

RESPECT – for more Responsible Purchasing Practices

RESPECT is a two-year project co-funded by the European Union Leonardo da Vinci program and led by the Fair Labor Association (FLA) and a coalition of several European institutions representing corporate social responsibility (CSR) experts, vocational training specialists, suppliers, and civil society organizations. Launched in November 2011, the project arose from the observation that aligning purchasing practices with CSR has not been achieved yet in most of the supply chains around the world. In the apparel and footwear industry for example, the supply chain calls for a more balanced power and more collaboration between stakeholders. Suppliers need ways to better express themselves and communicate about good practices; consumers seek to be better informed and have opportunities to support the process; and buyers often lack information on what good practices look like and seek new tools to reach a higher level of corporate responsibility.

FLA's Principles of Fair Labor and Responsible Sourcing holds affiliates responsible for aligning sourcing criteria and workplace standards, and RESPECT aims at helping companies to fill existing gaps. Through stakeholder engagement, the project will seek solutions and bring the responsible sourcing dialogue to the next level.

- **Objectives**

The project aims at developing innovative methodology and tools to help key stakeholders drive change in the way purchasing practices are operated in the supply chains. RESPECT will explore and test an approach inspired by the “open innovation” or collective intelligence concept to facilitate communication and collaboration among stakeholders: buyers, suppliers and consumers. The project will also collect vocational training content and best practices throughout activities in the two pilot countries - Turkey and Bulgaria - and tailor them for the apparel and footwear industries at the global level.

The project expected deliverables and outcomes are:

- Qualitative and quantitative field survey data (collected amongst key stakeholders: suppliers, buyers and consumers)
- Good practices and case studies
- Implementation matrix (linking purchasing practices to code of conduct implementation)
- Learning and improvement toolkit
- Vocational training content (buyers and suppliers)
- Innovative collaborative methodology and tools to stimulate stakeholder collaboration

- **Methodology**

The project is composed of different work packages that will lead to the final expected deliverables. Each project partner has its contribution and responsibility set in the project proposal. RESPECT follows an innovative framework with the following main components:

- 1) Needs analysis
- 2) Good practices and case studies
- 3) Qualitative and quantitative surveys amongst key stakeholders
- 4) Communication tools for stakeholder collaboration
- 5) Pilot seminars in the two target countries
- 6) Consolidation of methodology and toolkit

The RESPECT project is structured as a storyboard, divided into three Acts: 1) prologue, where existing gaps are identified in the purchasing process; 2) project development and implementation; and 3) deliverables.

Act 2 is divided into 3 scenes, each scene focusing more closely on one particular stakeholder.

- **Scene 1:** get input and good practices from suppliers through qualitative survey and onsite information gathering.
- **Scene 2:** reach out to consumers via collaborative communication channels – using data, info and illustrations collected with suppliers – and get their feedback through quantitative survey.
- **Scene 3:** present findings/synthesis to buyers and get their input on improving purchasing practices.

