



Image: Design by Lalessa: supporting communities in Kenya

ETHICAL FASHION FORUM



# OUR IMPACT 2009

OPENING DOORS:  
CHANGING LIVES

The ETHICAL FASHION FORUM (EFF) is the industry body for ethical fashion. A not for profit organisation, the EFF works with the industry and consumers to **reduce poverty, create sustainable livelihoods** and **reduce the impact of the industry on the environment**.

The fashion industry remains one of the most exploitative in the world, both to people and the environment. Inhuman working conditions, poverty wages and shocking environmental damage are widespread.

At the same time, leading fashion designers, entrepreneurs and established businesses are doing groundbreaking work, changing the lives of the people behind their products and reducing environmental impact through sustainable practices.

The EFF works to support and grow this movement, opening doors for fair trade and ethical initiatives at the heart of the industry and changing lives for thousands of people behind fashion products,

**This document sets out some of the impacts of our work and projects during 2009.**

# OPENING DOORS: GLOBAL SOURCING MARKETPLACE

The EFF aims to open doors to mainstream markets for fair trade and ethical suppliers which are supporting communities and changing lives. In November 2009, the Ethical Fashion Forum launched the **FIRST EVER GLOBAL ETHICAL SOURCING MARKETPLACE FOR FASHION**, which:

- Was the culmination of **7 monthly ethical sourcing marketplaces** held in London throughout 2009, attracting a total of over 500 fashion sector professionals
- Showcased **32 fair trade and ethical suppliers and manufacturers** from all over the world, to the professional fashion sector in London
- Attracted just under **300 fashion sector professionals**, including representatives of brands, designers, high street retailers, student and graduate entrepreneurs.
- **Gave all exhibitors online profiles and promotion** through press including Drapers, the UK's fashion industry magazine

***“We were thrilled with the connections made and the potential for new work as a result...40 good new contacts made”***  
Jacobs Well, fair trade production facility changing lives in India

***“We had so much interest ..from the largest retailers to students and the media”*** Mantis World, a network of ethical production units supporting communities in East Africa

Image: Organic cotton dress by ethical brand Edun Live



GLOBAL  
SOURCING  
MARKETPLACE

MAKING PRODUCING  
SUSTAINABLE FASHION  
COLLECTIONS EASY



# OPENING DOORS: INTERNATIONAL TRADE SHOWS

The EFF aims to **create windows of opportunity** for fashion brands that are pioneering in sustainable practices at the heart of the fashion industry.

- During 2009, the Ethical Fashion Forum has built **formal partnerships with international trade shows in LONDON, PARIS, AND HONG KONG**
- This has allowed EFF to **SHOWCASE PIONEERING ETHICAL FASHION BRANDS AT THE HEART OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY** : 14 exemplary fashion brands supported to date
- **African ethical fashion brands LALESSO AND MIA SECURED 10 AND 16 ORDERS** respectively at Pure, the UK's largest womenswear show, in August 2009

***“This has been an amazing projection of progress, Pure has opened up a whole world of buyers I would never have met otherwise”*** Mia Nisbet, MIA: Recycling and changing lives in Malawi

***“The opportunity that the competition provides is an amazing advantage in terms of business growth by providing free trade marketing for the next season...”*** Olivia Kennaway, Lalessa: supporting communities in Kenya

Image: MIA, Made in Malawi , 2009



# CHANGING LIVES

The Ethical Fashion Forum **aims to create sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty**. Addressing the environmental impact of the industry is also fundamental to achieving this goal. Towards this goal, the EFF looks to initiate, support and promote fashion initiatives that are life changing for the most vulnerable members of society.

- During 2009, the EFF **BUILT ON ITS WORK WITH AFRICA** to support and promote African based fair trade and ethical suppliers through network, Global Sourcing Marketplace and INNOVATION project
- INNOVATION winners MIA , Lalesso, and SIKA have been able to increase sustainable employment in Africa, with MIA **TAILORS IN MALAWI EARNING 8 TIMES THE NATIONAL AVERAGE**
- Connections built by EFF between Topshop , designers , and womens co-operatives in Ghana through the Tabeisa Design4Life Ghana competition continue to **CREATE SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT IN GHANA** and increase its profile as a supplier to the fashion industry
- Through its engagement with fashion industry professionals and decision makers, the EFF has played a fundamental and influential role in decision making at policy level within many leading fashion companies, leading to **DECISIONS AND POLICIES WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO CHANGE LIVES FOR THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE** in fashion industry supply chains.

Image; Design by MIA, changing lives in Malawi



# NETWORK BUILDING AND COLLABORATION

The Ethical Fashion Forum (EFF) aims to create a collaborative movement in the fashion sector which will **reduce poverty, create sustainable livelihoods and reduce the environmental impact of the industry.**

During 2009 , towards this goal the EFF has:

- **BROUGHT TOGETHER 12 INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS** to collaborate towards change, through the Fashion + project
- **BUILT FORMAL PARTNERSHIPS** with the World Fair Trade Organisation, Fair Trade Foundation, Organic Exchange , Made By and Estethica (London Fashion Week) to work towards common goals on a range of projects
- **LAUNCHED THE ETHICAL FASHION NETWORK**, an online platform which has grown to include more than 2000 members, from designers to fair trade suppliers, factories, students and press in more than 70 countries in less than a year.

