



EUROPE

Every Kiondo basket
is signed by the woman
who has made it, this way
every basket carries
a story of its maker.

MADE BY

Joyce Wambui 14



Mifuko

WOMEN & FAIR TRADE



Fair Trade

“Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South.

Fair Trade Organizations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.”

(Charter of Fair Trade Principles, 2009)

WFTO-Europe

The World Fair Trade Organization-Europe (WFTO-Europe) is the European branch of WFTO (global), the worldwide network of Fair Trade organisations. It is formed by more than 90 members across 16 European countries. Among them we can find Fair Trade organizations, Fair Trade networks and Fair Trade support organizations.

On a global level, WFTO aims at enabling producers to improve their livelihoods and communities through Fair Trade. This mission is carried out by delivering market access for its worldwide membership through policy, advocacy, campaigning, marketing and monitoring. In addition to its Global Office, WFTO has four regional networks: WFTO-Africa (formerly COFTA), WFTO-Asia, WFTO-Latin America and WFTO-Europe. North America and the Pacific Rim are only informally organized as a region.

WFTO-Europe's strategic aims are mainly to support the growth and consolidation of WFTO Global, to be the reference of Fair Trade in Europe, its representative organ and its voice, to protect the values of the Fair Trade and 100% commitment to it and, last but not least, to support Fair Trade policies.



EUROPE

Fair Trade and Gender Equity

Women have an important place in Fair Trade. Women make up an important proportion of workers and farmers. The proportion is even bigger among artisans, where women are a majority. Fair Trade makes an important difference for women because it aims at promoting gender equality. Advancing gender equality is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and the well-being of girls and boys, but also in eliminating discrimination on the work place and ensuring the recognition of employment rights of women.

Tackling this challenge is a priority for the World Fair Trade Organization and this is reflected in one of the **10 Fair Trade Principles (Principle 6)** guiding the action of the network which formulates:

“No discrimination, Gender Equity, Freedom of Association”.

Concretely, WFTO members need to put in place an internal gender policy ensuring several key conditions (no discrimination, equal access to management positions, respect of statutory employment benefits).

WFTO-Europe and its members are engaged in making progress with gender equity through campaigns, research and advocacy activities, notably through the [Trade Fair Live Fair](#) project. This work helps implementing the **Sustainable Development Goal n°5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”**, specifically targeting the end of all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere; ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life; and undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

On the occasion of **the International Women’s Rights Day**, WFTO-Europe would like to feature some stories of women working in Fair Trade from our European members. In the following pages, you will discover six of our members, who they are, what they do for women and testimonials from women working for their organisations.



SeeMe

SeeMe is a brand that produces sleek heart-shaped jewelry and accessories and provides ethical sourcing for other fashion brands. It was founded by Caterina Occhio, a former development aid manager with specialization in the socio-economic integration of women.

In her quest to help and improve women's conditions in the Middle East and North Africa region, in 2013 Caterina took a leap of faith and launched SeeMe.

Its main purpose is to give a safe environment and secure work positions to women upon leaving women's shelters in Tunisia, while at the same time developing successful designs and beautiful jewels.

www.seeme.org



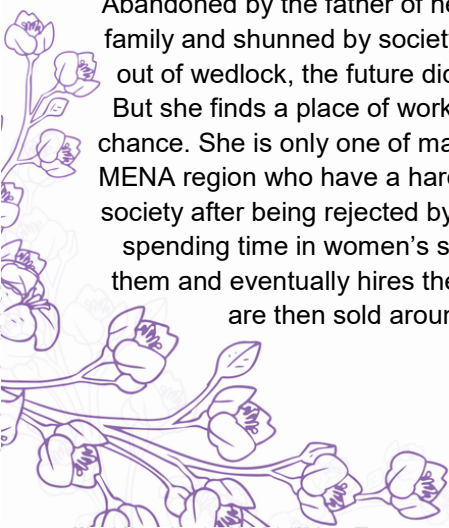
SeeMe employs women, often single mothers, who have suffered violence and were ostracized from their communities. Through training SeeMe women learn the craft of jewellery making following ancient Tunisian techniques.

Therefore, while fostering their country's traditions they also secure a workplace for themselves and a future for their families. Sparking a revolution in both the fashion and the fair trade worlds, SeeMe has successfully combined the two and made a product that feels good on the body and soul.

