

TEDA TO HELP REVIVE THE TEXTILE AND CLOTHING SECTOR

The Tshwane Economic Development Agency has identified an opportunity to establish a Clothing and Textile Hub in the City of Tshwane with a specific focus on the cotton value chain. The CSIR's Enterprise Creation for Development was commissioned by TEDA to assess the viability of establishing such a hub.

Globalisation has had a negative effect on the clothing and textile sector in South Africa. The Clothing, textile, footwear and leather (CTFL) industry, formerly one of the largest employers in the country, decreased in size as a result of numerous factors such as cheap imports from Asian Countries. Approximately 91 000 jobs were lost in the industry from 2005 to 2014. It is now one of the smallest employers in the manufacturing sector. The downturn of the sector resulted in South Africa becoming a net importer of clothing and textiles products.

In recent years, the sector began recovering from its downturn as a result of government intervention. In addition retailers have expressed an interest in sourcing products from local suppliers.

From the study commissioned by TEDA, primary production opportunities were identified for the City of Tshwane. Cotton is a versatile, drought tolerant crop with labour intensive production which increases opportunities for large scale employment. Emerging farmers in and around Rust de Winter are interested in reviving cotton production, which would assist in reducing cotton imports resulting from short supply. Additional land within the City will have to be identified for cotton cultivation. It is estimated that the hub will require primary cotton production from a total of 2300 hectares from the onset.

The increased supply of cotton would feed into the proposed Tshwane Clothing and Textile Hub. The project, if implemented successfully will create almost 513 job opportunities for staff to run the hub and additional benefits will accrue to cotton farmers and operators in the sector.