

# PROFILING KEY AUDIENCES RELEVANT TO THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A GREEN AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

## 1. Introduction

The circular economy is a regenerative model designed to minimize environmental impact while optimizing the use of resources.<sup>1</sup> At the heart of this model, products, equipment, materials and waste are seen as precious resources, whose value must be preserved for as long as possible. This approach, essential as it is, in the fight against climate change, requires the commitment and collaboration of multiple players. Transitioning towards a circular economy requires joint ventures to optimize human, technological, and financial resources and develop policy and institutional frameworks. This fact sheet explores the non-state actors/audiences relevant to this transition. The stakeholders were generated from focus group discussions that were held with different actors at national and regional levels.

## 2. Key audiences relevant to the transition

Stakeholder	Role in the Transition
Private sector: traders, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), investors, companies	Companies, SMEs and other business actors are at the heart of this transition. They ought to revisit their production models to minimize waste and maximize the use of resources. From product eco-design to waste recovery, companies have the ability to reduce their environmental footprints and can be motivated by the underlying economic benefits.  Furthermore, private capital investment into circular economy initiatives is provided by companies/traders and investors
CSOs/NGOs: environmental organisations, farmer organisations, energy alliances, environment networks, Community Based Organisations	These play a crucial role in raising awareness, educating and catalysing the transition to circular practices. They undertake community engagement in the circular economy. They participate in the development of supportive policy and institutional frameworks to facilitate decision-making processes in the transition to circular economy

<sup>1</sup> Ellen MacArthur Foundation; Towards the Circular Economy Economic and business rationale for an accelerated transition, available on <https://www.aquafil.com/assets/uploads/ellen-macarthur-foundation.pdf>

Stakeholder	Role in the Transition
Youth/Women-led Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)	Youth have the potential of job creation in recycling and reusing of what can ordinarily be taken to be waste. Women too play pivotal roles in the transition to a circular economy if they engage in a variety of activities that drive sustainable practices and resource efficiency such as agriculture.
Financial institutions	<p>The circular economy offers the financial sector a global growing market. Circular economy start-ups are up-scaling too fast, when and if enabled by finance. Overall, financial institutions like banks have an important role to play both as a leader in the circular economy finance and as lenders to companies and private entrepreneurs in the circular economy. Financial institutions such as banks play a crucial role in driving circularity by helping their clients adopt circular business models and more resource-efficient business practices. This involves supporting innovations in low-carbon materials and recycling technologies, enabling the development of products designed for longevity and reuse, and investing in companies that prioritise sustainable supply chains. In addition, banks can offer green loans and sustainable finance products tailored to businesses implementing circular practices.</p> <p>Financial institutions therefore need to: develop a common understanding of the circular economy; issue widely accepted and recognized guidelines on circular economy financing; adapt existing finance models to fit into a circular economy model; offer credit opportunities to circular businesses; train bank staff; as well as promote a strong culture of waste reduction and material re-use.</p>
Farmers	Agriculture plays a key role in the transition to a circular economy. The circular economy represents a promising strategy for supporting sustainable, restorative, and regenerative agriculture.
<p>Cooperative Societies</p> <p>The cooperatives in Uganda transcend all spheres of the economy and they are wide spread in all the major sectors such as: energy distribution, fishing, housing, consumer, financial services, livestock and dairy, apiary fruit and crop farming</p>	<p>Many cooperatives have been innovators in sustainable resource management in their sectors – launching consumer awareness programmes, developing recycling policies, and spearheading waste reduction initiatives. Cooperative societies have the potential of increasing production, productivity, and value addition which are critical for the transition.</p> <p>Cooperatives have the potential to participate in the recycling of waste and materials and in the generation of renewable energy</p> <p>Many cooperatives have been innovators in sustainable resource management in their sectors – launching consumer awareness programmes, developing recycling policies, and spearheading food waste reduction initiatives.</p>
Technology and innovation hubs	<p>Technology and innovation hubs have the potential to contribute to the Circular Economy by harnessing digital innovations to establish an economic system that promotes resource regeneration through continuous reuse while minimizing waste.</p> <p>Technology and innovation hubs play a role in promoting inventive approaches to production, consumption, and waste management. They enable solutions such as waste-to-energy technologies.</p>

