain programmes and tracks the impact of our learning and advocacy. . By doing this, we monitor our progress against our strategic objectives and identify lessons for our own improvement. . See <i>Enforcement</i> on their Code Violation Procedure 	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/sites/default/files/shared_resources/All%20code%20violation%20investigation%20procedure.pdf
		Are there agreements made to expand workers' rights further?	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . They participate in partnerships with other organisations, such as e.g. FWF, and they conduct trainings in areas to address gender equality and stimulate social dialogue. An example of their programme: . Over the year the programme reached a total of 55,347 factory workers directly through training activities and awareness-raising campaigns. It is anticipated that their increased knowledge and understanding of social dialogue and collective bargaining has in turn positively impacted an anticipated 150,000 family and community members by providing a greater sense of security through a more stable labour market. . In 2020, ETI was invited to be a part of a consortium of global partners working on the Sustainable Textile Initiative: Together for Change (STITCH). Together, consortium members formulated a five-year programme which was formally accepted by the Dutch Ministry in December and initiated in January 2021. STITCH enables ETI to fund many of our initiatives across the apparel and textile sector, including those critical to our strategic focus on business practices, meaningful human rights due diligence, gender and social dialogue. 	https://www.ethicaltrade.org/resources/annual-impact-review-2020-21/eti-initiatives
		Are there efforts made to go from minimum wage to living wage?	1	<p>ETI Base Code Clause 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living wages are paid. 2. Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standard, whichever is higher. In any event, wages should always be enough to meet basic needs and provide some discretionary income . 	

				<p>3. All workers shall be provided with written and understandable information about their employment conditions in respect to wages before they enter employment and about the particulars of their wages for the pay period concerned each time that they are paid.</p> <p>4. Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted, nor shall any deductions from wages not provided for by national law be permitted without the expressed permission of the worker concerned. All disciplinary measures should be recorded.</p>	
	<i>Efficacy</i>	To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?	1	<p>CRITIQUE CONNER: So, with some notable exceptions, our research indicated that the eTi’s overall contribution to providing effective redress in cases of human rights grievance has been very limited. why is this the case? it is important to note that there are complicated and highly unbalanced power relationships in each of the various spheres that the eTi must influence in order to facilitate effective redress. These spheres include the power differentials between workers and employers in low-skilled industries; the power relationships between eTi member companies and their first tier suppliers (and other suppliers further down the supply chain); and the power relationships between corporations (including eTi member companies and their suppliers) and state institutions in various countries. The vulnerable position of many workers means that it is far from easy to establish a grievance mechanism that they would have confidence to access, even if that mechanism did have the potential to resolve their grievances. The continual push by global retailers in many industries to minimise the amount they pay for their goods also severely limits their suppliers’ willingness to cooperate in any human rights initiative that might increase production costs.</p> <p>And most, if not all, eTi companies are only motivated to bring these exploitative conditions to an end if they can do so without reducing profit margins. while there is potential for overlap between this corporate agenda and eTi civil society groups’ goal of human rights redress, that overlap is not automatic. in the absence of a significant reputational threat (or of evidence that a human rights initiative would be either cost-neutral or profit-enhancing) it can be in the best interests of eTi companies to continually delay any agreement on how to respond to a human rights grievance and to water down the</p>	<p>https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/our-members/member-list</p>

