

# TANZANIA'S

## TEXTILE & APPAREL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

### A PROFILE

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- Much of Tanzania's textile industry was developed in the 1970s as part of a state drive to industrialise the country. Of the 30 textile mills in existence about 80% were state-owned (in the 1980s these mills consumed about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Tanzania produced lint). However after the privatisation programme of the late 1990s many of these mills closed altogether.
- Tanzania's larger (more than 30 employees) textile and apparel manufacturing industry consists of 20 firms which employ about 20 000 workers<sup>1</sup>. It has been estimated that Tanzania's textile producers on average consume about 30 000 tons of cotton lint a year. Most of this lint is spun into 100% cotton yarns, which is then made into traditional light-weight woven fabrics (kanga & kitenge – 110-150gsm). A limited amount of Tanzania cotton is ultimately transformed into regular apparel fabrics that are then made into apparel in Tanzania. [Tanzania ranks within the top 5 African producers of conventional cotton; it is the world's 4<sup>th</sup> largest producer of organic cotton (after India, Turkey & Syria); and, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest producer of sisal fibres in the world (in a distant 2<sup>nd</sup> place to Brazil).]
- Tanzania's textile & apparel manufacturing industry has the following general profile:
  - **Cotton Spinners:** there are 2 stand-alone cotton spinning firms (New Tabora Textiles; Jambo Spinning). Tabora exports a large proportion of its yarns; while all of Jambo's output is sold locally / regionally (in Kenya).
  - **Traditional Fabrics:** there are 10 firms that concentrate on making woven printed kanga and kitenge (some of these firms also make yarn dyed woven kikoi fabrics, and some woven *shuka*<sup>2</sup> and home textiles). Local traditional fabric producers are: the METL group's Afritex, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Textiles and Musoma Textiles; the Ladhani family's Mwanza Textiles and MbeyTex; Nida/Namera; Urafiki; Sunflag; Karibu Textile Mills (KTM); and African Pride Textile Mills (APTM). The latter 2 firms buy all their fabric requirements (mainly imports; but also locally available surpluses); while Nida is known to buy-in some *greige* cloth. Most of these traditional fabrics are sold in Tanzania – but some find their way into Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Kenya; and limited amounts into some of the island states off the east African coast.

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<sup>1</sup> About 6 000 of these workers (almost all in A to Z Textiles) are mainly involved in the production mosquito bed-nets.

<sup>2</sup> A traditional fabric mainly worn by Masaai peoples in Eastern Africa.

For details on kanga & kitenge look at the displays of the Erie Art Museum

[www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/kanga.ppt](http://www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/kanga.ppt)

[www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/kitenge.ppt](http://www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/kitenge.ppt)

[www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/EAfrican textile use.ppt](http://www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/EAfrican textile use.ppt)

[www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/Translations.pdf](http://www.erieartmuseum.org/exhibits/exhibits2008/kanga/documents/Translations.pdf)

- **Specialist Textiles:** Morogoro Canvas Mills (MCM) makes heavier weight woven canvas textiles – which are mainly exported. There are 3 firms that make mosquito bed-nets – A to Z Textiles is the largest and most technologically advanced (it also extrudes the yarns used to make the nets – it is the largest bed-net manufacturer on the African continent); Sunflag and Moshi Textiles are smaller producers (importing their yarns). Most of these nets are sold locally – but volumes are sold into other African states via the tender systems of malaria NGO and development organisations. Kilimanjaro Blanket Corporation (KBC), and Blanket & Textile Manufacturers make limited volumes of blankets which are all sold locally.
- **Apparel:** there are 5 larger apparel producers (making mainly knit garments), namely: Mazava Fabrics & Production, Sunflag, Kibotrade, Ellen Knitweave Mills, and A to Z Textiles. Three of these firms are connected to their own textile production units (Sunflag [makes its own yarns and finished fabrics]; while Ellen Knitwear and A to Z [both buy-in yarns to make knit fabrics which they then dye]). Mazava imports all of the synthetic (i.e. non cotton) knit fabrics used to make its sportswear; while Kibotrade buys some knit fabrics locally (from Sunflag) and imports the remainder. Sunflag currently sells most of its garments into South Africa, but it also has EU and limited US sales; Mazava only sells into the US; while Kibotrade has East African and Danish sales. Ellen Knitweave Mill's and A to Z Textiles' knit garments (t-shirts & polo-shirts) are sold into Tanzania's promotional wear market.
- **Sisal Textiles & Products:** a number of firms beneficiate a proportion of the Tanzania sisal crop into textiles and made-up items (e.g. yarns, fabrics, ropes, sacks, carpets and mats).

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