

Handbook for career guidance trainers and mentors in adult education

ENTREPreneurship training for migrant women in the field of FASHION

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Introduction

a) Welcome to the 'ENTREP-Fashion' manual

Welcome to the ENTREP-Fashion handbook for adult education trainers and mentors who are part of the Blended Training and Work-Based Entrepreneurial Education Program for migrant women in the fashion industry. The *ENTREP-Fashion* project aims to equip migrant women with the necessary entrepreneurial skills to start sustainable fashion businesses while overcoming the specific challenges they face when integrating into the labor market.

By using this handbook effectively, trainers and mentors will be better prepared to teach entrepreneurial skills and sustainable fashion practices. The training materials are tailored to the diverse needs of migrant women, who often face economic, social and cultural barriers. By providing structured guidance and resources for vocational trainers, the project aims to promote inclusion, economic independence and empowerment for these target groups.

The *ENTREP-Fashion* project is focused on the creation of practical and accessible **Open Educational Resources (OER)**. These resources form the core of the training program and provide detailed **learning pathways** for both migrant women and VET trainers. The content is tailored to the specific needs of these groups, ensuring that trainers and mentors are well equipped to deliver high quality, impactful education that addresses the barriers to integration and success in the fashion industry.

The digital learning paths are structured to guide both migrant women and VET trainers through a series of interactive and practical training modules. These modules cover a wide range of topics, from sustainability in fashion to the basics of business management. The digital learning pathway for migrant women focuses primarily on building the skills needed to start and maintain successful fashion businesses, while the digital learning pathway for VET trainers provides a framework for mentoring and teaching these concepts.

In summary, the focus of the materials and resources is on the fundamentals of business management in the sustainable fashion industry, while also providing comprehensive inputs on sustainable textiles, fashion and best practices in the industry. With these knowledge impulses, we want to encourage participants to define their own interests in order to further specialize in specific areas of the sustainable textile and fashion industry and develop their business plan based on this.

Click here for the digital elearning learning path for vocational training trainers:

<https://zebis.digital/start/9T4LMA/>

This digital content provides VET trainers and career guidance coaches with the tools they need to teach sustainable fashion principles, guide learners in their professional development and support them in starting their own business. The modules of this course are designed to provide trainers with the necessary framework to effectively mentor migrant women and ensure that the training content is both relevant and impactful.

What you can expect from the learning path for vocational training trainers:

- **Module 1: Principles of sustainable fashion and why it is important**
 - **Sustainability Basics:** Learn strategies for teaching sustainable practices in fashion, including eco-friendly materials and waste reduction through circular economy models.
 - **Unique market position:** Help learners find their niche in the sustainable fashion market and understand how their business can differentiate itself from the competition through sustainability.
 - **Practical implementation:** Explore real-life case studies that demonstrate the application of sustainable practices in the sustainable fashion industry.
- **Module 2: Career guidance in the sustainable textile industry**
 - **Business viability:** Learners learn how to validate their sustainable fashion business ideas by assessing market demand, competition and opportunities.
 - **Market dynamics:** Insights into market trends in the sustainable fashion industry to help learners find their niche and position their brand effectively.
- **Module 3: Career planning: how to create actionable plans**
 - **Objective:** To help learners create clear, realistic career plans that align with their long-term goals in the fashion industry.
 - **Roadmap to success:** Providing tools and techniques to develop step-by-step plans that guide learners through the complexities of the fashion business, from concept development to market launch.

Through a combination of interactive lessons, case studies and practical exercises, this digital learning path empowers VET trainers to effectively mentor migrant women and help them build sustainable textile and fashion concepts that can succeed in today's market.

Click here for the digital learning path for migrant women:

<https://zebis.digital/start/PLP9QD>

The Migrant Women's Learning Pathway focuses on providing participants with the essential skills needed to succeed in the sustainable fashion industry. Covering everything from sustainable textile practices to entrepreneurship and business management, this pathway provides practical exercises and real-world examples to help migrant women build successful, eco-friendly textile and fashion concepts.

What you can expect from the learning path for migrant women:

- **Module 1: Introduction to sustainable fashion/textiles**
 - **Basics of sustainable fashion/textiles:** Learn more about eco-friendly materials and sustainable production techniques, including natural dyes, upcycling and ethical sourcing. With these knowledge impulses, we want to encourage participants to discover their own interests and then specialize further on their own, outside of our digital learning program, in the chosen areas of the sustainable textile and fashion industry. The business plan will then be developed on this basis. **Important: The content provided does not cover the entire spectrum of the sustainable textile industry.**
 - **Techniques and tools:** Discover practical techniques such as upcycling and natural dyeing to create sustainable fashion products.
 - **Practical implementation:** Case studies of fashion brands and entrepreneurs who have successfully implemented sustainable practices in their companies provide inspiration and insights into practice.
- **Module 2: Entrepreneurship and business management in sustainable fashion**
 - **Start your business:** Learn the key steps to starting a sustainable fashion business, from developing a business idea to creating a business plan.
 - **Business Skills:** Acquire basic business skills, including budgeting, financial planning, marketing and operations.
 - **Market analysis:** Learn how to conduct a market analysis to identify opportunities and trends in the sustainable fashion sector and how to successfully position your company.
- **Module 3: Business start-up and cooperation for migrant women in the fashion industry**
 - **Starting a Fashion Business:** Comprehensive guide to starting a fashion business, including legal requirements, sourcing materials and marketing strategies.

- **Collaboration and Networking:** Learn how to build partnerships, networks and collaborations within the fashion industry that are essential to growing a business.
- **Legal and practical aspects:** Understand the legal requirements, approvals and practical steps needed to start and run a fashion business in your country.

Each module contains a mix of video tutorials, case studies and practical exercises to ensure that learners can apply their knowledge to real-life situations. By the end of the course, learners will have the necessary knowledge and tools to turn their passion for sustainable textiles and fashion into an eco-friendly business idea. The deepening and specialization of the chosen sustainable textile sector is stimulated by reflection exercises to continue independently .

b) Objectives of the manual

The aim of this manual is to:

- Equip **trainers and mentors** with the tools, strategies and knowledge needed to support migrant women in starting and running a sustainable fashion business.
- Promoting the social, economic and cultural integration of migrant women in the fashion industry by providing them with basic skills and knowledge.
- Provide a structured learning framework that supports both the trainers and the migrant women in understanding the key concepts of sustainability, business management and entrepreneurship.
- Promoting the adoption of sustainable fashion principles, such as the use of environmentally friendly materials, upcycling, circular economy and ethical production methods.
- Helping trainers to create a supportive learning environment in which migrant women can overcome language, cultural and financial barriers.
- Promotion of independent reflection processes and further development, as well as the deepening of individually suitable specializations.