				<p>final agreement so it falls well short of the full respect for the eTi base Code. further, arguably just by joining the eTi a company acquires a valuable shield against public criticism of its labour practices, since it can claim that it is working with well-respected civil society organisations to address human rights issues. This creates the risk that the eTi could undermine, rather than increase, pressure on companies to cooperate in ensuring that human rights grievances are properly addressed.</p> <p>ALSO: there is an overview of in which stage members are (full, foundation, suspended or resigned) but their specific performance is not published on. This questions the overall legitimacy of the ETI.</p>	
	<i>Enforcement</i>	Is compliance verified and noncompliance sanctioned?	1	<p>In today's global economy, all companies have issues in their supply chains. By joining ETI, a company is acknowledging these issues and making a commitment to tackling them. Our member companies report biennially on their efforts and the results they are achieving at farm or factory level: We expect them to improve their ethical trade performance over time, and have a robust disciplinary procedure for companies that fail to make sufficient progress or to honour their membership obligations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When the ETI is concerned about an apparent serious failure by a member to display the required level of commitment to the effective and transparent implementation of the ETI code or to its other obligations as a member, the following procedure shall apply: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring the concern 2. Improvement Letter 3. Further Action 4. Suspension 5. Termination <p>ETI Code Violation Procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o However, where an employer in the supply chain of an ETI member company fails to adequately address code violations, then ETI member companies have a responsibility to seek to address such violations. Informal approaches 	<p>https://www.ethicaltrade.org/about-eti/what-we-do https://www.ethicaltrade.org/sites/default/files/shared_resources/ETI%20Enforcing%20Obligations%20-%20Corporate%20Members_0.pdf https://www.ethicaltrade.org/sites/default/files/shared_resources/Alleged%20code%20violation%20investigation%20procedure.pdf https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Tim-Connor-2/publication/311838817_The_Ethical_Trading_Initiative_Negotiated_solutions_to_human_rights_violations_in_global_supply_chains/links/585c7aa08ae8fce48fad2c3/The-Ethical-Trading-</p>

			<p>to ETI member companies raising and seeking to resolve such situations are encouraged. Where such informal approaches may not be appropriate in the circumstances, or have failed to satisfactorily address the issue, this procedure provides a formal avenue for raising and resolving a complaint under the auspices of the ETI. The process aims to foster cooperation and trust between parties to resolve disputes under the ETI Base Code in a fair way. All parties to this procedure are encouraged to demonstrate good faith, especially by engaging in a timely and transparent manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who can file a complaint: Only an ETI member can file a complaint. However, an organisation which is not an ETI member may approach an ETI member to secure its support to take a complaint forward. A worker, or workers, wishing to file a complaint can do so with the assistance of the relevant Global Union Federation, other trade union organisation, or NGO member. ETI can assist with contacting the relevant member → NOTE: not very easy for union workers to file a complaint? <p>Whistleblow helpline:</p> <p>Any ETI stakeholder can contact us with information relating to serious matters that may include: criminal offences & failure to comply with legal obligations, miscarriage of justice, embezzlement or misappropriation of funds etc.</p> <p>CRITIQUE Conner: as for the eTi's role in overseeing grievance mechanisms administered by member companies or theirsuppliers, ourresearch interviewsindicated that this has not been an organisational priority. The eTi's public reporting on this issue is not detailed and it is not clear from the ETI's public reports how</p>	<p>Initiative-Negotiated-solutions-to-human-rights-violations-in-global-supply-chains.pdf</p>
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				many of those workplace-level mechanisms that are in place are working effectively.	
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4. Fair Labour Association (FLA)

Table 7

General Information on FLA

Origin	In 1996, President Clinton convened a meeting of multinational companies and NGOs at the White House and challenged them to work together to improve working conditions in the apparel and footwear industries. This group became the Fair Labor Association, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization incorporated in 1999 . https://www.fairlabor.org/about-us/annual-public-reports/
Mission	The FLA helps its affiliates translate more than 100 labor and human rights standards into practical policies and processes that help businesses improve the lives of workers in their supply chain. We provide the bridge between standards and their implementation, and the result is that companies and suppliers develop stronger and more robust social compliance programs which means they are better prepared to react when a problem occurs.
Vision	FLA’s vision is that workers in affiliate supply chains will earn compensation that is sufficient to meet their basic needs and have some discretionary income.
Issues it aims to address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Labour - Forced Labour - Living Wage - Supply Chain Transparency
(Governance) Output	Code of Conduct
Members	<p>Members include companies, universities, and civil society organizations that are committed to protecting workers’ rights through adherence to international labor standards. Specific member types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accredited Companies: Companies accredited by FLA meet international standards for labor rights by implementing a systems-level approach to human rights compliance and social responsibility. FLA Accredited companies are evaluated on an ongoing basis and must demonstrate continuous improvement efforts to address working conditions and protect workers’ rights. 31 - Participating Members: FLA counts some of the world’s leading brands among its members. Participating Companies have committed to ensuring fair labor practices and safe and humane working conditions throughout their supply chains. Companies join FLA on a voluntary basis but agree to strict labor standards and