Stakeholder	Role in the Transition
Education sector	<p>Establishing Foundational Knowledge: The concepts of reduce, reuse, and recycle are best instilled at an early stage of education. Schools, colleges, universities and other tertiary institutions should integrate sustainability into their curricula, to ensure that students comprehend the core tenets of the circular economy from the outset.</p> <p>Circular economy education should go beyond mere knowledge acquisition to the presentation of real-world challenges related to wastage, pollution, and sustainability; educators foster solution-centric mind-sets, preparing students to devise innovative circular solutions in future roles.</p>
Transport sector	<p>The transport sector has the potential to contribute to the promotion of the circular economy through the optimization of transport networks. A circular system will reduce the emissions from the materials used in vehicles by 70% by 2050, or 285 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent.<sup>2</sup> This is possible through making electric vehicles lighter and more durable, sharing vehicles, designing vehicles for reuse and remanufacturing</p>
Hospitality sector	<p>Food waste poses a significant socio-environmental challenge within the hospitality sector. Circular practices in the hospitality involve initiatives to lower carbon emissions, maximise the use of food resources, and extend the lifecycle of food products. The sector should rethink all aspects of its operations; from procurement, energy use, and technology integration to waste management</p> <p>They should implement stronger recycling programmes, composting organic waste from kitchens, gardens, and communal areas; installing energy-efficient lighting and appliances throughout the venue, using water recycling systems, and harnessing renewable energy sources like solar panels and air source heat pumps</p>
Special interest groups: PWDs, elderly, refugees, indigenous communities, marginalised communities	<p>Companies, organizations and private entrepreneurs that convert waste into raw materials should provide jobs and training opportunities to persons living with disabilities, marginalised individuals and young people who dropped out of school. The transition should be an inclusive transition-Inclusive circular economy: The production model that leaves no one out</p>
Academia/ research institutions	<p>A circular economy can be enhanced by applying the technical and business models generated by the academia</p> <p>Research institutions such as universities are able to undertake innovative solutions aimed at promoting the circular economy</p>
United Nations agencies/ Development Partners	<p>These UN agencies and Development Partners help advance circular economy models and projects that address various building blocks of a circular economy.</p>
International NGOs-resident International NGOs that promote circular economy practises	<p>International NGOs should support the development of safe, easy-to-recycle products with longer lifetimes</p> <p>International NGOs promote circular economy through programmes related to resource efficient and cleaner production as well as providing expertise in resource efficiency strategies</p>

2 <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/climate-change-and-a-circular-economy-for-transport> accessed on 23/10/2024

Stakeholder	Role in the Transition
Households Local communities Consumers of products	<p>The transition to a circular economy depends on the participation of consumers, households and local communities who drive companies' demand for new products manufactured using circular economy models</p> <p>Consumers, local communities and households have the power to shape the market through their choices and buying habits. By favouring durable, repairable and recyclable products, they encourage companies to adopt greener practices.</p> <p>Education and awareness-raising on circular economy practises is essential to promote responsible and informed consumer behaviour</p>
The Media	<p>The media disseminates information on circular economy, thereby increasing stakeholder awareness of circular economy</p> <p>Different media platforms such as print media and social media have the potential to influence the adoption of circular economy practices</p>
Religious institutions	<p>Religious institutions such as churches and mosques-are respected by their members in communities. The messages regarding the relevance and functioning of the circular economy can be shared with the masses.</p>
Cultural institutions	<p>Cultural institutions such as kingdoms, chiefdoms, and clans have loyal followers and can play an important role in sensitising communities on the transition to a circular economy.</p>

### 3. Conclusion

The transition to a circular economy is a collective venture that requires the mobilization of multiple stakeholders. Institutions, companies, consumers and civil society organizations are the key pieces in this evolution. Working together, they can transform our production and consumption systems to build a more sustainable and resilient future.



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