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Research Sustainability

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Bryn Galumbeck HAF Volunteer

Current production and disposal processes in the textile industry pose significant risks to the environment. Every year, approximately **92 million** tonnes of textile waste are generated worldwide, accumulating in landfills at an alarming rate—equivalent to one truckload per second. The rapid increase in textile production and consumption contributes to increased non-renewable resource depletion, greenhouse gas emissions, and water and energy consumption.

In response to the global textile crisis, governments, organizations, and other stakeholders are working to transition from a linear to a **circular economy** for the textile industry. Adopting a zero-waste approach not only reduces environmental harm but also brings economic benefits. The circular economy focuses on minimizing waste, enhancing durability, reusing materials, and recycling.

Since its inception, HAF has registered three official cooperatives in the Al Haouz province, supplying them with 50 sewing machines and essential resources. In the two months testing and learning period, the program has produced and distributed over 14,500 tree sacks to nurseries around Morocco. HAF's vision is to produce 1.4 million biodegradable tree sacks in three years to promote enhanced sustainability in tree planting. With continued collaboration and investment, we can further reduce plastic waste in agriculture by expanding our production and distribution networks.

The shift toward sustainability requires commitment from governments, businesses, and individuals. By embracing circular economic models, investing in innovative waste management solutions, and making conscious consumption choices, we can reduce environmental impacts and build a more sustainable textile industry.

On this International Day of Zero Waste, we encourage all stakeholders to engage in local and national zero-waste initiatives and advocate for responsible production practices.

Bryn Galumbeck is a volunteer at HAF, first introduced through the University of Virginia's global internship program in 2020. Passionate about women's empowerment and economic

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