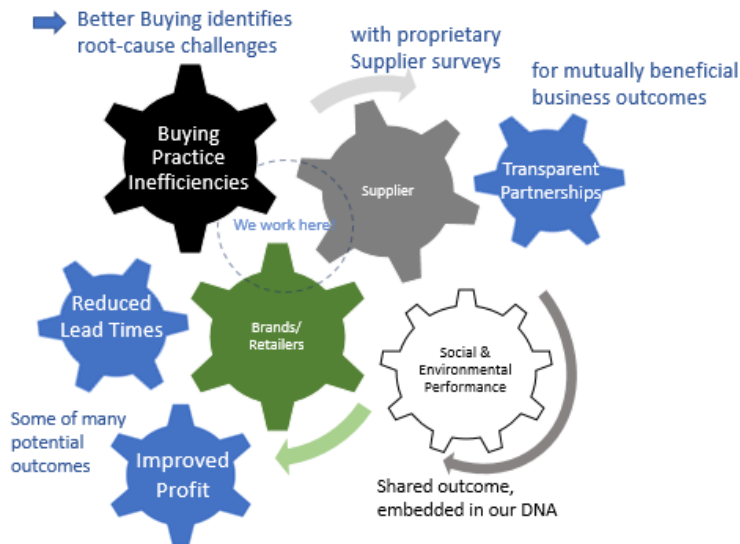




Promoting Sustainable Business Partnerships through Learning Loops

Better Buying™ and Keystone Accountability launch two-year project to support changes in retailer and brand purchasing practices and measure the business impacts of those changes



August 20, 2019 – Better Buying™ Institute and partner Keystone Accountability are co-designing and piloting a two-way “Learning Loops” improvement process between buyers and suppliers with the goal of promoting sustainable business partnerships and achieving mutually beneficial outcomes. Working from Better Buying™ ratings data, a dialogue between specific buyers and their suppliers will be initiated to identify priority improvable business practices, identify potential solutions, and pilot test the solutions. Better Buying™ Institute and Keystone Accountability received funding through The Walt Disney Company’s Supply Chain Investment Program.

Better Buying™ has been working with retailers and brands to provide data about their purchasing practices and the impacts those have on achieving ethical sourcing goals, such as wages and reduction of excessive overtime. With increased participation of buyers and suppliers, Better Buying™ is building a strong base of knowledge about what good practices look like and where changes can have big impacts on business.

“We recognize that sharing ratings reports will not alone result in better purchasing practices and improved buyer-supplier relationships. The learning loops are intended to be the additional input needed to transform Better Buying™ ratings into concrete actions to improve buying practices” explains Marsha Dickson, president and co-founder of Better Buying™.

By documenting changes in buying practices and the meaningful impacts that result, the learning loops system will allow Better Buying™ to demonstrate the business case for improved purchasing practices.

This project will be piloted with selected brands and retailers globally, and their suppliers in



Bangladesh and East Asia, with the goal of scaling to all global partners in the future.

About the Learning Loops system

The main aim of the learning loops process is to accelerate improvements in purchasing practices by leveraging Better Buying™ ratings through a facilitated dialogue process. A first step will be selecting the retailers and brands to involve in the first year's pilot from those that are engaged with Better Buying™ and have received at least one ratings report of the company's performance on purchasing practices.

"The learning loops will extend the Better Buying™ ratings into an ongoing process of feedback about progress on moving from ratings to identified issues of joint action, to agreed changes in business practices to test, and finally to assessment of those changes as they are implemented," commented David Bonbright, chief executive of Keystone Accountability.

Chris Schreiber, executive advisor for Better Buying™ adds "The final step – adapt, embed, and share successful practice changes – will be ongoing and involves the refinement of a tested improvement to a business practice, embedding it in business operations, and integrating it as appropriate to the full supply chain."

Apart from developing a business case for improved purchasing practices, the learning loops system will boost suppliers' confidence that information provided by them about their customers' purchasing practices is being taken into consideration for improvements. "Improved collaboration between brands/retailers and their suppliers will help tackle challenging purchasing practices and put business partners on a path toward improved business success," says Dickson.

END OF PRESS RELEASE - NOTES TO EDITORS

About Better Buying™

Better Buying™ is a global initiative that provides retailers, brands, and suppliers a cloud-based platform to obtain data-driven insights into purchasing activities. Better Buying's transparency fosters sustainable partnerships and mutually beneficial financial results and other outcomes. Anonymous supplier ratings of buyer purchasing practices obtained by the independent third-party initiative are aggregated, scored, and made available to the participating retailers, brands, and suppliers with the goal of accelerating change and industry-wide improvements across supply chains. Co-founded by Marsha Dickson, Ph.D. and Doug Cahn, Better Buying™ was launched during an 18-month feasibility study funded by C&A Foundation in 2015 as a project of the University of Delaware. Better Buying™ Institute is now incorporated as a non-stock corporation in Delaware, USA and is pursuing 501(c)(3) status. For more information, visit: www.betterbuying.org Twitter: @betterbuying

About Keystone Accountability Inc.

Keystone Accountability is the world's first specialist provider of constituent feedback systems



for social value creation. Its original Constituent Voice™ method blends customer satisfaction techniques with participatory development methodologies. Over the past decade and a half, working with over 200 organizations in over 20 countries, Keystone proofed out the idea of systematic feedback for social value creation, and led the first phase of the emergence of a brand new “feedback field” (also referred to as a “feedback movement”). Keystone also built the world’s first nonprofit online feedback system management platform, the Feedback Commons.

About The Walt Disney Company’s Supply Chain Investment Program

The Supply Chain Investment Program helps address systematic labor issues in global supply chains. This program makes grants to non-profit organizations, social enterprises, United Nations agencies and other qualified groups working on innovative and impactful projects that seek to create scalable, long-term improvements in working conditions and the empowerment of workers in key sourcing markets. By supporting and partnering with organizations that have the capacity to address these systemic issues, Disney believes that the projects supported through the Supply Chain Investment Program will continue to create improvements long after each project is complete. The Supply Chain Investment Program reflects Disney’s desire to contribute to the growing body of knowledge about systemic and root causes of noncompliance with labor standards around the world. By supporting program activities and engagement across all levels of global supply chains, we believe this gives us an opportunity to not only understand what contributes to poor working conditions, but to help address them in a systematic, replicable and scalable fashion.