



▶ **Advancing decent work in  
the circular economy**

## Overview

Instead of today's take–make–dispose linear model of production and consumption, the circular economy is restorative

Less than 9% of our world is circular

A circular economy could benefit the environment while boosting competitiveness and resilience

# €68 billion

Difference in Africa's GDP in 2030  
under circular economy scenario

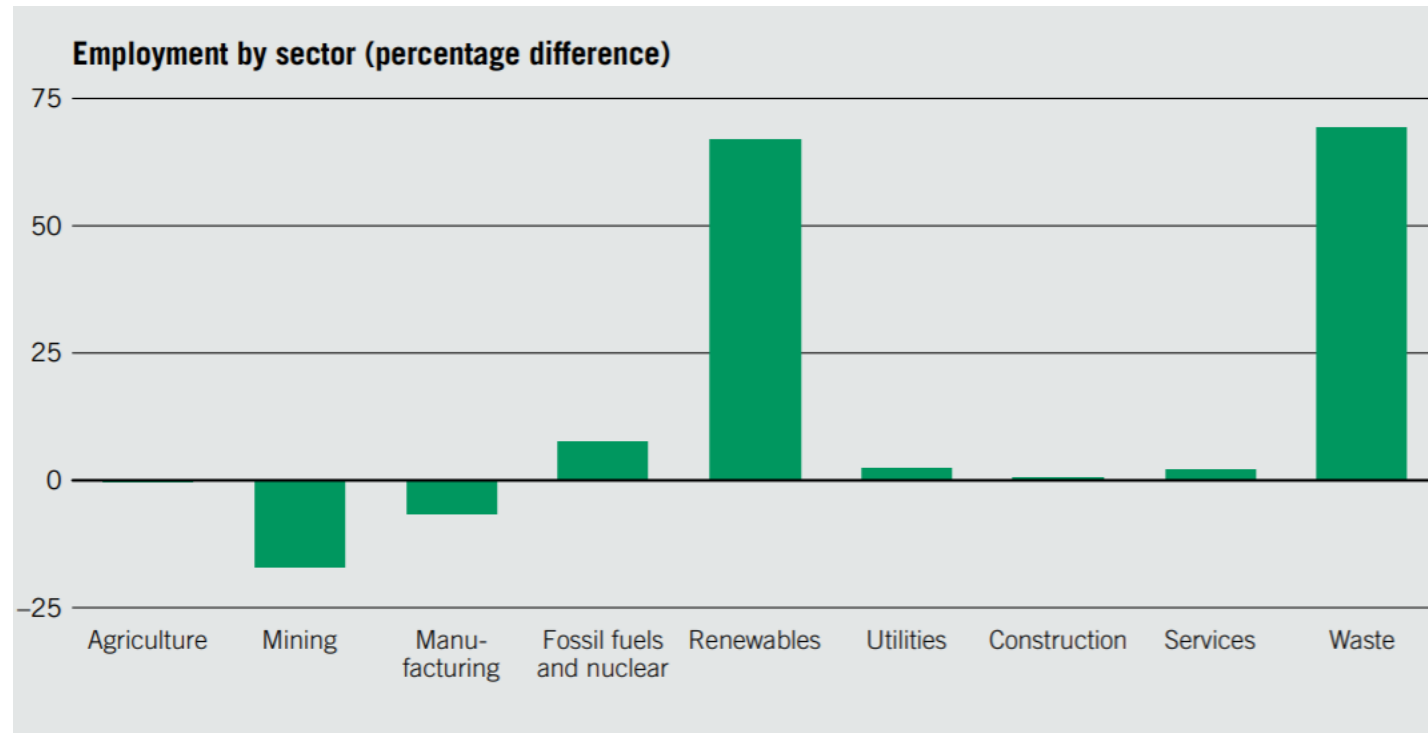
# 7-8 million jobs

Net growth in jobs globally due to  
circular economy by 2030

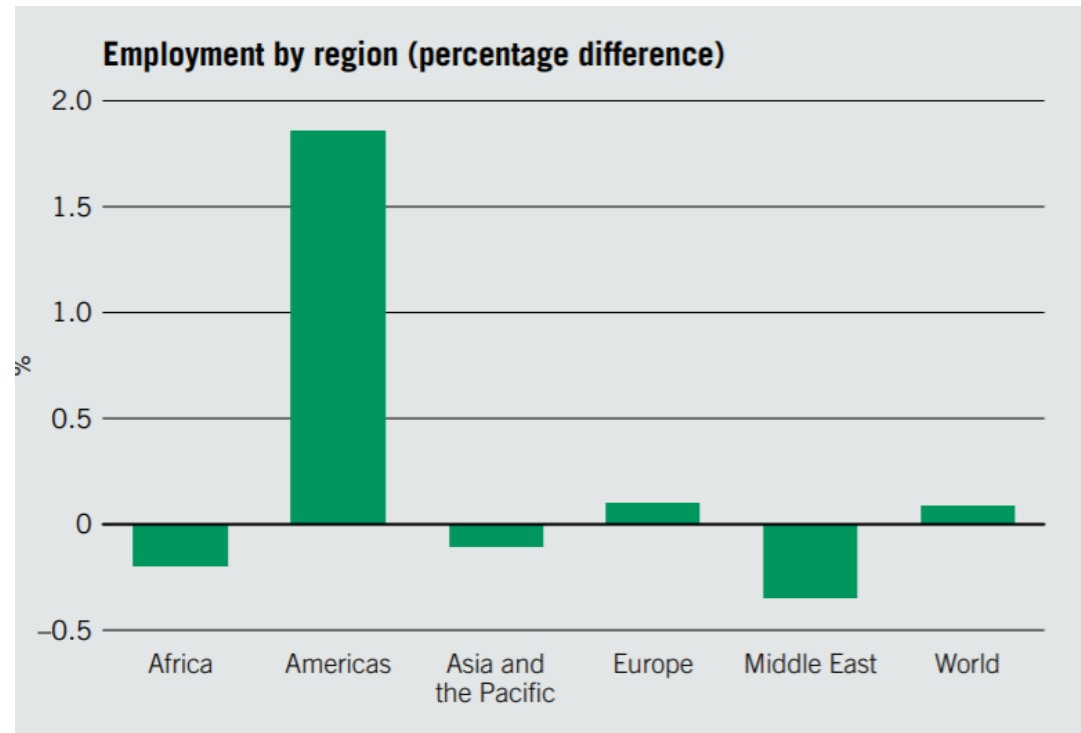
## ► Impact of a transition towards circularity on employment

| Type of impact                             | Examples  |
|--|---|
| <b>Job creation</b>                        | <u><b>Circular economic activities will increase the demand for labour in some sectors</b></u> (e.g. product repair, materials reprocessing and recycling), generating new employment opportunities in some countries. New product system services and digitalization are likely to create new types jobs in the ICT sector |
| <b>Job substitution</b>                    | <u><b>Some employment opportunities will shift</b></u> from companies, sectors and countries associated with the linear economic model to those that operate according to the circular model. One such example is job substitution through sharing economy platforms and new business models                                |
| <b>Job elimination</b>                     | <u><b>There will be no direct replacement for certain types of employment</b></u> in an advanced circular economy, such as jobs linked to linear extractive industries and jobs that are already threatened by automation   |
| <b>Job transformation and redefinition</b> | <u><b>Many existing jobs across multiple sectors are likely to be transformed</b></u> or redefined as a result of the circular economy transition. <u><b>This will require new skills and retraining of the workforce</b></u>   |

