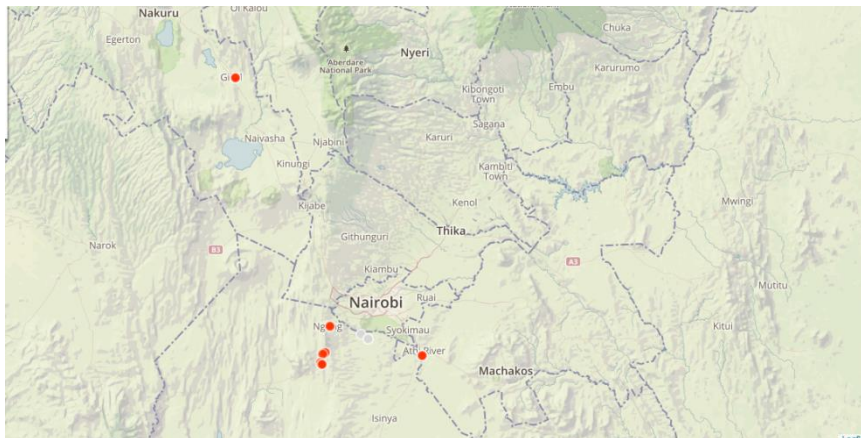


ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative Impact Assessment

Mimco Spring/Summer 2016 Order #2, Kenya: March – May 2016

Mimco order summary

In partnership with the International Trade Centre’s (ITC) Ethical Fashion Initiative (EFI) and Artisan.Fashion, Mimco produced two bag styles for their second Spring/Summer 2016 collection with artisans in Kenya. A total of 1230 units with 3690 components were produced by 142 artisans from Artisan.Fashion an enterprise that fosters a positive social impact for artisans through income generation and market access. Three textile techniques were used for the order, including screen printing, machine embroidery and beadwork – a traditional technique of the Maasai and Sambura tribes of East Africa.



Location of rural artisan communities producing beadwork for the Mimco order.

The Mimco order was monitored using the RISE framework – an innovative scheme developed by ITC’s EFI allowing clear and objective monitoring through data analysis. Benefits of the order were recognised in terms of income and saving, education, health and nutrition. The participants received a decent wage and worked as a community to develop their skills. Many participants were also able to send their children to school and access healthcare during and following production. As a result, the order strengthened local enterprises and improved the standards of living for those involved and their families.

Order characteristics

The Mimco Spring/Summer 2016 collection consisted of two styles, totalling 1230 units with 3690 components produced by 142 artisans in Kenya.

- 84% of the participants in the order were women.
- 87.64% of the artisans were under 40 years old.
- 6% of participants had no dependents, 45% had one to three dependents and 49% of artisans had more than four dependents.



MIMCO ORDER	
Moon & Back Tote	Moon & Back Pouch
430 units	800 units
	

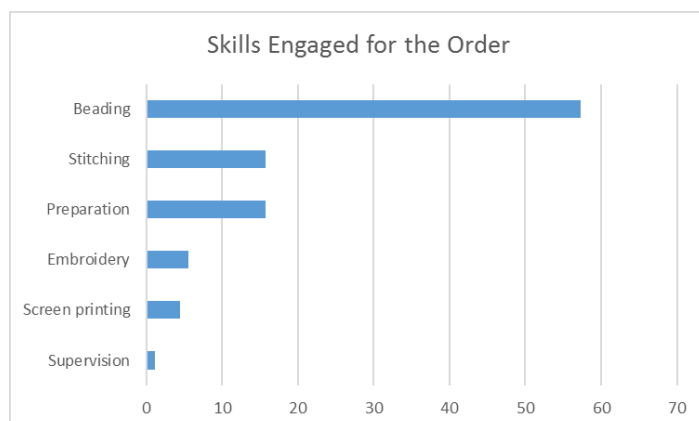
Skills and materials

- **Manual screen printing:** This technique uses a woven mesh to support a stencil through which ink is pressed onto canvas.
- **Machine embroidery:** Stitching skill to create an embossed relief design on the fabric often used in the tailoring and dress-making trade.
- **Beading:** Beadwork is a traditional activity of the Maasai and Sambura ethnic communities of Rift Valley in East Africa, passed on through generations. These tribes use beadwork for functional and commercial activities, as well as for their elegant traditional beaded jewellery that is worn as regalia during ceremonies.

