



H&M is a global fashion company based in Sweden which currently comprises of six distinct fashion brands and more than 4,100 stores in 64 markets. Their stated aim is to make sustainable, good-quality fashion accessible and affordable and use their scale to help drive systemic change making the fashion industry economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

The company recognizes that incorporating sustainable development into their business strategy is of paramount importance, as they help ensure the longevity of their business and improve the lives of those whose work is directly or indirectly related to their activities. H&M's approach relies on a broad global vision and integration of the sustainability programs in all business functions programs. These are then tailored to each specific context, designing programs and initiatives in collaboration with relevant partners in order to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of their projects.

A key appeal of the SDGs is the broad consensus and global commitment they represent and the way they encourage an inclusive and collaborative approach to development.

"We were involved among the thousands of stakeholders who participated in the global consultations of the SDG agenda and we warmly welcome the SDGs and especially its collaborative focus where the role of all sectors, including the private sector, is very clear."

They recognise that the SDGs are very much in line with their existing priorities and provide a good framework when designing the business' strategy going forward and in finding new and innovative collaborations.

Case Study: Industrial Relations in Ethiopia

As part of a partnership agreement signed in 2014 by H&M and the International Labor Organization (ILO), H&M, ILO and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) have launched a program in Ethiopia aimed at improving industrial relations and social dialogue in the garment manufacturing sector where H&M's suppliers operate. The project, co-financed by H&M and SIDA, is being implemented by ILO in collaboration with the Ethiopian government, the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions and the Ethiopian Employers Federation, demonstrating the potential for multi-partner development projects that include UN agencies, governments, companies and civil society.

The project is assisting the relevant local and industry stakeholders in their efforts to promote social dialogue and improve productivity as well as improve wages and working conditions through nurturing sound labour relations practices and promoting collective bargaining. This will not only contribute to creating a socially

sustainable textile and garment industry in Ethiopia, but also create the necessary conditions for improving the quality of goods, increasing productivity, job satisfaction and overall social and economic development.

Within their Industrial Relations and Social Dialogue Program and in addition to their work with ILO and Sida in Ethiopia, Cambodia and Myanmar, H&M is also running industrial relations projects in factories in Bangladesh, India and China which include a significant training aspect, for instance educating workers on how to establish democratic elections for representatives and the creation of effective social dialogue between workers and employers. Based on their shared belief in the benefits and importance of a well-functioning social dialogue, H&M has also partnered with the trade unions IndustriALL Global Union and IF Metall through a Global Framework Agreement and are also a partner of the Global Deal initiative developed by the Swedish Prime Minister in cooperation with ILO and OECD launched in 2016.