

Sustainable Sorting: A Human-Centric Approach to Second-Hand Clothing Decisions

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African countries are amongst the highest importers of second-hand clothes. Nearly seventy percent of all Western Secondhand Clothes (SHC) donations go to African countries (Kermeliotis & Curnow, 2013). However, this “charitable donation” of clothing has lasting socio-economic impacts that include extreme pressure on domestic industries, loss of jobs, and the exploitation of entrepreneurial potential in developing countries. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe and improve efficiency in the second-hand clothing industry by identifying the information, through data collection and analysis, that is needed to inform the options for where a garment ends up after it is donated. The objective is to understand the decision-makers in the second-hand clothing importing industry for the purchase and distribution of second-hand clothes. My core objectives are to identify and understand information bottlenecks that result in inefficient disposal-related decision-making for consumers and manufacturers.

Ultimately, this research will identify critical themes for understanding the experience of sorters and importers within the chain to inform suggestions for the future design of a digital garment profile: the garment-level attributes and details needed to guide post-donation decisions.

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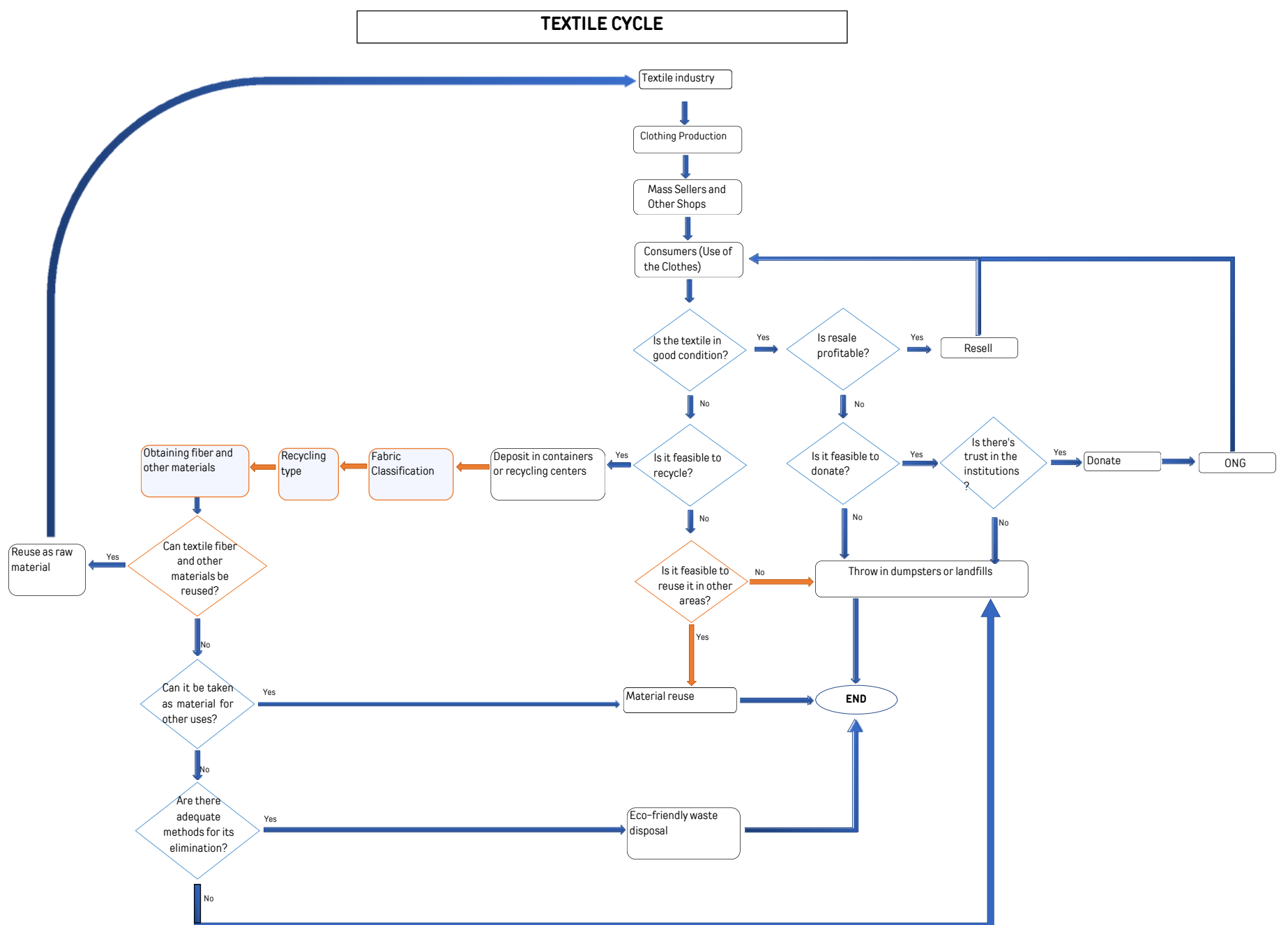


