



Ethical Lifestyle Initiative

AFGHANISTAN



**ISSUE
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Stories of Joy

ZAZI Vintage's new collection made in Afghanistan.

Climate Crisis

How it affects Afghans and what EFI is doing about it.

STORIES OF JOY



We all know the famous Afghan '70s coats that were worn all over the world by rock-stars like Hendrix and the Beatles, but we know less about the mountains of Afghanistan where they were made.

ZAZI Vintage continues to tell the story of the Afghan women and men who delve into their sacred heritage to produce beautiful clothing. Despite market uncertainties linked to coronavirus, ZAZI has chosen EFI social enterprise, Tarsian & Blinkley, to produce its new collection.

The coats and dresses evoke Lapis Lazuli plates, delicate hands pouring saffron tea before carefully stitching together the coats, communities coming together on horseback, their coats shielding them from bitter winds.

For the first time, young Afghan returnees and aspiring photographers are helping to tell the story. EFI trained a group of 11 students in 2019 and this year it picked 3 of the students for this photoshoot. Guided by two renowned fashion photographers, Stefan Dotter and Farzana Wahidy, the young students created the stunning images of ZAZI's new collection you see here.

ZAZI, EFI and the European Union are determined to have a positive impact on Afghan communities. With photography training and photoshoot experience for young displaced people and returnees, they have found a way to double the impact for creative young people as well as talented artisans.



ZAZI Vintage coats
© Fresha Salehi / EFI



Every cloud has a silver lining, they say, even COVID-19. EFI Afghanistan social enterprises have proven surprisingly resilient and, as brick and mortar stores shut down worldwide, turned a potential disaster into an opportunity: online sales.

Ziba Foods, for example, has used this time to optimize its online footprint with digital promotion strategies. Ziba sales have increased by over 25% on **Amazon US** and significantly on the **Ziba online sales** platform too. **Wunder Workshop** sells its saffron products,

sourced from Ariana Saffron, on its site and through online channels **Standard Dose** and **Content Beauty & Wellbeing**, while **Flor de Sal** sources saffron for its spicy salt from Talay Sorkh Afghan.

Training also moved online for social enterprises and the EFI team held virtual courses on traceability and why it matters, how to build sustainable and ethical supply chains, how to manage inventories using SKUs (stock keeping units) and how to use logos for consistent branding.



ONLINE ACCELERATION



Ziba Foods online shop
© Ziba Foods

INSTA SPICE



London-based cook, writer and food influencer, Alexandra Dudley, hosted a supper party to launch Wunder Workshop's new line of saffron products, produced in Afghanistan by Ariana Saffron. Guests feasted on the saffron-themed menu of finger foods and drinks, and were given Alexandra's recipe and ingredients to make them at home.

"We have always been committed to putting people and nature before profit," says Wunder Workshop founder, Zoe Lind van T Hof.

"Now our community can enjoy the unique luxury of saffron, and get to know the women and men in Afghanistan who nurture the saffron crocuses, pick the delicate flowers and extract their precious 'red gold'."

Ariana Saffron president, Bashir Rashidi, agrees: *"Working with Wunder Workshop will help us all thrive, creating jobs and prosperity for our communities."*



Delicious saffron cardamom buns
© Wunder Workshop



RED CARPET CULTURE

From Kabul to Bamako, an extravaganza of theatre, fashion and music, co-produced by EFI and the European Union's DG Culture, was in the spotlight at the Venice Film Festival in September. The event was hailed by a panel including DG DEVCO, Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States, World Cinema Fund and Cinemas du Monde as a best practice for using the creative arts to tackle themes related to migration, development and the global South.

EFI founder, Simone Cipriani, and *From Kabul to Bamako* director, Clara Bauer, presented a short film of the show, inspiration for EU and ACP film makers targeted by a new EU facility supporting co-productions.

Later guests enjoyed a virtual journey from Central Asia to the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, courtesy of the *Kabul to Bamako* Social Club ensemble.



Kabul to Bamako Social Club

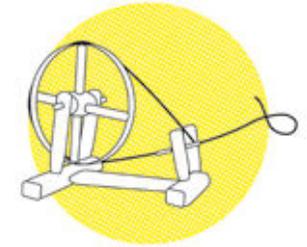
© Maria Teresa Tenaglia for Azabache Films

COMING SOON

RATTI, Italy's #1 distributor of luxury fabrics and accessories, is developing new scarves using fine silk hand-crafted by Afghan artisans. Sophisticated block and screen printing designs are being created for the major fashion labels RATTI serves, and for a new EFI brand. Watch this space!

Social enterprises (SEs) continue rolling out their training programmes in the coming months, with Fashion SEs Amir Abbas and Zanan Herat Silk fine-tuning their artisans' skills in spinning and weaving techniques. SEs specialised in Saffron will train factory staff in food safety, personal hygiene, saffron processing, drying and packaging, while their suppliers will learn about saffron cropping.

A photo exhibition is planned for December in Kabul to showcase the work of EFI Impact Photographers, the returnee and displaced young people that EFI is supporting to become fully fledged professional photographers (see cover story).



SILK SPINNING



SAFFRON PROCESSING



PHOTOGRAPHY

CLIMATE CRISIS



Herat province is a major centre of silk and saffron production. These sectors, wholly dependent on agriculture, generate almost all the province's jobs and earnings.

Climate change is already evident: growing seasons are longer and temperatures much higher than just a generation ago. We asked employees of EFI Social Enterprises in Herat how natural disasters such as flood and drought had affected them.

