TEXTILE WASTE AWARENESS

KEY TOPICS

- waste awareness and ecology
- textile industry and carbon footprint
- sustainability

SUMMARY

The module offers a detailed look at waste and includes interactive group work exploring its various aspects in our daily lives. Participants engage in discussions, games, and collaborative research activities that encourage a holistic approach to sustainability, focusing on upcycling and textiles. By the end of the module, participants will be familiar with key terms, informed about different waste management techniques, and feel empowered to implement these practices in their work.

TECHNICALITIES

15 people that will work individually, as one group and in groups of 3

190 minutes

material is in digital form through a projector and online padlet

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Waste is a major global issue, with about 2.01 billion tons of municipal solid waste generated yearly, according to the World Bank. The textile industry faces significant waste challenges, contributing roughly 20% of global water pollution due to untreated wastewater containing harmful chemicals like dyes and heavy metals. Around 85% of textiles end up in landfills or are incinerated annually, worsening environmental degradation and increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Microfiber pollution from synthetic fabrics, such as polyester, also threatens marine ecosystems, releasing millions of microfibers into water bodies during washing.

This module explores waste as a complex issue, using relatable examples from everyday life to help participants understand it better. The discussion examines waste production and management in the textile industry, highlighting the need for better waste treatment and advocating for product development and upcycling. Sustainability is integrated into every production stage, including design, manufacturing, distribution, and disposal. The module also addresses social aspects like fair wages and job opportunities, and educates the public on the environmental impacts of their daily actions.

In the accompanying video, an entrepreneur highlights the importance of managing production waste and how materials often seen as “trash” can be upcycled into new products. Specifically, the video showcases how people from diverse and marginalised groups, such as immigrants, disabled individuals, and inmates, transform this waste into marketable goods.

WORKSHOP INTRO

Methods	Objectives	Praparatory
• group work • group research • brainstorming • true or false • storytelling • scavenger hunt	• Debunk myths about carbon footprint. • Link the textile industry with waste. • Generate ideas for small changes in daily life that promote sustainability. • Give the perspective of transgeneration issue in sustainability	• Print the materials • Put chairs in a circle • Connect the laptop and speakers to the projector

Energiser: Sustainable Scavenger Hunt

10 minutes

none

Learning objectives

- Create an energetic and open atmosphere.
- Engage participants in a time-sensitive activity.
- Show that sustainability exists all around us.
- Foster team bonding.

Instructions

1. Form Teams: Divide participants into small teams.
2. Provide Lists: Give each team a list of sustainability-related items or actions to find or accomplish within 5-10 minutes. Items/actions might include:
   a. Finding examples of upcycled or recycled materials.
   b. Locating sustainable practices within the venue.
   c. Identifying eco-friendly products.
   d. Completing small sustainability challenges (e.g., picking up litter, turning off unused lights).
3. Compete Against Time: Instruct teams to race against each other to complete as many items/actions on the list as possible before time runs out.
4. Review Findings: After the time is up, gather the teams and review their findings.
5. Debriefing: Emphasise teamwork and collaboration. Discuss how participants communicated, delegated tasks, and solved problems together. Highlight the importance of observation and critical thinking as they identified sustainability-related items and completed challenges.
   - What challenges did your team face during the scavenger hunt, and how did you overcome them?
   - Did you gain any new insights about sustainability from this activity? If so, please share.

   Celebrate the successes of each group and emphasise the importance of their collaboration.

The Video on re.store – A Case Study in Social Enterprise

20 minutes

laptop, projector, a link to the video of re.store

Learning objectives

- Understand how re.store promotes social inclusion through its upcycled textile products.
- Recognise the environmental benefits of upcycling in the fashion industry.
- Explore the impact of innovative business models on changing consumer habits.

Instructions

1. Introduction (3 minutes):

Introduce the re.store project by explaining its mission to blend social innovation with ecological sustainability in the textile industry. Highlight how they work with diverse groups, such as refugees and social institutions, to create upcycled products from textile waste.

2. Video Viewing (6 minutes):

Play the video clip about re.store. Encourage participants to focus on how the brand promotes social inclusion and reduces the textile industry's ecological footprint.

3. Group Discussion (6-8 minutes):

After watching the video, facilitate a discussion with the following prompts:

- What stood out to you about re.store's approach?
- How do their practices support both social inclusion and environmental sustainability?
- What impact do you think this model could have on changing consumption habits?

4. Reflection (3-5 minutes):

Ask participants to reflect on how re.store's initiatives connect with the broader concepts of social entrepreneurship covered in previous activities.
Prompt them to consider:

- How can social enterprises influence positive changes in societal and environmental practices?
- What other industries could benefit from similar approaches?