	<p>work to improve working conditions through sustainable solutions. 20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating Suppliers: Manufacturers, farms, factories and factory groups are key players in the global supply chain. Often, these “suppliers” are the first line of defense for protecting workers. FLA Participating Suppliers make a commitment to meet the highest labor standards in their facilities. 11 - Colleges & Universities: FLA members include more than 150 academic institutions in North America. These colleges and universities demonstrate their commitment to the ethical sourcing of the products that bear their names and logos. 17 - Civil Society Organisations: FLA collaborates with international unions and other civil society organizations to shape programs and policies that hold companies accountable, address complex labor issues at the local level, and improve workers’ lives. 10
How to become a member	<p>A Company, Retailer or Supplier that desires to participate in the Association shall submit to the Association an application consisting of a Monitoring Plan that describes such Applicant’s internal compliance program, including the implementation of internal monitoring, independent external monitoring and assessments, and a system of remediation (as described in more detail in Section IX of the Charter) and an agreement by the Applicant to undertake in good faith the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> G. To adopt, and cause its applicable licensees, contractors and suppliers to adopt, the Workplace Code in the manufacture of its products; H. To formally convey the Workplace Code (in the applicable local language) to its factories, and applicable licensees, contractors and suppliers, and communicate the Applicant’s commitment to comply with the Workplace Code to senior officers, managers and employees of both the Company, Retailer or Supplier (as the case may be) and its applicable licensees, contractors and suppliers; I. To implement a system of internal monitoring that complies with the Monitoring Principles; J. To submit its Applicable Facilities to monitoring visits conducted by Monitors assigned by the FLA staff (as described in Section IX.C. of the Charter); K. To pay annual assessments to the Association. Assessments shall be determined by the Board of Directors of the Association based on a formula related to the annual revenues of each Participating Company; and L. To provide a report to the Association every twelve months, in a format approved by the Board, describing the activities of the Participating Company over the prior twelve month period to implement its obligations as a Participating Company. The staff of the Association shall review the Participating Company’s report, the reports prepared by Monitors with respect to the Participating Company’s inspected Applicable Facilities, the status and

	results of investigations of any Third Party Complaints involving the Participating Company or its Applicable Facilities, and any other relevant information in order to provide feedback to the Participating Company on its progress in implementing its compliance program.
Different Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code of Conduct - Root Cause Analysis - Supplier Engagement - Farm Program - Living Wages - Responsible Purchasing Practices
ETI's interventions to change the industry	
Headquarters	Columbia, United States
Organisation has staff in	US
Organisation operates in	<p>Today, the FLA stands for the rights of nearly five million workers in apparel and agriculture supply chains in 84 countries. Our company affiliates are headquartered in 21 countries and our civil society organizations represent workers in Bangladesh, India, and around the world.</p> <p>Participating companies locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canada - Egypt - Finland - Germany - Honduras - Hong Kong - Israel - Italy - Japan - Malaysia - New Zealand - Pakistan - Singapore - Sweden - Switzerland - Taiwan - Turkey - UK - USA - Vietnam
Structure	The FLA Board of Directors serves as the organization's policy-making body. It is comprised of 19 members, including an independent chair and equal representation by universities, civil society organizations, and companies.
Noteworthy to mention:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For all the MSIs in general: in many boards there are quite a lot of representatives of other MSIs present (dit nog even dubbel checken!!).