Laiqa (27) is a saffron processor with Talay Sorkh Afghan.

"Before moving to Herat City, I lived in the Injil district of Herat province, with the river on one side and the mountains on the other. My family had six wheat farms until the flood came and washed the whole crop away. Life hasn't been the same since. I moved here to find a better life and a good job."

Fatima (40) is a silk spinner and weaver at Zanan Herat Silk.

"My four daughters and I used to work as farm labourers. With the drought it became really hard to find work, so in 2003 we moved to Iran, but I couldn't find work. We came back to Herat in 2010. I managed to find a job with Zanan, learn new skills and now I can support my family."

These stories hint at some of the indirect impacts of climate hazards: people lose their livelihoods, cannot feed their families and are forced to migrate.

Tackling the climate crisis is a necessity for EFI and its Afghan partners. With the Integrated Approach, they are piloting drought-resistant varieties, intercropping, new irrigation techniques and, crucially, peer learning networks to spread the word about climate-smart agriculture.



Afghan landscape

© Hamid Reza Rahmani (Danial) / Afghanistan Photographers Association (APA)



There, the EFI's main fashion partner is Zarif Design. In this episode, your hosts Simone Cipriani and Clare Press sit down with Zarif's inspiring founder, Zolaykha Sherzad to hear how she established her social enterprise to bring beauty, harmony and hope to one corner of the city she grew up in.
- with @europeaid #afghanistan #kabul @zarifnyc



Product development with @zazi.vintage and our partners Tarsian and Blinkely in Kabul, Afghanistan.



Onion, Rojan Root, Saffron, Lemon, Walnut, Mint and Henna... just some of the Natural ingredients that Saleh Mohammad, our expert dye master in Afghanistan has used to tint these organic cotton samples - with @europeaid #MadelnAfghanistan #NaturalDyes #NaturalIngredients #Silk #Textiles



Quality inspections of beautiful suzani embroidery with our partners in Afghanistan



@wunderworkshop's golden saffron is grown in Herat, Afghanistan and sourced in partnership with us, @ethicalfashion. This saffron is proving a vital source of legitimate employment in the country by replacing the cultivation of lucrative but illegal opium poppies - in particular for women, who typically have fewer opportunities to earn an income in these rural areas



Did you know that every minute, 20 people leave everything behind to escape war, persecution, terror, and drought and other consequences of climate change?



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Newington Green

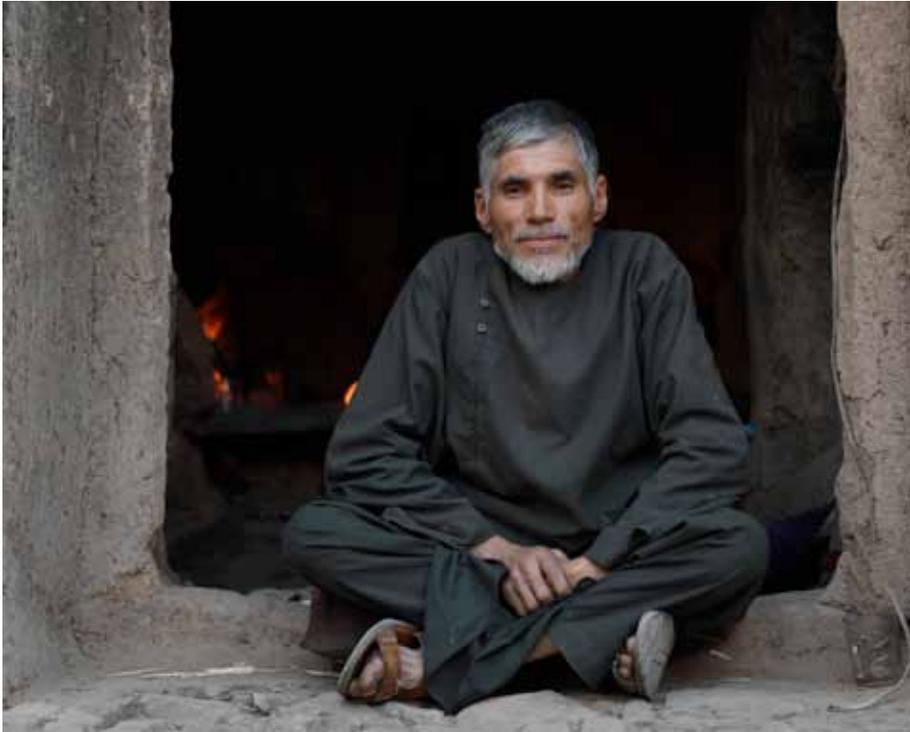


Last night's golden evening in my garden. Cooked a saffron inspired supper to celebrate my wonderful friends @wunderworkshop new ethical saffron launch and a recipe box I've created with them and @ethicalfashion @europeaid. Saluted their ethos by using suppliers who also use regenerative farming, giving back to the soil and to the earth.



ZAZI INTRODUCES SAMINA

We are honoured to introduce Kabul based Samina Ansari. @samina.ansari Together with her @ethicalfashion @europeaid, three incredible Afghan photographers called Fereshta @freshta_salehi, Marifa @marifaalikhani and Morteza, @morteza_rezaei we co-created our first ever ZAZI campaign in the country that we have been working with the longest - Afghanistan. A country of craftsmanship, of resilience, of incredible wisdom and a generation shaping a new future.



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Ghulam Sakhi, Ghulam Herat Glass
© Farzana Wahidy / EFI



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