

excellent reliability," says David McAlister, Product Manager for Fiber Testing at Uster Technologies.

The Low Volume Instruments also serve as the entry point for customers to join the USTER family at an affordable price. Starting with USTER's unique 'Think Quality' approach, spinners are equipped to move up the profitability chain step by step with every additional instrument, towards further control of quality throughout the mill processes.

### Paybacks for traders and spinners

Cotton trading companies exist in various sizes. Many are local, focusing on their domestic markets, such as in India, China, Pakistan and Bangladesh. They understand the importance of a quality tag for their trading business and therefore opt to invest in USTER® LVI. Their need isn't comparable with that of USDA (cotton classing at the United States Department of Agriculture): at this important cotton export institution, more than 250 USTER® HVIs operate at speeds of 800 samples/hour in three shifts, throughout three to four months per year.



USTER® LVI 920 nep tester.

Whether cotton is classified using LVI® or HVI® models, the important thing is that the classification takes place. Cotton marketed with no quality tag is regarded as low quality and not to be trusted – and the price suffers accordingly. The benefits of cotton classing are equally valuable to both spinners and traders. Spinners need to get the most out of their purchased

raw material with a smart cotton mix. For the right decision on this, proper quality parameters are necessary. The fact that the raw material is the biggest cost factor in a spinning mill is itself justification for investment in an USTER® LVI. "Quality control always pays back," says McAlister. ♦

## 'Stitches to Riches' for South Asian apparel sector still relevant after launch in 2016

'Stitches to Riches', a book brought out by the World Bank offers specific policy recommendations for stakeholders to better leverage the apparel manufacturing sector's potential in South Asia.

The focus is on identifying key bottlenecks and areas for improvement in the South Asian countries compared with those of their closest competitors in the South East Asia region (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia).

These recommendations include: (i) removing trade restrictions to allow easy access to manmade fibres as inputs; (ii) increasing efficiency along the value chain such as integration between textile and apparel; and (iii) improving social and environmental compliance by introducing better human resource practices. At the country level, policy highlights include suggestions that Bangladesh should improve performance on non-cost factors important to buyers. The book says India must address constraints to firm growth (like integration of textile and apparel, and access to manmade fibres), and Sri Lanka should position itself as regional hub and take advantage of emerging markets. It also suggests that Pakistan should increase product diversity and reliability, and take advantage of new markets.

'Stitches to Riches' has been motivated by South Asia's urgent need to create more and better jobs for a growing population. This book investigates the region's potential for expanding and improving jobs in the labour-intensive apparel sector. It estimates the effects of rising wages in China on apparel exports, employment, and wages in South Asia, and provides policy recommendations to leverage the sector for greater job creation.



As developing countries explore ways to boost living standards and reduce poverty, they are increasingly focusing on policy options to create jobs that are "good for development." For South Asia, this is a high priority, given that it must absorb close to one million individuals that will enter the workforce every month for the next three decades, and it continues to have a stubbornly low rate (30%) of female labour force participation. ♦