

Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco (CTTC)

| Founded 1996 | Founded by Nilda Callañaupa | Cusco, Peru | www.textilescusco.org/eng |

The Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco was established in 1996 by Nilda Callañaupa as an organization dedicated to preserving the textile traditions of the Cusco region of the Andes. The Center works with Quechua weavers and their families and has formed partnerships with nine communities, working with over 350 adult weavers and 250 children in all. Overall, the Center aims to improve the quality of life in the communities it works with by promoting skills-building and community development.

The Center was formed as a response to the disappearing knowledge of the 2,000-year-old weaving traditions, as older members of the communities were often the only ones who had the weaving skills; in the communities it is partnered with, the Center encourages the elders to impart their knowledge and skills on children and teenagers so that the weaving traditions can be sustained.

In each community it works with, the CTTC aims to expand the market in which the weavers can sell their products and promote commercialization of the textiles to the general public so that weavers can have a sustained income with which to support their families. A weaving shelter is created in each community in order to establish a communal space for the residents to make textiles and to share their weaving skills. In Andean tradition, textiles are a form of communication – the symbols and figures used in weavings represent the place of origin, the creator of the textile, and the Andean world. As the styles and designs vary between different communities, the Center aims to preserve these different traditions through research, documentation and, of course, education. The Center hosts dyeing workshops to promote the use of natural dyes rather than synthetic, industrial dyes. Traditionally, natural dyes are made from insects, plants and minerals that can be found in the region – for example, the Cochineal insect can be used for red dyes, Indigo plants can be used for blues and Qolle flowers are used for yellow.

SEWA Trade Facilitation Center

| Founded 2003 | Located in India | <http://www.sewatfc.org> |



and shelter.

The SEWA Trade Facilitation Center is a division of the Self Employed Women's Association, a trade union in India comprised of women who provide their own income through their own labor or small businesses. Because these women are part of the unorganized sector – which 93% of the female labor force in India is part of – they don't receive regular salaries or welfare benefits. Through its services, SEWA helps its members to become self-reliant and to achieve full employment, meaning that they have a regular income, job security, food security, and social security – healthcare, child care

Founded in 2003, the STFC is the commercial arm of SEWA and connects the artisan producers with the global market. It works with about 15,000 female embroiderers in 220 villages who produce different types of embroidery, making products such as apparel, handbags and home decorations. The artisans working at the village level produce the hand-crafted embroidered products which are then sent to the STFC's facility center in Ahmedabad to provide the finishing touches and for packing and distribution. STFC has also established a fashion label, Hansiba; the artisans themselves are the shareholders as well as suppliers and 65% of all sales go directly to them. Another center is located in Radhanpur and is a facility where the artisans stitch, learn about design and create the products for Hansiba.



Organizacion Cheque Oitedie Cooperative

| Founded by Inés Hinojosa | Located in Santa Cruz, Bolivia |

The Cheque Oitedie Cooperative is a group of 45 Bolivian women who are members of the indigenous Ayoreo community. While traditionally nomadic, in the last 30 years the Ayoreo have been forced to adopt permanent homes due to the agricultural development boom in Bolivia, whereby the environment they have traditionally lived in has been transformed into farm fields. The female weavers of Ayoreo community of Puesto Paz found that in their new location, the plant they were accustomed to weaving with was non-existent. Inés Hinojosa, the most prominent ethno-botanist, began working with those weavers to help them cultivate a similar plant so that they could continue their weaving traditions. Today, the women are able to cultivate and harvest the plant themselves and hand-weave their traditional bags. They also market and sell their bags themselves, exporting them to foreign countries and attending international crafts fairs; additionally, they export seeds to other Ayoreo communities so that those communities can grow the fibers needed for weaving. About 40% of the income of the Puesto Paz community is now generated by this cooperative of female weavers. Weaving has provided the community with a way to preserve their traditions despite the changes the Puesto Paz people have dealt with.