With this handbook and the digital **OER learning pathways**, you will be well equipped to guide migrant women on their journey towards sustainable fashion entrepreneurship. The resources provided will support you in delivering impactful training that not only teaches key skills, but also inspires and empowers learners to succeed in the fashion industry.

Section 1: Understanding the needs of migrant women

1.1. Challenges for migrant women in the fashion industry

Migrant women who want to enter the fashion industry face a variety of challenges. These challenges can have various causes, including language barriers, cultural differences, economic disadvantages and limited access to professional networks. Understanding these challenges is crucial for trainers and mentors as it helps in designing an inclusive and effective learning environment. Below are some of the key barriers faced by migrant women and the potential impact on their ability to succeed in the fashion industry.

1. language barriers

For many migrant women, language is a significant barrier to accessing training, networking and business opportunities. Limited knowledge of the local language can prevent them from fully participating in vocational education and business training, understanding business regulations, communicating with customers and promoting their business effectively.

Effects on learning and corporate development:

- Difficulty understanding technical or business-related content in training courses.
- Limited ability to market products or engage with local customers.
- Challenges in handling business regulations, permits and licenses, which are often written in the local language.
- Less self-confidence when participating in group discussions or asking questions in class.

Response from the training supervisor:

- Provide training materials in simplified language and use visual aids or bilingual resources where possible.
- Encourage group work where learners can help each other with the translation.
- Use tools such as translation apps and provide glossaries with key terms in the learners' native language.

2. cultural differences and integration

Immigrant women often have different cultural backgrounds that can affect their attitudes towards fashion, business practices and workplace dynamics. Cultural differences can affect their understanding of the local fashion market, consumer preferences and business norms. They may also find it difficult to adapt their creative ideas to local trends or integrate into the wider professional network.

Effects on learning and corporate development:

- difficulties in understanding local fashion trends and consumer behavior, leading to a potential mismatch between their products and market demand.
- Problems with adapting traditional fashion designs or techniques to the host country's market.
- Challenges related to different behaviors in the workplace, business etiquette and social expectations.

Response from the training supervisor:

- Promote a culturally inclusive environment where learners are encouraged to incorporate their cultural heritage into their business ideas and provide a unique value proposition to the market.
- Use case studies of successful migrant women who have adapted their cultural fashion influences to the local market.
- Intercultural communication training that helps learners understand local business etiquette and consumer behavior.

3. economic barriers

Migrant women often face economic problems that make it difficult for them to start or expand a business. Limited access to financial resources such as bank loans, grants or government subsidies can hinder their ability to purchase materials, hire employees or market their products. Economic discrimination can also limit their access to funding, often due to their migrant status or lack of local credit history.

Effects on learning and corporate development:

- Inability to access the funding or financial resources needed to start or grow a business.

- Lack of knowledge about local financial institutions, grant opportunities or alternative financing mechanisms.
- Possible reliance on cheap materials or practices that could affect the quality of their products.

Response from the training supervisor:

- Include financial literacy and business funding opportunities in the curriculum to teach learners how to apply for loans, grants or micro-financing opportunities.
- Providing information on alternative financing methods such as crowdfunding or community-based financing.
- Encourage learners to build cost-effective, sustainable business models that do not require large upfront investments.

4. limited professional networks

Building a successful business in the fashion industry requires access to professional networks, including supply chains, clientele, mentors and industry experts. However, migrant women often lack established social and professional networks in their new country, which can lead to isolation and fewer opportunities for business development, collaboration and mentoring.

Effects on learning and corporate development:

- Difficulties in finding reliable suppliers, employees or customers.
- Lack of mentors or professional guidance when exploring the fashion industry.
- Isolation from industry events, trade fairs and networking opportunities, which can limit contact with potential business partners and customers.

Response from the training supervisor:

- Facilitate opportunities for learners to build their professional networks through the organization of networking events, workshops and meetings with local fashion professionals.
- Introduce learners to online platforms such as LinkedIn or Instagram where they can make contacts and promote their work
- Encourage participation in fashion fairs, pop-up stores or local markets to get in touch with suppliers and customers.

5. social and psychological barriers

Migrant women may face social discrimination, lack of social support or feelings of isolation in their new environment. These social barriers combined with previous migration experiences or trauma can have a negative impact on their self-esteem and confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities. The psychological impact of these experiences can make them reluctant to take risks or fully engage with the training program.

Effects on learning and corporate development:

- Less confidence in starting or running a business, which can lead to missed opportunities.
- Fear of failure, which leads to an unwillingness to take risks or develop innovative ideas.
- A feeling of isolation or exclusion from the wider business community, which can make it difficult to actively participate in training or business development activities.

Response from the training supervisor:

- Build a supportive and inclusive learning environment that encourages open dialog, peer support and collaboration among learners.
- Use positive role models and case studies of successful entrepreneurs with a migrant background to inspire confidence and show that success is achievable.
- Include modules on personal development, goal setting and resilience to help learners overcome psychological barriers and build self-confidence.

6. Legal and regulatory obstacles

Starting a business in the fashion industry involves a number of legal and regulatory requirements, including business registration, permits, intellectual property rights and labor laws. Migrant women may not be familiar with the legal framework in their new country, making it difficult to comply with regulations and avoid potential legal pitfalls.

Effects on learning and corporate development:

- Confusion or lack of knowledge about legal requirements such as permits, taxes and regulations for operating a business.
- Potential legal problems in connection with intellectual property (e.g. copyrights to designs) or labor law.
- Delays in setting up a company due to difficulties in dealing with the legal system or acquiring the necessary licenses.

Response from the training supervisor:

- Providing clear guidance on the legal and regulatory requirements for starting a business in the local fashion industry.
- This includes practical exercises on registering a company, obtaining permits and complying with tax laws.
- Provide resources and contacts for legal advice or consulting services that specialize in supporting immigrant entrepreneurs.

By understanding these challenges, educators can create a more inclusive, supportive and effective training environment. Addressing the specific needs of migrant women in the sustainable fashion industry through tailored support - be it by offering multilingual resources, promoting cultural integration, providing financial advice or facilitating networks - can help overcome these barriers and unlock the full potential of migrant women entrepreneurs. The goal is to equip them not only with the technical skills needed for sustainable fashion, but also with the confidence and resources to succeed in the competitive fashion industry.

Section 2: Training for sustainable fashion

2.1. Basic principles of sustainable fashion

Sustainable fashion refers to the production, consumption and disposal of clothing in a way that conserves natural resources, minimizes waste and protects workers' rights. In today's fashion industry, sustainability is more than a trend - it's a necessity. Educators need to communicate to learners the importance of adopting sustainable practices when entering the fashion industry.