Image 1. This research mapped how second-hand clothes travel within the societal organization, sorting and tracking methods during the fabric life cycle, and transportation.

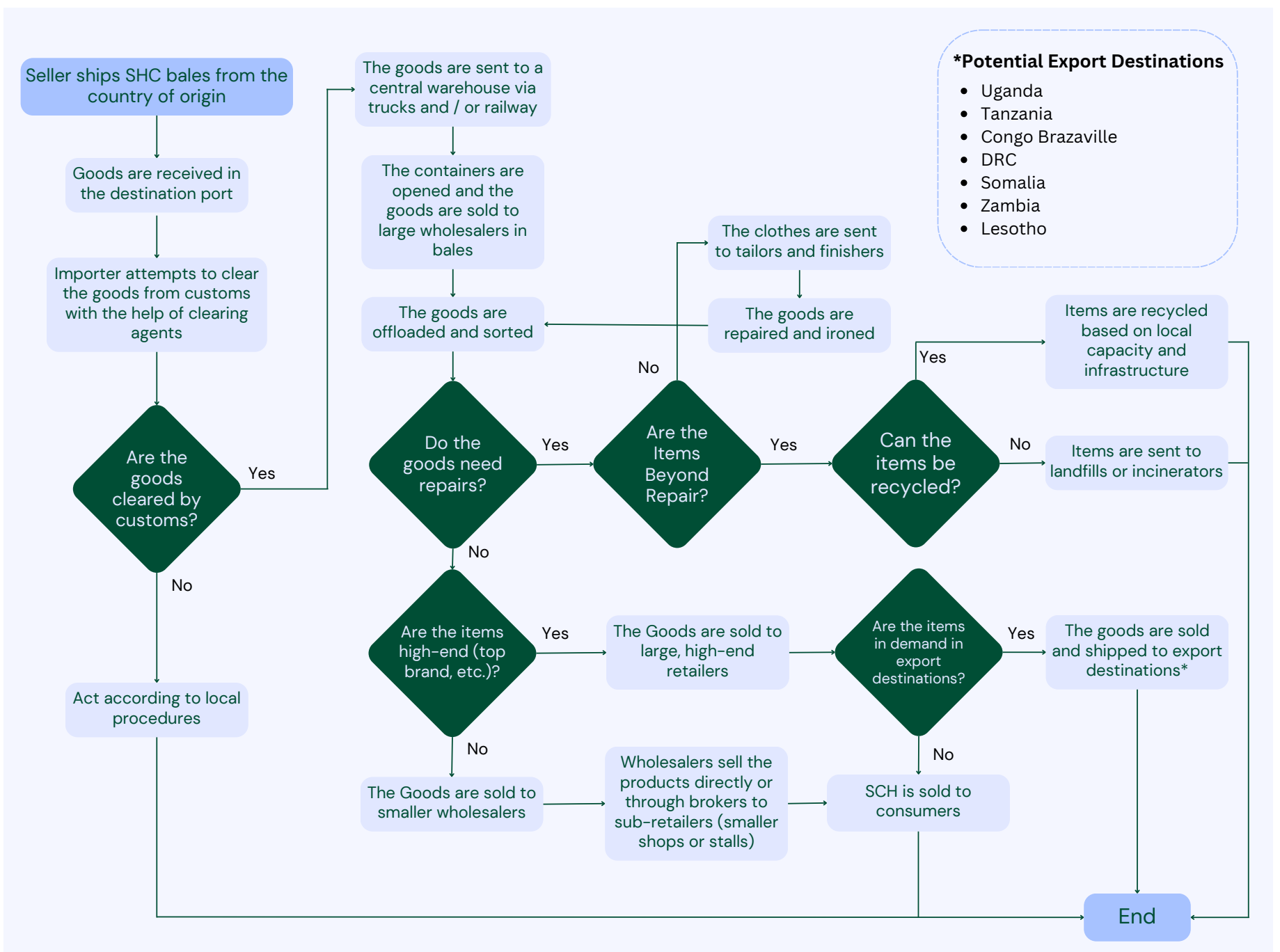
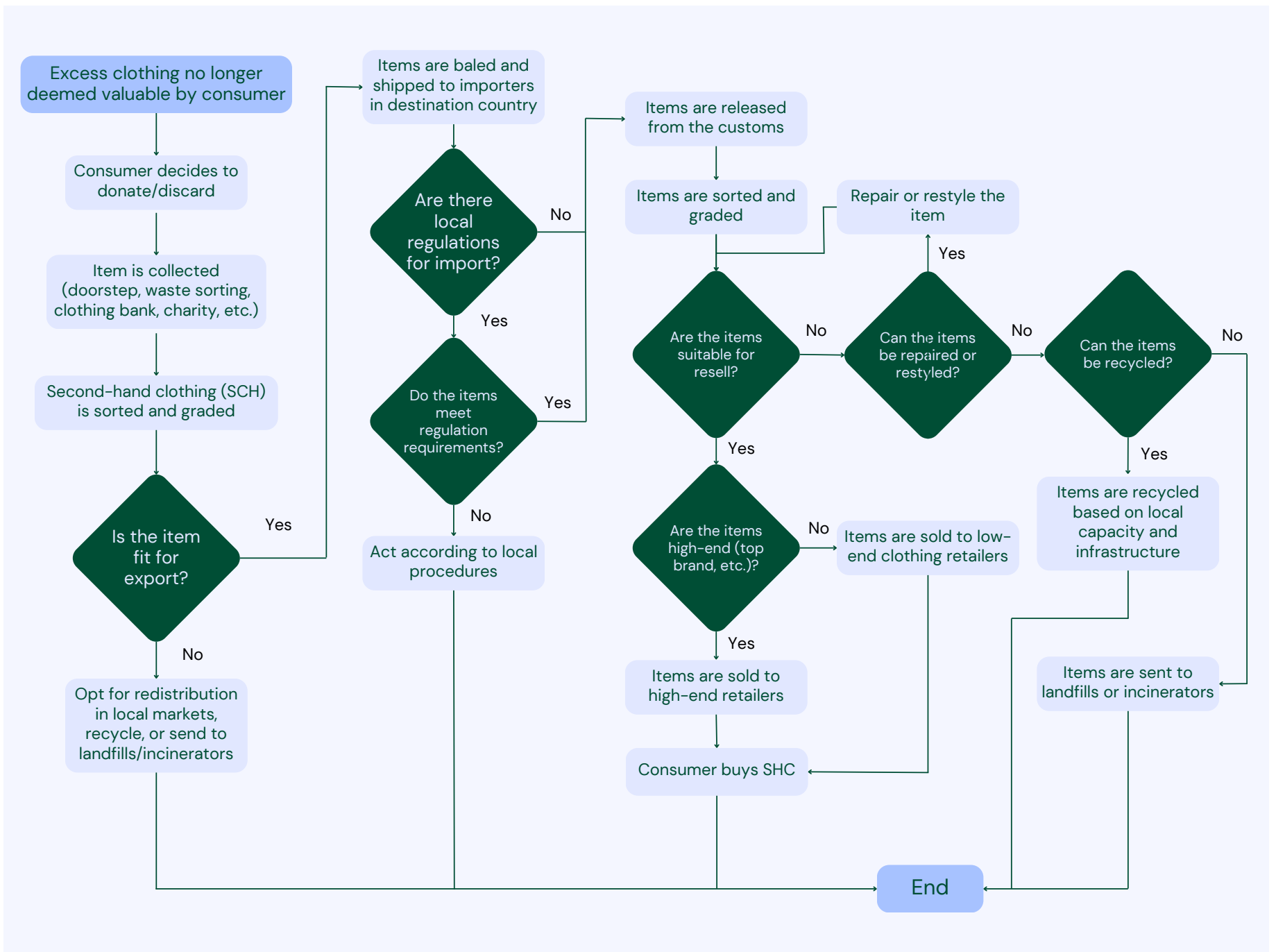


Image 2. This research mapped out what happens to clothing after it's donated and what are the various post-donation options.