***“ SeeMe hearts are made by women,
for women ”***

& story of one of their artisans

Abandoned by the father of her child, rejected by her family and shunned by society for simply giving birth out of wedlock, the future didn't look bright for her. But she finds a place of work, where she is given a chance. She is only one of many single women in the MENA region who have a hard time reintegrating into society after being rejected by their communities and spending time in women's shelters. SeeMe trains them and eventually hires them to forge hearts that are then sold around the world.





Mifuko is a Finnish design company producing handicrafts such as baskets, jewellery and bags.

It was founded by two female designers - Minna Impiö and Mari Martikainen and so it stands with one foot on the streets of Helsinki, and the other firmly on the red soil of rural Kenya. „Our colorful Kiondo baskets combine contemporary Finnish design with traditional Kenyan handicraft techniques. The word mifuko means pocket in Swahili. We make sure that everyone gets something in their pocket - our baskets and wooden birds bring joy and happiness to both their makers in Kenya and their users around the globe.“

www.mifuko.fi



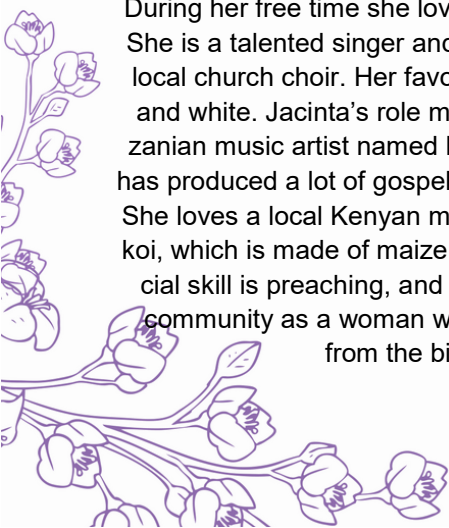
Kiondo baskets are a Kenyan tradition, and the knowledge is passed on from one generation to another. A skilled pair of hands and materials are all the artisans need to be part of Mifuko.

As Mifuko employs women in rural communities, young women have been able to move back from cities to their home villages and work as artisans together with their mothers and sisters.



& Jacinta's story

Jacinta is 40 years old and she has four children. During her free time she loves reading the Bible. She is a talented singer and loves singing in her local church choir. Her favorite colors are black and white. Jacinta's role model in life is a Tanzanian music artist named Rose Muhando, who has produced a lot of gospel songs in East Africa. She loves a local Kenyan meal known as Muthokoi, which is made of maize and beans. Her special skill is preaching, and she is known in her community as a woman who loves preaching from the bible.





DECE is a social-enterprise working alongside the poor in Western Romania. „We pride ourselves on creating beautiful hats and leather accessories. All our products are hand-made by skilled Roma men and women who we know to be living in truly difficult circumstances.

Through DECE we strive to give our artisans the opportunity to take control of their future and lay foundations on which they can begin to build their lives in a secure and sustainable way. Every DECE product sold supports a culture of hope: where parents can provide food, medication and housing for their families; where children can get an education; where people have the freedom to become who they want to be.“

www.dececlothing.com



„DECE began in 2009 with one woman, one ball of wool and one crochet hook. Our aim was to empower and equip her to support her family, without having to sacrifice time at home with her children. We currently employ a group of amazing women, working both in our central textile hub and from home.

In a culture where women are expected to fill traditional roles, these strong women adeptly juggle work and home responsibilities and are beautiful examples to their sons and daughters. Seeing their parents work has given new vision to the children in this community, with many now aspiring to complete their education, learn skills and step into employment.“



& Anca's and Florica's stories

„Anca and Florica work in our textile hub making sewn and crocheted hats and accessories.

Florica has been working with DECE since we began whilst raising her two daughters. She is proud to work and be able to support her family and enjoys the friendships she has built with her colleagues.

She dreams that her daughters would go to high school, complete their education and grow to be healthy and happy.

Anca is a busy mother to four young boys and who joined the DECE team 2 years ago. She loves to spend time dancing with her children. She says that the best thing about working with us is being able to build a better life for her family. She has hope for her children's futures.“





Esgii is a one-woman business based in Netherlands. Annelies Hendriks collaborates with four small different producers from Mongolia. Esgii has a collection of hand-made felt products, all of them made from 100 % natural wool. Esgii's sustainably produced fashion articles and accessories for in-home use, combine the beauty of modern-day design with the timeless quality of traditional Mongolian felt- and embroidery techniques. Esgii aims to help unemployed women and single mothers with small children at home, providing them work and good income. They talk with them about their lives and put emphasis on the fact that people feel free at work.

www.esgii.nl



„In the beginning, we teach the women the basics of felting and tailoring and various hand stitching methods - before they are able to help with the production of our slippers. It is common that we employ older workers and their whole family, like that they enjoy to work together and are happy because they get paid for it enough and the food is provided by us also.