Table 8

MSI Legitimacy and Just Transition of FLA

Dimension	Criterion	Key Questions	Code	Answer	Source
Input	<i>Inclusion</i>	Are the involved stakeholders representative for the issue at stake?	1	To some extent YES , key stakeholders are companies, manufacturers, civil society organisations, universities. HOWEVER , labourers and garment workers are not directly represented.	https://www.fairlabor.org/reports/2019-annual-report/
		Are important stakeholders excluded from the process?	0	It is not clear how garment worker representatives are DIRECTLY included.	
	<i>Procedural Fairness</i>	Do (representatives of) garment workers have a valid voice in decision-making processes?	1	To some extent YES , key stakeholders are companies, manufacturers, civil society organisations, universities. HOWEVER , labourers and garment workers are not directly included in decision-making processes	
		Do representatives of garment workers (representatives) have a (permanent) seat in decision-making boards?	1	<p>The Board of Directors of the Association shall consist of six business representatives, six Labor/NGO representatives, six university representatives and a Chair. The business Board Members shall be selected by the Business Caucus. The Labor/NGO Board Members shall be selected by a majority of the then-serving Labor/NGO Board Members. The College or University Affiliate Board Members shall be chosen by the University Advisory Council. The Chair shall be selected in accordance with the procedure specified below.</p> <p>Each Board Member shall be committed to the Mission of the Association in promoting adherence to international labor standards and improving working conditions worldwide. Persons employed or retained by, or agents of, Independent Providers or entities whose applications for accreditation are pending shall not be eligible to serve as Board Members. Officers, directors and employees of Participating Companies, College or University Affiliates and Labor/NGO entities may serve as Board Members. No more than one Board Member may be from any individual Participating Company, College or University Affiliate or Labor/NGO entity. The Board shall adopt appropriate screening and recusal policies in order to address any potential conflict of interest issues.</p> <p>Each Board Member shall serve a term of no longer than three years, although terms are renewable. The Board shall be staggered so that each year the terms of at least two business Board Members, at least two Labor/NGO Board</p>	https://www.fairlabor.org/app/uploads/2022/03/fla-charter-revised-feb-2021.pdf https://www.fairlabor.org/member/sommilito-garments-sramik-federation-sgsf/

				<p>Members, and at least two university Board Members shall expire. The terms of the business and Labor/NGO Board Members shall expire at the end of December, and the terms of the university Board Members shall expire at the end of May. Any Board Member whose term is expiring shall continue to serve until his/her successor has been named. The Chair shall serve for a three-year term, and may serve such additional terms as determined through the normal Chair selection process set forth below</p> <p>Current board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Chair: Michael H. Posner 6. Company representatives: Adidas, New Balance, Under Armour, Patagonia, Delta Galil, Hanesbrands Inc, Nestlé 7. CSO representatives: Sommilito Garments Sramik Federation, National Consumers League, Cividep India, GoodWeave, Oxfam, Global Fairness Initiative <p>CONCLUSION PARTIALLY YES: Sommilito Garmnets Sramik Federation – SGSF</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. SGSF is a union based in Bangladesh that works towards strengthening unions and achieving decent working conditions. SGSF represents over 100,000 workers in the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh. SGSF is an affiliate of IndustriALL Global Union. 9. HOWEVER: not clear to what extent garment workers are <i>directly</i> included in decision making/the board. 	
	<i>Consensual Orientation</i>	To what extent does the MSI promote mutual agreement among participants?	0	NO information disclosed.	https://apparelcoalition.org/collaboration-impact/
	<i>Transparency</i>	To what extent are decision-making and standard-setting processes transparent?	1	<p>QUITE TRANSPARENT</p> <p>Detailed outline on the decision-making processes of the board.</p> <p>The Board shall adopt appropriate screening and recusal policies in order to address any potential conflict of interest issues.</p> <p>YET: these screening policies, minutes, and other transparency mechanisms in terms of MSI decision-making have not been outlined as of yet.</p>	https://www.fairlabor.org/app/uploads/2022/03/fla-charter-revised-feb-2021.pdf

