



Oxfam GB Textiles Export Policy

Approval Date:	August 2021
Effective From:	August 2021
Author:	Corporate Responsibility Advisor (Environment)
Policy Owner:	Retail Director
SLT Sponsor:	Chief Engagement Officer
Approved By:	Retail Director
Union consulted:	No
Date for Renewal:	August 2024
Geographical Scope:	Worldwide, except in countries where the following policy contravenes local legislation. In these cases, local legislation must be followed.
Implementation owner:	Wastesaver Site Manager
Implementation plan:	Policy to be shared and incorporated into all contracts with third parties processing and selling on clothing donated to Oxfam GB. Policy to be added to the relevant page of the OGB website.
Circulation:	Public

N.B. Accountability for each element of the policy creation, approval, implementation, communication, monitoring and review process must sit with a specific role in the organisation not a team or named individual

POLICY STATEMENT

Oxfam GB recognises the potential negative impact that the export of donated textiles can have on the countries where they are sent to, which include impacts on human rights, local economies and the environment.

Oxfam GB is committed to ensuring that the donated textiles it receives are exported in a way which aligns with its values and minimises these risks.

SCOPE AND ELIGIBILITY

This policy applies to the sale of donated textiles where it is known, or reasonably known, that they will be exported outside of the UK.

POLICY PURPOSE

It is not possible for us to sell all the textiles that are donated to us by our supporters. This could be for a variety of reasons including damage to the item or their unsuitability of the item to the UK market. In order to extract the most value out of the donations we have been entrusted with, we sell thousands of tonnes a year of textiles to third-party customers, and often that is with a view to those textiles being exported.

The purpose of the policy is to seek to ensure that donated textiles and clothes are exported to countries through suppliers who minimise the risk of negative ethical and environmental impacts that could arise in their intended country of destination.

As a minimum this requires textiles to only be exported in line with UK and destination country laws and regulations, but also to restricts the export where Oxfam has concerns as to the underlying human rights risks associated with certain destination countries.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Ethical and Environmental Policy
- Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy

VERSION CONTROL

Version Number	Date Approved	Approved By (Name & Title)	Brief Description of Changes
2.0			This policy represents a significant update to a pre-existing policy dated from 2016.

POLICY CONTENTS

1.0 Definitions

Textiles – Any woven or knitted fabric of either natural or synthetic materials. This includes all items of clothing (for example, jumpers, shirts, trousers, skirts, underwear etc), but also includes fabrics used to make, but not limited to, items such as bedding.

Known destination country – The noted intended country of destination after the textiles are sold by Oxfam GB to the customer.

Reasonably known destination country – Where we know or reasonable suspect the most likely or intended final destination country for the textiles. This could be due to the established business model of the customer of our immediate customer, or previous examples demonstrating the end destination of textiles sold to a potential subsequent customer.

Potential customer – Someone who Oxfam GB has not sold textiles to in either the current or previous Oxfam financial year (1st April to 31st March).

Existing customer relationship – A customer who we have already sold textiles to in the current or previous Oxfam GB financial year (1st April to 31st March).

2.0 Commitments

- 2.1 To support the Policy Purpose outlined above, we are committed to:
 - 2.1.1 Minimising the impact of the sale, and at times export, of textiles on the people, economies and environment of the destination countries.
 - 2.1.2 Working with actual or potential customers to understand their intentions for the end destination of our textiles.
 - 2.1.3 Assessing in an open and transparent way whether the proposed sale and destination country is consistent with our commitments set out here, and with Oxfam's wider values and vision. We will then communicate clearly, promptly and accurately with our potential customers and concerns we may have.
 - 2.1.4 To comply with UK and International law with regards to the export and import of textiles to other countries.
 - 2.1.5 To continuously work to understand the actual or potential impact of exported textiles on the destination countries and their communities, and to respond promptly to what we learn.

3.0 Standards (must be measurable and reportable)

- 3.1 We will comply with UK law and regulation with regards to the export of textiles.
- 3.2 We will not knowingly attempt to export textiles to countries that have banned their import.
- 3.3 We will comply with the law and regulation of the known, or reasonably known, destination country.
- 3.4 With regards to potential customers, we will not to knowingly, or reasonably knowingly, allow the export of textiles to countries listed as **level 5 or 5+** in the ITUC Global Rights Index¹. Where an existing customer relationship exists and the destination country is listed at level 5 or 5+, we will work with the customer to make them aware of our concerns and urgently seek to minimise the specific risks. If those concerns cannot be adequately addressed, to our satisfaction and within 6 months, we will look to end any future sales to that customer and that intended export country destination.
- 3.5 To maximise potential oversight of labour and environmental standards goods will only be sold to companies who are directly processing stock, not to brokers.

¹ Reference to the 2020 index but this is updated every year <https://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-global-rights-index-2020>

- 3.6 With regards to potential or existing customers, we will not knowingly, or reasonably knowingly, allow the export of textiles to countries listed as level 5 or 5+ in the ITUC Global Rights Index, unless we are satisfied through our due diligence processes that the risks of the specific end destination are robustly addressed.
- 3.7 We will seek to target exports to countries where:
 - 3.7.1 There is a known shortage of clothing at affordable prices
 - 3.7.2 There is little competition with the local garment industries

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 Oxfam GB's Retail Director and ultimately Chief Engagement Officer hold overall accountability for this policy
- 4.2 The Oxfam Wastesaver Site Manager (Production) will ensure that all potential customers are assessed in line with the commitments noted above.
- 4.3 The potential customer will complete the required self-assessment questionnaire to the best of their knowledge and belief, and to not withhold any information which would reasonably inform Oxfam as to whether to continue or create a customer relationship.
- 4.4 The Oxfam Ethics team of Oxfam will advise the Wastesaver Site Manager (Production) on any issues that arise from the self-assessment questionnaire.

5.0 Consequences of non-compliance

We recognise that a zero-tolerance approach with suppliers and customers could undermine our ability to address the root causes of an issue. Therefore, with suppliers and customers we take an approach of *zero tolerance to inaction* on ethical and environmental issues. Oxfam GB will terminate a relationship where the conduct of suppliers or customers demonstrably violates this policy, and there is no willingness to address any specific instances which arise or address underlying weaknesses in systems which led to the incident, within a reasonable time period