Compared to the fact that more than one third of the population in Mongolia lives under the poverty line and has a shortage of food and other basic necessities, I can say that thanks to the work, our producers can have a better life.“

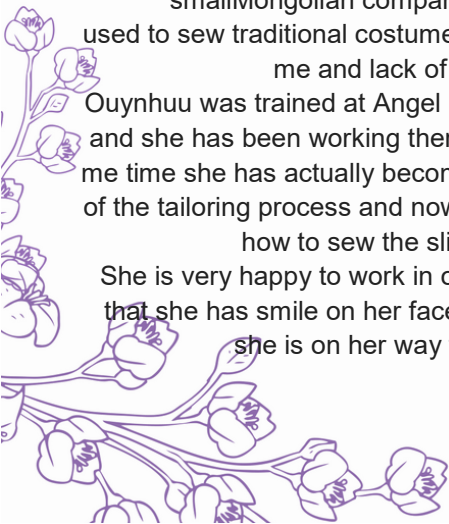
“ Our production is good for people, animals and environment ”

& Ouynhuu's story

„Ouynhuu, 56 years old woman working for small Mongolian company Angel Felting, used to sew traditional costume at home with low income and lack of orders.

Ouynhuu was trained at Angel Felting in October 2013 and she has been working there since then. After some time she has actually become a teacher and leader of the tailoring process and now she is teaching others how to sew the slipper sole.

She is very happy to work in our team and she says that she has smile on her face every morning when she is on her way to her job!“



dassie

Artisan

Dassie Artisan is a company from UK which is based on honesty, integrity and great design that inspires others to live well. They aim to fight poverty through trade in developing countries.

They offer unique, design-led homeware with a beautiful history behind, fairly produced in Vietnam, Thailand, India and South Africa by workers who were previously disadvantaged, small family businesses or homeworkers from mountain villages.

www.dassieartisan.com



„We are proud of the platform we have created for the artisans that we support and so are committed to continuing to grow organically whilst remaining socially and environmentally responsible. Our mission is to work directly with artisans in developing countries to produce unique, design-led homeware. We seek to empower our artisans to use their traditional skills and techniques to reach a broader market and create better lives for themselves and their communities. Our aim is to celebrate individuality and acknowledge our responsibility to inspire and educate our customers to make conscious and honest buying decisions.“

& Hanh Dung's story

Hanh Dung works with her husband in a factory in Vietnam run by her sister. They are specialized in producing hand-weaved seagrass baskets. Her day-to-day work involves both weaving the baskets and checking that the sequins are adequately attached.

The whole team take pride in their work and put a huge emphasis on quality – that's the beauty of working with a family business.

Aside from work, she likes nothing more than to relax and cook for her family - her speciality is fried chicken! She loves listening to music, singing and dancing with her friends and family.



„Traidcraft Exchange brings people together to fight injustice in trade. We believe in the power of trade to change lives and create lasting solutions to poverty. But we think the way the majority of trade happens in the world today is fundamentally flawed, making rich people richer and exploiting people living in poverty. We work to change this, through advocacy in the UK and through projects in South Asia and Africa which help people living in poverty get a fairer share of the benefits of trade. We are the partner charity of Traidcraft, the fair trade company.“

www.traidcraft.org.uk

Photo: Traidcraft Exchange

“We work with women by bringing them together in groups and helping them to get training, save money and work together to increase their voice and power within the supply chain.”

Photo: Traidcraft Exchange

& Naw Sar Ka 's story

„Naw Sar Ka lives in the village of Moe Goke in Myanmar. She has no land for farming, other than a small area around the house. Working with local partners, Traidcraft Exchange set up a group specifically for landless people like Naw Sar Ka.

Women from landless households are the poorest in this area, and so we ensured that they formed the majority on each group. The group had training, including how to create and manage a democratic association, book-keeping and business skills, as well as practical farming techniques such as composting, horticulture, pig-rearing and how to manage a rice bank. Following this training, Naw Sar Ka has been able to develop a vegetable garden and is now rearing pigs. ‘Now I can help feed my family as well as have my own money to contribute to the household expenses,’ she says.“

Photo: Traidcraft Exchange



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