		To what extent are the performance of the participating corporations and the evaluation of that performance transparent?	1	Detailed assessments of companies, including each company’s “corrective action plan” are outlined the FLA’s website	https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/assessments/assessments-manufacturing/?report_type=workplace-monitoring&page=4
		What specific action are taken to ensure transparency? Is transparency structurally embedded into the organization?	1	<p>FLA adopted a requirement for factory list transparency in February 2019 with a vote by its board of directors. FLA members must make public their Tier 1 factory list by March 2022.</p> <p>Specifically, FLA members must publish on their website (or other public platforms) a list naming all applicable sites that manufacture its products.</p> <p>NOTE: only tier 1 suppliers</p> <p>Site list information requirements Full name of the facility; Site address(es); Parent company of the facility; General description of the type of product(s) made or produced at the facility; Approximate number of workers at the facility. Additional criteria The information should be in a spreadsheet or other machine-readable format (see the Open Data Standard for the Apparel Sector).</p> <p>The information should be in English. Best practice would also include the name of the supplier in the local language where applicable.</p> <p>The information should, at a minimum, be updated every 12 months.</p>	https://www.fairlabor.org/reports/2019-annual-report/ https://www.fairlabor.org/issues/supply-chain-transparency/
	<i>Leadership and solidarity</i>	To what extent are (representatives) of garment workers involved in enforcing the standard of the MSI?	1	Not clear, maybe in the sense that they are represented in the board. HOWEVER , they are not directly representation (so as it seems), so this remains a bit vague.	https://www.fairlabor.org/reports/2019-annual-report/

Output	<i>Coverage</i>	How many rule-targets are complying with the rules?	1	<p>During 2019, the FLA’s board of directors considered the accreditation of nine companies’ social compliance programs, reaccrediting four programs and awarding five first time program accreditations.</p> <p>Approximately 30 companies have accreditation in total. Which meant (see <i>Enforcement</i>) that they underwent a rigours assessment. These assessments/accreditations of each company are published on their website.</p>	https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/accreditation/assessments/?report_type=accreditation-report
	<i>Social Protections</i>	Are social protections for workers in place?	1	<p>To safeguard against workplace violations and provide workers a way to raise grievances that may go undetected by company or FLA assessment processes, the FLA’s Third Party Complaint process allows any worker, union, university, civil society, or other stakeholder to request an investigation into violations of the FLA Workplace Code of Conduct or the principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing.</p> <p>The Third Party Complaint procedure allows any person, group, or organization to report serious violations of workers’ rights in facilities used by any company committed to FLA labor standards. It is one of several tools FLA has available to address such issues.</p>	https://www.fairlabor.org/reports/2019-annual-report/ https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/safeguards/ https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/safeguards/tpc-tracking-chart/
		Are efforts made to ensure that garment workers have a long-term say in the MSI decision-making process?	0	See <i>Procedural Fairness</i> , so yes they are arguably represented in the board. No further mechanisms to expand their influence are included.	
	<i>Remedying of injustices</i>	Are there commitments made to remedy existing inequities for garment workers? Are there specific actions taken?	1	YES: The chart below shows the TPC investigations that were concluded in 2019. Each was undertaken by an independent investigator to ensure a detailed, objective review of and report on the allegations. In addition to these formal investigations, the TPC process provides leverage for the FLA to look into many more allegations of violations and work with our affiliates to press factory management to address the concerns raised.	