## Impact of a transition towards circularity on employment

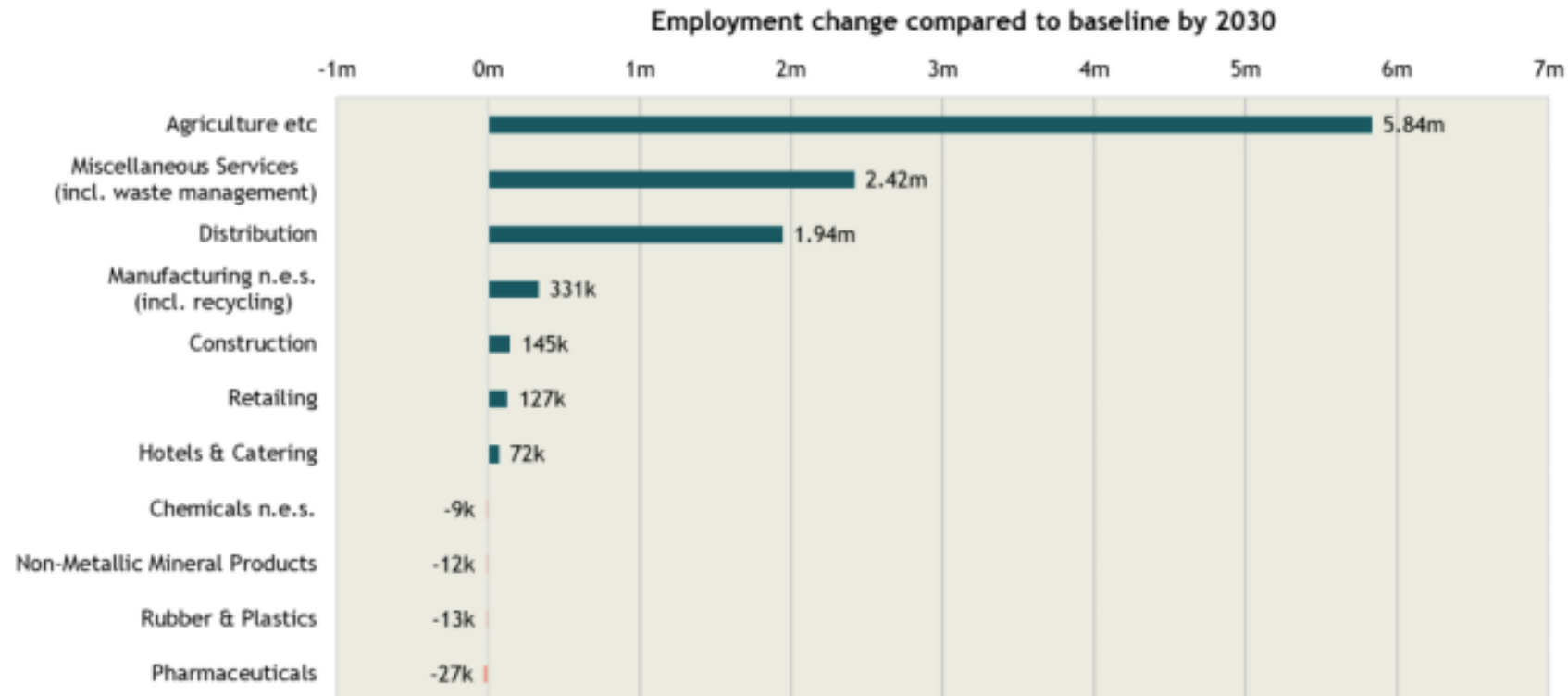


## ► Sectoral differences in job creation and job losses



## Variation in employment estimates

The European Commission predicts a 2.7% increase in employment in Africa from the transition to a circular economy