The most important principles of sustainable fashion include

1. **Circular economy practices:** The circular economy is a system that aims to prevent waste and make optimum use of resources. It includes:
 - Designing products for longevity and durability.
 - Use of materials that can be recycled, reused or converted into new products.
 - Avoiding waste by manufacturing products that can be dismantled and reused.
2. **Teaching strategies:**
 - Introduce learners to the concept of circular fashion by examining examples of companies that reuse fabrics, repurpose garments and reduce waste in the production process.
 - Organize workshops in which learners experiment with upcycling materials into new fashion items.
3. **Environmentally friendly materials:** Sustainable fashion favors the use of organic, biodegradable or recycled fibers. This also means that ethical working practices are observed throughout the entire supply chain.
Teaching strategies:
 - Give learners a detailed understanding of the environmental impact of different fabrics and encourage them to research alternatives, e.g. organic cotton, Tencel and recycled polyester.
 - Visit local companies or suppliers that specialize in environmentally friendly materials so that learners can learn first-hand about sustainable procurement.

2.2. Teaching sustainable fashion

Trainers play a crucial role in helping migrant women to wear sustainable fashion. As sustainability becomes increasingly important to consumers, companies that focus on ethical production and environmentally friendly materials have a competitive advantage.

Important teaching strategies:

1. **Case studies:** Use case studies of companies that have successfully implemented sustainable fashion practices. These examples can inspire learners and give them actionable insights into how they can integrate sustainability into their own business.
 - Highlight fashion brands that are known for their commitment to sustainability, such as Patagonia, Stella McCartney and Veja.
2. **Practical projects:** Encourage learners to apply sustainable principles in practice by designing their own collections or fashion products using recycled materials or eco-friendly fabrics. This will deepen their understanding of sustainability and encourage their creativity.

The digital **learning path for VET trainers** contains detailed case studies, videos and interactive content that provide trainers with the tools to teach sustainable fashion effectively.

2.3. Integration of sustainability in vocational training programs

Integrating sustainability into vocational training programs is crucial to prepare learners, especially migrant women, for the future of the fashion industry, which is increasingly characterized by sustainable practices. As consumers become more environmentally conscious, fashion companies that focus on sustainability are better positioned to succeed. For VET educators, this means ensuring that sustainability is a core part of their curriculum, not just as a theoretical concept, but as a practical framework that learners can apply to their business ventures.

Sustainability in the fashion industry involves practices that reduce environmental damage, promote social responsibility and ensure ethical working conditions. For migrant women entering the fashion industry, these sustainable practices can provide a competitive advantage by meeting consumer demand for environmentally friendly products while promoting ethical business practices.

To effectively integrate sustainability into VET programs, trainers must take a holistic approach that incorporates environmental, economic and social sustainability and ensures that learners acquire comprehensive knowledge and practical skills that enable them to build responsible, successful businesses.

Key areas for integrating sustainability into vocational training programs

1. Embed the principles of sustainable fashion in every module

The principles of sustainable fashion should be embedded in every aspect of the VET curriculum. This means that sustainability is not just a stand-alone module, but a lens through which all topics are viewed. For example, when teaching about textile production, trainers should emphasize the importance of choosing environmentally friendly materials, avoiding waste and implementing circular economy models.

2. Training strategies:

- **Sustainable materials:** Inform the learners about environmentally friendly materials such as organic cotton, hemp, recycled polyester, Tencel, bamboo, algae fiber, linen, Pintatex (see more information **ANNEX 1. Sustainable materials**)
Explain the environmental impact of traditional textiles and compare them with sustainable alternatives.
- **Circular fashion:** Introduce learners to the concept of circular fashion, where products are designed to last, be reused and recycled. This reduces the amount of waste in the fashion industry and encourages a move away from the linear model of 'take, make, waste'. Case studies of successful circular fashion brands such as Patagonia and Eileen Fisher can serve as inspiration.
- **Sustainability throughout the supply chain:** Discuss the role of sustainability at each stage of the supply chain, from sourcing of raw materials through to manufacturing, packaging and distribution. Learners should understand how to manage a sustainable supply chain and the potential cost benefits of adopting sustainable practices over time.

3. Environmental impact assessment in the classroom

One of the key elements of integrating sustainability into VET programs is helping learners understand and measure the environmental impact of their fashion products. This includes carrying out **life cycle assessments (LCA)**, which assess the environmental impact of a product from raw material extraction to disposal at the end of its life cycle.

Training strategies:

- **Life cycle analysis (LCA):** Teach learners how to create a life cycle assessment for fashion products. This means looking at the entire life cycle of a product - from production to disposal. In this way, learners can easily identify where they can reduce the environmental impact.
- **Reducing the carbon footprint:** Discuss simple strategies to reduce the carbon footprint of fashion products. Examples include using regional suppliers to minimize transport routes, using energy-efficient production techniques and relying on renewable energies in production.
- **Water and energy saving:** Emphasize the importance of reducing water and energy consumption in textile production. Discuss easy-to-implement methods such as dyeing techniques that require less water and energy-efficient production processes.

4. Interactive workshops on upcycling and recycling

Hands-on workshops provide an engaging way to teach sustainable fashion techniques such as upcycling and recycling. Upcycling involves transforming waste materials or unwanted products into new, high-quality items, while recycling involves breaking down existing materials to create something new. These processes reduce waste and give old garments a new life, which is in line with the principles of a circular economy.

Training strategies:

- **Upcycling workshops:** Organize hands-on workshops where learners are encouraged to bring in old clothes or material waste and transform them into new products. This helps them to understand the concept of waste reduction and creativity in fashion. Examples include old jeans being turned into bags or jackets, or fabric scraps being used to make accessories such as hats or scarves.
- **Recycling techniques:** Inform learners about different recycling techniques used in the fashion industry, such as shredding textiles and recovering fibers. These techniques can be applied to natural fibers such as cotton or synthetic fibers such as polyester.
- **Product prototyping:** Encourage learners to design fashion products from recycled or reused materials. Use simple discussion groups to gather ideas and develop practical examples. The aim is to encourage creativity and show learners how they can use sustainable materials to design new fashion products.

5. Integrating case studies of sustainable fashion brands

Case studies of successful sustainable fashion brands can serve as powerful learning tools. By examining real-life examples of companies that prioritize sustainability, learners can gain insight into the practical application of sustainable practices and the challenges and benefits of operating a sustainable business.

Training Strategies:

- **Successful case studies:** Include detailed case studies of companies such as **Patagonia**, which is known for its commitment to environmental protection, or **Stella McCartney**, a brand known for its use of sustainable materials and ethical production methods. The case studies should not only highlight the company's sustainability efforts, but also show how these efforts have led to long-term profitability and brand loyalty.
- **Challenges of sustainable fashion:** In addition to discussing success stories, it is equally important to highlight the challenges that sustainable brands face, such as higher production costs or the complexity of the supply chain. This gives learners a realistic idea of what it takes to run a sustainable business.
- **Interactive discussions:** Following each case study, learners can discuss the key learnings and how they can apply these lessons to their own fashion business ideas.