				<p>THIRD PARTY COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED IN 2019</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Factory</th> <th>FLA Affiliate</th> <th>Country</th> <th>Request</th> <th>Code Element or Benchmark</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Progida</td> <td>Olam</td> <td>Turkey</td> <td>Union</td> <td>Unlawful dismissal</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">Resolved May 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carnival Clothing Company</td> <td>adidas</td> <td>India</td> <td>Union</td> <td>Harassment or abuse Freedom of association</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">Resolved June 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C.S.A. Guatemala</td> <td>Hanesbrands</td> <td>Guatemala</td> <td>Workers</td> <td>Unlawful dismissals Payment of worker benefits</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">Resolved April 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hilandería de Algodón Peruano S.A. (HIALPESA)</td> <td>'47 Brand LLC The Burton Corporation</td> <td>Peru</td> <td>Union</td> <td>Freedom of association Unlawful dismissals</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">Resolved October 2019</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Star S.A. Gildan</td> <td>Gildan</td> <td>Honduras</td> <td>Union</td> <td>Freedom of association, dismissals, payment of worker benefits</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In addition, when a company is “checked”, their impact towards</p>	Factory	FLA Affiliate	Country	Request	Code Element or Benchmark	Progida	Olam	Turkey	Union	Unlawful dismissal	Resolved May 2019					Carnival Clothing Company	adidas	India	Union	Harassment or abuse Freedom of association	Resolved June 2019					C.S.A. Guatemala	Hanesbrands	Guatemala	Workers	Unlawful dismissals Payment of worker benefits	Resolved April 2019					Hilandería de Algodón Peruano S.A. (HIALPESA)	'47 Brand LLC The Burton Corporation	Peru	Union	Freedom of association Unlawful dismissals	Resolved October 2019					Star S.A. Gildan	Gildan	Honduras	Union	Freedom of association, dismissals, payment of worker benefits	
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		Are there measured improvements in terms of social equity, human rights, and ecological indicators? & How is this measured?	1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child Labour 2. Forced Labour 3. Living Wage 4. Supply chain transparency 																																																			
	<i>Quality work</i>	Which garment worker’s rights are protected with the MSI? Where are these rights based on?	1	<p>The FLA Fair Labor Code defines labor standards that aim to achieve decent and humane working conditions. The code’s standards are based on International Labour Organization standards and internationally accepted good labor practices.</p> <p>Employment Relationship → employers shall adopt and adhere to rules and conditions of employment that respect workers and, at a minimum, safeguard their rights under national and international labour and social security laws and regulations.</p> <p>Nondiscrimination → no person shall be subject to any discrimination in employment, including hiring, compensation, advancement, discipline, termination, or retirement, on the basis of gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, political opinion social group or ethnic origin.</p> <p>Harassment or Abuse → every employee shall be treated with respect and dignity. No employee shall be subject to any physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal harassment or abuse.</p> <p>Forced Labour → there shall be no use of forced labour, including prison labor,</p>	https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/standards/manufacturing/mfg-code/																																																		

