

A Framework for Socially Responsible Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chains



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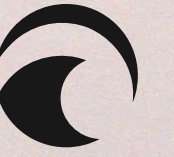
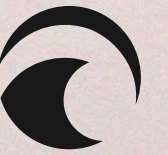


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NextWave Plastics is an industry-led, open-source collaboration among leading technology companies and consumer brands to develop the first global network of ocean-bound plastics supply chains. Convened by Lonely Whale, this consortium aims to keep plastic in our economy and out of the ocean and has committed to preventing a minimum of 25,000 tons of plastic waste from entering the ocean by 2025 across countries most impacted by plastic pollution. Members include Dell Technologies, Bureo, CPI Card Group, Herman Miller, HP Inc., Humanscale, IKEA, Interface, Solgaard and Trek Bicycle.

Core to the success of this ambition is the development of, and investment in, equitable, socially responsible supply chains that consider the health, safety and well-being of workers all the way to the point of collection. In service of this commitment is the development of this Framework for Socially Responsible Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chains.

This document was initially developed by members of the NextWave Plastics Social Responsibility Working Group and reviewed by key external content experts.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS



Photo Credit HP Inc.

DEFINITION OF TERMS



Aggregator

A business that gathers together and sorts waste collected from Waste Pickers or from other Aggregators.

Child Labor

Light to strenuous work performed by those under the age of 14 (ILO), which makes it difficult for a child to attend school, or limits their attendance, including those employed in largely unseen domestic work. In many countries, children are required to help their parents earn income, but it cannot be at the expense of their safety, education or rights to be children.

Diagnostics

The initial phase of an engagement with an Ocean-Bound Plastic Supplier, focused on building clear communication and trust, both with the Supplier and the extended Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chain network. This phase should include in-person site visits, stakeholder engagement, as well as research that provides clarity on where a supply chain is on the Maturity Map and determines their readiness for social responsibility interventions.

End User

Company that purchases recovered ocean plastic or ocean-bound plastic for use in packaging or finished products.

Fair and Predictable Payment

Wages, or payment per kilogram of collected material, that compensates all workers in a timely, fair and consistent manner,

regardless of gender. Offering fair and predictable remuneration for goods and services, or fair wages, means that workers can earn at least the daily minimum wage by selling material recovered in a full day of work. At aggregation facilities, rates are properly posted, and payment is paid only in legal tender.

Formalization

A context-specific process applicable to enterprises and/or employment that can include registration, taxation, organization and representation, legal frameworks, social and labor protections and bargaining mechanisms, occupational safety, the provision of contracts, the provision of access to public space, and more. ([WIEGO](#))

Harmful Child Labor

Child labor (as defined above) that is at the expense of a child's safety, education, or rights to be children. Many children engaged in harmful work experience its worst forms - including slavery, forced and bonded work, child trafficking, illicit activities, and involvement in armed conflict and sexual exploitation. ([Save the Children](#))

Inclusion

The act or practice of recognizing and including in system planning and contracting those people who have been or might be excluded because of their race, ethnicity, gender, faith, sexuality, ability or occupational or social status. Inclusion is not a one-time effort, but a sustained structural process for identifying and establishing permanent pathways for the integration of marginalized actors.

DEFINITION OF TERMS



Informal Economy

The diversified set of economic activities, enterprises, jobs and workers that are not regulated or protected by the state. The concept originally applied to self-employment in small unregistered enterprises. It has been expanded to include wage employment in unprotected jobs and includes anyone who is operating in an economy that is unregulated, unregistered, and unmonitored from a compliance or oversight perspective ([WIEGO](#)).

Informal Waste Sector

The Informal Waste Sector includes collection of waste from residences, businesses, landfills, the ground or a collection point, and transport of the material to an aggregation, processing, transfer, or disposal site. The Informal Waste Sector is the aspect of a waste economy that encompasses work done by unregistered enterprises or by workers, often Waste Pickers, who lack social and labor protections. It can also include semi-formal entities, such as cooperatives, that may be registered but oftentimes cannot meet all the obligations of social protection.



International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions

International labor standards are legal instruments drawn up by the ILO's constituents (governments, employers and workers) that set out basic principles and rights at work. These include Conventions (or Protocols), which are legally binding international treaties that may be ratified by member states. The ILO Governing Body has identified eight “fundamental” Conventions, covering subjects that are considered to be fundamental principles and rights at work, including: freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labor; the effective abolition of child labor; and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. ([ILO](#))

Key Goal

The set of conditions that characterize a socially responsible Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chain that promotes safe working conditions and provides decent livelihoods through to the collection level. These include freely chosen employment; fair and predictable payment; beneficial health and safety conditions; prioritized child welfare; strong business ethics, traceability and documentation; and support for marginalized populations. These goals provide the foundation for the structure and recommendations of this Framework.

Living Wage

The payment received for a standard work week by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and their family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transport, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events.

DEFINITION OF TERMS



Maturity - Low

A metric for Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chains that characterizes the level of social responsibility protections present down to the Waste Picker level. Low maturity supply chains are informal waste collection and recycling operations with little to no protections for Waste Workers and minimal traceability and documentation. Further criteria explained in the Maturity Map.

Maturity - Medium

A metric for Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chains that characterizes the level of social responsibility protections present down to the Waste Picker level. Medium maturity supply chains are informal waste collection and recycling operations with sufficient protections for Waste Workers and basic traceability and documentation. Further criteria explained in the Maturity Map.

Maturity - High

A metric for Ocean-Bound Plastic Supply Chains that characterizes the level of social responsibility protections present down to the Waste Picker level. High maturity supply chains are formal or informal waste collection and recycling operations with comprehensive protections for Waste Workers and consistent traceability and documentation. These supply chains have ideally reached formalization to the extent possible given the systemic conditions in the geography. Further criteria available in the Maturity Map.

Ocean-Bound Plastic (OBP)

Plastic that has not yet found its way into the ocean and is classified as “mismanaged waste.” That is, plastic that is not already collected by municipalities or another recognized entity, is not likely to be collected, and found within 50 kilometers of a waterway or coastal area. Although it is not the primary focus of this Framework, due to the high rate of fishing gear abandonment, used fishing gear reclaimed from small-scale or community fisheries, or locations where proper infrastructure for disposal was not previously available, is also included in the definition of ocean-bound plastic.

Ocean Plastic

Plastic that has already found its way into the ocean or other waterway (e.g., lake, river).

Ocean-Bound Plastic Supplier (or “Supplier”)

Suppliers of ocean-bound plastic typically reference the raw material recycler who sorts, processes and prepares the plastic for shipment to an end user or another downstream supplier of the end user. The plastic is eventually used in the end product for sale to consumers or another company.

Ocean-Bound Plastic (OBP) Supply Chain

The entire ocean-bound plastic supply chain - starting with waste pickers/collectors, through aggregators, and finally to recyclers - who sort and prepare the plastic for sale for use in place of other recycled or virgin polymers.

DEFINITION OF TERMS



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. In Informal Waste Sectors appropriate PPE includes shoes or boots of appropriate size, shape, material, and condition to protect workers' feet and lower legs; flexible gloves, preferably made of thick cloth as opposed to plastic, to protect the hand, wrist and lower arm; protective masks to minimize the risks of respiratory problems associated with smoke inhalation; and collective protection equipment such as containers or sites to store and/or quarantine collected materials before sorting.

Recycler

A specialized materials recovery facility that receives, separates, and processes recyclable materials for sale to end users. Processing may include baling, washing, and grinding plastic material, as well as extruding plastic resin pellets.

Sorter

A worker who is employed or contracted by an aggregator or recycler, that receives, separates, and prepares recyclable materials for further processing. Physical labor includes sorting plastic by material type and color, removing labels and caps, and more.

Source Mapping

The process of engaging across companies and suppliers to document the exact source of every material, process, and shipment involved in bringing ocean-bound plastic and ocean-bound plastic goods to market.

Stakeholder Mapping

A tool used to identify and categorize the various stakeholders involved in and or impacted by an ocean-bound plastic supply chain. A stakeholder map typically includes identification of the stakeholder groups, the interests they represent, the amount of power they possess, whether they represent inhibiting or supporting factors for an ethical supply chain, and methods for interacting with them.

Supplier

See Ocean-Bound Plastic Supplier.

Supply Chain Mapping

Supply chain mapping is the process of creating a full picture of the companies, organizations, and individuals within the supply chain at every tier. In the case of an ocean plastic supply chain, it should include recyclers, aggregators, organizations of waste pickers, as well as individual waste pickers.

Transparency

Documentation and disclosure of both progress and setbacks, which allows for open communication about and accountability for labor practices, financial transactions and recycled ocean-bound plastic material tracking from the point of collection.

Underage Worker

A collector or worker in a formal or informal supply chain who is less than 14 years of age, or under the age of minimum employment in the country of work, whichever is greater. ([ILO](#))

DEFINITION OF TERMS



Photo Credit: Jon Khoo, Interface

United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on Dec. 10, 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. It sets out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected. ([UN](#))

Marginalized Populations

The group of people within the ocean-bound plastic supply chain whose interests are not considered, who are not in a position to protect their own interests, and who are discriminated against, abused, or taken advantage of due to gender, immigration or refugee status, ethnicity, age, economic status, occupation, ability, housing

status or other factors such as prisoner status, drug abuse, poverty, and disabilities.

Waste Sector

The combined formal and informal waste sector for collecting, sorting, transporting and selling recyclable materials within an economy. For purposes of this document, the waste sector refers specifically to recovered ocean-bound plastic materials.

Waste Picker

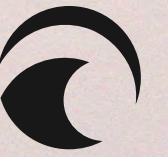
A person who collects and sells recyclable materials, usually within the informal sector. Waste pickers can be unorganized or autonomous, picking materials on the streets or in dumpsites. They can also be organized, working through cooperatives and associations to provide formal, semi-formal or informal waste management services. Some waste picker organizations are contracted by the government or the private sector to provide services.

Waste Worker

A formal or informal worker in the ocean-bound plastic supply chain from collection through sorting, cleaning, and shipping. Waste Workers can be unaffiliated or organized, working through cooperatives and associations to provide formal, semi-formal, or informal waste management services.

Young Worker

Children between 15 and 18 years of age who are engaged in work.



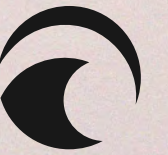
INTRODUCTION



Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)



INTRODUCTION



In 2017, NextWave Plastics set out to turn off the tap on marine plastic pollution by keeping plastic in the economy and out of the ocean. Based on transparency and radical, open-source collaboration, this cross-industry consortium of multinational brands aims to develop the first global network of ocean-bound plastic supply chains by integrating ocean-bound plastic (OBP) into products and demonstrating that OBP carries commercial value. Core to the success of this ambition is the development of, and investment in, equitable, socially responsible supply chains that consider the health, safety and well-being of workers all the way to the point of collection.

We define OBP as plastic that has not yet found its way into the ocean, but that is not likely to be collected by a formal waste management system and is found within 50 kilometers - or 31 miles - of a coastal area. The absence of a formal waste management system means that sourcing recovered plastic waste for use in new products is likely to depend on the informal waste sector.

There are approximately 20 million waste pickers globally who manage 50-100% of waste in many cities, **filling critical waste management gaps**. In 2016, waste pickers were responsible for **60% of global recycling**.

These services are essential to keep plastic waste from entering the ocean. They are an agile solution to pollution in public spaces or informal settlements that lack waste collection services and infrastructure, as streets are often too narrow for garbage trucks and local citizens or municipalities cannot always afford it. Despite these contributions, waste pickers generally lack recognition for their important existing role in waste management systems, and tend to be excluded from the planning and implementation of these systems as

Photo Credit: OceanCycle



INTRODUCTION



they develop. The conditions that lead individuals to become informal waste pickers can be complex and entwined with structural issues, especially poverty and gender inequality, across different geographies.

OBP supply chains will often rely on a workforce that is at risk for social and economic exploitation and exposed to degraded environmental conditions. Given that these waste pickers have never benefited from formal compliance systems or oversight, additional care is needed to ensure social responsibility throughout the supply chain. However, existing corporate evaluations primarily focus solely on identifying and addressing risks in a factory setting. Due to the informal and distributed nature of informal waste sectors, there is a need for customized solutions that speak to the specific context of each OBP supply chain as well as an acknowledgment that systemic changes in this sector are going to take time and require inputs from a variety of organizations.



NextWave member companies are committed to sourcing OBP that not only protects the ocean from plastic pollution, but also ensures that social responsibility protections within these innovative supply chains are inclusive of all the workers involved in waste management.