6. Incorporating technology into sustainable fashion

Technology plays an important role in promoting sustainable fashion practices. From using artificial intelligence to predict fashion trends and reduce overproduction to introducing blockchain for supply chain transparency, technology can help companies improve sustainability while increasing efficiency.

Training strategies:

- **Digital material research:** Involve learners in how they can use the internet to search for environmentally friendly materials. Show them simple websites where sustainable fabrics or recycled materials can be found. This will help learners to make conscious choices for their sustainable fashion projects.
- **Understand simple supply chains:** Explain to learners why transparency in the supply chain is important. Use simple examples, such as the journey of a T-shirt from the cotton farm to the store, and show why it is important that everyone involved is treated fairly.

- **Online marketplaces for sustainable fashion:** Show learners how they can present and sell sustainable fashion products online. This can be done on marketplaces or platforms for second-hand fashion that offer an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional transportation routes. Setting up such profiles can be a first step towards integrating technology into the fashion industry in a meaningful way.

7. Promoting ethical labor practices

Sustainability is not just about the impact on the environment, but also about ensuring ethical treatment of workers throughout the supply chain. The fashion industry has come under fire for exploitative labor practices, particularly in developing countries. It is important that learners understand the importance of fair wages, safe working conditions and labor rights as part of their commitment to sustainability.

Training strategies:

- **Ethical supply chains:** Educate participants on how to build ethical supply chains by purchasing from suppliers that adhere to fair labor standards. Provide resources to identify certified ethical suppliers and understand international labor laws.
- **Certifications and standards:** Familiarize learners with sustainability certifications such as **Fair Trade**, **Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)** and **OEKO-TEX**. These certifications ensure that both environmental and labor standards are met in the production of textiles and garments.
- **Human rights and fashion:** Engage learners in discussions about the role of human rights in the fashion industry, emphasizing the importance of advocating for fair treatment, especially for workers in low-income countries where much of the world's fashion production takes place.

8. Involve learners in community-based sustainability projects

Encourage learners to participate in community-based sustainability projects. These projects could involve local fashion businesses, schools or non-profit organizations and focus on sustainability initiatives such as textile recycling programs, sustainable fashion shows or awareness campaigns about the importance of eco-friendly fashion.

Educational strategies:

- **Collaborate with the community:** Facilitate partnerships between learners and local businesses or community organizations to work on sustainability projects. These projects provide hands-on experience while having a positive impact on the environment and society.

- **Fashion Sustainability Challenges:** Organize sustainability competitions where learners have to design solutions to local environmental problems through fashion, e.g. reducing textile waste or promoting second-hand clothing markets.
- **Public fashion shows:** Host sustainable fashion shows showcasing upcycled or eco-friendly collections designed by learners. This not only gives learners practical experience, but also raises awareness of sustainability in the local community.

Integrating sustainability into vocational education programs is important to prepare learners for the challenges of the modern fashion industry. By incorporating sustainable practices into every aspect of the curriculum - from design and production to business management and ethics in the supply chain - educators can help learners build successful, environmentally conscious businesses. With a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical knowledge and practical application, vocational training programs can empower migrant women to start fashion businesses that not only thrive economically, but also contribute to a more sustainable future.

Section 3: Entrepreneurial education for migrants

3.1. Advice for migrant women on developing business ideas

Entrepreneurship offers migrant women the opportunity to become economically independent and contribute to their community. Trainers need to focus on helping learners identify viable business opportunities and develop entrepreneurial skills that align with their personal passions and market demand.

Key areas for the focus:

1. **Brainstorming and validation techniques:** Help learners develop business ideas by conducting market research, identifying market gaps and validating their ideas through surveys, focus groups and competitor analysis.

Sample Exercise:

- Organize a brainstorming session in which the learners propose ideas for sustainable fashion. They then need to research consumer trends and validate their ideas through practical tests (e.g. surveys or focus groups).
2. **Drawing up a business plan:** A well-crafted business plan is essential for any entrepreneur. It provides a roadmap for business growth and is often needed when seeking funding or investment.

Components of a business plan:

- **Executive Summary:** An overview of the company, its goals and its unique selling proposition.
- **Market analysis:** An analysis of the target market, including customer demographics, competitors and industry trends.
- **Product/service offering:** A description of the fashion products or services that the company will offer.
- **Marketing strategy:** How the company wants to reach and address its target audience.
- **Financial plan:** Projections for income, expenditure and profitability.

The **learning path for migrant women** contains modules that guide learners through the process of developing a business plan, from brainstorming and validating to writing and presenting their ideas.

3.2. Supporting migrant women in company management

Once learners have developed their business ideas, trainers need to guide them through the next stages of entrepreneurship: managing and growing their businesses. This includes teaching key business management skills and providing tools to help learners navigate the complex fashion industry.

Key qualifications:

1. **Market Research:** Market research is critical to understanding consumer behavior, identifying trends, and evaluating the competition. Teach learners how to conduct thorough market research using both primary (e.g., surveys, interviews) and secondary (e.g., industry reports) data used.

Example exercise:

Commission a market research project in which learners analyze the market for sustainable fashion in their region and identify opportunities for new businesses.

2. **Networking skills:** Networks are a valuable tool for entrepreneurs as they provide access to resources, mentors and potential clients. Encourage learners to build their networks both online and offline.

Networking opportunities:

- Local fashion events and trade fairs.
- Online platforms such as LinkedIn or Instagram to connect with fashion industry professionals, influencers and potential customers.
- Fashion incubators or accelerator programs that support companies in their early stages.

The **Learning Path for Trainers in Vocational Education and Training** offers modules on market research, networking and business management that give trainers the tools to effectively teach these critical business skills.

Section 4: Training methods

To ensure that migrant women effectively learn, understand and apply sustainable fashion principles and entrepreneurial skills, vocational trainers need to use diverse and dynamic teaching methods. Training methods are not only about content delivery, but also about fostering a supportive, interactive and engaging learning environment where learners can actively participate, experiment and grow. The methods chosen should take into account the different backgrounds of migrant women, including possible language barriers, cultural differences and different levels of formal education.

The aim is to ensure that all learners understand the key concepts, can apply their knowledge in practice and build the confidence to start and maintain a successful fashion business. Below are some key methods that can enhance the learning experience and help migrant women succeed.

4.1. experiential learning and practical projects

Experiential learning is an effective approach, especially when it comes to teaching practical topics such as sustainable fashion and entrepreneurship. This method involves learning by doing, which helps learners retain information better by directly involving them in practical projects.