				<p>indentured labour, bonded labour or other forms of forced labour.</p> <p>Child Labour → no person shall be employed under the age of 15 or under the age for completion of compulsory education, whichever is higher.</p> <p>Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining → employers shall recognize and respect the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining.</p> <p>Health, Safety and Environment → Employers shall provide a safe and healthy workplace setting to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with, or occurring in the course of work or as a result of the operation of employers' facilities. Employers shall adopt responsible measures to mitigate negative impacts that the workplace has on the environment.</p> <p>Hours of Work → Employers shall not require workers to work more than the regular and overtime hours allowed by the law of the country where the workers are employed. The regular work week shall not exceed 48 hours. Employers shall allow workers at least 24 consecutive hours of rest in every seven-day period. All overtime work shall be consensual. Employers shall not request overtime on a regular basis and shall compensate all overtime work at a premium rate. Other than in exceptional circumstances, the sum of regular and overtime hours in a week shall not exceed 60 hours.</p> <p>Compensation → Every worker has a right to compensation for a regular work week that is sufficient to meet the worker's basic needs and provide some discretionary income. Employers shall pay at least the minimum wage or the appropriate prevailing wage, whichever is higher, comply with all legal requirements on wages, and provide any benefits required by law or contract. Where compensation does not meet workers' basic needs and provide some discretionary income, each employer shall work with the FLA to take appropriate actions that seek to progressively realize a level of compensation that does.</p> <p>IN ADDITION: the FLA outlined clear and detailed benchmarks that can be downloaded on its website.</p>	
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		How are these rights “monitored”?	1	<p>FLA member companies are expected to comply with all relevant and applicable laws and regulations of the country in which workers are employed and to implement the Fair Labor Code in their applicable facilities. When differences or conflicts in standards arise, affiliated companies are expected to apply the highest standard.</p> <p>VIII. ACCREDITATION CRITERIA AND STANDARDS FOR MONITORS</p> <p>Independence</p> <p>A prospective Independent Provider shall not be eligible to conduct independent external monitoring or assessments of the Facilities of a Participating Company or College or University Licensee unless such provider is independent from such Participating Company or College or University Licensee as well as its applicable licensees, contractors and suppliers</p> <p>Qualifying characteristics of Independent External Monitors</p> <p>Background knowledge Monitoring Workplace Conditions Analysis and Reporting Application Requirements for Prospective Independent External Monitors Accountability of Independent Providers</p> <p>Application Requirements for Independent External Monitors</p> <p>A prospective Independent External Monitor may seek accreditation to conduct monitoring in one or more countries, and for one or more areas of the Workplace Code.</p> <p>Accountability of Independent Providers</p> <p>An Independent Provider shall be accountable to the Association for professional misconduct or gross negligence in the conduct of its monitoring or assessments or the preparation or content of its monitoring or assessment reports. If a complaint concerning the professional misconduct or negligence of an Independent Provider is submitted to the Association, the Executive Director shall assess the reliability and</p>	<p>https://www.fairlabor.org/app/uploads/2022/03/fla-charter_revised_feb_2021.pdf</p> <p>https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/standards/manufacturing/mfg-code/</p>
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				<p>severity of the complaint and inform the provider of the contents of such complaint. In the event that the Executive Director determines that an Independent Provider has committed such alleged misconduct or negligence, the Executive Director shall recommend to the Board the appropriate sanction. The Board shall have the authority to restrict, suspend, and/or remove all or part of the accreditation of such Independent Provider.</p> <p>Nondisclosure by independent providers Accreditation Guidelines and Procedures for Independent Service Providers. Standards for FLA Assessors</p> <p>The monitoring process Monitoring Plan: Each Applicant shall submit to the Association for review and approval a Monitoring Plan that describes with specificity the Applicant’s proposed internal compliance program. The Monitoring Plan must describe the strategy and process by which the Applicant shall implement its compliance program in accordance with the Monitoring Principles. Internal Compliance Program: Each Participating Company shall implement an internal compliance program consistent with the Monitoring Principles covering all Applicable Facilities during the Initial Implementation Period. As part of its internal monitoring, the Participating Company shall conduct periodic internal monitoring visits of its Applicable Facilities in accordance with its Monitoring Plan covering all of its Facilities by the end of the Initial Implementation Period. Following the Initial Implementation Period, a Participating Company shall continue to fully implement the Monitoring Principles in all of its Applicable Facilities. Independent External Monitoring and Assessments: A Participating Company shall agree to subject its Applicable Facilities to monitoring visits and assessments conducted by Monitors. The FLA staff will determine which Facilities will be subject to independent external monitoring and assessments, based on risk factors and using a random sampling methodology, and will schedule and assign the monitoring visits and assessments to Monitors.</p>	
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				<p>Costs of Independent Monitoring and Assessments</p> <p>Reporting on Independent monitoring and assessments</p> <p>Following any period of special review, whether or not such period has been extended by the Board, the Board of Directors may terminate the participation of a Participating Company or Category B Licensee in the Association if the Participating Company or Category B Licensee has not effectively addressed the issues which required such special review period and the Board finds that the Participating Company or Category B Licensee is still not in Compliance with the Fair Labor Association Standards with respect to its Applicable Products. The fact that a Participating Company's or Category B Licensee's participation has been terminated shall be made public by the Association.</p> <p>NOTE: only accredited companies are monitored? This is not really clear so far.</p>	
		Are there agreements made to expand workers' rights further?	1		
		Are there efforts made to go from minimum wage to living wage?	1	<p>The FLA Workplace Code of Conduct states that workers have a right to compensation within a regular work week that is sufficient to meet their basic needs and have some discretionary income. Too often, workers in global supply chains earn poverty-level wages that are not sufficient to support themselves or their families.</p> <p>The FLA's fair compensation program wage data collection methodology focuses on collecting compensation data by worker occupation and pay periods. During 2019, affiliates collected data on each type of pay or benefit, such as basic or contract wages,</p>	