For this reason, members of NextWave are taking action by creating the NextWave Plastics framework for socially responsible ocean-bound plastic supply chains whose vision is guided by two major principles: **protection for and inclusion of waste workers and increased business transparency.**

Photo Credit: OceanCycle



INTRODUCTION



SCOPE

The Framework applies to informal waste collection, sorting and aggregation of recyclable OBP¹, and includes the following:

1. A vision for socially responsible OBP supply chains;
2. A roadmap for how to implement a developmental approach for OBP supply chains, including:
 - a. A maturity map, which provides a deeper look into the potential concerns and eventual goals for OBP supply chains;
 - b. Success metrics to evaluate supplier maturity; and
 - c. A continuous improvement process for optimizing informal supply chains for social responsibility.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

This Framework is designed for business-to-consumer and business-to-business brands and manufacturers interested in the development of OBP supply chains that provide for the social responsibility of all workers through to the point of collection. This Framework is also meant for organizations interested in direct investment and engagement in OBP supply chain development, especially those seeking partners and guidance for how to create on-the-ground impact throughout a nascent supply chain.

¹ Evaluating partners to ensure they have sufficient awareness of the unique needs of informal waste sectors will be an important step in determining the right partner organization. Prospective partners with a track record of success in OBP supply chains are suggested in this document. In addition to partners with experience in informal waste sectors, eligible partners may include those with experience in industries that face similar concerns, such as agriculture and handworkers.

Supply chain social responsibility experts will benefit from using this Framework by reaching beyond established standards for evaluating factory settings to understand, evaluate and develop programs to improve informal and/or low maturity supply chains. This Framework recognizes the importance of informal waste collection as a critical waste management function and guides the implementation of supply chains that work to protect and serve all workers in this recycled material supply chain.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document should be used as a guide for anyone who is working with OBP suppliers. Considered a “living document,” we are seeking continual feedback from those who leverage this document to ensure their supply chains are effectively considering the needs and interests of the people and businesses most affected throughout the supply chain.

Due to the range of circumstances across geographies and OBP supply chains, it is not possible to account for every circumstance, risk, potential partner, etc., that may arise in the effort to responsibly source OBP. As such, the aim is to provide end users and OBP supply chain participants with a resource that helps guide them to focus on the most critical issues, ask the right questions, diagnose challenges, and develop and implement action plans to continuously evolve OBP sourcing. The stakeholders and partners to engage in each phase of this scope will depend on the specific supply chain engagement at hand and the particular needs of the social responsibility intervention. In all cases, stakeholder representation from across the informal waste sector, including waste pickers, will be essential. Implementation



INTRODUCTION



partners recognized and trusted by NextWave Plastics are offered as suggestions throughout the Framework, although these should not be considered a comprehensive list.

HOW TO PROVIDE INPUT

This Framework is intended to be a living document.

You can provide input and offer recommendations by contacting

hello@nextwaveplastics.org.



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VISION FOR SOCIALLY
RESPONSIBLE
OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC
SUPPLY CHAINS



VISION FOR SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC SUPPLY CHAINS



Our vision is that ocean-bound plastic (OBP) suppliers, the OBP supply chain network and end users achieve safe working conditions, inclusion, and decent work and livelihoods for all individuals across the OBP supply chain and through to the collection level.

This vision is grounded in the framing provided by the [ILO Conventions](#) and [UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and is guided by the principles of:

- **Protection and Inclusion for Waste Workers** - All workers in the informal waste sector deserve health and safety protections, opportunities for representation and organization, labor protections, beneficial livelihoods, just work and fair compensation.
- **Increased Business Transparency** - Transparency, traceability, and documentation are the foundation for greater trust in the supply chain and more effective social responsibility interventions.



Photo Credit: HP Inc



VISION FOR SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC SUPPLY CHAINS



When the vision is attained, the following key goals² will be realized:

- 1 **Freely Chosen Employment**
Ensuring that all work is conducted without threats, restrictions, exploitation, fees, or fraud;
- 2 **Fair and Predictable Payment**
All workers shall be compensated for work they have performed in a timely, fair, and consistent manner, regardless of gender or other identity factors;
- 3 **Beneficial Health and Safety Conditions**
Minimize and actively prevent injury and illnesses, create conditions that remove or reduce health risks, and increase the availability or access to healthcare services
- 4 **Prioritized Child Welfare**
Prevention of harmful child labor, including work done by underage children and hazardous work by young workers, while maximizing opportunities for education and childcare, health, and sustainable fairly remunerated livelihoods for adult family members;
- 5 **Strong Business Ethics, Traceability and Documentation**
Conducting all business interactions with integrity, transparency, documentation and without improper advantage (e.g., not using bribes to receive contracts or withholding payment for fair work); and
- 6 **Support for Marginalized Populations**
Respect, recognition, inclusivity, and additional protections for worker populations that are discriminated against, taken advantage of, or abused.

In developing this vision, we recognized the following:

- In many geographies, waste collection and sorting are handled to a large extent by the informal waste sector. With that in mind, achievement of our vision necessitates a more concerted focus within that sector to identify the most serious and most common issues affecting people and businesses. This recognition has resulted in creation of this living document that provides end users and suppliers clarity for the conditions they can effectuate and seeks input on a continual basis to ensure we are addressing the evolving, most acute, and critical issues.
- The importance of taking a developmental approach to supply chain creation, management, and advancement in order to increase a community’s capacity to address the adverse societal and systemic risks that exist in many informal waste sectors. As such, guidelines for implementing a developmental approach are laid out in the roadmap to a socially responsible OBP supply chain in alignment with this vision.

² All of the key goals identified here are important, but they are ordered in such a way to create the most benefit. It is critical to note that many of the key goals will be interdependent. For example, child welfare is a top priority, but child labor risks are often related to lack of fair remuneration for adult workers which requires children to work to supplement family income, so attaining fair and predictable payment will be critical to supporting all workers and instrumental in achieving beneficial child welfare.

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THE ROADMAP TO A
SOCIALY RESPONSIBLE
OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC
SUPPLY CHAIN



THE ROADMAP TO A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC SUPPLY CHAIN



OVERVIEW

In order to meet the key goals laid out in the vision for socially responsible ocean-bound plastic (OBP) supply chains, NextWave Plastics has developed this roadmap to inform the practice of progressing along the path. This includes working with partners and suppliers to implement social responsibility throughout the collection, sorting, and aggregation of OBP, especially as it applies to the informal waste sector.

The roadmap includes three main parts, as defined briefly here and discussed in greater detail in the following chapters:

1 Supply Chain Maturity Map: The maturity map characterizes the real-world conditions found in the informal waste sector from low to medium to high maturity. This map highlights commonly found risks (low-medium maturity) and lays out a path toward a goal state (medium-high maturity). This map is intended to inform the continuous improvement process, as well as provide context for effective use of the success metrics

2 Success Metrics: The success metrics provide a tool for supplier evaluation of the six key goals laid out in the vision. These questions can be used for evaluation during the initial diagnostics and at key checkpoints throughout continuous improvement, especially during monitoring and evaluation.

3

4-Phase Continuous Improvement Process: The continuous improvement process lays out the following steps for end users and their partners to foster socially responsible OBP supply chains:

i Diagnostics - Assessing the informal waste sector and the specific social, cultural, and environmental conditions in the particular geography;

ii Plan of Action - Developing a plan of action, in collaboration with stakeholders across the OBP supply chain, including informal workers, to address gaps, and reach key goals;

iii Implementation - Implementing the plan of action in collaboration with all members of the OBP supply chain, NGOs, government, and other relevant partners; and

iv Monitoring, Evaluation and Feedback - Monitoring and evaluating progress toward the key goals, in order to learn what is or is not proving successful and adjust the plan of action for continuous improvement in OBP supply chains



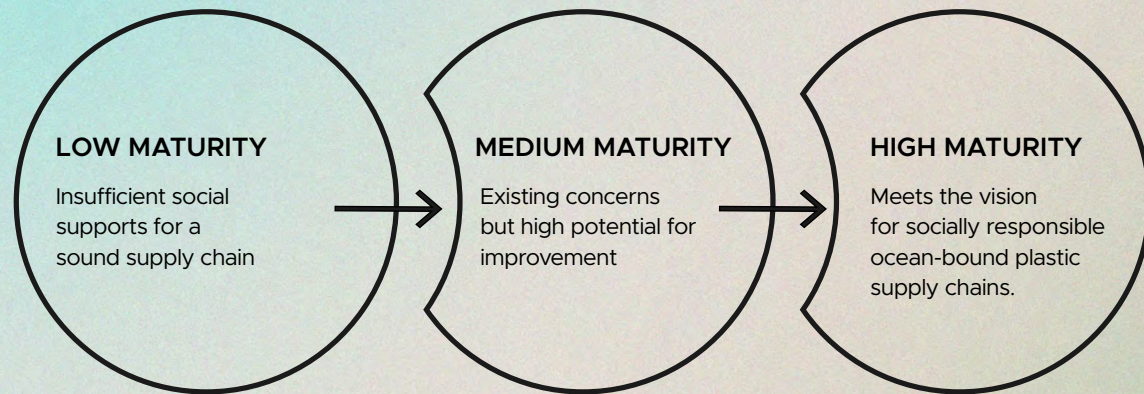
THE ROADMAP TO A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE OCEAN-BOUND PLASTIC SUPPLY CHAIN



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP

Building a scalable supply chain for recycled ocean-bound plastic (OBP) where waste management is dependent on an informal waste sector means that the existing conditions are unlikely to align with formal corporate social responsibility standards designed for factory settings.

As outlined below, the supply chain maturity map describes the characteristics or conditions that one might encounter in an informal waste sector for each of the six key goals of the vision³. Aligned with each goal, the supply chain maturity map begins with a description of the low maturity conditions in underdeveloped OBP supply chains and moves through descriptions of medium and high maturity conditions that align with socially responsible OBP supply chains.

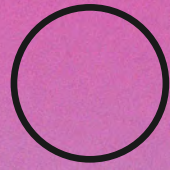


When put into practice, the maturity map will guide the 4-phase continuous improvement process by:

- Providing the context for understanding where a target OBP supply chain is starting during diagnostics;
- Identifying appropriate goals for the plan of action and implementation; and
- Understanding progress through monitoring, evaluation and feedback.

The primary goal of this map is to illustrate a socially responsible or high maturity OBP supply chain, as well as the stages an OBP supply chain may go through to achieve each of the key goals of the vision. A key goal will be “realized” when the supply chain reaches the high maturity or formalized state for that goal. This map will guide end users in realizing the vision of a socially responsible OBP supply chain by achieving the high maturity state across each of the key goals as quickly as possible.

³ As encountered by NextWave members and their partners when evaluating and implementing a developmental approach in OBP supply chains.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



FREELY CHOSEN EMPLOYMENT

Due to the informal nature of OBP waste collection, many people who rely on waste picking for their livelihoods live in poverty and may be vulnerable to exploitation with few opportunities or power to pursue recourse. Socially responsible OBP supply chains ensure that all work is conducted without threats, restrictions, exploitation, fees, or fraud.

Low Maturity Informal Waste Sector

No efforts exist by leaders in the OBP supply chain (e.g., aggregators, sorting facility owners, recyclers) to prevent the occurrence of forced labor. There are no channels to report forced labor and if forced labor is reported, retaliation occurs. Workers may not report they are in a forced labor situation because they do not know the laws or are reluctant to access government programs due to fear and/or distrust. Employers or other leaders of the OBP supply chain may provide housing (e.g., in illegal dumpsites) or offer large loans to waste pickers, which can easily lead to indentured work conditions. There are few or no opportunities for informal workers to access social or labor protections, be recognized in contracts or seek other methods of formalization of their work. Additional risk factors may include employers retaining workers' original documents as a guarantee for repayment of advance wages and higher instances of captive drug use and dependency.

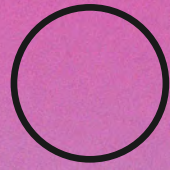
Medium Maturity Informal Waste Sector

There is a target or policy in place at the recycler level to prevent forced labor in the OBP supply chain, but some implementation components or enforcement may be lacking. Recognition of and

contracts with local waste picker organizations increase, promoting opportunities for formalized work. Regular check-ins with the collector community confirm freely chosen labor in most cases. Monitoring of the program is in place, but communication, supporting data systems, and closed-loop corrective actions are not robust or complete. Aggregators may not respond to inquiries in a timely manner. Channels to report forced labor exist, but are not fully efficient or transparent (i.e., retaliation still occurs or the channel is not properly designed to allow the identification of the person reporting forced labor).