5. Wrap-Up (1-2 minutes):

Conclude the activity by summarising key insights from the discussion. Emphasise the importance of innovative enterprises like re.store in fostering sustainable practices and social inclusion.

A Hands-On Approach to Social Entrepreneurship - Simulation

30 minutes

laptops or tablets with internet access, an online platform for gameplay

Learning objectives

- Introduce participants to social entrepreneurship through experiential learning.
- Stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Foster creativity and innovation in addressing social and environmental challenges.

Instructions

1. Group Formation: Divide participants into small groups of 3-4 individuals.
2. Explain the Activity: Tell the groups they will participate in a simulation to explore social entrepreneurship and present the Scenario.

The scenario for the simulation

- "Imagine you are part of a community facing a pressing social or environmental issue. Your task is to develop a solution that addresses this issue sustainably and effectively. Consider the needs of the community, available resources, potential challenges, and the long-term sustainability of your solution."

3. Brainstorm Ideas: Give groups a few minutes to brainstorm and discuss ideas.
4. Group Presentations: After brainstorming, have each group present their proposed solution to the rest of the participants.
5. Encourage Feedback: Invite other groups to ask questions and provide feedback on each presentation.
6. Facilitate Discussion: After all presentations, guide a discussion to reflect on the key elements of social entrepreneurship that emerged during the activity. Ask questions such as:
    - What defines a social entrepreneur?
    - How does social entrepreneurship differ from traditional entrepreneurship?
    - Can you share examples of successful social entrepreneurship ventures?
    - What characteristics make a solution sustainable and impactful?
    - How can social entrepreneurs measure the success of their initiatives?

Summarise Key Concepts: Conclude the discussion by highlighting the importance of creativity, innovation, and empathy in social entrepreneurship.

Debriefing:
Lead a debriefing session to discuss insights gained from the simulation. Encourage participants to reflect on their understanding of social entrepreneurship and its relevance to real-world challenges. Reinforce key concepts such as empathy, sustainability, and innovation. Invite participants to share how they can apply the principles of social entrepreneurship in their own lives and communities.

Waste Awareness Challenge: The True/False Game

30 minutes

digital file with questions, projector

Learning objectives

- assess waste awareness
- reflect critically on waste and sustainability
- highlight the complexity of waste management

Instructions

Seating: Ask participants to sit beside each other while preparing for the exercise.

Explain the Game: Let them know that there will be four questions to test their waste awareness. Instruct participants to stand in the middle of the room. When the first statement appears, they must move to the left if they think it is true or to the right if they think it is false.

Facilitators' role

- Read the Statement: Read the first statement aloud, giving participants time to think before moving to the corresponding side.
- Participant Insights: Select at least one participant from each group to explain why they believe the statement is true or false.
- Encourage Dialogue: Allow participants to discuss their views with others in their group and the opposing side. To manage time and maintain focus, set a time limit of 4 minutes for these discussions.
- Watch Supporting Video: After the discussion, show a short video segment confirming the correct answer.
- Repeat: Follow the same process for each statement.

Return to Seats: Instruct the group to return to their seats once all statements have been addressed.

Debriefing:

- Ask participants how the activity helped them discuss and exchange ideas.
- Inquire if any statements surprised them or changed their understanding of waste awareness.

Emphasise the importance of respectful dialogue and the exchange of ideas to motivate participants to continue exploring sustainability topics beyond the game.

Understanding Carbon Footprint: Exploring Our Impact

60 minutes

digital presentation file, projector, online Padlet, laptop

Learning objectives

- Clear up misconceptions about carbon footprint
- Reflect on the socio-economic factors of carbon emissions worldwide
- Reflect on the implications of personal choices on the environment.

Instructions

Gather Participants: Have everyone sit in a circle.
Show Presentation: Use the projector to show a presentation about carbon footprints. Explain what they mean and discuss how familiar participants are with the concept.
World Map Discussion: Display a world map showing carbon emissions. Explain why emissions are distributed in particular ways across countries.
Group Formation: Divide participants into four groups. Assign each group a topic to research.

Topic to research:

- Group A: Fashion
- Group B: Food
- Group C: Personal Footprint
- Group D: Tourism

Research Time: Give each group 20 minutes to explore their topic and take notes on Padlet.
Present Findings: After the research, gather everyone to share their findings. Each group presents its research to the larger group.
Facilitate Discussion: After presentations, ask participants: "Does your carbon footprint matter?" Encourage a discussion about personal choices and related anxieties.
Watch Video: Facilitate a short video on carbon footprint in daily life as the group discusses.

Debriefing:
Discuss the impact of daily activities on carbon footprints and the relationships between emissions and factors like industrialisation and population density.
Reflection Questions:

- How did researching different areas change your understanding of your carbon footprint?
- What patterns did you notice in the emissions distribution map? How do they connect to socio-economic factors?