Production

Of the 142 artisans involved with the order, the following numbers were involved in each skilful stage:

- **Beading:** 57%
- **Preparation:** 16%
- **Stitching:** 16%
- **Embroidery:** 6%
- **Screen printing:** 4%
- **Supervision:** 1%





Communities

Besides beadwork, the skills used during the Mimco Spring-Summer 2016 order were acquired either through training or apprenticeship. The training on beadwork offered during the order enabled artisans to improve their beading techniques.


Income and saving

The artisans received different incomes depending on the skills and tasks performed and the number of days worked. Participating artisans from Artisan.Fashion were salary based, while those from the community groups were paid on a piece rate.

 <p>INCOME</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a result of the order, artisan income increased between 1.2 – 2.5 times. - 63% of participants stated their income was higher than what they would have otherwise earned from the domestic market.
 <p>SAVING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 42% of participants were able to save money from the income received through the order. - 33% of participants were able to invest their earnings in education, housing and small business.

Access to education



Given the high number of female artisans, income was primarily invested into education for their children. This is consistent with the aims of EFI and Artisan.Fashion, both promoting income-generating activities and empowerment for women.

 <p>EDUCATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 79.8% of participants used their salary to contribute towards paying school fees during the order
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Health and nutrition

Focus group discussions revealed that a regular income enabled artisans to maintain their health, due to a regular meal and improved medical care access.

 <p>HEALTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 38.2% of participants experienced sickness in their household. Of these participants, 13% were able to receive treatment in private medical facilities and another 25% in public facilities. - 53% of participants said they would not have sought the same treatment without the income from the order, while 27% would still visit the same facilities attributed to distance of the care offered.
 <p>NUTRITION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 46% of participants stated that with their earnings during the order they never skipped a meal - 54% stated that they rarely skipped a meal in the period of the order.

Testimonials

Joan Ndetei, 29

“I am a single mother of one. I worked on the Mimco order as a supervisor for the finishing section which performs the final quality control. The income from the order assisted with school fees for my daughter, new clothes and a regular healthy meal.”



Maria Teteyio, 37

“I am a mother of six. The Mimco order was really important for me in terms of paying school fees for my children. Educating children in my family is not a priority for my husband and so I worked hard to raise tuition fees and meet other needs such as food, school uniform and books. I do not wish to see my children lack education as I do and so Mimco contributed towards fulfilling my wish.”



Regina Wetamo 30

“I am a mother of five. I worked on the beaded circles during the Mimco order. The income from the order assisted me to meet the weekly contribution to the merry-go-round group. I also invested by buying two goats which I sell in December during the Christmas holidays.”



Miriam Mwangangi 26

“I am a single mother of three. I have four years of experience in embroidery. I really loved to work on the Mimco order. In addition to regular income I received good training during the order which has greatly improved my skills. I also learnt how to improve my working condition and to reduce work related stress.”

Conclusion

Mimco’s second Spring/Summer 2016 order majorly contributed to the wellbeing of artisans part of the Kenyan hub, Artisan.Fashion. The order also helped to establish stronger local enterprises organised as self-help groups meeting the artisans’ desire to own businesses however small.

The work in the nearby community workshop led to the development and increase in both human and technical skills. During the production process, the artisans assisted one another to solve issues related to both the order and their daily life, creating an opportunity to deal with pressing social issues. This opportunity created by Mimco’s Spring-Summer 2016 order contributed towards unlocking the artisans’ business opportunities, subsequently helping individuals and artisan families to improve their well-being and living standards.

More about the Ethical Fashion Initiative:

The Ethical Fashion Initiative is a flagship programme of the International Trade Centre, a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. The Ethical Fashion Initiative reduces global poverty by linking micro-producers and artisans to the international supply chain of fashion, facilitating dignified work at a fair wage. By collaborating with social enterprises, the Ethical Fashion Initiative supports local creativity, female employment and empowerment and gender equality. Ultimately, this aims to reduce extreme poverty and increase the export capacities of the region in which it operates.



RISE Framework:

RISE is an innovative scheme to enable sustainable trade, social and environmental responsibility, traceability and impact. Through clear monitoring, RISE measures compliance to ensure the activities lead to a socially and ethically responsible supply chain using systematic data gathering techniques. This allows information about the product, its manufacture, stories of the artisans and the impact of the work on their lives to be shared.

About Artisan.Fashion:

Artisan.Fashion is a Kenyan-based social enterprise connecting Africa's artisans to recognised brands in the global fashion chain, including Vivienne Westwood, Stella McCartney and Karen Walker. Combining their creativity and production capabilities, these artisans produce high-quality products in exchange for a fair wage, fostering a positive social impact for themselves and their families. In its ninth year, Artisan.Fashion has engaged over 1,000 artisans who aim to produce over 100,000 bags and accessories per year.