High Maturity Informal/Formal Waste Sector

Labor and social protections, contracts, and legal frameworks are provided such that informal workers can choose if they want to work formally. There is a system, policy, and ongoing training program to prevent forced labor with the ability for suppliers and brands higher in the OBP supply chain to measure effectiveness. Contracts between recyclers and aggregators have forced labor clauses in them and include local waste picker organizations. Regular check-ins with the collector community demonstrate freely chosen labor, access to formal work, and a pathway to formalization for informal workers in most cases. Waste pickers and workers can clearly explain the opportunities for formalization and their rights. Waste pickers and sorters have access to a reporting system for forced labor violations. Reporting forced labor is effective and does not lead to retaliation. Forced labor policy meets or exceeds local laws and regulations. Aggregators may be enlisted as supporters and champions of this policy. Workers have their original documents in possession at all times.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



FAIR AND PREDICTABLE PAYMENT

Waste pickers' earnings vary widely between regions, by the type of work they do, and for women and men. In some countries, waste pickers provide the only form of solid waste collection, providing public benefits and contributing to local economies, public health and safety, and environmental sustainability. However, low rates of payment for material collection mean that few waste pickers are able to earn a living wage. In socially responsible OBP supply chains, all workers are compensated for work they have performed in a timely, fair, and consistent manner, regardless of gender.

Low Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Market drives collector rates with large changes exhibited. No specific compensation policies are in place. Workers are not consistently paid correctly, directly, or on time. Wages may not be paid in cash or legal tender (e.g., in-kind or in exchange for housing). Differences in payment exist between work done by women and men. There is no minimum price per kilogram or hour of work set. Work hours do not comply with local laws and regulations. Workers are not able to cover basic living costs for themselves and their family despite working full-time. Men and women experience differences in payment for equivalent work, employment opportunities, and access to finance and resources or equipment because of their gender. Where occupational segregation exists, female-dominated sectors are more undervalued compared with similar male-dominated sectors.

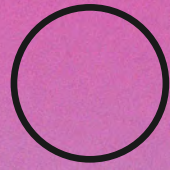
Medium Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Market drives collector rates, but compensation policies from aggregators are in place and clearly communicated in terms that

waste pickers understand. Changes in rates and material needs are clearly communicated. Compensation is directly paid to workers and is generally accurately calculated or recorded. No differences in compensation exist between work completed by women versus men. No minimum price per kilogram or hour of work is set. On site work hours are set and tracked, and workers work less than 48 hours per week in alignment with ILO Convention.

High Maturity Informal/Formal Waste Sector

Adequate and effective compensation policies and practices are in place. Wages are directly paid to workers on time and are accurately calculated and recorded. Workers can explain their wages. A minimum price per kilogram for payment directly to waste pickers is established. Payment of the established rate is monitored and enforced. Contracts with waste picker organizations include compensation for the provision of services as well as the quantity of material collected. Waste pickers are able to earn a "living wage" from full-time work. Living wages are calculated for each specific location based on the resources available to workers, legal minimum wage, and other local conditions



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



BENEFICIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONDITIONS

Ocean-bound plastic collection poses many health risks. Informal waste pickers are exposed to hazardous materials and dangerous conditions, such as medical waste, toxic fumes, and risks posed by fires, unstable surfaces, and trucks in open dumps. Adding to these challenges, many waste pickers lack access to healthcare to properly treat cuts, infections, or other injuries. Socially responsible OBP supply chains minimize and actively prevent injury and illnesses, create conditions that remove or reduce health risks, and increase the availability or access to healthcare services for all workers through the collection level.

Low Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Limited health and safety communication exists without a management system to monitor effectiveness or understanding by key audiences. Workers are not provided PPE and may be responsible for paying for their own PPE. Waste pickers do not receive ongoing training on health and safety or proper PPE use. There is a high level of job-related accidents. Some waste pickers take collected waste home to sort or store, introducing dangers to the home.

In sorting facilities, there are cases of unsafe machinery operation and first-aid equipment is not available. Healthy temperature, air quality, bathroom, or drinking water conditions are not provided. Alcohol and drug consumption at work are not prohibited.

Medium Maturity Informal Waste Sector

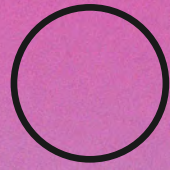
Recurring training that communicates key health and safety principles relevant to work conditions and the value of PPE is offered to informal waste sector workers involved in collection and sorting. A monitoring system for effectiveness may be missing. Workers have PPE and a way to access

replacement equipment but may not always use it. Workers report they do not pay for their PPE. Waste pickers have access to space to sort and store collected material. A health and safety committee does not exist.

High Maturity Informal/Formal Waste Sector

Recurring health and safety training is offered to informal waste sector workers involved in collection and sorting, which communicates comprehensive health and safety, including the value of PPE, proper ergonomics and infrastructure use, first aid, etc. There is an active monitoring system to assess training effectiveness. Workers have PPE, can access more PPE when needed, and can explain how to use it. Workers report they do not pay for their PPE. A health and safety committee made up of a combination of aggregators and waste pickers (including both men and women in representative numbers) exists to promote increased safety and access to health care systems. Injury data, disaggregated by sex and other relevant factors for the supply chain in question, is collected and shared to ensure understanding of where and in what way gender or other factors are fueling differences in treatment, rights, and protections. Injury reporting includes injury type, severity and rate of occurrence, plus documentation of [violence and harassment in the world of work](#). Solutions are in place to ensure that everyone, including waste pickers, have access to medical health services or are covered by health insurance. Proper ergonomic collection equipment and sorting setups are available for all workers.

Safety information is available at aggregation facilities to communicate to waste pickers and sorters in a way they can understand (local language, visual graphics). Recyclers and/or aggregators include health and safety (PPE, etc.) in the cost structure of an end product.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



PRIORITIZED CHILD WELFARE

Child labor is a key concern in informal waste collection across the globe, and is largely driven by poverty and inadequate remuneration and economic opportunity. Children may collect waste to sell to aggregators in order to help subsidize family income, or they may be brought to work by parents who either lack a safe place to leave their children while they are working or who need additional working hands to meet their economic needs. Unfortunately, these activities can expose children to hazardous environments and may deprive them of safety and education. Socially responsible OBP supply chains provide for the prevention of harmful child labor, including work done by underage children and hazardous work by young workers, while maximizing opportunities for education, health, beneficial livelihoods, and growth. This can primarily be achieved by improving the remuneration, organization, and representation of informal workers to better customize the terms and conditions of their work so that children can attend school and daycare.

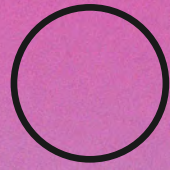
NOTE *According to the International Labor Organization, the presence of children in the informal waste sector, or on site at aggregation and sorting facilities does not necessarily mean that child labor is taking place. Assessment of child labor (work that is harmful for a child) versus children working (perhaps helping their parents after school with light tasks) should be considered when evaluating maturity of OBP informal waste sectors. Children in poorer communities (under the age of 15) may be asked to support their family with income but it cannot be at the expense of their childhood, safety or education. End users, in coordination with implementing partners, shall evaluate whether tasks completed by children do not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling.*

Low Maturity Informal Waste Sector

In low maturity waste sectors, child labor cases are presumed or known to be present, including work done by children below the minimum working age that is harmful to their physical, mental and emotional development OR young workers doing hazardous work. Underage workers may perform hazardous and non-hazardous work without PPE and training. No system is in place for age verification and there is no remediation process for child labor cases. There is no expectation or effort to prevent underage workers, such as training or resource provision. Underage workers may be present or have been present within the last six months. Conditions do not meet local laws and regulations regarding child labor. In addition, child labor may be voluntary, forced or may go unpaid.

Medium Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Young workers may be present and doing non-hazardous work with parental consent. Some age verification takes place before payment for work within the waste sector (e.g., collection). Payment is less than for adult workers or nonexistent. Conditions partially meet local laws and regulations regarding child labor. Expectations to eliminate child labor are shared across the informal waste sector and established suppliers. However, some young workers may occasionally do hazardous work, which qualifies as child labor. Training to avoid child labor is insufficient, and remediation systems for child labor cases are present but not adequate.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



PRIORITIZED CHILD WELFARE

High Maturity Informal/Formal Waste Sector

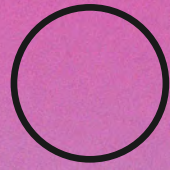
Young workers may be present and doing non-hazardous work with parental consent. There are voices on the ground who can inform the recycler or other responsible entity of child labor issues or risks (e.g., monitoring organizations, unions, local grassroots organizations, regular impact assessments, etc.), there is a child labor remediation process and/or a third party child labor remediation service provider, and transparent information on past or ongoing child labor remediation activities is available. Practices are established that require age verification to be provided prior to accepting waste from all workers. Organized workers may have agreements or bylaws that prohibit child labor and provide childcare support. Conditions meet or exceed local laws and regulations regarding child labor.



All waste pickers are earning enough to afford school and/or daycare services for their children. There is active community engagement and training to ensure families can access available resources. The only children present in the OBP supply chain are those that have to be with families when the adults are working, with verification that all school-age children are enrolled in school. Waste sector work involving children is limited to times that do not interfere with the health or normal development of underage workers (e.g., collect for 2 hours/day after school with a parent). Young workers only perform nonhazardous work and receive training and other educational resources.

Flexible systems addressing a variety of needs may exist, such as registering individuals as "official waste pickers" allowed to sell material to a facility, with a list of associated "contributors" under their account or profile. Ideally such a system would help verify school enrollment and vaccination cards, deliver PPE, and set follow-up appointments with social workers.

Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



STRONG BUSINESS ETHICS, TRACEABILITY, AND DOCUMENTATION

Due to the informal nature of ocean-bound plastic supply chains, documentation and traceability is essential to ensure the chain of custody but may not exist in many cases because of limited literacy and access to technology in collection, sorting, and recycling stages of the supply chain. In some cases, supply chain players may take advantage of these conditions by asking for bribes or withholding payment for fair work. In socially responsible OBP supply chains, all business interactions are conducted with integrity, transparency, documentation, and without improper advantage.

Low Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Workers do not have the right to unionize. Bribes, kickbacks, and facilitation payments are part of daily business. Corrupt practices regularly occur. Legislation is disregarded. Business partners are not vetted or are potentially even connected to criminal networks. No whistleblower process, grievance mechanism, or complaint mechanism is in place.

There is grossly insufficient documentation of waste pickers, aggregators, and others downstream in the OBP supply chain. Production and wage records at the collection level are not recorded or available. A practice may be in place to gather manual operational data (i.e., weights and material type) to collector level, but data is not aggregated or stored.

Medium Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Expectations for ethical standards are clearly communicated throughout the OBP supply chain. There is alignment on most salient ethics and governance risks to marginalized populations (e.g., organized crime, discrimination, etc.) and the ability to engage aggregators or ask for advocacy with local government. An ethics monitoring program exists.

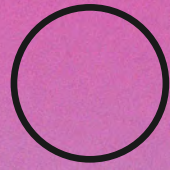
Employees are provided with an anonymous complaint mechanism to avoid retaliation. Workers are allowed to unionize.

Pay rates, collector names, material weight and material type are regularly documented and maintained for OBP supply chain transparency. Documentation is likely paper receipts of payment. Data is usually reliable but may sometimes be incomplete or out of date. Monitoring systems for proper implementation and payment are in place, but may operate with variable success, such as one or more elements of the policy may be missing and/or not accessible to audit. A declaration of conformity to minimum wage and payment requirement is ideally provided.

High Maturity Informal/Formal Waste Sector

A detailed and effective ethics policy exists (maybe at the recycler level) with an implementation mechanism that extends throughout the OBP supply chain to include waste pickers at the point of collection. Policy covers discrimination, harassment and abuse, grievances, corruption, and organized crime in alignment with [ILO Convention 190, Recommendation 20](#). Any confirmed cases of ethics violations are well documented with a corrective action plan. Reporting mechanisms for ethical violations are accessible without fear of repercussions or retaliation. Workers are allowed to unionize. Ethics standards meet or exceed local laws and regulations.

Chain of custody and full OBP supply chain mapping are established down to the collector, including weights, material type, source location, collector name and type, and payment amount at minimum. Data is available in paper or digital format and information is accessible by customers. Third-party review of information is conducted to certify OBP sources.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



**STRONG BUSINESS ETHICS,
TRACEABILITY, AND DOCUMENTATION**

DATA MANAGEMENT IN OBP SUPPLY CHAINS

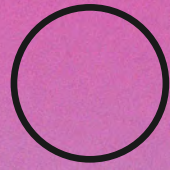
Tracking OBP supply chain data brings clarity and transparency to the supply chain and is important to inform and maintain social responsibility. However, collecting and managing that information can be costly, both in terms of time, technical skill, and technology.

Data management activities and ownership must be conscientiously adjusted to the scale and capabilities of the particular supply chain. There will likely be a threshold of knowledge or scale among key stakeholders that will determine who is able to maintain, as well as suppliers. For example, an implementation partner may be responsible for tracking and maintaining data in the long term, but it will still be important to set expectations with aggregators, recyclers, and other suppliers to support and enable the consistent and accurate collection of data within their operations.