Talk about the role of governments and businesses in tackling climate change and reducing carbon emissions.

Waste Solutions in the Textile Industry: Refuse, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle

45 minutes

digital presentation file, projector, online Padlet, laptop

Learning objectives

- Get the key issues on waste in the textile industry.
- Explore Solutions for each waste component.
- Empower Consumers to make sustainable choices in the textile industry.

Instructions

Circle Formation: Have participants sit in a circle.
Show Terms: Project the digital file with "refuse, reuse, repurpose, recycle" for everyone to see. Clarify that each concept is to be defined in group work.
Divide into Groups: Split participants into four groups, assigning each group one of the terms for 15-minute research. Encourage teams to take notes on an online Padlet.

Research Task

Instruct each group to find:

- A clear definition of their term.
- Five benefits of applying the term in the textile industry.
- Five challenges associated with it.
- Five examples of the term in practice.

Discussion Time: Once the 15-minute research period is over, reconvene in the training room for each group to present their findings.
Facilitate Conversation: After the presentations, lead a 10-minute discussion about the terms and their implications in the textile industry.

Debriefing:
Discuss practical examples, benefits, and challenges of refuse, reuse, repurpose, and recycle in the textile industry. Ensure participants feel equipped to make sustainable choices based on their understanding of waste reduction strategies.
Guiding Question:

- What role do businesses and policymakers play in promoting waste reduction strategies in the textile industry?
- How can consumers advocate for change?

Discuss the circular economy and how it can be applied to textiles to minimise waste and maximise resource efficiency.

Circle of Transgenerational Circular Economy - Debriefing

15 minutes

none

Learning objectives

- Share practices from personal and family stories.
- Connect sustainability to heritage and family.
- Learn from diverse cultural perspectives on sustainability.

Instructions

1. Sit in a Circle: Gather everyone in a circle.
2. Introduction: To conclude the session, participants will share sustainability practices from their family stories and past generations.
3. Sharing Examples: Go around the circle clockwise, prompting each participant to share one example from their parents, grandparents, uncles, or neighbours that reflects a sustainability practice in the textile and clothing industry.
4. Completion: Once everyone has shared, thank participants for their contributions. Encourage the group to applaud their openness and reflect on the shared stories.

Main Learning Points

- Acknowledge that sustainable textile and clothing industry practices have existed in families and communities for generations, even if they haven't been explicitly labelled as such.
- Recognise the connection between sustainability, cultural heritage, family values and traditions.
- Gain insights from the diverse cultural perspectives shared by participants.

Debriefing:

Questions for Reflection:

- How do these examples reflect the values of your cultural heritage?
- How can we draw inspiration from our ancestors' sustainable practices to guide our efforts toward a more sustainable future?

Debriefing of the workshop and strengthening the learning outcomes

In this workshop, we explored the complex issue of textile waste awareness, examining various aspects of waste production, management, and solutions within the textile industry. Through interactive activities, discussions, and collaborative research, we deepened our understanding of sustainability principles and how they apply to our daily lives. By sharing personal stories and cultural perspectives, we connected with our heritage and learned how sustainability practices have been part of our cultures for generations.

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Increased awareness of waste production and the cycle in the textile industry.
- Appreciation for the cultural and ancestral roots of sustainability practices.
- Empowerment to make small changes towards more sustainable behaviours.
- Understanding of how individual actions connect to environmental impacts.
- Recognition of the need for collaboration and dialogue to address sustainability challenges.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some of the most impactful insights you gained from the workshop?
- How do you plan to incorporate refuse, reuse, repurpose, and recycle principles into your daily life or work?
- Reflecting on the Circle of Transgenerational Circular Economy activity, how does your cultural heritage influence your approach to sustainability?
- How can we leverage what we learned to promote sustainability in our communities?
- What specific actions would you like to take following this workshop?

Future Ideas and Actions:

- Collaborate with local organisations or businesses to implement sustainability initiatives such as clothing swaps, upcycling workshops, or eco-friendly product campaigns.
- Share your experiences and learnings from this workshop with others to encourage awareness and action toward reducing textile waste.
- Advocate for policy changes or corporate responsibility measures that support sustainable practices and reduce waste in the textile industry.

Sustainability tips

For activities outside, consider the following adjustments:

- Use paper cards with statements instead of online tools.
- Replace the digital definitions of carbon footprint and related terms with printed cards. Use pens and paper.
- Prepare posters entitled "Refuse," "Reuse," and "Recycle," on which Participants will write their definitions and examples on these papers.

Additional comments and tips for facilitators

- No adjustments are required for participants with mobility disabilities. However, creating integrated pairs and groups is essential for smoothly implementing the activities for participants with eyesight disabilities.

Hadouts

- Video of re.store