## Beyond the numbers

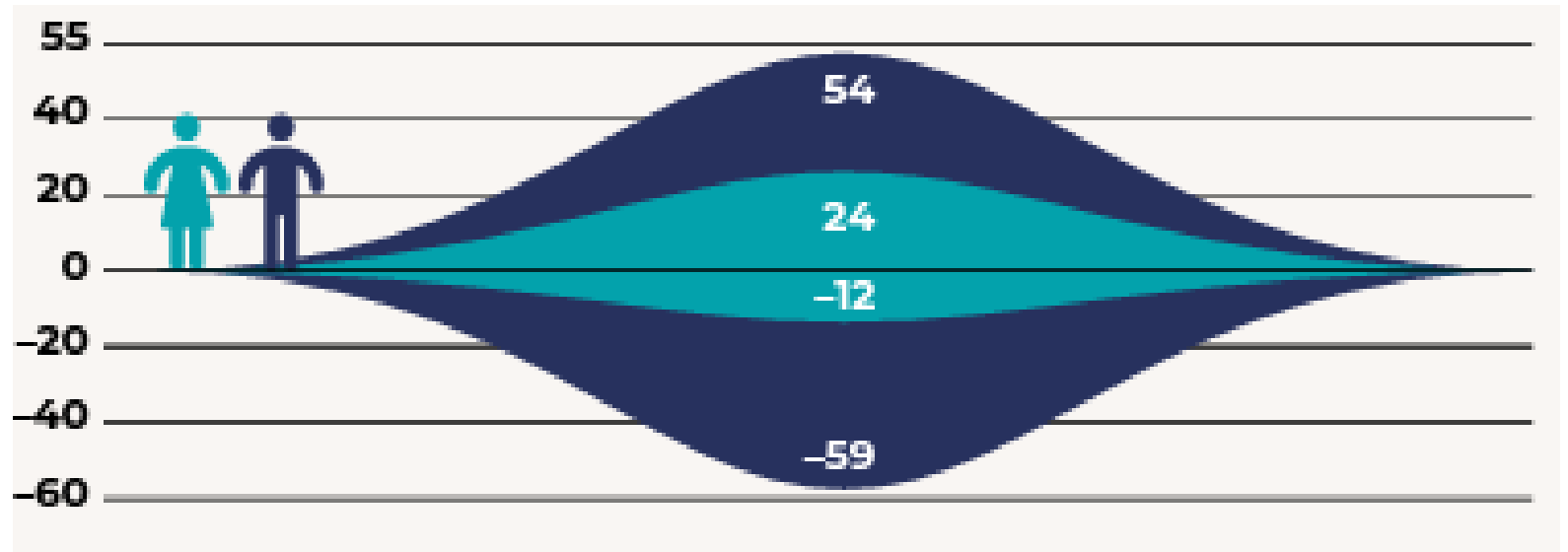
Gender

Informality

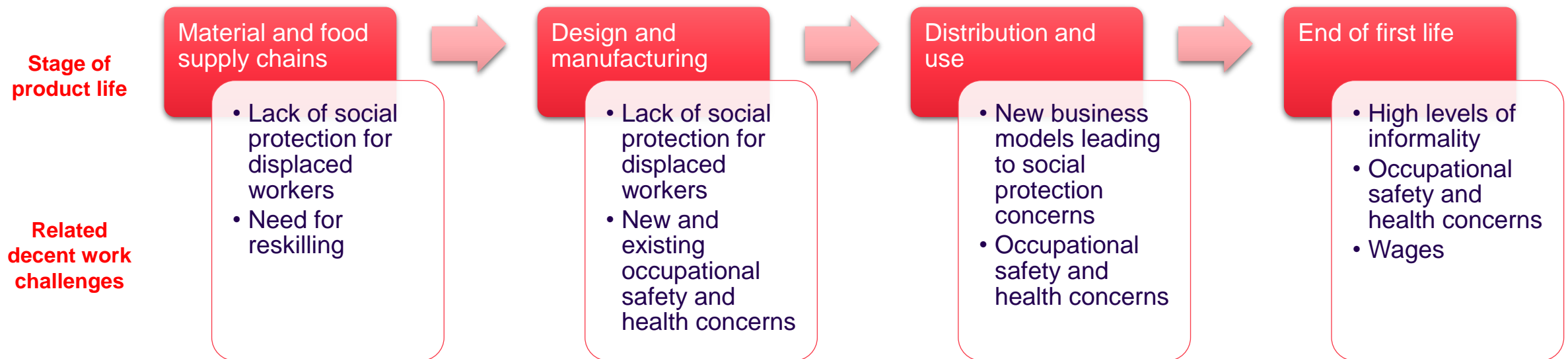
Vulnerable groups

Skills

Jobs created and destroyed in the circular economy by gender

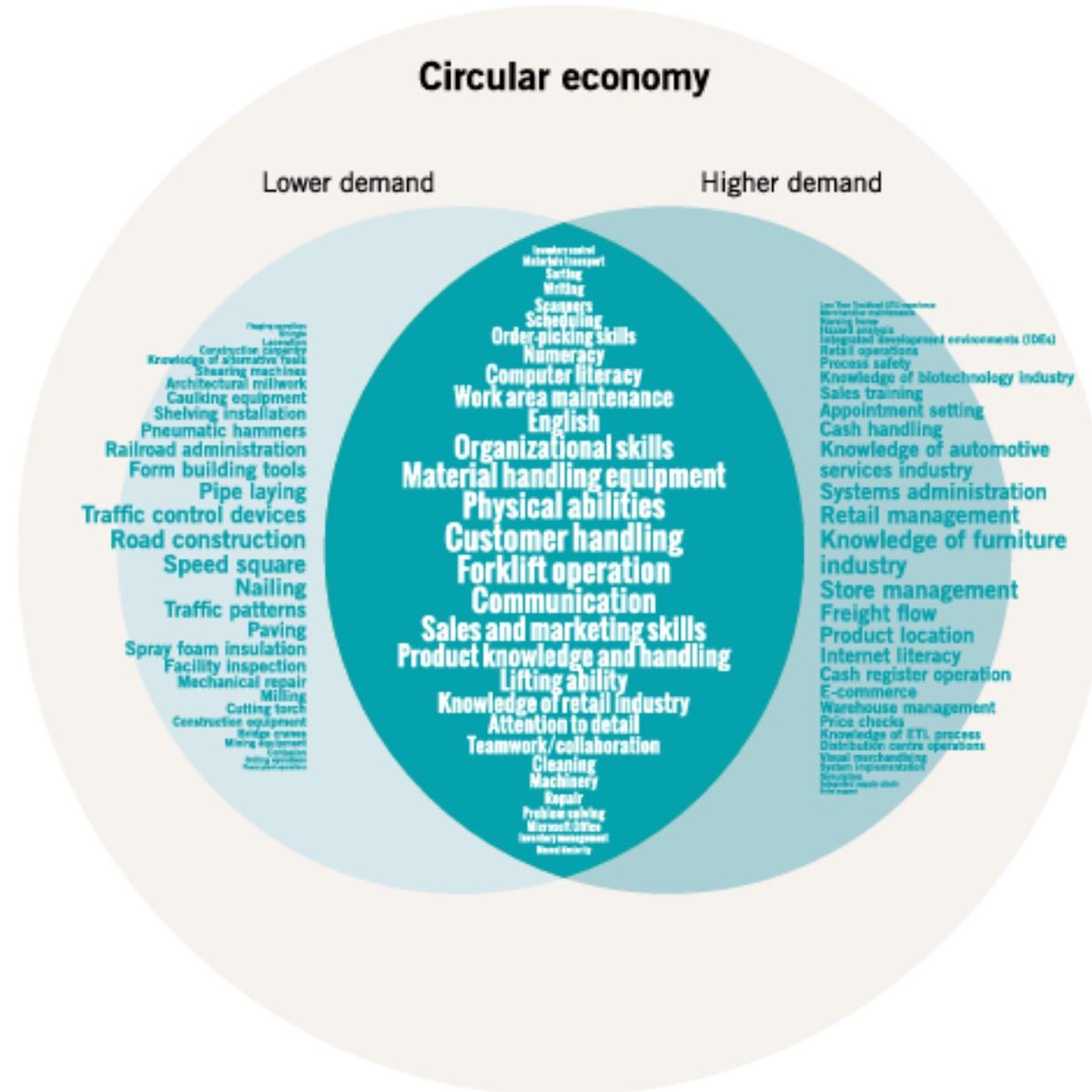


## Visualizing challenges and opportunities across the chain





# Skills for a circular economy





# Case study: jobs in e-waste



## Factsheet about E-waste

E-waste: Electrical or electronic equipment that is waste, including all components, subassemblies and consumables that are part of the equipment at the time the equipment becomes waste