				incentive pay, in-kind and cash benefits, leave and overtime pay using the FLA’s wage data collection tool released in 2018. 10. DATA IS COLLECTED ON THIS, BUT DATA ITSELF AND NO OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS is provided?	
	<i>Efficacy</i>	To what extent do the rules address the issues at hand?	1	FLA itself states that Since its founding in 1999, the FLA has served as a “safe space” for honest dialogue that breaks down barriers and gets to the core of issues critical to improve working conditions and ensure better lives for workers and their families. HOWEVER, there exists significant criticisms with regards to this.	https://www.fairlabor.org/reports/2019-annual-report/
	<i>Enforcement</i>	Is compliance verified and noncompliance sanctioned?	1	YES , you have the accreditation program with extensive monitoring (see <i>Quality Work</i>). FLA Accreditation is a rigorous, multi-year process that evaluates a company’s systems to protect workers in its global supply chain. Accreditation is at the core of FLA’s work with agriculture and manufacturing companies. FLA publishes a comprehensive assessment report for each company that earns accreditation. The following reports document each company’s social compliance program as approved by the FLA Board of Directors. 1) Affiliate Headquarter Assessment: Assessments at headquarters and field offices to interview staff involved in compliance and in other functions, and to review documentation, processes, and database capabilities. In some cases, the offices of agents are visited as well. In countries where the FLA is not able to conduct in-person assessments, interviews are conducted by phone with company staff involved in compliance and in other functions. 2) FLA Factory-Level Assessments: Independent External Monitoring (IEM), Independent External Verification (IEV), and Sustainable Compliance Initiative (SCI) assessments are all sources of information on compliance issues and remediation efforts. 3) Annual Reports: Affiliate reports for each year of implementation provide data on the evolution of an affiliate’s compliance program in line with FLA Principles. 4) FLA Third Party Complaints: Where relevant, an affiliate’s involvement in, and	https://www.fairlabor.org/accountability/assessments/?report_type=accreditation-report

			<p>responsiveness to, FLA Third Party Complaints provide additional insight into compliance programs and remediation strategies.</p> <p>5) FLA Strategic Projects: Where relevant, an affiliate’s participation in FLA Strategic Projects provides opportunities to learn about the affiliate’s compliance strategies for detecting and remediating complex issues.</p> <p>6) Observation: Wherever possible, FLA staff accompanied affiliate compliance staff on internal audits, training sessions or remediation visits.</p> <p>7) Routine Interactions: Information on the affiliate’s compliance program has also been collected through discussions and interactions with affiliate compliance staff in the course of each year’s program. Exchanges with civil society organizations and other stakeholders interacting with the affiliate provide additional perspective.</p> <p>NONETHELESS, non-accredited member companies are also accountable through manufacturing assessments: FLA holds member companies accountable for enforcement of its Fair Labor Code in their supplier facilities.</p> <p>A rigorous system for assessing working conditions, remedying violations, and verifying progress includes visits to a random sample of facilities each year. The results of recent assessments are available here with each company’s corrective action plan (CAP) and progress updates.</p>	
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