*“A great forum for connecting ...we have shared expertise, received contacts and are doing business as a result.”* Prama Bhardwaj, Managing Director, Mantis World. Ethical Manufacturer in Tanzania, in reference to the Ethical Fashion Network

Image: Design by SIKA, supporting communities in Ghana



# CHANGING PERCEPTIONS: INNOVATION COMPETITION

The EFF aims to change perceptions about ethical fashion and promote inspirational examples of great fashion products that change lives. In 2009 the EFF expanded the profile of its INNOVATION awards, launching an international competition, promoting **inspirational new talent in fashion design and sustainability**.

- Applications were received from **16 COUNTRIES IN EVERY CONTINENT IN THE WORLD**
- **SUPER MODEL ERIN O CONNOR AND TOP DESIGNER ROLAND MOURET** were secured as high profile project ambassadors
- The project attracted **BUYERS** and staff from ASOS, Browns Focus, Vivienne Westwood, Liberty, Urban Outfitters, Ted Baker, Cath Kidson, Ascension, Equa, Tesco and many more. **All designers supported succeeded with orders**
- **PRESS** coverage included: The Observer, Telegraph and Guardian, Vogue.com, Italian Marie Claire and Vogue Japan, Fashion Monitor, and the Daily Mail (circulation 2,228,897)

***“VOGUE.COM is committed to supporting the project and its goals and the team is proud to be involved.”*** Dolly Jones , Editor, Vogue.com

Image: Design by Rani Jones, INNOVATION Award winners



# CHANGING PERCEPTIONS: INSPIRING PROFESSIONALS

The EFF aims to inspire, motivate and support fashion professionals and decision makers to source and work in a way that creates sustainable livelihoods, reduces poverty and minimises impact on the environment.

- In 2009, The EFF launched a series of monthly seminars and master classes entitled **SPOTLIGHT ON SOURCING: HOW FASHION CAN CHANGE LIVES**. The series included topics from sustainable manufacture, to working with community & fairtrade suppliers, to certification and standards.
- During 2009, **OVER 1000 FASHION INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS** attended 17 seminars, networking events and masterclasses
- **PARTNERSHIPS WITH TRADE SHOWS** allowed the EFF to deliver training as part of the official seminar programme at Pure (the UK's largest womens wear trade show) and Interstoff in Hong Kong ( a sourcing hub for the fashion industry)

**"I found this event inspirational - it was both motivational and informative"** Feedback from Spotlight on Sourcing participant, London

Image : Design by SIKA, supporting communities in Ghana



# CHANGING PERCEPTIONS: MARKET IMPACT

The RE: Fashion Awards launched by EFF in partnership with Anti Apathy and Futerra in November 2008 represented the highest profile ethical fashion event held to date, receiving widespread press coverage, broad industry, press and celebrity attendance. This event along with all the other work of the Ethical Fashion Forum has contributed to raised awareness and market growth.

## **MINTEL REPORT, ETHICAL CLOTHING, FEB 09:**

- Mintel estimates **the market for ethical clothing has more than quadrupled** over the last four to five years to reach around £175 million
- The **widening availability** of ethical fashion is central to this growth
- 61% of women feel “It is important that a company acts ethically”
- The involvement of celebrity names is adding more than a touch of glam...Just recently for instance, contributors at the RE:Fashion Awards included Vivienne Westwood, Zandra Rhodes, Daisy Lowe and others.
- Ethical clothing has now been **transformed by the presence of new and exciting designers** taking it right up into the realms of high fashion and expanding into all clothing sectors

Image: Leah Weller wearing a design by Preen, made from Kikoy fabrics from Kenya, on the catwalk at the RE:Fashion Awards



# SUPPORT THE ETHICAL FASHION FORUM

Your donations and gifts are a crucial support to the work of the Ethical Fashion Forum.

From as little as £5, you can make a donation or buy someone a fashion gift that will change lives. Please visit the donations page on our website on the link below to make a donation, or send a cheque to the address below.

<http://www.ethicalfashionforum.com/Buy-a-gift-or-donate>

## **BECOME A FRIEND OF THE ETHICAL FASHION FORUM:**

Become a Friend of the Ethical Fashion Forum by donating a gift of £500 or above. This represents a very important contribution to the work of the EFF, supporting a widescale shift towards sustainability in the fashion sector. As a Friend of the EFF you will be listed in our annual report, receive an invitation to an annual Friends of the EFF event and get VIP access to other EFF events. Email Amisha for further details at [amisha@ethicalfashionforum.com](mailto:amisha@ethicalfashionforum.com), visit our donate page or send a cheque to the address below.

## **ETHICAL FASHION FORUM: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR FASHION**

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Image: children in a Kenyan slum where a series of fashion initiatives are creating sustainable employment