Data management expectations throughout the supply chain may look like:

- End users and/or implementing partners collecting and maintaining data on the collector workforce and their wages, working hours and more;
- Recyclers, converters and manufacturers demonstrating thorough data management for **full-time employees and contract laborers, and complete material chain of custody; and**
- Aggregators and recyclers providing consistent and complete transaction records.

Data mentioned in this Framework that will need to be collected and managed includes collector payment rates, the material weight and type bought and sold, minimum wage compliance tracking, supply chain mapping results, chain of custody assessments, and more.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



SUPPORT FOR MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Social stigmatization is a challenge for most waste pickers and harassment is a significant problem. Many people who enter into this line of work do so because of barriers to participating in more formal work, including lack of accessible formal work opportunities in the economy, lack of education, immigration status or lack of identification, gender or ethnic discrimination, or other factors. Socially responsible OBP supply chains proactively offer respect, recognition, inclusivity and additional protections for worker populations that are discriminated against, taken advantage of, or abused.

Low Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Frequent discrimination cases occur during hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination, or retirement based on race, social or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, maternity or union or political affiliation. Workers and waste pickers are not looked at favorably in the society and are regularly affected by discrimination and derogatory treatment. No action is taken to regularize their position or improve their position (change public view, achieve recognition by the municipality, etc.) in the community.

Frequent cases of gender-based violence or violence in general occur during work. Women waste-pickers may work in isolation at early or late hours without considerations for protection. Supervisors or owners may sexually assault workers knowing that they may not, or cannot, report incidents due to social customs and norms, lack of legal protection, or because they need the work. It may be difficult for marginalized communities to identify their own discrimination, as they have often internalized the stereotypes and discrimination surrounding their own communities.

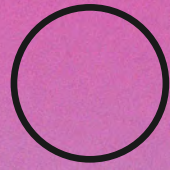
Medium Maturity Informal Waste Sector

Few cases of discrimination occur during hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination, or retirement based on race, social or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, maternity or union, or political affiliation. Some steps are taken to improve the perception of waste workers in the community. Health services, education, and training are made available in appropriate methods for workers regardless of the above classifications. The process of formalization begins to create recognition and protections for waste pickers, as well as accountability in leadership. Recourse exists for reports of abuse, unfair treatment, or exploitation.

Efforts exist to assist workers who lack proper identification in getting registered, improving their lives and income, and gaining access to public health and education systems. Initiatives to increase access to education exist and are designed to proactively address risks for improper labor practices or safety concerns in the event that a parent needs to have their children present when working.

High Maturity Informal/Formal Waste Sector

Marginalized workers report they understand their rights and protections and use them without repercussion. The recyclers have a documented policy in place with an ongoing training and monitoring policy for effectiveness throughout the OBP supply chain. A health and safety committee is made up of a combination of management and workers to promote a safe working culture, including both men and women from the outset. Quotas help ensure fair gender representation.



SUPPLY CHAIN MATURITY MAP



SUPPORT FOR MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Formalized systems provide points of entry for informal workers (aggregators purchase material from a local waste picker organization, but still accept material from individuals) and pathways for formalization exist when informal waste pickers decide to participate as part of the more formal system.

Cases of abuse or discrimination during hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination, or retirement based on race, social or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, maternity or union, or political affiliation are rare. The position of waste workers in the society is regularized and positively viewed.

TYPES OF WASTE COLLECTION PRACTICES & PLASTIC COLLECTORS

In low maturity conditions, very little value is placed on all plastics and most people see plastic as garbage. High value plastics, like PET water bottles, tend to litter the environment. Waste management systems are ineffective and lead to illegal and informal dump sites where many people, sometimes including children, collect the higher value plastics in unsafe and unhealthy environments, with the few people that understand plastics competing against each other to collect volume on their own. Due to the lack of local infrastructure for collection many of these collectors must travel long distances carrying material by foot or pulling a cart to get paid. Poor transportation availability means that workers must rely on small

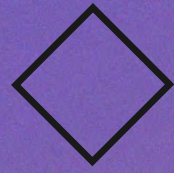
balancing operations for hand transport which can lead to inefficiency and injuries and contributes to quality issues when material gets to the plastic recycler. Payments for plastic material are inefficient and random and most workers do not get paid on a timely basis. People buying plastic tend to have new people delivering to them on a daily basis. Insufficient recycling technology and infrastructure also leads to inefficiently processed materials with high contamination rates and poor baling, which reduces profits and recycling rates.

As the waste sector advances in maturity, there is common understanding of the value of plastic and robust informal collection systems to recover and recycle most of the high value plastics. Few high value materials are found in the environment and some recyclers leverage their infrastructure to deal with the low value or difficult to recycle plastics, like multilayer packaging. Professionally run local collection centers with high quality control standards and effective aggregation sites help make material efficient for transport. Large collection points and aggregation sites have large balers and forklifts to minimize cost of transport. Many of the aggregation centers may also have cold wash lines to make transport even more efficient.

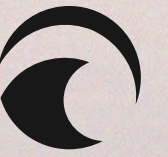
Waste pickers and aggregators operate in an organized fashion with regular times for delivery of material from regular collectors. Few ad hoc collectors work in the system and there are many options for waste pickers to sell material to small aggregators in the communities where they live. Most of the employees in the collection centers have been there a while and are full-time with some part-time employees. In busy times, some piece workers are employed but they receive more than minimum wage for their work. Collection center managers know and communicate regularly with their consistent collectors.

nextwave

SUCCESS METRICS
FOR REACHING
HIGHER LEVELS OF
MATURITY IN SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY



SUCCESS METRICS FOR REACHING HIGHER LEVELS OF MATURITY IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



FREELY CHOSEN EMPLOYMENT

The success metrics provide a tool for supplier evaluation against the six key goals laid out in the vision. They are designed as a tool to help develop a baseline assessment of the ocean-bound plastic (OBP) supply chain in relation to the supply chain maturity map and evaluate progress through the levels of maturity once engaged in a continuous improvement process.

For each key goal identified in the vision, questions are posed to ascertain the degree to which an OBP supply chain has advanced from one level of maturity to another; first from low to medium maturity, and then from medium to high maturity. These questions are posed in a yes/no format with a “yes” answer indicating progression on the maturity map. However, the questions themselves and the answers (or missing information) should provide deeper insight into the supply chain and what interventions are needed versus what is going well. These questions can be used for evaluation during the initial diagnostics and at key checkpoints throughout continuous improvement to measure progress, especially during the monitoring, evaluation, and feedback phases.

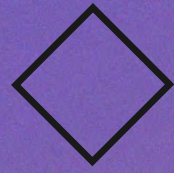
Low to Medium

- Are there established channels to report forced labor?
- Is there protection against retaliation for forced labor reporting?
- Do workers retain possession and ownership of their original identification paperwork throughout their employment?
- Is the offering of loans in exchange for employment prohibited in the OBP supply chain?

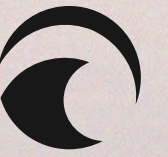
- Have all agencies that the supplier or other members of the OBP supply chain used to hire employees been evaluated for fair labor practices?
- Are there processes in place for transparency throughout the OBP supply chain when incidents of forced labor occur?
- Are there opportunities for informal workers to access social or labor protections, be recognized in contracts or seek other methods of formalization of their work?

Medium to High

- Do all members of the OBP supply chain have policies against forced labor?
- Are all managers trained in the importance of avoiding, recognizing, and reporting incidents of forced labor?
- Is there a system, policy, and ongoing training program to prevent forced labor?
- Is there a monitoring program within the supply chain that ensures communication and supporting data are in place?
- Is there third-party monitoring in place for incidents of forced labor?
- Are there intervention processes in place to protect and assist reported victims of forced labor?
- Are there intervention processes in place to help prevent an incident of forced labor from recurring?
- Do pathways for informal waste pickers to work formally and gain access to social and labor protections exist in most cases?
- Can waste pickers and workers clearly explain the opportunities for formalization and their rights?



SUCCESS METRICS FOR REACHING HIGHER LEVELS OF MATURITY IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



FAIR AND PREDICTABLE PAYMENT



Low to Medium

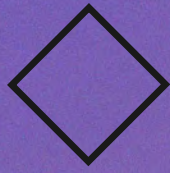
- Are employee hours set and tracked, and are they working less than 48 hours per week?
- Are workers provided an explanation of their compensation in a language they can understand with documentation of payment if requested?
- Are all workers paid correctly, directly and on time?
- Are wages between women and men equal?
- Are there work hour policies that are compliant with local laws and regulations?
- Are all transactions recorded with a receipt and tracked?
- Are employees paid more than their respective country's minimum wage?

Medium to High

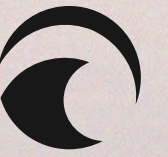
- Is there a compensation policy, including the minimum wages per hour, kilogram or work set?
- Is the compensation adequate enough as a living wage for their full-time job?
- Are workers able to earn the equivalent of at least the legal minimum wage without overtime?
- Are wage and hours records maintained and transparent?
- Are there internal procedures in place for reporting grievances regarding pay or hours worked without reprisal and for responding and resolving them?
- Is there a third-party process for intervention in case a wage or hours dispute is not solved internally?
- Is any premium value associated with OBP reflected throughout the OBP supply chain to the collector level?
- Are compensation policies and practices adequately and effectively communicated to the workers and OBP supply chains?

Photo Credit OceanCycle





SUCCESS METRICS FOR REACHING HIGHER LEVELS OF MATURITY IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



BENEFICIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONDITIONS

Low to Medium

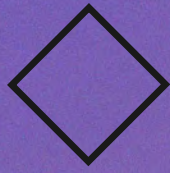
- Is there regular health and safety communication and training?
- Is appropriate PPE provided to all workers?
- Are the working environments and aggregation facilities where waste pickers sell collected material equipped with first-aid equipment that is available to all workers?
- Do workers have access to safe drinking water?
- Do workers have access to bathroom facilities? Are there separate toilet facilities for men and women?
- Are appropriate temperatures and air quality maintained in working environments?
- Do waste pickers have adequate space for sorting and storing collected materials?
- Are work buildings and areas safe (properly covered and labeled electrical, labeled safe walking areas, guards on machines, railings on walkways at height, fire prevention, maximum material stacking height requirements, emergency exits with proper labeling, noise management, etc.)?

Medium to High

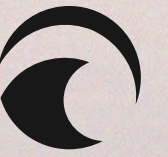
- Is there a system to ensure ongoing training and monitoring of health and safety appropriate to the risks of the work environment?
- Are there training records available?
- Are there past injury incidence records?
- Are there procedures in place for reporting [work-related safety concerns](#) without reprisal and for responding and resolving them?
- Is the injury rate tracked and calculated? Does injury tracking extend to all workers in the supply chain, including collectors, in order to accurately reflect safety throughout the entire OBP supply chain?
- Are workers knowledgeable of the health and safety procedures? Are workers able to describe safe behavior in interviews and/or are appropriate safety measures seen being followed on site?
- Do workers have access to healthcare in the event of injury?



Photo Credit Michelen Studios on Unsplash



SUCCESS METRICS FOR REACHING HIGHER LEVELS OF MATURITY IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



PRIORITIZED CHILD WELFARE

Low to Medium

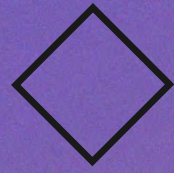
- Is there a remediation process when child labor cases are reported?
- Is there age verification for employees?
- Are there bans in place for any underage person selling material to each collection point?
- Are young workers prohibited from performing hazardous work?
- Are PPE and training provided for young workers that perform non-hazardous work?
- Is the payment for young workers the same as adult workers?
- Do working conditions meet local laws and regulations regarding child labor? Are underage workers prohibited from working in the OBP supply chain?
- Is there communication throughout the OBP supply chain about child labor elimination?

Medium to High

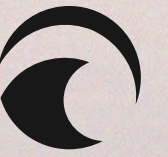
- Do all OBP supply chain members have written policies about the commitment to avoid child labor?
- Are recyclers trained on child labor avoidance, including the importance, age verification processes, problem recognition and incident reporting, procedures?
- Is there a process for reporting incidents of child labor?
- Can all waste pickers afford school and/or daycare services for children?
- Are the local conditions that may contribute to bad labor practices understood? Are the families registered in the local

community so they can access public health systems and their children can attend school?

- Are there enough teachers and schools to accommodate the local population of children?
- Are the specific community needs that put workers and families at risk if not addressed (such as adequate and consistent access to food, safe water, basic medication, and nutrition) understood?
- Do children of waste pickers have access to appropriate education and educational resources?
- Have interventions to address reported or suspected harmful child labor been successfully implemented in the past 12 months?
- Are there partnerships in place with local experts and institutions to provide the full range of support needed to keep children in school for the long term?
- Does the supplier have a sufficient system to monitor and effectively prevent child labor in the OBP supply chain?
- Are there documented records of child labor being reported and remediated?
- Is there an effective process in place to follow up on children removed from collection to ensure they do not return?