Source: Basel Convention



**53.6 Mt**

E-waste generated worldwide in 2019

Source: Global E-Waste Monitor 2020

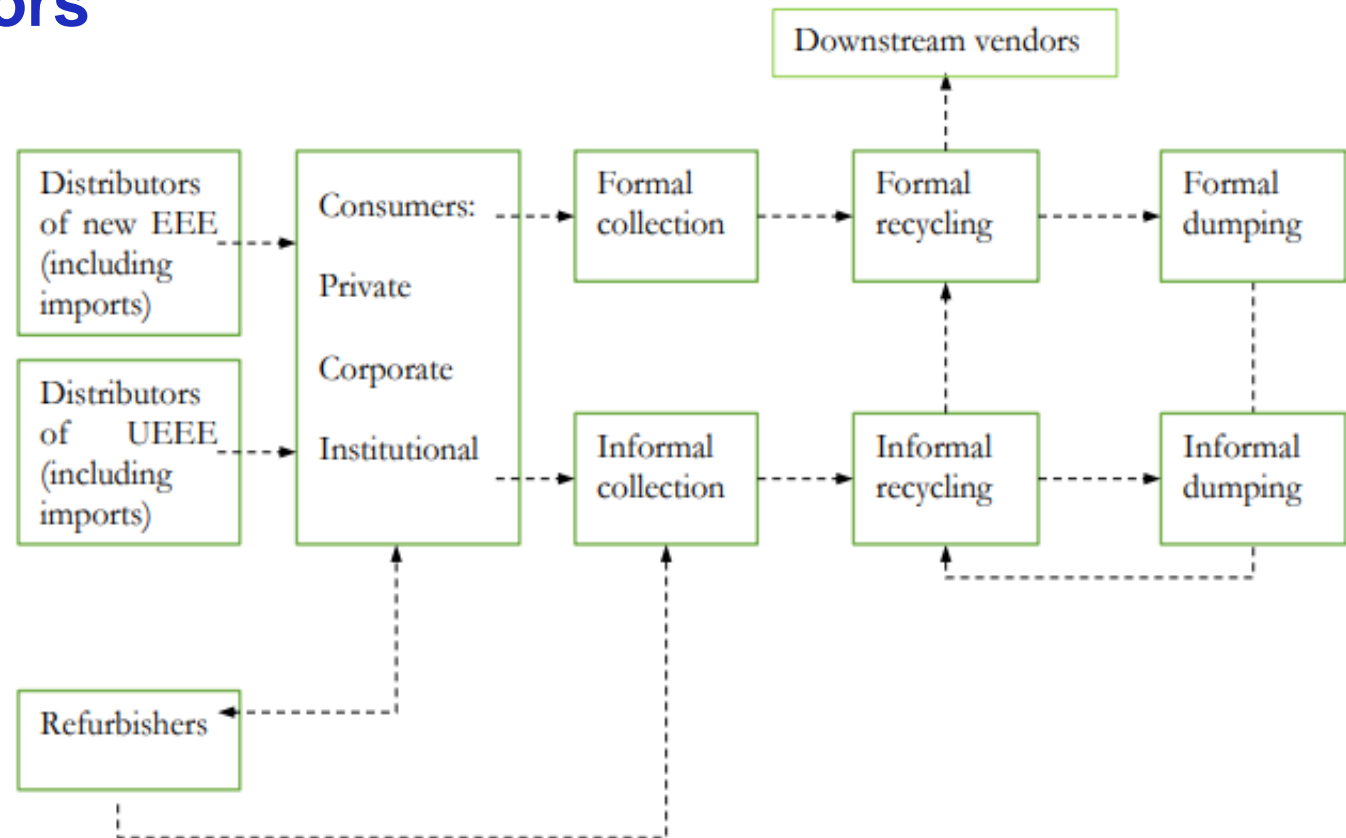


**17.4 % (9.3 Mt)**

E-waste formally collected and recycled

## E-waste value chain and actors

- In many low- and middle-income countries, e-waste sector relies on the informal value chain
- Informal value chain is complex with multi-directional flows and many different actors



Source: ILO Nigeria e-waste analysis (2019)



## Job creation potentials of e-waste

Many studies and analyses support the employment effects of the e-waste sector:

- On average, **63** jobs are created per 1000 tons of e-waste collection
- In the US, for every 1000 tons of e-waste processed, sorting and recycling create **15** jobs while repair create **200** jobs
- In the Netherlands, circularity in metal and electrical products result in a **13%** rise in domestic employment

