

Opportunities for Businesses to Collaborate with the FCDO-UNCTAD Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP) Programme

Tuesday 14th June 2022 | 13:00 – 14:00 BST

Register [here](#)

CONCEPT NOTE

Industrialisation has massively increased production capacities, which enabled rapid economic and social progress, and technology advancement. However, that comes with a tremendous cost of pollution, driving the biggest challenges of our century – climate change, impacts on human health and biodiversity degradation.

Global trade, exports, and supply chain have greatly accelerated the pollution problem, particularly prevalent in the environmental and health footprints of manufacturing, including intense water contamination, land use, emissions, and solid waste generated. Socially, there is a rise in pollution-related chronic diseases, i.e. asthma, heart disease, and strokes. especially in lower and middle-income countries (LMICs), due to weak environmental and public health protection and resources, and limited capacity on the part of the private sector, to invest in cleaner production. On the other hand, over-extraction of resources in manufacturing has also led to unsustainable production in the long-run. Resource extraction is currently rising by approximately 2% every year with around 82 bn tonnes of raw materials extracted in 2020, a doubling since 1980 according to the OECD.

Apart from reforming trade rules/regulations at the international/bilateral level, realising the full development gains linked to exports requires supporting improvements in environmental performance of fast-growing manufacturing clusters in Africa and South Asia. Since production linked to exports yields significant environmental impacts¹ it is imperative that the manufacturing-pollution-export nexus is addressed on a practical level. Gathering detailed domestic information and data to translate levels of pollution into exposure and damage is a first step undertaken by the SMEP programme.² For enduring impact, the programme provides financing for pollution-mitigation solutions and business uptake of circularity approaches to manufacturing.

About the Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP) Programme

Established by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and implemented in partnership with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP) programme aims to generate cutting-edge scientific evidence that can improve existing knowledge of the environmental health and socio-economic impacts of manufacturing sectors across target. The programme identifies technology -based solutions to address the environmental health issues associated with manufacturing in focus countries and invest in

¹ <https://smepprogramme.org/dashboard-shows-environmental-impacts-of-exports-from-african-and-south-asian-countries/>

² <https://smepprogramme.org/>

developing business. It also addresses plastic pollution and support the development of material substitution and biodegradation options. FCDO has committed £24.6 million to the delivery of research and related interventions to meet programme objectives. The SMEP programme was commissioned in mid-2019 and will run at least until the end of 2024.

For further details, please refer to: <https://smepprogramme.org/>

The Webinar aims to bring together ICC members and partner businesses to learn more about opportunities to support the mitigation of pollution resulting from manufacturing via the SMEP programme. Collaboration opportunities include:

- (a) Being a **bidder** through a competitive procurement process organised by the SMEP programme (involving an initial call for concepts, and a subsequent call for full proposals expanding on shortlisted concepts. Bidders are usually made of consortia of companies, research organizations, universities, etc.
- (b) Being a **business partner** by means of co-funding SMEP beneficiary projects (either on a commercial partnership basis or as a philanthropic investor / CSR opportunity)
- (c) Being a **technical advice provider** to assist in the design of targeted calls for pollution-mitigation interventions in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

References

- SMEP programme: [procurement process overview](#)
- The Role of Exports in Manufacturing Pollution in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia: Towards a Better Trade-Environment Governance: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditctedinf2021d6_en.pdf
- SMEP Pollution from Manufacturing in Kenya and Uganda: [Uptake of Pollution Mitigating Responses](#).
- Manufacturing Pollution – Synopsis Series 1: [Kenya-Distilleries; Ethiopia Leather; Tanzania-Textiles](#);
- [SMEP-sponsored projects on plastic pollution mitigation](#).