SUCCESS METRICS FOR REACHING HIGHER LEVELS OF MATURITY IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



STRONG BUSINESS ETHICS, TRACEABILITY AND DOCUMENTATION

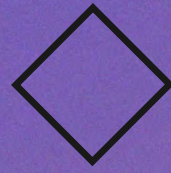
Low to Medium

- Is there a union and/or does the recycler or aggregation facility allow (or encourage) waste pickers and/or workers to organize? Alternatively, are there democratic governance systems in place within the company or organization?
- Have the ethical business standards been clearly communicated throughout the OBP supply chain?
- Is there traceable documentation to show the OBP supply chain for the material down to the waste picker level? Are receipts with the quantity of material purchased and the price paid offered to the waste pickers?
- Is there an anonymous complaint channel?
- Is there an internal process for addressing complaints?
- Are there any production and wage records at the collection level? Are these records tied to individual collectors and can they be verified via worker interviews?

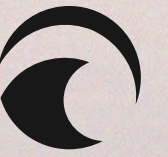
Medium to High

- Is there a detailed and effective ethics policy (likely at the processor or recycler level of the supply chain) with evidence that it is being implemented and communicated throughout the OBP supply chain?
- Does the policy cover all important ethics topics, including discrimination, coercive behavior, harassment/verbal, physical, or sexual abuse, humiliating disciplinary tactics, grievances, corruption, and organized crimes?

- Is there an active education program to inform the waste pickers about these policies?
- Are there any ethics risk assessment records, including any ethics violations documented?
- Is there a third-party mechanism for addressing ethics complaints that are not solved through internal channels?
- Is the OBP supply chain mapped for every raw material order from the recycler, including weights, material type, source location, and payments?
- Is the information reviewed and certified by a third party?



SUCCESS METRICS FOR REACHING HIGHER LEVELS OF MATURITY IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



SUPPORT FOR MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Low to Medium

- Is there a hiring and compensation policy that protects marginalized populations by prohibiting unfair behavior, such as pregnancy testing as a condition for hiring, ongoing possession of legal documents or identification by the hiring party, and discrimination and sexual harassment in all its forms?
- Is there training on the hiring and compensation policy?
- Is there a data collection process in place for sex-disaggregated data related to labor force participation and equal pay?
- Do safe reporting mechanisms for gender-based violence exist? Do reporting mechanisms ask about specific conditions or concerns rather than discrimination in general?

Medium to High

- Are there concrete actions being taken to improve the position of waste workers in society?
- Is there concrete evidence of improvements in the position of waste workers in society?
- Are waste workers included in the development and implementation of solutions to improve their livelihoods, pay, and access to fair and dignified work?
- Do pathways for informal waste pickers to work formally and gain access to social and labor protections exist in most cases?
- Does a health and safety committee made up of a combination of management and workers to promote a safe working culture exist? Is representation on the committee gender-balanced and inclusive of people of different races and ethnicities found in the supply chain?

Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)





DIAGNOSTIC



PLAN OF ACTION



IMPLEMENTATION



**MONITORING,
EVALUATION
& FEEDBACK**

4-Phase Continuous Improvement Process



DIAGNOSTIC





DIAGNOSTIC



SUMMARY & APPROACH

When first establishing a relationship with a potential ocean-bound plastic supplier, initial meetings should **focus on building clear communication and trust - both with the supplier (likely the recycler) and the extended OBP supply chain network, including local waste picker representatives or organizations.** This phase is about getting to know each party and creating collaboration, rather than marking off a checklist or setting too many immediate expectations.

Key exploratory questions to consider before an initial meeting with the supplier include:

- What solid waste management systems currently exist in the country/region and what are their governance features, if any?
- Who are the key stakeholders involved and what gaps are causing significant mismanaged waste?
- What are the suppliers' concerns regarding risks or blind spots` in the OBP supply chain?
- Who plays what roles in the OBP supply chain currently?
- Where are the key areas of risk?
- Will training on social responsibility key goals and priorities be necessary to ensure mutual understanding?
- What are the cultural, economic, and social contexts the waste pickers are work within?
- Do people in the local area understand the value of plastic material for collection and recycling?
- What kind of waste management is happening at the household level?
- What kind of infrastructure exists (e.g., super sacks, balers, trucking)?

These exploratory questions, and additional information collected during the diagnostic meetings with the supplier and waste pickers, will help determine an early assessment of supply chain maturity based on the maturity map criteria. To determine baseline maturity, identify questions from the success metrics that are appropriate for the context at hand, and seek answers from the supplier, supply chain partners, the informal and formal waste sector and others familiar with existing conditions. It is wise to flag areas where answers are not readily available for further evaluation and intervention designed in the plan of action.

This is also the phase to evaluate the readiness of the recycler(s) and waste pickers based on the existing factors that affect their ability to implement changes and progress. Key considerations to determine readiness for implementation include the:

- Size of the OBP supply chain;
- Complexity of the OBP supply chain;
- Activities to de-risk the supply chain that have been completed;
- Supplier's understanding of the customer's needs; and
- Existing relationships and level of transparency between the recyclers and downstream subcontractors, other upstream OBP supply chain participants or stakeholders, and any nonprofits or government agencies that may help the OBP supply chain progress.

This will help set realistic expectations regarding the length of time interventions will take, which will be documented in the plan of action and monitored and evaluated during the implementation phase.





DIAGNOSTIC



SUMMARY & APPROACH

The diagnostics phase is the ideal time to establish two core tenants of the supplier relationship:



1

A critical nonprofit or implementing partner that will support the relationship through the entire process⁴ - it will be important for this partner to assist in the initial baselining, participate in relationship building; and inform the core areas of focus in later stages of the roadmap process; and

2

Confirmed demand signals, meaning a clearly communicated long-term financial commitment connected to the social responsibility priorities within the OBP supply chain - This creates clarity for the supplier to see the business implications at each stage so that continuous improvement can be successful.

⁴ Evaluating partners to ensure they have sufficient awareness of the unique needs of informal waste sectors will be an important step in determining the right partner organization. Prospective partners with a track record of success in OBP supply chains are suggested in this document. In addition to partners with experience in informal waste sectors, eligible partners may include those with experience in industries that face similar concerns, such as agriculture and handworkers.



DIAGNOSTIC



SUMMARY & APPROACH

Critical in-person elements of this phase include on-site visits of recycling facilities, a tour of collection sites, and interviews with waste pickers. The Diagnostics phase is a critical time to engage waste pickers directly in order to understand their needs, key risks, and real-world concerns. It is strongly recommended that the chosen implementing partners and/or local experts are experienced in worker inclusion and able to effectively engage waste pickers throughout the Continuous Improvement Process since these workers are essential components of the ocean-bound plastic supply chain.



Diagnostic visits should lay the groundwork for an implementation partner to provide consistent, regular monitoring of the supply chain in order to bring to light the human rights issues found in informal collection. **Only through regular, ongoing monitoring and consistent funding of social impact programming focused on outcomes for waste collectors can end users and implementing partners find and mitigate human rights issues.**

Tools:

- [Source Map](#)
- Stakeholder Mapping
- [Ethical Trading Initiative \(ETI\) Base Code](#)
- [Nest Supply Chain Mapping Tool and other Industry Tools for Compliance](#)
- [Nest Diagnostic Tool and Assessment Tool](#)
(fee for service)

Potential Implementing Partners:

- [Nest](#)
- [OceanCycle](#)
- [First Mile / WORK](#)
- [NextWave Plastics Members](#)
- [WIEGO](#)
- [Global Alliance of Waste Pickers](#)
- [Local Waste Picker Organizations](#)
- Other Local NGOs or Organizations

DIAGNOSTIC

Freely Chosen Employment

To understand potential risks for forced labor in the supply chains, begin by engaging with a local expert partner who is familiar with the most common forms of forced labor that may exist in the specific geography and/or the informal waste sector and how to best identify them. This specialist may be different from the NGO(s) engaged to evaluate child labor or other topics of concern. In coordination with this partner, survey workers and management (if it exists) to identify any particular risks of forced labor. Engage waste picker organizations in this process to understand key risks and potential solutions. Risks can include: employer or aggregator offering large loans/paying salary in advance, free or subsidized housing, migrant labor force, retention of personal documentation by the employer, the existence of an unlicensed representative of the workers with some form of control over them, etc. If forced labor is actively identified, it will be important to identify the root causes of the issue so that a customized remediation can be created in the plan of action.



When evaluating labor conditions, there may be safety concerns for the workers, so the end users or their partners may need to adjust how they gather information or how they intend to influence the situation in a way that is customized to each unique OBP supplier.

Fair and Predictable Payment

The NGO or implementing partner should manage the research and pre-work to understand existing conditions related to the payment of workers. Key topics and questions to understand include:

- Identify price policy that waste pickers are subjected to and their average income from picking/sorting waste. How close or far is the average total income to the minimum wage in the country/region? What is the living income in the region, and what is the gap in income to this value? Identify whether waste picking/sorting is their only income or a side activity.
- Understand which local waste picker organizations exist, whether workers are allowed to organize, and what power or influence waste picker organizations have to advocate for better treatment, prices, working conditions, etc.
- Identify key barriers to reaching minimum wage for workers and which interventions do or could impact wages for waste pickers in the near term, such as providing access to carts or bicycles for collecting and transporting more material.
- Understand if waste workers in sorting are paid in regular intervals or sporadically based on their work.
- Identify whether there is any inequality in payments to waste pickers based on gender, age, or other factors.
- Support consistent cash flow to collection center managers to help ensure workers are paid properly and on time.

Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)



DIAGNOSTIC



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Beneficial Health and Safety Conditions

To understand the existing conditions, scope and the requirements for change to achieve beneficial health and safety conditions, evaluate what corrective action looks like to get verification for each of the following questions:

- What is the nature of the informal waste sector work for this supply chain, and what are the likely health and safety risks associated with this type of work?
- Are there special considerations for waste pickers in this context? Do they work during the day or at night? Do they have permits to pick waste or some agreement with the institutions/neighborhoods/households or not? Do any waste pickers collect waste from unmanaged landfills, dump sites, or other dangerous areas?
- Are there special considerations for workers in sorting facilities?
- Are ergonomics considered? Is building and electrical safety considered at the facility? Are extreme heat or cold considered?
- What local waste picker organizations exist? Are workers allowed to organize, and what power or influence do waste picker organizations have to advocate for better treatment and working conditions?
- Do waste pickers/workers in sorting have accident insurance that covers medical treatment for work-related injuries and illnesses?
- What is the local landscape and experience with healthcare? Do waste pickers have access to healthcare or are they often turned away because of the assumed inability to pay?
- Have any work-related injuries, illnesses, or safety incidents (including those related to physical, psychological or sexual violence and harassment) occurred during the last three years? Have they been recorded?

- Is PPE provided to waste pickers/sorters free of charge? Do they use it?
- Are waste pickers/sorters trained or informed about safe working routines?
- Are toilets and drinking water provided? Are separate toilets, changing facilities and/or accommodation provided for men and women?
- If accommodation is provided, is it safe, well-maintained, and appropriate for the number of residents?
- What are the usual working hours per week? Do workers on-site at facilities have at least a day off in a week and are free from work on public holidays?
- Do they work in shade and/or while protected from the elements?

Prioritized Child Welfare

The identification of children and young workers within the OBP supply chain is a critical part of the OBP supply chain mapping process ⁵. Child labor is often something communities don't share freely, as most parents don't want to have to admit that their children are working. It takes a lot of trust within communities to understand the extent of this issue and the root causes that face families who have children working in collection. That means understanding child labor in the supply chain can take a long time, and continued monitoring and trust-building beyond the diagnostics phase will be essential.

⁵ Evaluating child welfare allows us to gather additional information on the overall conditions of the workers, even adult workers. It provides a fact check of the environment and the broader conditions facing workers..





DIAGNOSTIC



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

During this phase, the aim is to set expectations and align definitions for child labor with the supplier to ensure clear understanding, discern what insight currently exists into the OBP supply chain with regard to child labor activities, target the known issues that face the particular OBP supply chain, and lay the groundwork for ongoing evaluation of child labor risks with key supply chain partners.

Key steps include:

- Work with the supplier and other waste sector organizations (e.g., collector organizations or aggregators) to set expectations and align on definitions for child labor.
- Inquire about what insight regarding child welfare currently exists into the supply chain.
- Identify opportunities to de-risk the supply chain prior to purchasing material from it (e.g., would it be influential to reduce barriers to school enrollment, ensure labor policies and receipt tracking, help establish childcare options for marginalized workers in the system, etc.)
- Conduct an external review through third-party audit and/ or Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) engagement that considers a holistic view of the social conditions affecting children and youth. This may include:
 - Evaluate what schooling is available, where the schools are located, how many there are and whether there is access to school for collector communities (distance, transportation, cost, safety).

