

## PRIVATE SECTOR PEER LEARNING: MECHANISM PROFILES

### Sweden Textile Water Initiative (STWI)

**Description:** The [Sweden Textile Water Initiative](#) (STWI) established STWI Projects, a public-private partnership between the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Stockholm International Water Institute, and over 20 STWI brands and their suppliers. The initiative was started in 2010 by 34 Swedish textile and leather brands, with the Stockholm International Water Institute as the secretariat, to find joint solutions to water and environmental challenges in their global value chains. The initiative developed guidelines for water and wastewater supply chain management.

**Objective:** The STWI was launched with the aim to catalyse a shift toward environmentally sustainable production in major textile and leather industry production hubs. STWI Projects seek to improve water efficiency in between 120 and 160 textile and leather manufacturers in Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, and Turkey.

**Structure:** The initial two-year pilot phase from 2012 to 2014 involved a pilot project by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and three Swedish textile brands, which co-financed the project, and the Stockholm International Water Institute, which was the implementing partner and manager of funds. Likewise, STWI Projects are co-financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and participating brands and factories, while the Stockholm International Water Institute acts as the implementing partner.

**Partners:** Participation in STWI Projects is open to any fashion brand based in Sweden with operations in Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, India or Turkey.

**How it works:** The STWI has the following priorities: building knowledge on sustainable water use in the textile and leather industries, with continuously updated STWI guidelines – to improve water efficiency, prevent water pollution and improve wastewater treatment – and their increased international recognition; financial support for retailers and their suppliers in common projects for the development and implementation of the guidelines; building institutional capacities for improved decision making in industrial water governance at the national and provincial levels through governance and water risk assessments; offering a platform for exchange and communication on methods and case study results; and raising the water profile in global processes that address the environmental impact of the textile and leather industries.

**Monitoring and evaluation:** The two-year pilot phase was evaluated in 2015. The inception phase of the scaled-up STWI Projects has just finished and will be monitored and evaluated through annual reviews.

**Results:** The STWI guidelines were tested and implemented in the pilot project with three Swedish brands, Indiska, Lindex and KappAhl. The project, which was called Sustainable Water Resources Management for Textile Industries in Delhi and Jaipur, was proven successful for its water, chemical and energy savings and building an economic incentive model for suppliers to continue their efforts. According to the Stockholm International Water Institute, more than half of the participating factories will continue their efforts on their own and communicate their progress to brands in Sweden. Moreover, some of these factories have joined the STWI. Implementation of the guidelines has begun in more than 120 supplier factories of over 20 Swedish brands in Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, India and Turkey.

**Insights:** The initiative adopts a holistic approach that includes acting as an international level a norm-setter on sustainable water use and industrial water governance as well as offering technical support through knowledge exchange and finance to implement the guidelines in specific projects and build a motivational model on the nexus of water, chemicals, energy and financial savings. The STWI was able to build on momentum from the private sector. It harnessed the appetite of retailers to move from an auditing approach to something more proactive. Industry partners have been

**Development Assistance Committee member:** Sweden

**Duration:** 2012-17

**Budget:** Not available

**Geographic focus:** Bangladesh, China, Ethiopia, India and Turkey

**Sectoral focus:** Textile and leather industries

**Offered:** Support for the development and implementation of guidelines on sustainable water management

key to the success of the initiative, particularly in terms of getting suppliers – who are competitors – engaged. The STWI has worked to build confidence with suppliers, particularly regarding the acceptability of collaboration on sustainable production management.

**SOURCES:**

STWI (n.d.), Sweden Textile Water Initiative website, <http://stwi.se> (accessed 1 July 2016).

SIWI (n.d.), Stockholm International Water Institute website, [www.siwi.org](http://www.siwi.org) (accessed 1 July 2016).