Main features of experiential learning:

- **Application in the real world:** Learners apply what they have learned in practical, real-life scenarios. This is particularly useful when teaching fashion design, upcycling techniques or business planning. For example, in a workshop where learners make garments from recycled materials, they can immediately put theory into practice.
- **Prototyping and design:** Encourage learners to develop prototypes of fashion products. This could include making garments from eco-friendly fabrics, natural dyes or recycled materials. The process of designing, producing and presenting a prototype helps learners to understand the challenges and opportunities associated with sustainable fashion.
- **Business simulations:** Run simulations where learners simulate a business. This could involve pricing their products, presenting their business ideas to a panel or managing a fashion event. Simulations allow learners to experience the reality of entrepreneurship in a controlled environment.

Advantages:

- Learners gain practical experience and are better prepared for the challenges of the real world.
- This promotes problem-solving skills as learners encounter and overcome obstacles in their projects.
- Helps learners to develop a sense of ownership of their learning process.

4.2. interactive group projects and peer learning

Collaboration is a key component of vocational training, especially for learners from different backgrounds. **Group projects** and **peer learning** encourage teamwork, problem solving and the sharing of ideas. These projects offer learners the opportunity to develop communication skills, share experiences and learn from each other's perspectives.

Main features of group projects:

- **Joint fashion collections:** Divide learners into groups to design small sustainable fashion collections. Each group can be tasked with sourcing eco-friendly materials, designing garments and presenting their collection. This project promotes collaboration and creativity and encourages learners to share their skills and resources.
- **Peer feedback sessions:** After completing a project or assignment, hold peer review sessions where learners give each other feedback on their work. This encourages critical thinking and allows learners to gain new insights about their projects.
- **Cultural exchange:** Encourage learners to bring their cultural background into group projects to promote a cross-cultural exchange of fashion ideas. This not only enriches the learning experience but also helps migrant women to recognize the value of their cultural heritage in the design of their fashion businesses.

Advantages:

- Learners develop communication and teamwork skills that are essential for running a business.
- Promotes an inclusive environment where different perspectives are valued and shared.
- It encourages accountability and mutual support, which can be particularly helpful for migrant women who can feel isolated.

4.3. case-based learning and case studies from practice

Case-based learning is an excellent way to teach entrepreneurship and business management in the fashion industry. Using real-life case studies, learners can analyze how companies have overcome challenges, seized opportunities and applied sustainability principles.

Main features of case-based learning:

- **Case studies of sustainable companies:** Present case studies of successful fashion companies that prioritize sustainability. For example, analyze how companies like Stella McCartney or Patagonia have built their brands on eco-friendly practices. Break down the business strategies they used, the challenges they faced and the solutions they implemented.
- **Challenges in sustainable fashion:** presenting case studies that address the challenges faced by sustainable fashion businesses, e.g. sourcing ethical materials, managing supply chains or dealing with higher production costs. This enables learners to carry out critical thinking and problem solving exercises.
- **Entrepreneurship in action:** Focus on case studies of migrant women who have successfully started fashion businesses in their new countries. These stories can be both inspiring and educational as they offer insights into how these women entrepreneurs overcame financial, legal and cultural hurdles.

Advantages:

- Learners gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of managing a sustainable fashion company.
- It encourages critical thinking by having learners analyze and discuss different business scenarios.
- Real-life examples provide practical insights that learners can apply to their own business ideas.

4.4. simulation exercises and role plays

Simulation exercises and **role plays** are dynamic methods for teaching both business and interpersonal skills. These exercises allow learners to practice real-life situations they might encounter in their companies, such as presenting ideas to investors, negotiating with suppliers or interacting with customers.

Main features of the simulation exercises:

- **Business pitch simulations:** Have learners present their sustainable fashion business ideas to a panel of instructors and peers, simulating the experience of presenting to investors or potential business partners. This builds confidence and prepares learners for real opportunities.
- **Negotiation role plays:** Conduct role plays where learners practice negotiating with suppliers or dealing with customers. This helps them to develop communication and negotiation skills that are crucial to running a successful fashion business.
- **Customer service scenarios:** Create simulations where learners have to deal with customer interactions, including difficult situations such as dealing with complaints or resolving disputes. In this way, learners learn how to provide excellent customer service, which is essential in the fashion industry.

Advantages:

- Teaching practical business skills such as negotiation, presentation and customer relations.
- Prepares learners for real-life interactions with customers, suppliers and investors.
- Helps learners gain confidence in their business ideas and communication skills.

4.5. blended learning and technology integration

Blended learning combines traditional face-to-face training with digital resources and online tools. This approach allows learners to access educational content both inside and outside the classroom, making learning more flexible and accessible. For migrant women, blended learning can help overcome time, location and language barriers by providing options for self-directed learning.

Key features of blended learning:

- **Online learning platforms:** Provide access to **ENTREP Fashion Learning Path** modules where learners can explore topics such as sustainable fashion practices, business management and market analysis at their own pace. These platforms often include quizzes, videos and interactive content to reinforce learning.
- **Video tutorials:** Use video tutorials to teach specific skills, such as upcycling techniques for textiles, sustainable fabric sourcing or business planning. These tutorials can be accessed remotely so that learners can review the content as needed.

- **E-portfolios:** Encourage learners to create digital portfolios in which they present their designs, business plans and projects. These e-portfolios can serve as a valuable tool when seeking funding, partnerships or employment opportunities.

Advantages:

- Offers flexible learning options to accommodate learners with different schedules/commitments.
- Enables learners to recall content as needed to consolidate and retain what they have learned.
- Enables trainers to track progress through online assessments and feedback tools.

4.6. reflection and self-assessment

Reflection and **self-assessment** encourage learners to critically evaluate their own work, set personal goals and take ownership of their learning journey. For migrant women, self-reflection can also help build confidence and resilience as they navigate the challenges of starting a business in a new country.

The most important features of reflection and self-assessment:

- **Learning journals:** Encourage learners to keep a journal throughout the training program in which they report on what they have learned, the challenges they face and how they overcame them. This promotes learning and personal growth.
- **Goal setting exercises:** At various stages of the training program, have learners set specific, measurable and achievable goals for their business or personal development. Review these goals at regular intervals and evaluate progress.
- **Self-assessment checklists:** Provide learners with checklists that they can use to assess their own skills and knowledge. For example, after completing a module on business management, learners can assess their knowledge in areas such as budgeting, marketing or supply chain management.

Advantages:

- Encourages learners to take responsibility for their learning and personal development.
- Strengthening self-awareness and self-confidence by highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.
- Helps learners track their progress and reflect on their entrepreneurial journey.

4.7. guest speakers and industry experts

Guest speakers from the fashion industry, especially those who are involved in sustainable fashion or have experience as immigrant entrepreneurs, can greatly enhance the learning experience. These experts can provide valuable insights, share their personal stories and give advice on how to overcome the challenges of building a fashion business.