Learn more: <http://whitleyaward.org/winners/indigenous-ayoreo-community-puesto-paz-bolivia/>

Tuareg Jewelry

| Founded by Mohamed Koumama | Located in Niger | www.tuaregjewelry.com |

Tuareg Jewelry sells the work of the Koumama family of Niger, who are members of the semi-nomadic Tuareg people. Because of the blue turbans they wear, the Tuareg are known as the “Blue Men of the Desert.” The Koumama family has passed down a tradition of making sterling silver jewelry for over 25 generations and has established a reputation as master jewelry manufacturers. The late Mohamed Koumama first gained attention for his jewelry work in 1960, and today his relatives continue the tradition and expanded the family jewelry business. Ehadji Koumama, Mohamed’s son, first began travelling internationally with the jewelry in 1993, hoping to establish the business abroad, and since then he has continued to travel around the world selling the family’s jewelry and bringing the profits back to his home in Niger.



The jewelry itself is made using simple hand tools and in a central compound where the Koumama men work in groups of up to fifteen. The younger Koumama men must serve apprenticeships under the older members until their skills are developed enough for them to produce their own pieces for sale. The geometric motifs of the jewelry each have special significance – for example, mothers traditionally give their daughters triangular pieces and men give diamond shapes to their wives.

Kandahar Treasure

| Founded 2003 | Founded by Rangina Hamidi | Located in Kandahar, Afghanistan |
www.kandahartreasure.com

Kandahar Treasure supports the empowerment of women in Afghanistan by employing female artisans to produce embroidered clothing, home décor and accessories. This style of embroidered textiles, called Khamak, is from the Kandahar region in the southern part of Afghanistan, and has been a tradition passed down among women working in their homes for centuries. Kandahar Treasure was founded by Rangina Hamidi, a native of Afghanistan who left in 1981 and grew up in the United States. She founded the organization upon returning to Afghanistan in 2003; in the last decade it has expanded from employing just 25 artisans to over 400.

Kandahar Treasure helps elevate the value of women in their homes and their independence by providing them with a steady income to support themselves and their families. In addition to economic independence, the organization provides women with information on educational opportunities or social events available to them. As 95% of the women in Kandahar are illiterate, and many are confined to their homes, Kandahar Treasures provides literary services to the women inside their own homes to help them become more self-sufficient. It also teaches women about hygiene and helps them find medical care when they have serious health issues, and helps the women plan and manage their income.



Uganda Crafts 2000 Limited

| Founded 1983, incorporated 2000 | Founded by Marilyn Dodge & Betty Kinene |
| Located in Kampala, Uganda | | www.ugandacrafts2000ltd.org |

Uganda Crafts 2000 Limited sells fair trade crafts from Uganda around the world. Before becoming incorporated as a private sector company in 2000, it operated as a non-governmental organization known as Uganda Crafts. It was founded in 1983 by UNICEF worker Marilyn Dodge and Betty Kinene, a widowed shopkeeper in a hotel in Kampala. When she was forced to close her shop by a man who wanted her job, Betty was unemployed and disabled with several children to care for. Together Betty and Marilyn opened a shop in Uganda selling crafts made by local artisans, and in 1988 began exporting their products to countries such as Canada, Denmark and England.



Uganda Crafts helps provide income to people who need it most by purchasing products to buy from underprivileged women, single mothers, widows and disabled people. It works with both rural and urban women, and organizes them into production groups based on the crafts they manufacture. It provides training in handicraft production and aims to improve the quality of Ugandan artisanship overall by promoting uniform standards and creativity in different designs and patterns, while still preserving the local African traditions. Additionally, the group aims for environmental and economic sustainability by encouraging production using local materials. In addition to training its own employees, Uganda Crafts provides training courses on behalf of other organizations.

