

CREACT4MED Mapping: Best Practices

Application Number: BP_03

1. Basic info*	
Email Address	m.olama@egyptianclothingbank.org
Title of the Best Practice	Almah
Name of the Applicant	Manal Saleh
Is the BP a registered legal entity?	Yes, I will send the certificate of registration by email
Website	www.Almah.org
Country	Egypt;
Subsector	Design (software, advertising, architecture, interior design, graphic design, industrial design, fashion);
Category	a) Cultural and creative entrepreneurship;
Year of establishment and duration	1/1/2020
Target group of the BP	Almah is a creative hub for the pursuit of innovative design solutions for the repurposing of discarded clothes and fabric waste and excess to fulfill a circular model of clothes recycling. The beneficiaries of this model are all Egyptian and international fashion and product designers who are welcome to experiment with and manipulate vintage fabric and clothes scrap into creative designs. It also benefits women workers trained to work with unconventional raw material and recyclable supplies. Finally the most benefitting are the underprivileged whom Almah serves as Almah is a social enterprise where all proceeds get directed to providing them with essential clothing for continuing their education, their wellness and happiness.
1. Best Practice Characteristics	
Problem Statement	The problem of un-utilized clothes waste and excess is universal, and very alarming in Egypt where there is high production of clothes, high exports, high imports and very high consumption of new clothes... resulting in a huge waste issue. Clothes and fabric waste in Egypt is rarely repurposed, mostly incinerated, land filled or dumped in the Mediterranean and Red seas and the Nile.
Mission Statement & Value proposition	Almah is the trendsetter of up cycling design in Egypt and a hub for innovator designers passionate about circularity and resource preservation. It is an advocacy for practice change in the fashion industry and a space for experimentation and fabric manipulation, empowering women and youth through its network of SME workshops. Through Almah's access to virgin vintage clothes and scrap material, and through its creative space and Human Resources, fashion and product designers have the canvas to freely apply creative thinking to design complexities for up cycling. Fashion is the loudest advocate for environmental issues and through theme based collections, climate change awareness can spread in bold design and color.
Results and growth	Almah has produced a number of themed collections since its inception and after its primary phase of initial experiments. The first collection was one made of color schemes silk ties complicated by an artist and turned into glamorous evening dresses. This first collection attracted attention of influencers, fashion enthusiasts and the media. So Almah's first impression by the audience was really good. The collections that followed ranged from quirky collaborations with emerging designers to the Coral Blues SS23 Collection that was showcased in Vogue, displayed at the first ever Egypt Fashion Week and is shortlisted for the Egypt Fashion Awards.
Strategy to be financially sustainable	Almah is already achieving revenue and the strategy to be financially sustainable is on track through finalizing a compact brand manual, setting up a commercial merchandizing team to oversee sales and revenue streams, addressing B2B fabric manipulations markets and