Main features of the guest speaker sessions:

- **Industry experts:** Invite local sustainable fashion business owners, textile suppliers or fashion designers to share their experiences and insights with learners. They can give practical advice on how to be successful in the fashion industry.
- **Migrant women entrepreneurs:** Invite guest speakers who are migrant women and have successfully started their own fashion business. Their personal stories of resilience and innovation can inspire and motivate learners.
- **Interactive Q&A:** Allow learners to ask questions and engage directly with guest speakers to foster a dialog that can lead to mentorships or professional contacts.

Advantages:

- Provides practical insights from industry experts who have first-hand experience in the fashion industry.
- Offers apprentices the opportunity to get in touch with professionals from the industry.
- Inspire learners with success stories that resonate with their own experiences.

Using a variety of training methods in VET programs ensures that the learning experience is dynamic, inclusive and tailored to the needs of migrant women. By incorporating hands-on projects, collaborative learning, real-life case studies, simulations and the integration of technology, trainers can engage learners more effectively and empower them to succeed in the sustainable fashion industry. These methods not only teach practical skills, but also promote self-confidence, creativity and resilience - important qualities that help migrant women to overcome challenges and succeed as entrepreneurs.

Section 5: Practical application

5.1. Practical training projects

Practical training projects are an essential part of vocational training and are particularly important in the context of fashion and entrepreneurship. For migrant women entering the sustainable fashion industry, the practical application of learned skills is key to their understanding and future success. Through practical projects, learners not only absorb theoretical knowledge but also apply it to real-life challenges, gain confidence, develop creative solutions and build a solid foundation for their business.

Hands-on projects offer learners the opportunity to experiment with sustainable fashion techniques, test business ideas and hone their entrepreneurial skills in a safe and supportive environment. This type of active learning also encourages creativity, problem solving and innovation - qualities that are essential for success in the competitive and rapidly evolving fashion industry.

Below are some practical training projects that you can integrate into your classroom to ensure that migrant women gain hands-on experience with sustainable fashion and entrepreneurship.

1. workshops on upcycling and recycling textiles

Upcycling and recycling are fundamental practices in sustainable fashion that allow designers to reduce waste by transforming existing materials into new, higher value products. Organizing **upcycling workshops for textiles** is a great way to introduce learners to the principles of sustainable fashion while encouraging their creativity.

Description of the project:

- **Upcycling old items of clothing:** Learners bring old items of clothing or textiles (e.g. jeans, T-shirts or curtains) to the workshop. They have the task of designing and producing new fashion items from these materials. The projects can range from turning jeans into a jacket to transforming old T-shirts into bags or curtains.
- **Accessories.** Learners are encouraged to experiment with sewing, cutting and embellishment techniques.
- **Recycling fabric scraps:** For smaller, more intricate projects, learners can collect fabric scraps and other leftover materials from the production process. They can use these fabric scraps to create patchwork designs, unique garments or

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accessories such as hats, scarves or purses. This exercise teaches them to make the best use of each material, boosting their creativity and minimizing waste.

Advantages:

- Develops technical skills in sewing, pattern making and garment production.
- Encourages creativity and ingenuity by showing learners how to repurpose materials.
- Teaches the importance of waste avoidance and sustainability in fashion production.

2. prototyping of sustainable fashion products

The ability to design and prototype fashion products is crucial for aspiring designers and entrepreneurs in the fashion industry. In this project, learners will be guided through the process of designing, producing and presenting their own sustainable fashion prototypes. This hands-on experience allows them to apply sustainable practices while developing their personal brand identity.

Description of the project:

- **Design and concept development:** Learners begin by brainstorming ideas for fashion products that adhere to the principles of sustainability. They are encouraged to research sustainable materials and ethical production methods and incorporate these elements into their designs. The design phase also includes sketching garments or accessories and selecting fabrics.
- **Prototyping:** Learners then produce a prototype of their design and create a one-off piece or small collection. In this phase, they focus on perfecting the fit, cut and overall design, taking into account sustainability goals such as minimizing waste and choosing environmentally friendly materials.
- **Presentation and feedback:** Once the prototypes are ready, learners present their products to the class or a group of guest experts. This presentation can be similar to presenting a collection at a fashion show or pitching to investors and provides invaluable experience in public speaking and business pitching. Feedback from peers and mentors allows learners to refine their designs and production processes.

Advantages:

- Provides practical experience of the entire design and production process, from concept development to the finished product.
- Emphasizes the importance of sustainability in fashion design and encourages learners to think critically about the choice of materials and production methods.

- It boosts self-confidence to present ideas and receive constructive feedback - skills that are crucial for entrepreneurs.

3. sustainability audits and eco-assessment projects

Sustainability audits are an important tool for assessing the environmental and social impact of a fashion company. By conducting audits, learners can evaluate a company's sustainability, identify areas for improvement and suggest environmentally friendly alternatives. In this project, learners will learn about the key factors involved in running a sustainable fashion business, such as energy consumption, material sourcing and labor practices.

Description of the project:

- **Audit of a local fashion company:** Learners carry out a sustainability audit of a local fashion company, supplier or manufacturer. They have the task of assessing various aspects of the company, including the type of materials used, production methods, energy consumption and waste management. Learners also assess whether the company complies with ethical labor standards.
- **Sustainability report:** After completing the audit, learners compile their findings in a detailed report containing recommendations for improving the company's sustainability. Suggestions could include switching to environmentally friendly materials, reducing water consumption, introducing energy-saving technologies or introducing a circular economy model.
- **Presentation of the results:** Learners present their sustainability report to the business owner (or class) and explain their findings and proposed solutions. This project helps learners to develop consulting skills and a deeper understanding of how sustainability can be applied in the fashion industry.

Advantages:

- Provides practical experience in assessing the sustainability of companies in practice.
- It encourages critical thinking and problem solving as learners have to find practical solutions to improve sustainability.
- Teaches important business skills such as report writing, consulting and presenting recommendations.

4. joint collection for sustainable fashion

Working as a team on a collaborative sustainable fashion collection gives learners the opportunity to apply their knowledge of sustainability, business management and

creative design. This project simulates the real-life experience of running a fashion business where collaboration and teamwork are key.

Description of the project:

- **Team building and role assignment:** The learners form teams, with each team member taking on a specific role within the company, e.g. as designer, marketing manager or production manager. Together they decide on a theme for their sustainable fashion collection and assign responsibilities.
- **Designing the collection:** The team designs a small collection of garments or accessories and ensures that the collection complies with the principles of sustainable fashion. They must source environmentally friendly materials, use upcycling or recycling techniques and ensure that their production process generates as little waste as possible.
- **Marketing and branding:** In addition to designing the collection, the team is also responsible for developing a marketing strategy and brand identity for its collection. This includes, for example, designing a logo, creating social media campaigns and writing product descriptions that highlight the collection's sustainability features.
- **Final presentation:** The project culminates in a fashion show or presentation where the team presents their collection to the class or a group of industry professionals. This event provides an opportunity to receive feedback on the designs, marketing strategy and overall business plan.

