



**MIMCO**



ARTISAN  
FASHION  
from ethical fashion artisans

**MIMCO**

INDI-GO-GO, July-September, 2017

Impact Assessment

ITC Ethical Fashion Initiative: Artisan Fashion EPZ Ltd

April-August, 2017



This order was monitored using the RISE framework – an innovative scheme developed by the International Trade Centre’s Ethical Fashion Initiative (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, overall strengthening local enterprises and improving the standards of living for those involved and their families.



Ethical  
Fashion  
Initiative

**International Trade Centre’s Ethical Fashion Initiative Impact Assessment**

**MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order summary.**

MIMCO produced 1,285 pouches and bags in Kenya as part of their INDI-GO-GO collection. This order included 1,285 accompanying dust bags.

A total of 33 artisans all from the Artisans Fashion EPZ were involved in producing the order. 67% of the artisans working on the order were women and 97% of the artisans were under the age of 40.

Different skills were required to produce the order were: beading, cutting, preparation, screen printing, tagging, supervision, quality control, packing and cleaning. Nearly all artisans received some form of training to help with the production of the order.

67% of the artisans used the income received to fund the education of their children, dependents or their own.

Style	Photo	Quantity	Groups involved in production
INDI-GO-GO HIP BAG		565	Artisan Fashion EPZ Ltd.
INDI-GO-GO POUCH		720	Artisan Fashion EPZ Ltd.
Dust Bags		1285	Artisan Fashion EPZ Ltd.
<b>Total</b>		<b>2570</b>	

### Community groups participated in the order

Group	Main skills used in the order	# of the participants in the order	# of women	Trainings received
Artisan Fashion EPZ-LTD	Preparation, cutting, binding, stitching, sewing, final quality control, packing	33	23	None
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	

### Map of communities involved / production location



### Challenges

- ❖ The MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order was received when the country was recovering from a severe drought and water scarcity. The period was notable by an acute shortage of supplies such as maize, a staple food in Kenya. Lack of water also led to outbreak of cholera which by July 2017 had claimed more than four lives. Due to the epidemic it was a major concern for many of the artisans working on the order, although no case of shortage of food or death was reported from them. It was evident that with the stable income the artisans were able to stay in good health.
- ❖ Kenya was gearing up for the elections to be held on the second week of August 2017. Campaigns were rife at the time of completing the order. This heightened ethnic tension among artisans. Work was therefore an important uniting factor among artisans of different tribal backgrounds.

## Income, saving and investment



The workers received a fair and decent wage throughout the order. Many of the artisans were able to **save and invest their earnings into education, health, housing and various other commodities**, increasing their opportunities and contributing towards poverty alleviation.



- ❖ 9% of participants stated their income was higher than what they would have otherwise earned from the domestic market.



- ❖ 27% of the artisans were able to save however due to high cost of living none were able to invest their income.

- ❖ 67% of workers were able to pay all or most of the tuition fees for children.

## Skill development



To complete the order, the artisans improved and expanded their **skillsets** and received training. This contributed to their **income-generating prospects**.

- ❖ 67% of artisans received training and learnt new skills to complete the MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order.



## Health and nutrition



Receiving a regular income enabled artisans to **maintain their health** due to a **regular meal and improved medical care access**, subsequently enhancing their **quality of life**.



- ❖ 100% of participants were able to provide a regular and healthy meal for their household. 85% of workers stated that they never or rarely skipped a meal, while 6% sometimes or often skipped meals due to inadequacy of food supplies.

- ❖ 9% of the participants experienced sickness during the order.

- ❖ 100% of the artisans who experienced sickness said they would not have sought the same medical treatment without the income received from the order.

## Social well-being



For most artisans, working on the order provided them with a sense of **social well-being** and improved their **life satisfaction**. Not only did the artisans work together to complete the order, but they **worked as a community** to discuss their **daily needs** and **solve pressing social issues**. This **empowered women** and **improved development**, consistent with the aims of EFI.



- ❖ 100% of artisans said they felt more confident in their daily tasks and activities as a result of the order.

- ❖ 100% of artisans felt proud of the work they had produced.

- ❖ 100% of artisans were able to provide for their immediate families with the income from the order.

- ❖ The MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order had an overall satisfaction rate of 100%.

## Meet the artisans

**Martha Kimani, 40 years old**



*I am a mother of two boys and one girl. During MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order both of my boys were sick and in need of better medical attention. Even though I had not yet received the income, I was confident to borrow money which I used to pay their hospital bills.*

**Mary Joseph, 35 years old**



*I am a foster mother of one. I worked on MIMCO INDI-GO-GO as a stitcher. I used the tie and dyed leather imported from Ethiopia in construction of the bags. Given that the material was not locally sourced I strived to make quality perfect bags. I gained more experience working on the order.*

**Angeline Kalondu, 38 years old**



*I am a mother of two. I worked on MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order as a beader. The order came at a time my family was experiencing some economic challenges. I used the income from the order to buy enough of food stuff in preparation for scarcity usually experienced during elections (early August 2017)*

**Asumpta Kanini, 32 years' old**



*I am a mother of two. I am an embroiderer however I worked on MIMCO INDI-GO-GO as a stitcher. I used the income from the order to pay school fees, feed my family and to pay rent.*

**Mini / 'fun facts' about the order**

10 artisans were engaged in order to make one tassel. 2 tailors, 1 cutter, 2 preparation, 5 beading and tagging.

Three artisans from three community groups came to Artisan Fashion to perform the beadwork for the tassels used as zip pull on the bags.

**Mini / 'fun facts' about the order**

67% of artisans improved their skills through on-the-job training.

It took 150 and 120 minutes of (a beader, cutter, hand screen printer, preparation tailor and finishing tailor) to construct the bag and the pouch respectively

**Conclusion**

MIMCO's INDI-GO-GO order was performed in very unstable economic times characterised by high inflation, scarcity of essential commodities especially food and politically instigated uncertainties. The tough externalities did not dampen the spirit of the artisans but invigorated their determination to respond to their needs. Qualitative findings indicate that one of the most desired need by the artisans was social cohesion in a divisive political environment. The MIMCO work provided income to artisans and provided an opportunity for positive interaction and ability to tolerate one another's divergent political opinion.

The MIMCO INDI-GO-GO order provided good work for the artisans which leveraged strong livelihood in terms of skill development and fair treatment in their workplace. Despite the limited access to essential food and services in the period of the order, the artisans still improved their social well being and standards of living.

**More about the Ethical Fashion Initiative:**

The Ethical Fashion Initiative (EFI) is a flagship programme of the International Trade Centre, a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. EFI 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 EFI 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.

**About: ARTISAN FASHION EPZ Ltd**

**ARTISAN FASHION** is a social enterprise that was established in 2005 to connect Africa's artisans to esteemed luxury brands all over the world. They are the first African production company to successfully combine artisan creativity and production capability with a careful consideration for traceable social impact. Acting both as a production hub and a disseminator of work, they employ Kenyan artisans in their hub and collaborate with 17 artisan communities across Kenya to produce hand crafted materials and artefacts made with traditional skills.