	<p>internationalization. This year, Almah has several upcoming projects to ensure sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of its new line store in 2023, • Opening of its second store in January 2024, • Launch of the initiative From Waste To Good Taste to invite collaborations with established sustainable fashion and product designers and brands to design, produce and market co branded products for expanded reach and revenue streams • Almah is showcasing products in many concept stores and on a number of e-commerce platforms both local and regional • Almah joined a number of trade shows in Dubai and Saudi Arabia in December 2023 and plans to join more regional and European ones in 2024
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2. Impact (please complete at least 3 of the 6 sub-sections)	
Economic significance	Almah achieved 400000 LE sales in 2022 (around 12000 EUROS). In 2023 it hopes to make 1000000 LE (around 30000 EUROS). Almah hopes to start exports of fabric and curated vintage in 2024. The economic situation would be an accelerator of Almah's activity since it is a recycled product and complies with reusing and with conscious consumption trends around the world. Almah products are sustainable and all recycled, Almah also has a great effect on empowerment and job creation since all products are produced through training and green jobs offered to women in small workshops across Egyptian governorates. Ultimately proceeds generated empower primary school children with school kits and warm clothes, an edge that feeds further economic and social dimensions.
Replicability and upscaling	Through the process of creative design and documented techniques and patterns, Almah operations can be easily replicated and even more scaled... there's so much clothes and fabric waste lying there to be salvaged and repurposed. Almah depends on the specific and specialized operations of clothes sorting at its own organization, the Egyptian Clothing Bank, where clothes and fabric waste is categorized into 77 types of fabric, for the designers' ease of access and material traceability. The systematic operation is a model innovation that facilitates repurposing right after vast logistical collection and sorting.
Employment generation	Almah has access to abundant material, in addition to the already accessible clothes and fabric waste in factories, retail shops, free zones and workshops. Almah currently employs 25 employees and contracts over a hundred in its contracted workshops. We take in tens of interns and volunteers. Once the model has been visualized, designers working on collection samples and capsule collections, more professionals will be needed in 2024 including a full marketing team, a diverse designer team for fashion, products, Jewellery, leather goods and more. A fashion archiving team shall also be sought to archive the curated vintage clothes and fabrics, part of the Almah collections for sale. In 2024 we hope to employ 25 more young women.
Inclusiveness	Almah stand for most of the SDGs and most importantly inclusivity and equality. We are advocates of individuality and expression and stand for equality and the marginalized and vulnerable. Almah is a social enterprise with a mission to enhance the livelihood of women and children, through training, job creation, provision and empowerment. Almah contracts workshops that employ underprivileged women in seven Egyptian governorates most in Upper Egypt. One of these workshops hosts sight

	impaired young women. Almah also provides workshops on up cycling and material reusing to migrant youth and women for mental health.
Social impact	Almah is a social enterprise with a clear social and environmental mission. All Almah proceeds are directed to providing essential clothing to children and all products are recycled and themed to environmental issues. Many of the techniques used for deconstructions and reconstructions (patchworks and other patterns), and fabric manipulations adopted are from heritage lineage of ancient Egyptian Hand crafts. Some of the contracted women are artisans in their environment, applying their passed to skill and training to the innovative process commissioned to them.
Innovation	When Almah was an idea, we couldn't find much reference to the type of operation we had in mind... starting from the collection channels, to primary and secondary sorting, to special fabric identification and categorization, to the process of deconstructing clothes, to patterns and sample making, to the training of local workers on unconventional use of fabric material and fabric manipulations, to ultimately the product shooting and displaying of unique one of a kind piece of clothing and pricing. All the above had to be innovated and invented from scratch. Almah started introducing technology in the design process and aims to apply AI fabric identification in 2024.
Environmental sustainability	Almah founded the initiative "From Waste To Good Taste", an alliance of sustainable practices in Cairo. The initiative is an awareness platform that leads interested audiences to adopt conscious habits and performs workshops for recycling. Its annual event takes place in down town Cairo in February and in 2024 we plan to have a mega event for its second edition. Almah was also showcased in COP 27 in the fashion pavilion and had an art installation made from the construction site scrap displayed in the conference entrance. Almah vows to remain true to its values of sustainability and resource repurposing.
3. Challenges and lessons learned	
Challenges	The main challenge for Almah is the adoption of expanded customers to the idea of purchasing up cycled products made from waste. And for this reason Almah exerts in its advocative activities to spread awareness about the importance of changing habits and conscious consumption. Fast fashion is a tough wall to break but Almah is taking the challenge responsibly.
Lessons learned	The most important lessons learnt is that with the thousands of years of human civilization, human creativity is limitless. With the need for creative solutions in the fashion industry, young designers keep coming up with innovation, both in design and technique. It is important to also set up the brand as a creative industry business model, have a clear brand identity and manual, an organizational structure that delivers and develops, and a market fit that works exponentially.
4. Demographic Information	
Is the organization led by a woman?	Yes
What age is the lead of the organization?	Over 35 years old