Advantages:

- Communicates the importance of collaboration and teamwork in a business environment.
- Offers experience in managing various aspects of a fashion business, from design and production to marketing and branding.
- Encourages innovation and creativity while ensuring that sustainability is considered at every stage of the project.

5. business pitch and financial planning as a challenge

Developing a compelling business plan and presenting it to potential investors or partners is a key skill for any entrepreneur. This project asks learners to create a comprehensive business plan for their sustainable fashion business and present their idea to a panel of judges, mimicking the experience of seeking funding or securing partnerships.

Description of the project:

- **Development of a business plan:** Learners are tasked with creating a detailed business plan for their fashion startup. The plan should include an executive summary, market analysis, marketing strategy, operational plan and financial projections. Particular emphasis will be placed on the sustainability aspects of the business, such as environmentally friendly materials, ethical production practices and waste reduction strategies.
- **Financial planning:** As part of the business plan, learners are required to produce a financial plan that includes start-up costs, projected revenue and profit margins. This component helps learners to understand the financial realities of running a fashion business and encourages them to think critically about pricing, sourcing and profit sustainability.
- **Pitch presentation:** Learners present their business plans in a pitch session where they have to convince a panel of judges (trainers, peers or industry experts) of the viability and potential success of their business. This presentation simulates the experience of pitching to investors and learners receive feedback on both the content of their plan and the delivery of their pitch.

Advantages:

- Teaching basic business management skills, e.g. financial planning, market analysis and strategic thinking.
- Prepares learners for the real-life experience of presenting business ideas to investors or partners.
- Develops the public speaking and presentation skills that are critical to building a successful business.

Practical training projects provide migrant women with invaluable opportunities to apply their knowledge, test their ideas and develop practical skills in sustainable fashion and entrepreneurship. By engaging learners in activities such as upcycling workshops, sustainability audits, fashion collections and business planning challenges, educators can provide real-life experiences that prepare them for the challenges and opportunities of running a fashion business. These projects not only encourage creativity and innovation, but also boost self-confidence and self-efficacy, helping migrant women to overcome barriers and assert themselves as successful entrepreneurs in the fashion industry.

5.2. Establishing community networks

Building strong community networks is vital to the success of any entrepreneur, and this is particularly important for migrant women looking to enter the fashion industry. For many migrant women, isolation and a lack of connections in their new country can be significant barriers to starting and growing a business. Building a professional and social network allows them to access important resources, connect with mentors, form partnerships and gain the visibility they need to succeed in the highly competitive fashion industry.

The role of the trainer is not only to teach technical skills, but also to help learners build these networks by guiding them on how to enter and integrate into professional communities. This section explores strategies for building robust community networks both within the training program and in the wider fashion industry.

1. the importance of networks for entrepreneurs with a migration background

Networks are a critical element to the success of any business. For migrant women, who may face additional challenges such as cultural adjustment, language barriers and social isolation, access to a supportive community network can provide the following benefits:

- **Access to resources:** Networks open doors to valuable resources, including information on funding opportunities, legal advice, suppliers and industry trends. Being part of a network allows entrepreneurs to share resources and knowledge, which can be crucial when starting a business with limited capital.
- **Mentorship and guidance:** Professional networks often include experienced mentors who can provide advice, feedback and encouragement. Mentors can help new entrepreneurs overcome challenges, avoid common mistakes and make strategic decisions.
- **Improved visibility and market access:** Building a network allows entrepreneurs to present their products, services and brand to a wider audience. Networks offer the opportunity to meet potential customers, employees and investors, which is essential for business growth.
- **Emotional support and motivation:** Running a business can be isolating and stressful, especially for immigrant women who may already feel disconnected from their community. A strong network provides emotional support, motivation and encouragement from like-minded people who understand the challenges of entrepreneurship.

2. in-class networking opportunities

Building a network starts in the classroom. Educators should create an environment where learners feel comfortable working together, sharing ideas and supporting each other. The connections that learners build with their peers can serve as the foundation for their future professional networks. This sense of community within the training program is critical to supporting immigrant women on their path to entrepreneurship.

Strategies for building networks in the classroom:

- **Group projects:** Incorporating group projects into the curriculum helps learners develop teamwork and collaboration skills. These projects create opportunities for peer learning and allow learners to share ideas, solve problems together and build strong bonds with their classmates.
- **Peer feedback sessions:** Regular peer feedback sessions encourage open communication and provide learners with the opportunity to practice giving and receiving constructive feedback. These sessions help build trust and respect among learners and lay the foundation for a supportive network.
- **Social events and meetings:** Instructors may organize informal social events or gatherings, such as coffee mornings or fashion outings. These events provide a relaxed environment where learners can get to know each other better, share experiences and discuss their progress in the program.

Advantages:

- Creates a sense of camaraderie and mutual support among learners.
- It promotes cooperation, which is essential for entrepreneurial success.
- Helps learners build confidence in networking in a comfortable and familiar environment before moving on to larger industry networks.

3. connection with the local fashion industry

Once learners have made contacts within the training program, the next step is to connect them with the wider fashion industry. Trainers play a crucial role in making contacts, organizing industry-related events and helping learners find their way in a new cultural and professional environment.

Strategies for making contact with the fashion industry:

- **Invite guest speakers and industry experts:** Inviting industry professionals into the classroom gives learners valuable insight into the fashion industry and the

opportunity to make important contacts. Guest speakers can include local designers, fashion entrepreneurs, textile suppliers or

- Sustainability experts. Encourage learners to ask questions and exchange ideas with the guest speakers so that they can build their network.
- **Excursions to fashion events:** Organizing field trips to fashion shows, trade fairs or textile exhibitions allows learners to experience the fashion industry first-hand. These events offer the opportunity to meet industry professionals, observe trends and gain insight into how the industry works. Encourage learners to introduce themselves to exhibitors, network with other attendees and collect business cards for future reference.
- **Workshops with local fashion brands:** Partnering with local fashion companies to offer hands-on workshops can be an effective way for learners to build their network while gaining practical experience. These workshops can focus on topics such as sustainable sourcing of textiles, ethical production methods or fashion marketing. Learners can build relationships with local businesses that can lead to future collaborations or employment opportunities.

Advantages:

- Provides an insight into the real fashion industry and its professionals.
- Helps learners to understand current trends and opportunities in the local fashion scene.
- It creates opportunities for learners to make contacts that can lead to partnerships, internships or jobs.

4. use of digital and online platforms

In today's digital age, much of the networking in the fashion industry takes place online. Social media platforms, online communities and professional networking websites offer migrant women valuable opportunities to connect with industry leaders, showcase their work and connect with potential clients or collaborators from around the world.