- Evaluate access to healthcare, vaccination rates, etc.
- Collect general socioeconomic information for the waste pickers. Are there jobs available for educated youth/ young adults? How does this illuminate the root cause of child labor in the OBP supply chain?
- Understand the needs of the children related to those in the OBP supply chain, e.g., are the children and their parents documented?
- Build partnerships with the supplier, waste picker/ collector organizations, and aggregators to implement ongoing monitoring for child labor, in order to uncover risks that may not be found in the early stages of a relationship with a supplier.

Strong Business Ethics, Traceability and Documentation

Gather information on the current practices for tracing material origins from the point of collection through to when it reaches the supplier’s facilities. Are there complete records? Is the documentation for all the waste purchased logged and kept? Are receipts with the quantity purchased and the price paid issued to the waste pickers? What form do they take - paper receipts, digital tracking in an app, etc.? What information is missing? Commonly, documentation such as ledger-keeping and offering receipts to individual waste pickers is not found in OBP supply chains, especially given literacy rates among this population in certain communities. This is not a reason to not engage with a supply chain, but understanding the existing conditions will help identify what training and tools are needed or applicable for the Plan of Action.





DIAGNOSTIC



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS



Evaluate what capabilities the supplier has to improve material traceability and record keeping based on their capacity and the unique conditions downstream in the OBP supply chain. Consider how partners can assist in increasing transparency, record keeping and traceability.

Support for Marginalized Populations

Research and document which populations may experience marginalization in this specific context. Include a participatory investigation of the specific concerns of these populations, why they are participating in the informal waste sector and what unique conditions they may face in the informal waste sector. Include voices of waste-pickers that represent all communities that participate in the OBP supply chain in question. Example diagnostic questions include:

- Are there cases of unfair behavior, such as pregnancy testing as a condition for hiring, ongoing possession of legal documents or identification by the hiring party, or discrimination and sexual harassment?
- Are there discrepancies by gender when it comes to labor force participation and equal pay?
- Is parental leave following the birth of a child extended to workers in accordance with the local law and in alignment with the [ILO](#)?
- What is the position of waste workers in society?
- How could the position of waste workers in society be improved?
- What unique conditions do waste pickers face in the informal waste section? Are these concerns systemic or related to the supply chain directly?

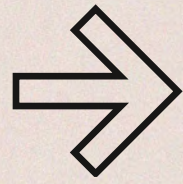
Photo Credit [Nest](#) by [Sara Otto](#)





PLAN OF ACTION





PLAN OF ACTION



SUMMARY & APPROACH

The plan of action is where a tangible plan for intervention in the supply chain is developed to directly address issues identified in the diagnostic findings. During this phase:

- Tie the plan directly back to the maturity map to prioritize the key goals that need to be addressed and outline how this will be accomplished;
- Design interventions based on the ocean-bound plastic (OBP) supply chain's level of maturity for each key goal according to diagnostic findings, including direct input and direction from waste picker organizations and representatives in the supply chain; and
- Identify areas of improvement and criteria for success based on maturity levels for each key goal and the associated success metrics, as well as custom guidance from waste pickers.

What makes this process unique for OBP supply chains is the level of engagement needed to ensure the informal waste sector achieves the key goals. OBP supply chains call for end users to be more involved in implementation, to put in more work or investment up front to establish sufficient working conditions, to proactively engage informal workers from the beginning of an engagement, and to bring more creativity to the process.

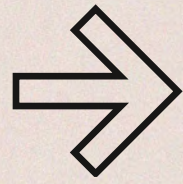
This is the time to establish a clear scope and set of roles and responsibilities with core implementing partners and get specific about what each partner will do. Consideration should be made for scope, time, and resources, including the size of the OBP supply chain and how much time it will need to move toward higher maturity performance.

The plan of action should set clear expectations, but also incorporate flexibility and adaptability based on the scope and resources available and provide opportunities for informal waste workers to contribute to success informed by their own priorities.

For example, it may be beneficial to choose a limited number of collection centers to implement changes in order to match interventions with the resource capacity available, and then implement a plan for scaling from pilots to comprehensive programming over a defined timeline.

Since stakeholder engagement and maturation of the supply chain over time are important in this context, the Ceres Roadmap to Sustainability (linked as a tool below) can and should be a key guiding tool throughout this stage





PLAN OF ACTION



SUMMARY & APPROACH

in the process. It is critical that waste pickers and OBP supply chain representatives are included in the development of the plan of action from the outset. Additional local stakeholders should be included for key topics like healthcare and education where waste pickers and OBP supply chain representatives may not have a complete view of options and obstacles.

Key questions to answer during this phase include:

- What is the scope of the plan (e.g., improve an existing multi-layered supply chain or foster capabilities from the bottom up)?
- What resources are needed (money, time, access, skills)?
- What is the geographic scope?
- What is the starting point to move work forward and what are the key milestones? Is this a pilot that will be replicated?
- What are the opportunities for formalization of the supply chain? Where can you lay the groundwork for informal workers to access social or labor protections, be recognized in contracts, or seek other methods of formalization of their work?
- Who is accountable for the success of social responsibility interventions?
- Are there clear roles and responsibilities (supply chain, brands, assurance organizations)? Who is going to help implementation?
- How will partners and/or frameworks be utilized?
- Are you set up with the bandwidth to complete the plan of action, including bandwidth for contingencies and risks that may arise?
- Are waste pickers educated on the issues at hand and prioritized/engaged in decision-making on how best to

improve the supply chain?

Note that the plan of action process may be repeated as one phase is completed and resources are available to address additional key goals, and the OBP supply chain continues to move along the Ceres Roadmap to Sustainability.

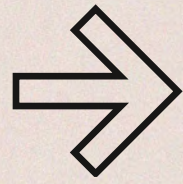
Tools:

- [Ceres Roadmap to Sustainability](#)
- [Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index](#)
- [Save the Children’s Position on Child Labor](#)
- [Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work: ILO Convention No. 190, Recommendation No. 206](#)
- [Nest Ethical Handicraft Standards and Code of Conduct](#)
- [Nest Compliance Best Practices for Vendors](#)

Potential Implementing Partners:

- [The Centre for Child Rights and Business](#)
- [Ethical Trading Initiative](#)
- [WIEGO](#)
- [Global Alliance of Waste Pickers](#)
- [First Mile / WORK](#)
- [Nest](#)
- [OceanCycle](#)
- [Local Waste Picker Organizations](#)
- Other Local NGOs or Organizations





PLAN OF ACTION



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Freely Chosen Employment

In response to forced labor concerns identified during diagnostics, the plan of action should identify the specific requirements the end user and implementing partners need to fulfill and introduce interventions to address potential risks. Local experts and implementation partners are best suited to be responsible for implementing any interventions for forced labor in informal waste collection. To identify appropriate action, evaluate the following:

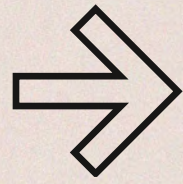
- Based on the risks and scope of forced labor identified in the diagnostics phase, does the end user have the necessary resources to address the issues effectively? Does the end user need to engage with an expert partner to assist in remediation and/or are there any immediate actions that can be taken to address the forced labor risks?
- Consider how to leverage government assistance or protocols that are in place, if any. What laws are in place and enforced to provide protection? What are the necessary steps to involve government intervention or a third party?
- Address migration, citizenship status, gender, or ethnic differences that may make certain groups more vulnerable to forced labor risks.
- Look for opportunities to partner with local waste picker organizations and establish contracts with them as service providers in waste management. Provide avenues for formalization of waste picking, and complement these systems with social and legal protections established in the Fair and Predictable Payment, Beneficial Health and Safety, and Prioritized Child Welfare goal sections.

Fair and Predictable Payment

Identify a plan to support fair and predictable payment throughout the OBP supply chain. This may mean starting with an evaluation of current conditions as a first step in the plan of action. Since the market price of recycled material as a commodity fluctuates and collectors are paid solely for the material they move and not for any of the services they provide, it is nearly impossible for collectors to earn a living or even minimum wage at the current market value of recycled materials.

Once you have a clear understanding of existing conditions, consider potential interventions that increase collector productivity and fill economic gaps, such as continuing to pay a standard price for material regardless of fluctuation in the market, providing collection resources such as bicycles and carts, or offering a volume commitment for different levels of development to offset the cost and time of creating and implementing such a plan. A key component of successful implementation will be ensuring a clear understanding of cash flow and operations of all parties along the value chain. A processor needs to have customers in order to buy material from a collection center that can then pay local collectors. Evaluate the economics across the system, as well as how the value in the supply chain trickles down to waste pickers. Ensure that any premiums being paid get passed through the aggregators to the individual collector level and consider that material premiums that translate to a couple cents added per pound often do not provide enough of an increase to move income at the collector level out of extreme poverty.





PLAN OF ACTION



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Then, to identify the appropriate interventions, consider:

- Relying on traditional banking systems will likely be challenging in many OBP supply chains, so customizing solutions to the context will be important. What payment methods are available for receipt of payment? And how can they be tracked (e.g., written receipts, mobile payments and transfers, payments made via check) Additionally, are accounts easy to open at the bank for both men and women? Are they safe and secure? What regulatory bodies are available?
- Are systems easy to implement/manage (e.g., is infrastructure in place to support the Internet)? If not, what steps are necessary, and what financial resources are required to implement a technology solution if desired?

Beneficial Health and Safety Conditions

When considering health and safety interventions, it will be important to keep them simple for the OBP context. Solutions that address challenges identified during diagnostics will look different for OBP supply chains and depend on the specific context. Use images on signage for multilingual communication and play with out-of-the-box thinking for the context, like building tools on-site (e.g., step stools), making PPE, etc. Engage workers in this process to better understand what modifications will resonate and work for them.

For informal waste pickers, develop processes that specifically account for the risks of the locations where waste will be collected (coastal, river, urban, landfill, residential/commercial buildings). Any program should include health and safety considerations in:

- Process designs (e.g., design on baskets/carts if applicable);

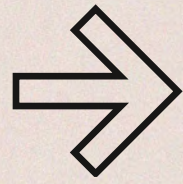
- Diagnostic training and communication of safe processes and first aid;
- Signage and ongoing access to information and resources at various locations and inclusion in areas assessed during audits and monitoring;
- Access to healthcare for injury and illness; and
- Audits and monitoring (injury rate and reporting, PPE use, consequences for non-compliance with policies and rules).

In addition, informal waste collectors often work in hazardous conditions such as open pit landfills and are exposed to pathogens as well as the potential for injury, so access to holistic healthcare is critical. Interventions, such as partnerships with healthcare providers and education for waste pickers on how to navigate health systems and advocate for themselves as patients, can help ensure that waste collectors will be seen and treated. Implementation partners can provide much needed case management and training in these areas to ensure that healthcare is accessible.

Prioritized Child Welfare

Start with an evaluation of whether the end user's policies reflect the needs of the supply chain. Does the end user have a clear and effective child labor policy in place that is relevant to the particular risks identified in the diagnostic phase. Many "no tolerance" policies will prevent helpful remediation work from taking place, so end users should evaluate the need to customize the approach to address the specific needs of the OBP supply chain in question and lay the path to compliance with their policies over time. Consider pulling in implementing partners, and ideally experts in child welfare, to assist in timely and effective implementation of this process.





PLAN OF ACTION



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Then, in collaboration with implementing partners and waste picker organizations or representatives, define interventions that address concerns in the supply chain and programming that can mitigate child labor in a sustainable way. Create a plan to communicate child labor expectations and intervention programs, building on the understanding established during the diagnostics with the supplier. Include specific steps for each layer of the OBP supply chain relative to their particular functions and child labor risks. Consider how workers across the OBP supply chain will be trained and engaged in interventions or programming to address child labor, understanding that this will take continued and regular engagement for full adoption. Include how the end user will monitor the implementation of remediation efforts at each level.

Identify and plan for specific interventions to support the successful implementation of this policy. Consider the following steps when identifying appropriate interventions:

- Consider whether existing support is available to children and how it is being managed and implemented. Would childcare services, after-school activities, sports, job boards, or other interventions relieve pressure on key drivers of child labor risks?
- Create a mechanism for feedback outside of a formal audit process (e.g., grievance mechanism or local monitoring group) if one does not exist.
- In coordination with the OBP supplier, develop or finalize a supplier code of conduct that will apply throughout the value chain to aggregators⁶, if one is not in place, with minimum age requirements and standards that align with your company's expectations.

Strong Business Ethics, Traceability and Documentation

In the plan of action, set clear expectations on the minimum documentation required to be provided to each party in material sale transactions, including what may be paper or electronic at different levels. Lay out how to establish an audit trail and explain the monitoring cadence.

Account for cultural and legal differences in the location (e.g., whether informal workers are protected by all laws or corruption is endemic) with regard to training, specifically design training. Include a grievance mechanism, with the ability for workers to remain anonymous if allowed by local law, to allow any party to report a grievance across any element of the program (e.g., pay, age, health and safety, etc.).

