



Ethical Production & Fairtrade

The textile and fashion industry has become a global phenomenon and textile products are made all over the world under increasingly competitive and unethical conditions.

Fair trade is a social and economic movement which promotes international standards of ethical production, labour and environmental policies in the trading of goods or commodities such as cotton. It includes principles such as payment at a fair price and gender equality.

Where fair trade is a way of doing business, ethical production refers to the production of a textile product and encompasses the whole life cycle of the product from the raw materials, through the finishing processes, to the construction.

For example, you may have a garment that is made from cotton which was purchased in a fair trade way, but that does not mean the construction of the garment was produced in an ethical way.

Facts

- For making a \$100 pair of trainers, the factory worker will receive just 50 cents (www.cleanclothes.org)
- The minimum wage for a garment worker in Bangladesh has stood since 1994 at just £7 per month. Garment workers went on strike and the national minimum wage board has now proposed raising the minimum to £12 per month, only half the most basic living wage estimate.

(Report - *Fashion Victims: The true cost of cheap clothes at Primark, Asda, and Tesco.* <http://www.cleanupfashion.co.uk/>)
- Total UK sales of Fairtrade products are running at £300m a year, a rise of almost 50 per cent in the past year.

(The Independent – *Fair trade clothing is new battleground for retailers.* 13 March 2007)
- Employing 2.5million workers in 4,500 garment factories, Bangladesh's garment industry generates over three quarters of the country's export revenue. (<http://www.waronwant.org>)

Key Organizations

Labour Behind the Label - <http://www.labourbehindthelabel.org/>

A campaign that supports garment workers' efforts worldwide to improve their working conditions. They are also the UK platform of the international **The Clean Clothes Campaign** <http://www.cleanclothes.org/>

Fashioning an Ethical Industry - <http://fashioninganethicalindustry.org>

This is a project that works with tutors from fashion/textile courses to integrate ethical issues into their teaching. There is a good Resource section on their website.

Ethical Fashion Forum - <http://www.ethicalfashionforum.com/>

This is a network and business support to promote sustainable fashion practices. They also have a social networking site which includes information on sourcing fabrics.

The Ethical Trading Initiative - <http://www.ethicaltrade.org>

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is an alliance of companies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and trade union organisations which aims to promote and improve the implementation of corporate codes of practice which cover supply chain working conditions.

Fairtrade Foundation - <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

This is a development organisation committed to tackling poverty and injustice through trade. They have developed a Fairtrade certification for cotton.

Environmental Justice Foundation – <http://www.ejfoundation.org>

This organisation runs campaigns to defend environmental damage and human rights.

War on Want - <http://www.waronwant.org/>

War on want fights poverty in developing countries by campaigning for human rights against the root causes of inequality and injustice.

Reading Materials

Rivoli, P. (2005) *The Travels of a T-shirt in the Global Economy: an economist examines the markets, power and politics of world trade*. John Wiley & Sons: USA

Ethical Consumer magazine <http://www.ethicalconsumer.org>

Companies and Designers

American Apparel -<http://www.americanapparel.net/>

US high street retailer who guarantee no sweatshop involvement with their range of jerseywear basics, along with a separate organic line.

Made-By - www.made-by.org

A network of environmentally and socially conscious fashion designers working with fair trade principles and organic materials.

Rani Jones - <http://www.ranijones.com/>

High-end fashion collection.

People Tree - <http://www.peopletree.co.uk/>

Fair trade and environmentally-friendly clothing for men, women and children.

TerraPlana - <http://www.terra-plana.co.uk/>

Ethically- produced shoes.

Audio Visual Resources

Film about Fairtrade cotton in Cameroon, Fair-trade Foundation
http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/films/cotton_cameroon.aspx

Steve Redgrave visits fair-trade cotton farmers in Mali, Fairtrade Foundation
http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/films/sir_steve_redgrave_visits_cotton_farmers_in_mali.aspx

'What's done in our name?' Social Responsibility and the Patagonia supply chain, Patagonia
http://www.patagonia.com/web/us/footprint/index.jsp?null&setLocaleCode=en_US&setCountryCode=US

Interview with Bangladesh garment worker, Fashioning an Ethical Industry
<http://www.youtube.com/user/FEInumber1>

Forced child labour and human rights , Environmental Justice Foundation
<http://www.ejfoundation.org/page85.htm>