![changemakers ASHOKA logo]

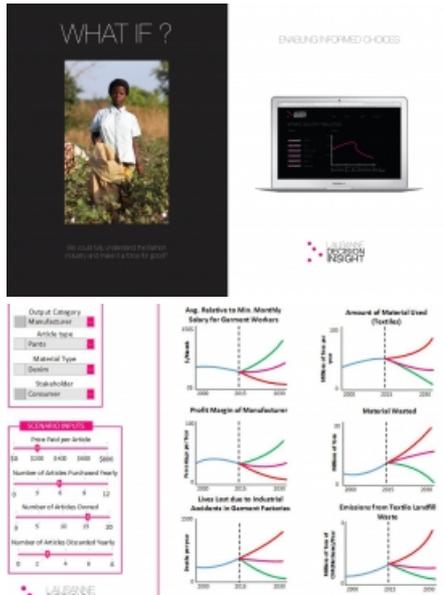# Lausanne Decision Insight: An interactive platform to gain insights into the fast fashion system for good

Lausanne, Switzerland

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Year Founded:
2015
Organization type:
hybrid
Project Stage:
Idea
Budget:
$100,000 - $250,000
Website:
http://decisioninsight.ch/

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- Trade
- Sustainable development
- Human Rights
- Conscious consumerism
- Transparency

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

We are developing an interactive online platform which will help various actors in the fast fashion system, such as consumers, brands and manufacturers, explore connections, play out scenarios and see how improvements can be brought about and challenges can be addressed across the system for good.

WHAT IF - Inspiration: Write one sentence that describes a way that your project dares to ask, "WHAT IF?"

We could fully understand the fashion industry and make it a force for good.

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

The fashion industry is highly complex. This project looks at the fashion supply chain as a system of interconnecting and interdependent parts where consumers, brands, manufacturing, and farming decisions have impacts on the environment and on people at many different points across the system. Our tool will help address problems such as garment workers' pay and conditions, environmental issues due to waste clothing, overconsumption, and quality.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

We will build a model of the dynamic and complex fashion supply chain. This interactive model will allow consumers to find points of leverage where the system as a whole can be improved. The model will also provide insights to the brands and manufacturers so that they too can work with it to see how changes in one part of their operations can ripple up and down the supply chain. The insight that this tool will bring to the users will allow them to make informed decisions on how they consume, and how they operate their businesses. This in turn will have positive impacts for garment workers, farmers, textile processors, shop workers and the environment. The users can pledge to change their consumption and production.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

The consumer can input into the model the no. of items of clothing they buy per month, the average cost of these items, and their average life expectancy. They could input the materials that their clothes are made from and the countries in which they are made. These are data that are easily accessible to the consumer. The consumer then has access to "sliders" which he can move up or down for a number of variables e.g. garment workers' pay, materials, overheads, transport, profit margin. He can then find the best possible scenario for getting insight into how many items of clothing he should buy each month, of what quality, from what countries, at what price in order to maximise the benefits to the workers and reduce negative impact impact.

Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact for the coming years.

There is a lot of interest from partner organisations for this project and we have been asked to speak at TedX Lausanne. Consumers want to have more information on how their clothes are made and how they can be sure that by making more conscious consumer choices they can affect people's lives. This project will educate consumers to make better buying choices. It will provide a management decision-making tool for brands and manufacturers by demonstrating to them where their investment will have the best social impact. It will provide transparency and lead to more accountability on the part of the stakeholders. It will create a demand for higher quality goods that last longer. Users will have the option to register to use the tool and whether they agree to follow-ups on their fashion related activities, this will provide qualitative and quantitative impact data.

Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?

This tool will be available for free online to anyone. It could also be used as a training tool where a facilitator would walk through its uses and implications with stakeholders e.g in classrooms, in companies, in NGOs and government departments. Initially we will use publicly available data to build the model. However the more primary data we have the more accurate the model will be, the more relevant it will be to consumers and brands around the world. The model will provide scenarios that can be used to shape policy as well as to provide support to companies wanting to make changes.

Sustainability

Financial Sustainability Plan: What is this solution's plan to ensure financial sustainability?