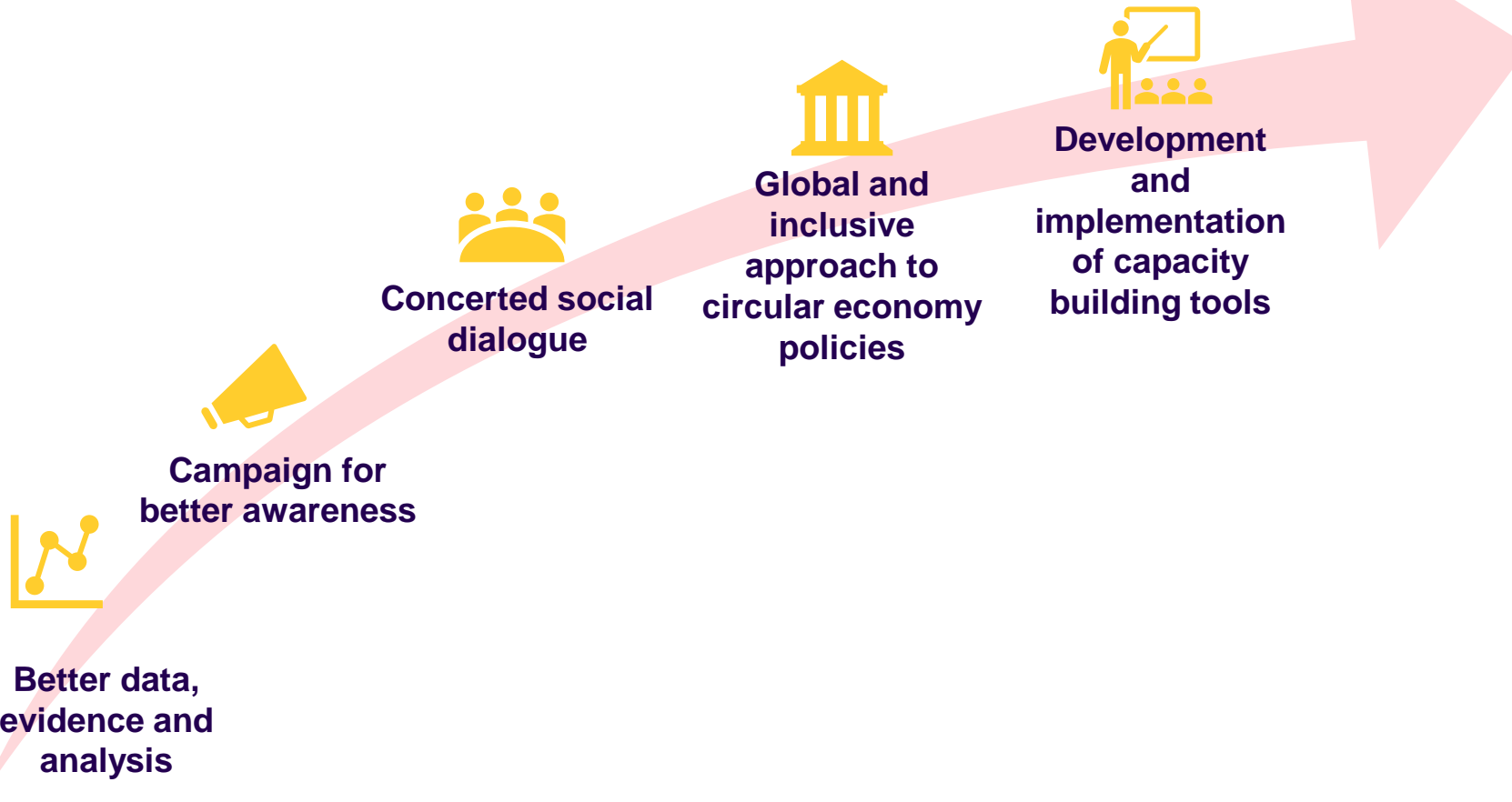
Source: Rreuse (2015), de Boer et al. (2021)



## Decent work challenges and opportunities in e-waste



# How can we make circular economy inclusive?



Employers, workers and governments are informed, equipped and taking concerted action to advance decent work in the circular economy in specific countries and sectors



## Examples of ILO action

World Employment and Social Outlook: Greening with jobs (2018) publishes statistics on circular economy

The first ever Global Dialogue Forum on Decent Work in the Management of E-waste (Geneva, 9-11 April 2019) – adopted points of consensus

Collaboration at the international level: Platform for accelerating circular economy, UN Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, UN E-waste Coalition

Regional and national projects, for example e-waste

ILO, World Bank, Circle Economy initiative to measure jobs





# THANK YOU

# ▶ FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

*For additional information, kindly contact:*

- Casper N. Edmonds: [edmonds@ilo.org](mailto:edmonds@ilo.org)
- Luke Carroll: [carroll@ilo.org](mailto:carroll@ilo.org)

