

## Request for proposal

### **The development of a participatory tool to support action planning, implementation and monitoring, following a human rights risk assessment and analysis process in recycling value chains, focusing on the informal waste sector**

#### **Background**

Public awareness of the scale and impacts of plastic pollution is increasing. Companies are responding in various ways, including making ambitious commitments to increase the percentage of recycled content in their plastic packaging and goods. Many businesses are committed to supporting the development of an ambitious and legally binding United Nations Treaty to end plastic pollution. These drivers towards new ways of working will introduce or increase the number of waste pickers within company value chains.

There are at least 20 million informal waste pickers globally. In many contexts, waste pickers play a substantial role in the collection and recycling of plastics, collecting 60 per cent of the plastic collected globally for recycling. While carrying out a vital environmental and public health role, these waste pickers are vulnerable to a broad range of severe human rights impacts.

In November 2022, the [Fair Circularity Initiative](#) (FCI) was launched by The Coca-Cola Company, PepsiCo, Unilever and Nestlé, and convened by Tearfund. The FCI brings businesses together around the aim of ensuring the human rights of workers within the informal waste sector are respected and their critical role in circular value chains is recognised. At the heart of this initiative are the [Fair Circularity Principles](#) (the Principles). At the launch of the FCI, the four companies publicly committed to advance and adopt these guiding principles in their value chains, in collaboration with waste picker organizations, and to report on their progress annually.

The Principles apply the expectations and responsibilities of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) to the informal waste sector. The UNGPs make clear that while states have a duty to protect individuals within their territory from human rights harms, companies also have a separate, independent responsibility to respect human rights throughout their operations and value chains. All corporate actors in plastics recycling value chains are connected to the human rights impacts experienced by informal waste sector workers, and there is therefore a responsibility under the UNGPs to act.

Tearfund research suggests that while there are a plethora of responsible business tools and approaches being used by companies in their human rights due diligence practices with formal value chain partners, there remains a lack of publicly available resources for companies to use to map, assess and manage human rights risks and impacts amongst workers within informal value chains.

## Tools to support waste picker rights in recycled plastic value chains

In order to ensure human rights due diligence throughout all relevant value chains, we believe that tools and guidance are needed to guide companies through the following process:

- Stage 1: MAPPING of plastic waste value chains and stakeholders in a specific context.
- Stage 2: PARTICIPATORY ASSESSMENT and ANALYSIS of human rights risks, root causes and priority concerns of waste pickers in particular contexts.
- Stage 3:
  - PARTICIPATORY ACTION PLANNING to address human rights risks and waste picker priorities.
  - IMPLEMENTATION of action plans.
  - MONITORING, VERIFICATION and REPORTING.

Tearfund has already commissioned the production of tools to enable companies to identify and map the actors in their value chains, with a particular focus on informal sector workers (Stage 1) and to carry out participatory assessment and analysis of human rights risks, root causes and priority concerns of waste pickers in particular contexts (Stage 2).

### **Stage 3: A tool for participatory action planning, implementation and monitoring following a human rights risk assessment and analysis process.**

This Stage 3 tool will provide guidance on the steps that a company (or a proxy - see 'Audience' below) should take to develop and implement a corrective and preventive action plan once the plastic recycling value chain mapping and participatory human rights assessment and analysis exercise is complete. The tool will also enable companies to monitor the effectiveness of action implementation.

**Audience:** Given the power imbalance between large companies and waste pickers, and the sensitivities involved in assessing and analysing human rights impacts in a participatory way, it is envisaged that a company will need to commission a third party - most probably an NGO - to assist in the implementation of this tool.

#### **Approach:**

- The tool should be as clear and practical as possible.
- It should outline: the purpose of the tool, the methods for prioritising the human rights risks and root causes identified in Stage 2 and ensuring the participation of the affected rights-holders to create meaningful action plans.

- It must draw on the framework of the UNGPs (eg prioritisation is focussed on the severity<sup>1</sup> of harm to people.)
- It should give guidance on aligning the action plan with the [Fair Circularity Principles](#).
- The tool should ensure that actions are planned with a gender lens given the particular human rights impacts faced by female waste pickers.
- It should assess what will be required to implement the action plan and consider local contexts.
- This manual version of the tool should be designed with a future option to convert into an online format in mind, particularly in terms of the monitoring stage and future reporting requirements under the Fair Circularity Initiative.
- The action planning and implementation tool must be participatory. Throughout the process of human rights due diligence, the UNGPs are clear that businesses should be engaging with directly affected stakeholders at each stage. Where they are unable to engage directly, they should engage with credible proxies (i.e., stakeholders who can effectively represent the perspectives of directly affected stakeholders) and/or issue experts.

## Outputs

A draft guidance resource/“tool” that will define actions planned to prevent and address human rights impacts based on waste picker input and establish indicators with timelines for the implementation of the required actions. The tool will support and guide companies and other stakeholders to implement the final stage of the three-stage human rights due diligence process; participatory action planning, implementation and monitoring. The indicators will align to a continuous feedback mechanism enabling informal waste worker feedback and to ensure continuous improvement of human rights for waste pickers within company value chains.

## Consultant(s)

We invite quotes from a consultant or organisation with:

- ***Expertise in human rights due diligence***  
We are looking for consultant(s) with an excellent understanding of, and expertise in, human rights due diligence processes in company value chains, and the tools currently available to support these.
- ***Understanding of the informal waste sector***  
They will also have an excellent understanding of the informal waste sector - the vital role waste pickers play, as well as the human rights challenges they face
- ***Experience in developing ‘tools’ - guidance/resources***

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<sup>1</sup> Severity might result from the gravity or seriousness of harm (i.e., the ‘gap’ between international standards and the situation for stakeholders on the ground); the scale of harm (i.e., the number of people affected), OR the irremediability of harm (if the harm occurred, could it be made right?). A second factor is likelihood: how likely is it that the harm will occur? The result of this analysis provides businesses with a set of priority human rights impacts that the business should immediately focus on.

The consultant(s) will have experience in the development of participatory tools or practical guidance and resources, and they will have excellent English written communication skills.

### Resources and timeline

The budget for this project is £8,000 and we propose the following timeline:

Project phase	Activity	By when
RFP	Proposals received by Tearfund	23rd August 2023
	Award notification	25th August 2023
Phase 1	Briefing meeting with Tearfund	29 August 2023
	Outline proposal of the tool to be produced and process to be followed	4 September 2023
	Comments from Tearfund on outline	8 September 2023
Phase 2	Draft 1 of tool	21 September 2023
	Comments from Tearfund and others	28 September 2023
Phase 3	Delivery of final tool taking on board comments from Tearfund and others	12 October 2023
	Learning review	23 October 2023

### Submission details

Please submit a bid explaining:

1. Your relevant experience and expertise (max 1 page). If more than one person will work on this project, please also name the individuals that will conduct the research and their related experience/expertise. Please also include CVs.
2. The approach that you will take to the project, referencing (or attaching) any similar work that you intend to draw on (1-2 pages, with further information as annexes if required).
3. A breakdown of your costs including the number of days and the day rates for each individual as well as other relevant costs.

Please send these to [lorraine.tew@tearfund.org](mailto:lorraine.tew@tearfund.org) by the end of Wednesday 23 August 2023.