Support for Marginalized Populations

Specifically account for the marginalized populations identified during the diagnostics and addressed in your plan of action. What additional precautions/measures need to be taken in order to build the infrastructure/processes to support them and their needs? What additional assessment questions or mechanisms are needed to determine differential treatment or impact?

⁶ Oftentimes OBP suppliers may not see instances of child labor as children will typically sell to aggregators and not to the supplier directly. While the supplier should have policy around employment in their facility, many will claim there is no child labor in their supply chain, because there is a layer of the supply chain between children collectors and OBP suppliers





IMPLEMENTATION





IMPLEMENTATION



SUMMARY & APPROACH

In the implementation phase, the plan of action is put into practice. During this phase, it is important that project management processes are followed and progress against milestones and key goals are tracked. This phase is designed for everyone included in the ocean-bound plastic (OBP) supply chain to remain on track and get access to resources as necessary. The intent is to improve documentation control and tracking, as well as improve communication between waste workers and ultimately end users.

This is also where creativity can help create success. It is important to recognize that every situation is going to be unique when working with informal waste sectors. Solutions that work in one context may not apply to different sites or communities.

Use ingenuity and creative thinking to leverage local nuances, and address needs such as creating systems of communication and allocating resources to workers. This will likely be a process of trial and error to understand what works for the specific context. Seek ideas and information from the waste pickers and others in the informal waste sector and evaluate how well they are working on a recurring basis. Engage waste pickers in the development and implementation of interventions. Adjust as needed until you find what works. This may include simple interventions, small or large scale pilot programs or a step-by-step process that begins with small changes and advances through more sophisticated health and safety interventions once the supplier or waste pickers are ready. Local teams executing this programming and managing implementation will be critical to this stage. It is important that all implementation efforts be community-led and executed by local teams as possible.

Unanticipated circumstances are likely to emerge, and there should be processes in place for adapting to them. Based on earlier assessment of readiness, hands-on involvement and/or training may be needed and should be implemented – for example, literacy training, business skills, etc. – in order to allow aggregators and recyclers to be successful in implementing the plan of action. Note that the implementation process may be repeated as each element of the plan of action is completed, resources are available to address additional key goals, and the OBP supply chain continues to move along the roadmap.

Tools:

- [UN Global Compact Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights](#)
- [Putting Ethics to Work – A guide for UN Staff](#)
- [Nest Ethical Handicraft Program](#)

Potential Implementing Partners:

- [First Mile / WORK](#)
- [Nest](#)
- [Local Waste Picker Organizations](#)
- [Other Local NGOs or Organizations](#)
- [OceanCycle](#)





IMPLEMENTATION



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Freely Chosen Employment

Implementation for labor concerns will depend strongly on the particular risks that have been identified and the scope of those risks within the specific OBP supply chain. Remediation implementation will likely require intensive engagement in deep layers of the OBP supply chain and regular, direct communication with waste pickers. Resolution may depend on workers having access to independent financing to reduce or eliminate the dependence on contractors. Waste workers must be educated on their right to freely chosen work and alternatives to forced labor.

Fair and Predictable Payment

Implement consistent pricing guarantees, posting of material rates, or other interventions as identified in the plan of action. Follow up on tracking of receipts and monitoring of payments and wages, starting with a more closely monitored process and then evolving into a more long-term solution, such as on-site monitors that track ocean-bound plastic material for traceability and pricing/costs for fair wages. Pursue programs that empower waste picker organizations to be able to better advocate for themselves with regard to fair remuneration.

If formal employees are part of the raw material supply chain, develop a “Salary Benefit Plan” guideline explaining salary structure and other benefits, if any. Make the plan accessible to employees via text or online and issue a printed copy to be given to each employee. The plan shall address flexible work when needed by employees. Payment shall be in compliance with local state and federal laws. Continually communicate with employees any changes in government or benefits updates, such as minimum wage increases.

Beneficial Health and Safety Conditions

During this phase, it will be important to conduct training related to health and safety policies. Implement interventions that address health and safety concerns with the resources available on-site and that incorporate ideas and input from the workers themselves. Get creative when identifying solutions. Make reference documentation available for all waste workers, including informal workers, in a language and/or medium that they can access and understand. Make necessary PPE available for waste workers. Work with local healthcare providers to assess and implement healthcare benefits for waste workers and their dependents. Pursue programs that empower waste picker organizations to be able to better advocate for themselves with regard to safe working conditions.

Prioritized Child Welfare

Implementation for child welfare may include:

- End user to introduce written policy regarding child labor and engage various layers of the OBP supply chain through training;
- Age verification collected from all waste pickers and deeper supply chain mapping brings transparency to any children engaged in the collection process. Where age verification is not possible due to lack of identification, supply chain mapping paired with other strategies informed by implementing partners will help increase transparency;
- Process is established to remedy discovered child labor cases with the best interest of the child as a primary guidance. Underage workers are removed from work and transitioned back into school, with organized transport, additional tutoring for children with historically inconsistent schooling, and support for school costs such as tuition, uniforms and books provided as needed;





IMPLEMENTATION



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Related issues, such as food and income insecurity, that may contribute to the need for children to work (e.g., collecting plastic to help feed their families) are addressed through interventions that support the waste picker community holistically. Example interventions include, providing access to healthcare and food stipends for the entire family (also see Fair and Predictable Payment Income and Beneficial Health and Safety Conditions);
- Young workers are removed from hazardous work to suitable positions;
- Supervisors are trained on the protection of young workers;
- If infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children are accompanying their parents at work, solutions for suitable childcare are explored; and
- Feedback from workers at all levels is collected and training is improved as appropriate, ensuring policies and practices are being followed. Engagement and monitoring must happen regularly with comprehensive reporting to concerned management to ensure needed support provided to continue improvement.

Strong Business Ethics, Traceability and Documentation

Conduct training for logging and tracking materials purchased from waste pickers inclusive of quantity and price. Require the issuance and tracking of receipts for all transactions. Ensure both the waste picker and buyer (aggregator, etc.) receive a copy of the receipt. Implement processes for continued monitoring and process improvement that are customized to the specific supply chain. For example, independently operated collection centers will not want to share proprietary information into a public system, but other options for traceability and transparency may be a possibility.

The end user shall comply with its own business Code of Ethics when selecting OBP suppliers and request a copy of the OBP supplier's Code of Ethics for evaluation. If a supplier's Code of Ethics is not provided, the end user may assist the OBP supplier in developing one.

Additional interventions may also include:

- Create a Code of Ethics that defines a Code of Conduct and conflicts of interest, anti-bribery and corruption, antitrust/competition and export compliance. Train employees and staff about the policy and evaluate code implementation. Require aggregators, sorters and recyclers to make the policy available and display its summary in targeted areas in the workplace (break areas, main office, etc.)

Support for Marginalized Populations

Key considerations for marginalized populations during implementation include:

- Make translators available as necessary;
- Consider various levels of literacy for all materials that are written, posted and/or distributed.
- Create specific work policies or interventions that address poverty, migrants and refugees, prisoners, gender inequality (including pregnancy and childcare responsibilities, breastfeeding safety and rights, gender-based violence, etc.), people who use drugs, elderly, and those with disabilities;
- Offer assisting equipment when possible; and





IMPLEMENTATION

- Offer anonymous reporting channels for elevating concerns and communicate the proper channels for contacting local social and health departments during an emergency.

Customized offerings for marginalized populations may be more appropriate for a later stage of implementation once adequate infrastructure is in place for the typical workforce in the supply chain. During early social responsibility interventions, implementation may look like recording the presence of marginalized populations and potential risks and identifying opportunities for later intervention. Specific interventions will depend on the needs of the specific communities in the OBP supply chain.

Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)





MONITORING, EVALUATION & FEEDBACK





MONITORING, EVALUATION & FEEDBACK



SUMMARY & APPROACH

Monitoring and evaluation consist of measuring how the ocean-bound plastic (OBP) supply chain is progressing from baseline through maturity levels.

This phase should be treated as a training opportunity for suppliers and others in the OBP supply chain, both uncovering opportunities for improvement and iteratively building capacity within the supply chain to achieve higher maturity conditions.

Progress should be measured using the success metrics provided in this framework or against key milestones/metrics identified in the plan of action and/or implementation process. Feedback is included here

intentionally as a core element of this phase, since ongoing monitoring of OBP supply chains must include avenues for input and feedback from across the supply chain. Seeking input from informal waste workers will be critical to understanding the success of interventions, guiding continuous improvement, and building local agency to demand social responsibility in the supply chain.

Monitoring, evaluation and feedback will need to be ongoing and recurring, as various key goals are addressed and action plans are undertaken and will require direct check-ins with each layer of the OBP supply chain. Even at high maturity, or if there are no active action plans underway, it is expected that OBP supply chains will need to continuously be monitored by the end user or implementing partners for new areas of concern or opportunity. This will be especially true as employees' roles change, operational scale increases, new policies are implemented, or the local system evolves.

As an informal waste sector or OBP plastic supply chain advances through the levels of maturity in the maturity map, additional layers of social responsibility may need to be addressed. When completing implementation, set a goal state which will trigger a new round of diagnostics or interventions, which will build on the success of early work and restart the continuous improvement process laid out here to spur further advancement in OBP supply chain maturity.





MONITORING, EVALUATION & FEEDBACK



SUMMARY & APPROACH



Photo Credit: Jon Khoo Interface



Tools:

- [GRI Social Standards](#)
- Success Metrics for Reaching Higher Levels of SR Maturity
- [Nest Industry Tools for Compliance](#)
- [Nest Diagnostic Tool and Assessment Tool](#)

Potential Partners:

- [First Mile / WORK](#)
- [Nest](#)
- [WIEGO](#)
- [OceanCycle](#)
- [Local Waste Picker Organizations](#)
- [Zero Plastic Ocean](#)
- Other Local NGOs or Organizations



MONITORING, EVALUATION & FEEDBACK



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Freely Chosen Employment

Use third-party evaluation to ensure that all forced labor issues have been addressed and that all workers are working of their free will. This process should evaluate whether workers have access to and are educated about services available for them to avoid obligatory employment and relationships, and gather feedback for how best to improve access to and education about these services.

Fair and Predictable Payment

Monitoring and evaluations should ensure the end user has a compliance system in place from the OBP supplier where fair payment is secured. Key indicators include, whether at a minimum, workers are paid according to local government minimum wage laws and differences in salaries can be justified for different work being done; if there are no gaps in salary based on gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation preference, or ethnicity; whether payments are transparent and done in a timely manner; and if channels to report unfair and unpredictable payment exist. Feedback on how these different elements are working in practice and how conditions can be improved should be sought from workers across the supply chain, especially directly from waste pickers.

Beneficial Health and Safety Conditions

Monitoring and evaluation should ensure a system is in place to validate the environmental conditions of the OBP supplier's workplace. Records of injuries or fatalities are evaluated and subjected to contract termination. End user reviews all safety

records and permits, environmental compliance, ISO certifications, or equivalent documents and establishes metrics and training to assist OBP suppliers to improve workplace conditions when necessary. Feedback from waste pickers is sought out to understand the practical application of health and safety interventions and whether they have and/or continue to meet the evolving needs of this population as they collect ocean-bound plastic.

Prioritized Child Welfare

Monitoring and evaluation should ensure there is a clear system for cases of harmful child labor to be reported up the OBP supply chain. For examples, once reports have been received or child labor is identified, this process should confirm whether there is a comprehensive system in place by the end user to document, investigate and resolve the case, as well as gather feedback for overall child welfare programming to reduce further incidents. This will help determine whether an effective child labor policy has allowed the end user to prevent child labor, and if there is a robust system in place for continued monitoring of the OBP supply chain and reporting of child labor cases that arise.

In addition to evaluating the process for discovering and addressing child labor, it will be important to seek feedback from suppliers, workers, and waste picker representatives, to understand if that process is addressing their needs or if they have ideas for how it can be improved.





MONITORING, EVALUATION & FEEDBACK



GOAL-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Strong Business Ethics, Traceability and Documentation

Monitoring and evaluation should measure the success of traceability and documentation systems and technologies, such as paper receipts and records, QR codes, GPS tracking devices and blockchain, and ensure materials and information can be traced back to its source of generation. Critical to success is whether all transactions reflect fair payment of waste pickers for material sold. This phase should include continued training for new participants in the supply chain and lay the groundwork to evolve documentation systems to higher levels of sophistication as engagement and participation advances.

Support for Marginalized Populations

Monitoring and evaluation should ensure there is a process to prevent discrimination against marginalized populations in the workplace, and that those individuals have access to channels to report harassment, discrimination, and safety concerns. Feedback from a diversity of workers including waste pickers, women, and other relevant marginalized groups should be collected as part of this process. Successful engagement with these groups will be dependent on relationship and trust-building during the diagnostics, plan of action, and implementation phases.



Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)





CLOSING NOTES





CLOSING NOTES



An estimated 11 million waste pickers were responsible for 60% of global recycling in 2016⁷. The scale and importance of this work has only continued to grow with the continued increase in plastic production and lag in development of recycling facilities and infrastructure.

It is time we recognize the essential role that informal workers play in critical waste management and the circular economy and work diligently to ensure their decent work and livelihoods.

Thank you to the individuals who contributed to the development of this framework for socially responsible ocean-bound plastic (OBP) supply chains. This process has brought considerable clarity to the

unique and important role of waste pickers and OBP recyclers, as well as a depth of commitment from each of the NextWave Plastics member companies to achieve socially responsible OBP supply chains.

We call on brands, manufacturers, implementation partners, and others to use this Framework, integrate the principles of protection and inclusion for waste workers and increased business transparency in their work, and achieve the key goals.

⁷ Pew Charitable Trusts, SYSTEMIQ. (2020). (rep.). Breaking the Plastic Wave. Retrieved from https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2020/07/breakingtheplasticwave_report.pdf



CLOSING NOTES



Your commitment to this work will help reach our vision that OBP suppliers, the OBP supply chain network, and end users ensure safe working conditions, inclusion, and decent work and livelihoods for all individuals across the OBP supply chain through to the collection level.

While this document was developed for a corporate audience without waste picker input, we acknowledge the critical need for waste picker inclusion in defining and creating the future of informal work. We recognize the limitations of this Framework as well as the need for deeper engagement with waste picker organizations and communities at all stages of program development. We hope that the guidance for when and how to engage waste pickers included here will ignite this engagement in the specific local contexts in which OBP supply chains exist, and we intend to seek further input from waste picker organizations in future iterations of this framework.

This framework is intended to be a living document. We ask that those who use this framework share feedback on what we have provided based on their experience and particular needs. You can provide input and offer recommendations by contacting hello@nextwaveplastics.org.

This framework will be updated at least every two years, or more often as needed, in response to specific social responsibility needs of end users, OBP supply chains and informal waste sectors globally.

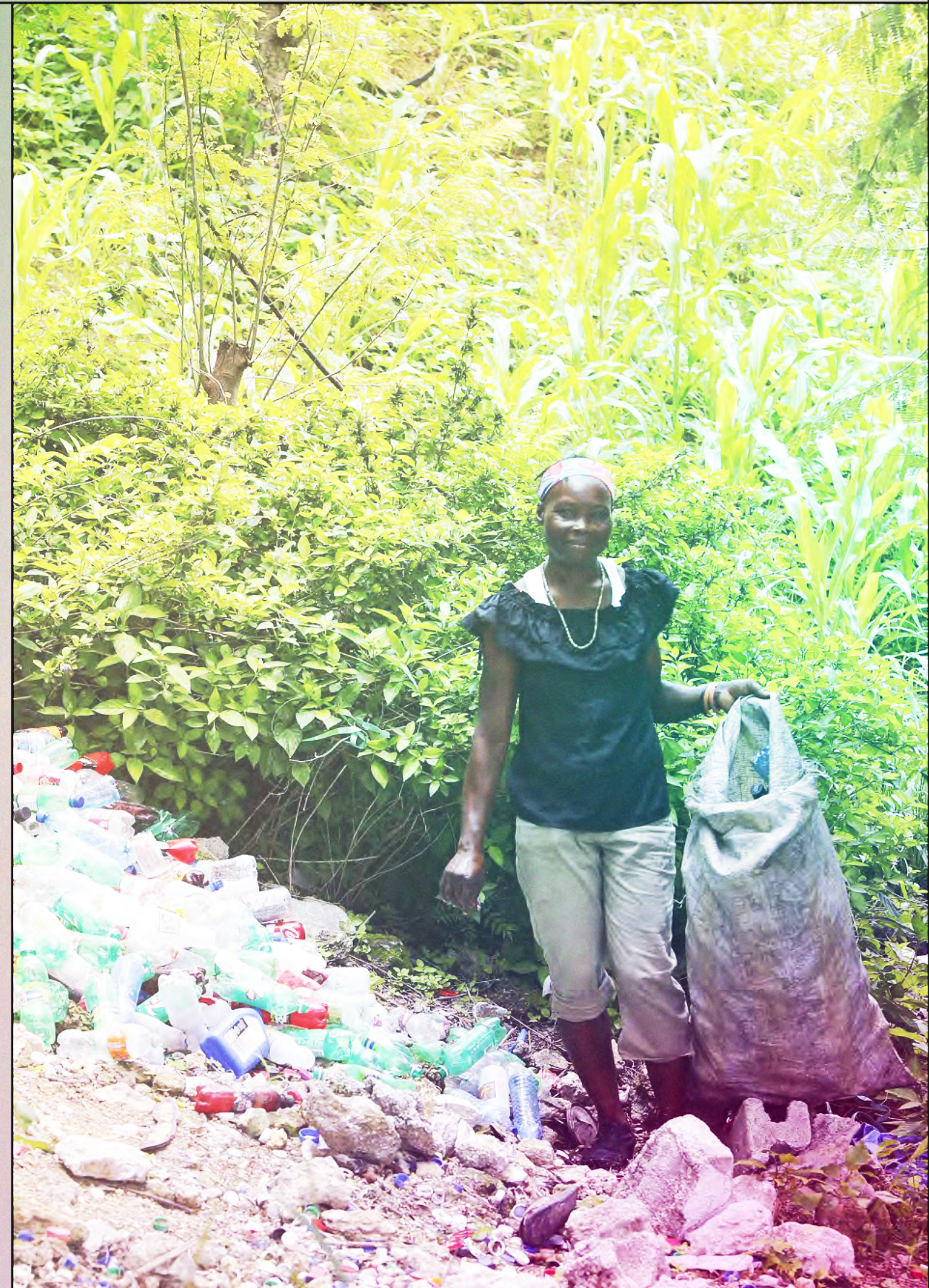


Photo Credit HP Inc

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RESOURCE GUIDE: TOOLS AND PARTNERS



Photo Credit Emy Kane - Lonely Whale



RESOURCE GUIDE



BACKGROUND RESOURCES & TOOLS

BACKGROUND RESOURCES

- [Breaking the Plastic Wave, Pew Charitable Trusts and SystemIQ](#)
- [Discarded: Communities on the Frontlines of the Global Plastic Crisis, Informal Economy Monitoring Study \(IEMS\), WIEGO](#)
- [Waste Pickers, WIEGO](#)



TOOLS

- Supply Chain Mapping
[Source Map](#)
- Systems Mapping:
[WRI](#)
[Systems Change Lab](#)
- [Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code](#)
- [Ceres Roadmap to Sustainability](#)
- [Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index](#)
- [GRI Social Standards](#)
- [UN Global Compact Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights](#)
- [Putting Ethics to Work - A guide for UN Staff](#)
- [Save the Children's Position on Child Labor](#)
- [Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work: ILO Convention No. 190, Recommendation No. 206](#)
- [Nest Ethical Handicraft Program](#)
- [Nest Ethical Compliance Standards and Code of Conduct](#)
- [Nest Compliance Best Practices for Vendors](#)
- [The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers work on Extended Producer Responsibility](#)

Photo Credit [OceanCycle](#)



RESOURCE GUIDE



RECOMMENDED POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The Centre for Child Rights and Business (formerly CCR CSR)

The Centre for Child Rights and Business (The Centre) supports businesses to deliver improvements within their supply chains that not only benefit workers, families and children, but also deliver positive business outcomes. We offer global expertise, services and support covering a broad range of child rights and well-being issues. Our services cover responsible recruitment practices with a focus on child labor prevention and remediation, child rights risks assessments, support packages for Young Workers and other marginalized groups, and a comprehensive set of services to create family-friendly workplaces in supply chains.

Role: Child labor specialists, supply chain child rights risks and impact assessment, research, compliance.

Geographies: Headquartered in Hong Kong, the Centre works in a growing number of countries including Egypt, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Turkey, Vietnam, among others.

Contact: info@childrights-business.org

Ethical Trading Initiative

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is a leading alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs that promotes respect for workers' rights around the globe. Our vision is a world where all workers are free from exploitation and discrimination and enjoy conditions of freedom, security and equity. ETI defines best practice in ethical trade; helps workers to help themselves, builds strategic alliances between companies, Suppliers, trade unions, NGOs and governments; persuades and influences key players; and drives performance in member companies' performance.

Role: Best practices, labor rights, case studies, training

Geographies: Global

Contact: eti@eti.org.uk



RESOURCE GUIDE



RECOMMENDED POTENTIAL PARTNERS

First Mile

The First Mile®, an initiative of Thread International and [WORK](#), formalizes waste collection networks in low-income communities and bridges the gap for global brands to purchase from these responsible supply chains, while diverting plastic waste from the ocean and landfills. Our work maps waste sheds, and helps brands and NGOs understand how best to tackle the social and environmental issues inherent to informal waste economies and implements those solutions directly. We have created supply chains that have saved millions of pounds of plastic from landfills and the ocean, created income generation opportunities for thousands of collectors, and developed programming that has curtailed and remediated child labor in landfills, undercut bad faith practices like predatory lending and ensured that families can safely make the transition to the formal economy, all while supplying over a dozen global brands with First Mile approved materials that they and their consumers can be proud of. We have experience working with waste collectors in over a dozen low-income countries.

Role: Supply chain development, social responsibility intervention, traceability and transparency

Geographies: Haiti, Honduras, Taiwan. Expanding globally.

Contact: impact@firstmilemade.com

Global Alliance of Waste Pickers

The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers is a networking process supported by WIEGO, among thousands of waste picker organizations with groups in more than 28 countries covering mainly Latin America, Asia and Africa. The Global Alliance is currently focusing on the sharing and exchange of information and solidarity among thousands of waste pickers' organizations, with the support and coordination of WIEGO and contributions from waste picker leaders and allies across the world.

Role: Connections to local waste picker organizations, best practices, stakeholder engagement

Geographies: Latin America, India, Africa

Contact: <https://globalrec.org/contact/>



RESOURCE GUIDE



RECOMMENDED POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Nest

Nest is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) building a new handworker economy to increase global workforce inclusivity, improve women’s well-being beyond factories and preserve important cultural traditions around the world. In partnership with public and private sector collaborators, including artisan business leaders themselves, Nest’s programs are bringing radical transparency, data-driven development and fair market access to a fragmented industry, unlocking handwork’s unmet potential to improve our world.

Role: Supply chain evaluation, social responsibility intervention

Geographies: Global, Indonesia, Mexico

Contact: info@buildanest.org

NextWave Plastics Members

NextWave Plastics is an industry-led, open-source collaboration among leading technology companies and consumer brands to develop the first global network of ocean-bound plastic supply chains. Convened by Lonely Whale, this consortium aims to keep plastic in our economy and out of the ocean and has committed to preventing a minimum of 25,000 tons of plastic waste from entering the ocean by 2025 across countries most impacted by plastic pollution. Members include Dell Technologies, Bureo, CPI Card Group, Herman Miller, HP Inc., Humanscale, IKEA, Interface, Solgaard and Trek Bicycle.

Role: Thought leadership, convenor/connector, case studies

Geographies: Global, Southeast Asia, Central America and Caribbean

Contact: hello@nextwaveplastics.org



RESOURCE GUIDE



RECOMMENDED POTENTIAL PARTNERS

OceanCycle

As a social enterprise and trusted source of transparency in the ocean-bound plastics marketplace, OceanCycle works with leading brands to integrate more sustainability into their core products. OceanCycle helps brands' procurement departments and Suppliers integrate their certified materials with cost-efficiency and minimal supply chain interruptions. OceanCycle is a change catalyst bringing solutions to scale in three main ways: business consultation, material certification and community impact.

Role: Certification, material sourcing strategies, de-risking supply chains, traceability & documentation, social metrics and measurement, training and increasing recycling rates

Geographies: Global, Ecuador, Thailand, Indonesia, Honduras, India, Pakistan, and North and West Africa.

Contact: info@oceancycle.co

WIEGO

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) is a global network focused on empowering the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy to secure their livelihoods. We believe all workers should have equal economic opportunities, rights, protection and voice. WIEGO promotes change by: improving statistics and expanding knowledge on the informal economy; building networks and capacity among informal worker organizations; and, jointly with the networks and organizations, influencing local, national and international policies. Today, WIEGO is a thriving network of Individual and Institutional Members in over 40 countries. The WIEGO Network comprises: membership-based organizations (MBOs) of informal workers; researchers engaged in analysis of the informal economy; and development practitioners concerned with poverty and informality.

Role: Stakeholder engagement, informal economy knowledge experts, research

Geography: Global

Contact: wiego@wiego.org



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