Strategies for the use of digital platforms:

- **Social Media Marketing:** Learners will learn how to effectively use platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest and Facebook to build an online presence and showcase their sustainable fashion designs. These platforms allow entrepreneurs to reach a global audience, share their creative process and connect with influencers, collaborators and customers.

- **LinkedIn for professional networking:** Introduce learners to LinkedIn as a tool for building a professional network. Learners can use LinkedIn to network with mentors, potential investors, suppliers and other professionals in the fashion industry. Encourage learners to actively participate by sharing content, taking part in discussions and joining relevant groups dealing with sustainable fashion and entrepreneurship.
- **Join online fashion communities:** There are numerous online communities and forums dedicated to fashion design, sustainability and entrepreneurship. Encourage learners to join these communities to gain insights, ask questions and share their work. Platforms such as [The Sustainable Fashion Forum](#) or [Not Just a Label](#) offer independent designers the opportunity to network and showcase their work.

Advantages:

- Provides access to a global network of fashion professionals, suppliers and customers.
- Provides opportunities to showcase work and build an online brand presence.
- Brings learners together with like-minded people who share their passion for sustainable fashion.

5. integration into local and global networks

Migrant women benefit from involvement in **local** and **global** networks. Local networks offer immediate, personal support, while global networks offer broader opportunities for collaboration, learning and business growth. Trainers can help learners identify key organizations and networks at both levels and show them how to actively participate.

Strategies for integration into local networks:

- **Local business associations:** Encourage learners to join local business associations or chambers of commerce that focus on fashion, entrepreneurship or sustainable industries. These organizations often offer networking events, workshops and access to resources that can help learners grow their businesses.
- **Local fashion and sustainability meet-ups:** Many cities have meet-ups or groups that focus on sustainable fashion and eco-friendly practices. Encourage learners to regularly attend these events to build relationships with like-minded people and potential collaborators.

Strategies for integration into global networks:

- **International fashion and sustainability organizations:** Introduce learners to international organizations such as **Fashion Revolution**, **Global Fashion Exchange** or **Common Objective** that focus on sustainable fashion and provide valuable opportunities for cross-border networking.
- **Virtual networking events and webinars:** Thanks to the proliferation of online events, learners can now participate in virtual networking sessions, conferences and webinars from anywhere in the world. These events allow learners to connect with industry experts and peers around the world without having to travel.

Advantages:

- Provides access to both immediate, local support and broader, global opportunities.
- Helps learners learn about international trends, innovations and best practices in sustainable fashion.
- Expands business opportunities by connecting learners with global markets, employees and customers.

6. building long-term relationships and mentorship

Networking is not just about gathering contacts, but about building long-term, meaningful relationships. For immigrant women, building relationships with mentors and peers can provide ongoing support and guidance in building a fashion business. Trainers can help learners identify potential mentors and understand how to maintain and nurture professional relationships over time.

Strategies for building long-term relationships:

- **Mentoring programs:** Where possible, create or match learners with mentoring programs specifically designed for women entrepreneurs or immigrant women in business. Mentors can offer personalized guidance, advice and introductions to key industry figures.
- **Check in and follow up regularly:** Teach learners the importance of following up after networking events. Encourage them to send thank you notes, keep in touch via email or LinkedIn, and schedule regular meetings with mentors or contacts to maintain relationships.
- **Reciprocity in networking:** Networking should not be one-sided. Encourage learners to think about how they can contribute to their network by offering

support, sharing resources or giving feedback. This reciprocity helps to strengthen relationships and build a supportive network.

Advantages:

- Provides ongoing support, advice and guidance from experienced professionals.
- Helps learners build long-term relationships that can lead to partnerships, collaborations and business growth.
- Promotes an attitude of giving and mutual support that strengthens the entire network.

Building a community network is one of the most important aspects of becoming a successful entrepreneur in the fashion industry, especially for immigrant women who may feel isolated or disconnected from the business world in their new country. Instructors play a central role in helping learners build these networks by encouraging collaboration in the classroom, connecting them with local and global fashion communities, and teaching

How to use online platforms for networking. By building these networks, migrant women gain access to the resources, mentors and opportunities they need to start and maintain successful, sustainable fashion businesses.

Conclusion

By following this handbook and incorporating the resources available in the **OER Learning Pathways**, you will be equipped with the knowledge, tools and strategies to help migrant women build their careers in the sustainable fashion industry. As an educator or mentor, your role is critical in guiding learners on their entrepreneurial journey and helping them develop the confidence, skills and networks they need to succeed.

This content, including the OER learning pathways, is available in English, German, Greek and Bulgarian, making it accessible to all trainers in the project regions. Together we can empower migrant women to overrealize their entrepreneurial dreams and contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive fashion industry.

ANNEX:

1. *Excerpt from Sustainable Textile Materials Science:*

Organic cotton: It is grown without the use of harmful pesticides and chemical fertilizers, which makes it more environmentally friendly than conventional cotton. However, water consumption is still an issue.

Hemp: Hemp is one of the most sustainable plants, as it grows without many pesticides or herbicides, requires less water and grows back quickly. Hemp is also biodegradable.

Recycled polyester: Recycled polyester is a more environmentally friendly alternative to new polyester, as it is made from recycled plastic (e.g. bottles) and thus reduces the need for new raw materials. However, it remains a plastic and releases microplastics.

Tencel (Lyocell): Tencel is made from wood fibers, often from sustainable forestry. Production is relatively environmentally friendly as the solvent for the laser process is recycled.

Bamboo: Bamboo is a fast-growing plant that is often considered environmentally friendly. However, processing it into fabrics can be chemical-intensive, unless the bamboo is processed mechanically (e.g. bamboo linen).

Linen: Linen is made from the fibers of the flax plant and requires little water and no pesticides in cultivation. It is durable, biodegradable and is considered one of the most environmentally friendly materials.

Algae fibers: These innovative fibers are obtained from seaweed and offer a sustainable alternative to conventional fibers. Algae fibers are biodegradable and the harvesting of algae requires few resources.

Pinatex: Pinatex is made from the fibers of pineapple leaves, which are a by-product of the pineapple harvest. It is a sustainable alternative to leather and requires no additional agricultural resources as the leaves are normally waste products. Pinatex is durable, versatile and biodegradable.

For more information read the following article:

→ [20 Most Sustainable Fabrics: The Full Life-Cycle Analysis | Impactful Ninja](#)

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3. **add source with brief description green competences:**
www.edu.greencomp-project.eu

Appendix - Further Essential Content

FURTHER ESSENTIAL CONTENT TO BE CONSIDERED:

click on the text and you'll be directed to the relevant source for you to read or download

1. [Lesson Plan](#)
2. [Assessment Guide](#)
3. [Glossary](#)
4. [Argumentation 'Wondering why not everything is translated into your language?'](#)

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