We are in the process of applying to other Foundations for financial support. We have in-kind support from BSL and EPFL. In the longer term, commercial clients, NGOs and academia can pay for training days with the tool. Companies can pay for the model to be customised with their proprietary data. We will also apply to government organisations for support as we believe this model is important for supporting sustainable trade and industry.

Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?

The Sustainable Apparel Coalition are addressing fashion sector issues in a systemic way but not the entire system. Other projects map parts of the system but not the whole such as Fashion Footprint Transparency Tool, Bern Declaration tool, Fashion Revolution index, and the World Apparel & Footwear Life Cycle Assessment Database (WALDB) and Responsibility in Fashion. Our project provides systemic solutions rather than symptomatic ones. We look forwards to creating partnerships with these actors so as to provide the maximum benefit to all stakeholders and not reinvent the wheel.

Team

Founding Story

The founder volunteers for Fashion Revolution Suisse and is a professor at Business School Lausanne. Along with a colleague at BSL who is a systems thinking expert they realised that the problems that Fashion Revolution and many others are trying to address could be analysed in a systemic way (all the issues are well documented in The True Cost movie) . A powerful tool could be designed to bring together all aspects of the system from the farmers, to the processing, to manufacturing, to brands, to consumers and beyond to textile recycling and disposal. These ideas were presented to students and experts at BSL in the form of bathtub dynamic models of the fast fashion sector (see our website).

Team

The team is composed of a research team leader (PhD in CSR and Sustainability), a systems thinking expert (PhD in systems modeling) and 4 assistants with systems thinking and IT expertise as well as a creative director for user interface design. There are 3 board members. Everyone is currently part-time. The team will grow by adding expertise from: - Student interns from Business School Lausanne and Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne for data gathering and contextual inquiry - An IT specialist for creating the online interactive platform - A Data scientist for data warehousing and predictive analytics

File attachments:

Value Chain: Where does your work fit into the apparel value chain? [check all that apply]

Raw Materials, Manufacturing, Consumption.

Your Role: What is your relationship to the apparel industry? [check all that apply]

Advocate/Organizer, Consumer, Non-profit Staff, Researcher.

Target Population: What stakeholder groups do you engage or empower in your work? [check all that apply]

Auditors, Brands, Consumers, Corporations, Designers, Factory Workers, Factory Owners, Policymakers, Researchers, Retailers - Department Store, Retailers - Specialty Store, Retailers - Mass-merchandise Chain, Retailers - Discount Chain, Sourcing Manager / Supply Chain Manager, Supplier - contractor, Supplier - subcontractor, Trading Companies, Women, Youth.

● Intervention Focus: What are you trying to achieve / influence? [check all that apply]

Accountability, Conscious Consumerism, Environmentally Sustainable Practices, Labor Rights (i.e. Collective Bargaining, etc.), Recycling or Circular Economy, Physical Working Conditions, Transparency.

Lever for Change: Select up to 3 ways your work is helping to transform the industry.

Data, Policy, Training.

Is your project targeted at solving any of the following key barriers?

Consumers Aren't Motivated to Care: Neither Compelling Reasons Nor Easy Means to Change Consumption Habits, Sustainability is Not Yet in the DNA: Fast Fashion's Current Model Disincentivizes Value-Driven Economies.

Does your project utilize any of the innovative design principles below?

Disrupt Business as Usual: Target Key Players Who Can Influence the Bottom Line.

Innovation Inspiration: When you first conceived of your project, did you think of it as applicable to the apparel industry?

yes

If you answered "no" to the previous question, which industry was your project originally aimed at transforming?

● Replicating in the Apparel Industry: If your project didn't initially target the apparel industry, how are you specifically tailoring it to do so now?
Are you nurturing or inspiring others to be changemakers? If so, how?

By providing thinking tools and learning methods that helps individuals raise their awareness by seeing the systems as a whole.

● Tell us about the partnerships that enhance your approach. How have you collaborated with others in the industry to increase your impact?

Working with Fashion Revolution Suisse has given us access to key thinkers in the apparel sector.

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