Gahaya Links

| Founded 2004 | Founded by Janet Nkubana & Joy Ndunguste | Located in Rwanda |
| <http://gahayalinks.com/> |



Gahaya Links is a for-profit handicraft company that empowers Rwandan women by selling their handmade products. It was established after the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, which left the country with many single mothers, widows, wives with imprisoned husbands and orphaned teenage girls. The two sisters who founded the company, Janet Nkubana and Joy Ndunguste, began working with these underprivileged, rural Rwandan women to help them provide an income for themselves. The sisters returned to the city of Kigali after the genocide after living in a Ugandan refugee camp and opened a hotel there. Seeing how many women had been left impoverished and unable to provide for themselves after the genocide, they began selling hand-woven baskets made by local women to guests at the hotel. Eventually Gahaya Links began teaching weaving skills to small groups of women so that they could make high-quality products suitable for the international market. Today Gahaya Links sell the products of over 4,000 rural weavers all across Rwanda, as well as employing 16 full-time staff members. Their products are exported to major stores in the US using fair trade practices.

Part of their mission is to “weave lasting peace;” by promoting the economic empowerment of women they help the country achieve sustainable peace and development. Many of the weavers are single women who are the only providers for their families, but some are part of married couples who are gaining their own economic independence. In 2007, Gahaya Links established the Gahaya Gifted Hands Innovation Center, a place where women meet to learn and enhance their weaving skills so that they can keep the product quality high. The company has won many awards for its socially responsible business practices.

SAHALANDY

| Founded in 2006 | Located in Madagascar | <http://sahalandy.org> |

SAHALANDY is made of seven weaving cooperatives located in the Madagascar mountain town of Sandrandahy. The organization was founded as a way to provide a stable income for the silk weavers and to preserve the cultural heritage of Madagascar. The primary goal of SAHALANDY is to improve the standard of living for each weaver. It emphasizes fairness, equality and professionalism in its practices so that each weaver is provided with the ability to be financially self-sufficient. The benefits of selling the silk scarves that SAHALANDY members produce are widespread, as the organization states that each member has at least 10 people who are being supported through scarf sales. Thus, SAHALANDY provides an important way for weavers, especially women, to provide for their family members. SAHALANDY also sustains the traditions of Malagasy culture by encouraging the continuation of the entire weaving process – which includes gathering and preparing silk cocoons, then spinning and weaving the silk. It is tradition for young girls to be taught the weaving process by their older family members.



The products that the weavers of SAHALANDY weave are complex and unique; they weave using both cotton and silk and use only natural dyes. One of the products that they produce is the Lamba Landys, a silk cloth that is used in many traditional ways in Madagascar. As one Malagasy proverb states, “This is the lamba. When one is angry it is wrapped around the waist to free one’s hands to fight, when one sleeps it serves as a blanket, when one goes out it is worn as clothing, when one dies it becomes a shroud.”

UNRWA Sulafa Embroidery Center, Gaza

|Founded 1950| Located in Gaza |



Through the Sulafa Embroidery Center in Gaza Strip, voices of Palestinian women are being heard. First started by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in 1950, the center provides hundreds of refugee women with income-generating embroidery work. Sulafa Embroidery Project aims to provide income for the Strip's refugee women and to ensure that the traditional art form of embroidery is kept alive.

The center is organized into nine community centers across the Gaza Strip where women are given embroidery work and are compensated with an average of \$40 per month. This is a significant number in a region where many people live below the poverty line of \$2 per month and the unemployment rate is 45%. Because many men are unemployed, often this income from embroidery is the only means for supporting the family.

The Sulafa Embroidery Center aims to revive and sustain cultural traditions by using the patterns of traditional Palestinian dresses and training young women to embroider.

Sulafa's shawls, with their elegant style and striking geometric patterns, have been popular for many years. Many of Sulafa's customers are local women who are interested in traditional dresses for special occasions.

Embroidery plays a central role in the lives of many women, by not only providing an income, but an opportunity to connect to other women and to honor their Palestinian identity.