Recycling Process Cycle

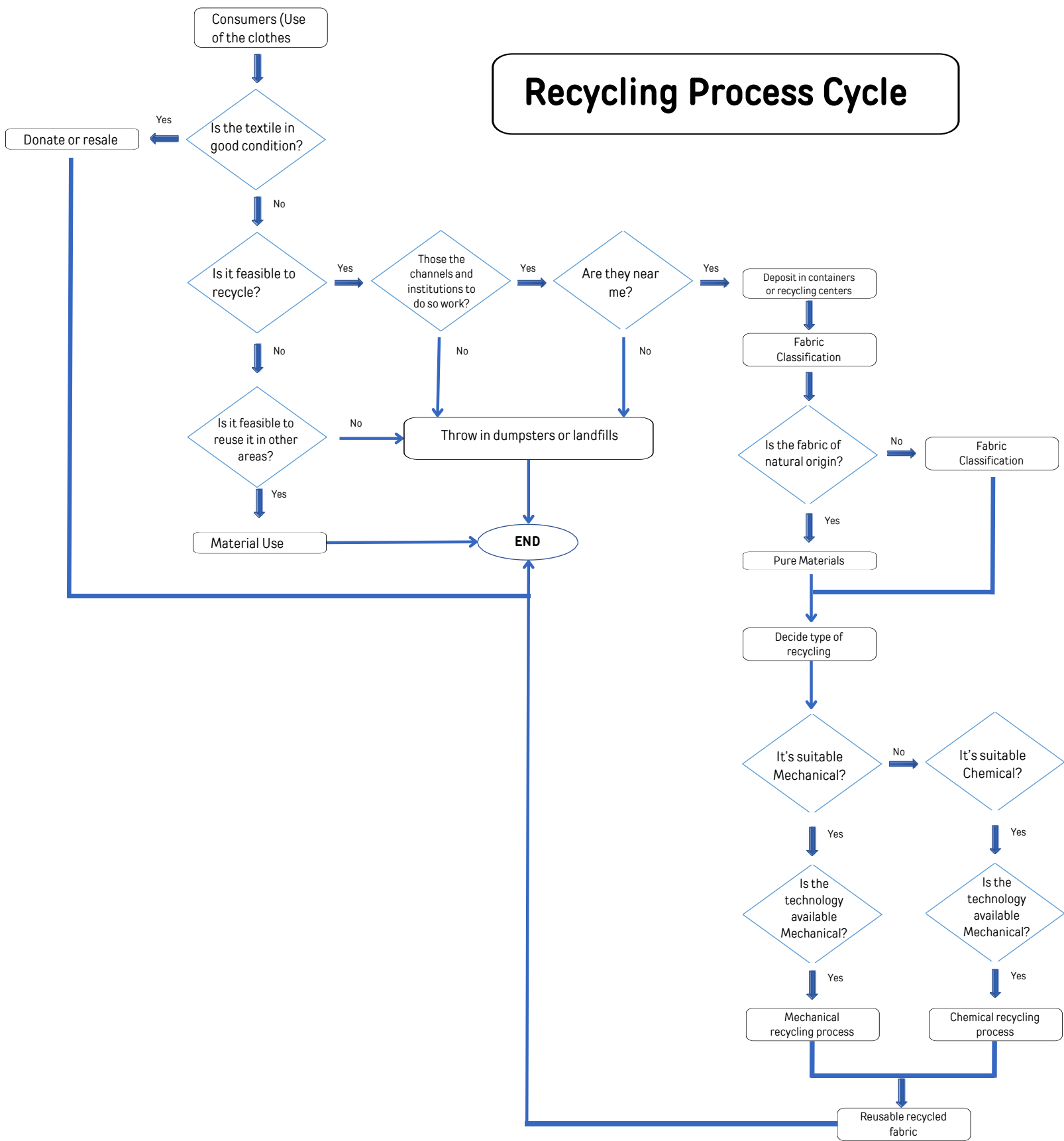


Image 3. This research mapped out what happens to clothing after it's donated and what are the various post-donation options. Feasibility, Fabric Classification, polyester, fiber, cotton etc, Recycling, Reuse types, Donation.