

IMPACT ASSESSMENT BANTU WAX SS15, KENYA

The Ethical Fashion Initiative carried out an Impact Assessment during the production of Bantu Wax Spring/Summer 2015 order in Kenya. Impact Assessment enables the Ethical Fashion Initiative to monitor, evaluate and provide feedback on compliance with fair labour standards and the impact the order had on workers and the communities they live in.

CORE FINDINGS

The impact of the Bantu Wax order on the participants was tangible: artisans earned a higher wage with which they could contribute directly to their household and/or save for future use. In addition to increased earnings, the Bantu Wax order provided artisans with the opportunity to improve their skills in order to meet the quality demands of the international fashion market. The Bantu Wax SS15 order was performed using a unique hand-woven naturally dyed fabric produced by a cooperative of weavers in Burkina Faso which is part of the Ethical Fashion Initiative. Because this order involved two African countries in the production value chain, it brought additional value to the products.

GENERAL FEATURE OF THE GROUP

The order was produced between March and April 2015, providing work and income to artisans from poor and marginalised areas.

- The order was produced by 20 artisans.
- The order was produced through a Kenyan Social Enterprise, Ethical Fashion Artisans EPZ (*Export Processing Zone*) Ltd., headquartered in Nairobi.
- The order engaged three skill levels:
 - Skilled artisans – Quality Control, Supervisory and Stitching.
 - Semi-skilled artisans – Cutting.
 - Manual artisans – Preparation, Finishing, Labelling and Packing.
- 74% of the participants in the order were women.
- 42% of the artisans were under 35 years old.

IMPACT: INCOME



- Income was dependent on the skill level engaged, the speed and productivity of artisans in a day.
- The order allowed the income of artisans to increase by 0.7 to 6.4 times.
- 63% of the surveyed artisans said their income was higher than what they would have earned otherwise.

IMPACT: TRAINING RECEIVED



- 100% of artisans received training during the production of the order.
- 32% of artisans were trained in Finishing, 11% in Cutting, 11% in Supervising, 5% in Preparation, 21% in Quality Control and 21% in Stitching.
- 32-36% of artisans gained social skills, such as production planning, teamwork and fundamentals of fair labour.
- 100% of trainees reported they were able to pass on their knowledge to others.

IMPACT: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT



- 21% of women were able to save money from the income received from the order.
- The majority of the participants working on the order were single mothers.

IMPACT: HEALTH AND NUTRITION



- Among the 16% of respondents that experienced sickness in their household, 5% were able to receive treatment in private medical facilities and 11% in public facilities.
- 5% of artisans said that they would not have sought the same treatment without the income from the order.
- 63% of artisans reported that the money from the order enabled them to provide healthier meals for their families.

IMPACT: BANKING AND CAPACITY TO SAVE



- 31% of artisans (21% women) were able to save money from the income received from the order.
- On average artisans were able to save 16% of their earnings during the period of the order.
- 22% of participants (11% women) were able to invest their earnings.

IMPACT: ACCESS TO EDUCATION



- 95% of respondents contributed to all or part of the school fees during the order.

IMPACT: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY





- 100% of artisans re-used or recycled leftovers materials to make other goods for economic gain.
- 84% of those surveyed contributed to reducing environmental degradation by deliberately participating in activities such as collecting garbage, planting trees or draining open sewers.

IMPACT: SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING



- 100% of artisans were satisfied with the number of daily working hours.
- 79% of participants said that the money they earned during the order was enough to cover their needs.
- 42% of respondents were satisfied with the way the money helped them to support their family and dependents.
- 100% of artisans were confident and proud of their work.
- 100% of respondents were satisfied with their work.

ARTISAN TESTIMONIES

Testimonials	
<p>Mary Wacuka</p> 	<p><i>I am a 38 years old single mother of three. I participated in the Bantu Wax SS2015 order as a stitcher. I saved the income from the order for my April holidays. This was to assist to feed my boys who are always at home when the schools close. During school vacations my family budget usually rises by 300 shillings (USD 3.5) per day. I did not have a problem of meeting that budget as I received good income from the Bantu Wax order.</i></p>
<p>Joyce Wairimu</p> 	<p><i>I am 41 years old, and a single mother of two school-going children. During the Bantu Wax order I worked as a general worker in the preparation and finishing section. The income from the order assisted me to have healthy meals and to pay rent. A part of that income I added to my savings and used them to restock my small business.</i></p>
<p>Lucy Mwaura</p> 	<p><i>I am a 38 years old single mother of three. I worked on the Bantu Wax order as a Quality Control person in the preparation and finishing section. The income from the order assisted me to meet my rent and to support my children.</i></p>
<p>Jane Nthenge</p> 	<p><i>I am 41 and a single mother of four. I worked on the Bantu Wax order in the stitching section. In addition to good income I also received very valuable upgrading of my tailoring skills from the training. The order proceeds have also made my family happy and very proud of me as we have enough to feed on despite most of our neighbours experiencing acute shortage of food.</i></p>

CONCLUSION

Bantu Wax ordered **600** units to be produced for their SS15 season. The order was done during the months of March-April 2015, directly providing work and income to 20 artisans from poor and marginalised areas. From the quantitative findings and the qualitative data gathered through interviews, fieldwork and testimonies, it is evident that the collaboration between EFI and Bantu Wax demonstrates an innovative and fruitful partnership which reduces poverty in developing economies.

In addition to income the Bantu Wax SS15 order provided the participating artisans with the opportunity to further develop their skills to meet the quality threshold not just on Bantu Wax items but also for their own local customers. The Bantu Wax SS15 order presented to the world exclusive bags and pouches hand-made from West African fabric and assembled by Kenyan artisans. The findings further show that the Bantu Wax SS15 order also enabled the participants to appreciate the environmentally-friendly usage of recycled fabrics. Most of the leftover fabrics from the order were reused to make other goods, due to the policy that raises environmental awareness of artisans.

In addition to receiving training the artisans also received good income from the order. The findings indicate that using the income from the Bantu Wax order the participating artisans were able to meet most of their pressing needs in the month of April 2015 which included meals, rent, hospital bills as well as making provisions for the education of their children in the following school season.

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 to the international supply chain of fashion. The Ethical Fashion Initiative is not a charity but facilitates dignified work at a fair wage. This is achieved by connecting some of the world's most marginalised artisans in Africa and Haiti with the fashion industry's top talents, for mutual benefit. The Ethical Fashion Initiative also works with upcoming designers in West Africa to promote African creativity and encourage local manufacturing.

In everything it does, the Ethical Fashion Initiative develops local creativity, fosters predominantly female employment and empowerment, promotes gender equality to reduce extreme poverty and increase the export capacities of the regions in which it operate.

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