



OUR GLOBAL PROGRAMS

Ten Thousand Villages empowers individuals to lift themselves out of poverty by investing in entrepreneurial endeavors in developing countries and providing a marketplace for their handicrafts in North America.



Empowering Marginalized Communities



Where you live can determine your access to education, transportation, and jobs. For geographically and socially marginalized people, the fair trade jobs created by our purchases can be transformational.

What we do: We build buying relationships in places excluded from the global economy: 100% of the artisans we work with live in marginalized communities.

Empowering Women & Girls



Research demonstrates that when women are able to earn incomes, their households and communities flourish. When women gain financial independence, their daughters are more likely to attend school, breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

What we do: More than 60% of our job creation efforts target women.

Artisan Development



Each artisan workshop needs a different kind of support, from skills training that advances their work to new technology that improves their material processing.

What we do: We make small investments that can support great leaps forward – improving handmade crafts, increasing incomes and creating safer working conditions – collaborating with partners like Mennonite Central Committee.

Product Design Collaboration



By working with artisan groups over time, we learn about their strengths and challenges, and we convey what our customers want.

What we do: We offer market and trend research and collaborate to develop new handmade crafts that utilize locally available materials and the unique skills of our artisan partners.

Fair Pricing



Fair pricing protects the dignity of artisans, respects their skills and provides for a sufficient quality of life.

What we do: Our purchases from artisan groups start with a conversation. Together we agree on a price that provides fair wages for artisans to obtain clean water, food, shelter and medical care. Pricing also accounts for revenue to help their workshops grow and thrive.



“HELP A WOMAN EARN HER OWN INCOME, AND SHE WILL NEVER BE HELD DOWN AGAIN.”

IRANI SEN, ARTISAN PARTNER IN INDIA

Microfinance



In communities where banking services are scarce and interest rates are prohibitively high, debt is one of the most common ways people fall into an inescapable cycle of poverty, bonded labor, or even slavery.

What we do: To reduce the vulnerability of artisans and their families, we offer interest-free advances when placing an order, giving artisans the cash needed to do their work.

Long Term Buying Relationships



Consistent incomes help families maintain regular school attendance for children, obtain preventive healthcare, start savings and achieve financial security.

What we do: We invest in people and organizations so they are able to grow and improve over time. Our average buying relationship with an artisan group is more than 10 years.

Creating Access to Markets & Establishing a Marketplace



From urban slums to rural villages, we work through distance, language and technology barriers to collaborate with artisan groups, developing inventive products that utilize time-honored skills.

What we do: We connect artisans to markets they could not access alone and customers who appreciate the beauty of their handmade crafts.

Emergency & Disaster Relief



When natural disasters devastate high poverty communities, we work with partners like Mennonite Central Committee to provide relief funds, sending help when and where it's needed most.

What we do: When artisans are ready to return to work, we ensure they receive product orders, because the ability to return to routine can accelerate financial and emotional recovery.

Eco-Conscious Commitment



The earth's limited resources need to be kept in balance through good stewardship.

What we do: We emphasize the use of recycled and renewable natural materials in our products. We finance improvements in energy efficiency and safe processing of dyes at artisan workshops. We consolidate sea shipments in order to reduce our carbon footprint.



Education & Community Outreach



As a pioneer of the fair trade movement, we believe that sustainable incomes can help to end poverty. We work to educate consumers about the true power of their purchases.

What we do: Connecting our communities with artisans through story-telling and face-to-face encounters widens perspectives and empowers us all.