

FASHION SHOW

FAIRTRADE
COTTON ON
THE CATWALK

EVENT GUIDES
– all you need
to know

WELCOME

You've come to the right place to find out how your group can get Fairtrade cotton on the catwalk. This guide includes top tips and ideas from other Fairtrade campaigners, facts and information about the cotton industry, and details on how to find Fairtrade cotton clothing for your fashion show.



FASHION SHOW

The range of Fairtrade certified cotton clothing and homeware is increasing at a phenomenal rate. There are currently more than 1,500 products available, from baby clothes to school uniforms. A great way of showcasing these products is to hold a fashion show.

It's a fun and effective way to tell your local community about Fairtrade cotton, makes for a buzzing social event and attracts good media coverage. It's also great news for disadvantaged cotton farmers, because when shoppers choose Fairtrade, the farmers benefit from the Fairtrade price. Organising a fashion show with a Fairtrade twist takes time and effort but can be a great boost to your local campaign. Who knows, you might even recruit some new supporters by involving students or local groups as models, designers and photographers.



CONTENTS

Cotton on! Let people know the difference Fairtrade cotton makes

Information for you and your audience about the conventional cotton industry and a profile of Makandianfing Keita, highlighting what Fairtrade means to cotton farmers in Mali.

Getting started

– what, when and where?

Top tips to help you plan, prepare for and organise a successful event.

Where to find Fairtrade cotton

Contact details and information about lots of companies who can help you get hold of Fairtrade cotton clothing for your event.

Pre-event and on the day

More top tips as the big day draws closer – from recruiting models to entertaining the crowds – and suggestions from fashion show veterans to ensure everything goes smoothly!



COTTON ON!

Let people know the difference Fairtrade cotton makes

Why we need Fairtrade cotton

Cotton symbolises the unfairness of global trade. Although cotton prices are currently rising, in real terms they are falling dramatically. As the cost of living increases due to sharply rising food and fuel prices, this causes great suffering to cotton farmers in the developing world. While the US and EU advocate free trade and open markets in developing countries, their subsidies are destroying the livelihoods of millions of poor farmers around the world. As artificially cheap cotton floods the world's markets, poor farmers, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, are priced out of the game.

A 2007 Oxfam study shows that taking all US cotton off the global market would increase the price by between 6% and 14%. For more than one million households – 10 million people – in West Africa that would mean an increase in income of between 8% and 20%. For farmers living on less than a dollar a day this means more money for food, medicines, school fees and fertilizers to help sustain their lives and farming businesses. If all subsidies were removed it is estimated that West and Central African countries could earn an extra \$94m–\$360m from cotton production. In 2005, the US spent \$5bn subsidising large cotton farms – more than the annual gross domestic product of Burkina Faso and the amount sent in aid to Africa.

Source: Oxfam, www.maketrade4fair.com



COTTON ON!

Producer profile: Makandianfing Keita

Makandianfing Keita was born in 1961 in Dougourakoroni village in Mali, West Africa. Mali is a landlocked nation among the 10 poorest on earth. Life expectancy is 54 (*United Nations Development Programme*) and infant mortality rates are some of the world's highest. The people of Mali have been failed by conventional trade. Parents can no longer afford to send their children to school and rural communities break down as young people leave for the city to look for work that doesn't exist.

Fairtrade seeks to change lives for good and empowers people like Makandianfing. Through selling cotton on the Fairtrade market, Makandianfing and the other members of the UC-CPC de Djidian co-operative have transformed their lives. Fairtrade strengthens the position of marginalised farmers and workers, allowing them to earn enough for today so they can invest in a better tomorrow. They receive a minimum Fairtrade price, which covers the cost of production, and additional Fairtrade premium, which producers invest in projects that benefit the whole community. Makandianfing's co-operative have spent their premium on access to clean water, a health centre and nursery school, a soap factory to provide employment and an alternative source of income, agricultural equipment for co-operative members, literacy programmes, vocational training and growing more maize to make their community more self-sufficient.

I never thought that I, a cotton farmer from Mali, would ever in my lifetime have the opportunity to meet anyone as important as the CEO of such a huge company. With Fairtrade we become more equal.

Makandianfing Keita

For further information about the benefits of Fairtrade cotton and other producer profiles, please see:

www.fairtrade.org.uk/producers

Life is changing for the better for Makandianfing and his family, but there are still many more farmers and workers not receiving a fair price for their produce. If we are to reach these people we need to sell more products with the FAIRTRADE Mark so that these benefits can go back to more farmers and workers in the developing world. And that's why we need people like you to organise events showcasing the range of Fairtrade cotton items available.

Makandianfing visited the UK during Fairtrade Fortnight 2008 to tell people about the difference Fairtrade is making to his community. He met campaigners, school pupils, and church groups and his meeting with the CEO of Marks & Spencer demonstrates how Fairtrade is bringing people at both ends of the chain closer together.



Makandianfing in the UK, at the launch of Fairtrade Fortnight 2008.

GETTING STARTED

What are your aims and objectives?

- Set clear aims – do you want to fundraise, reach new audiences, or promote local shops that stock Fairtrade cotton?
- Set measurable targets – it might be to secure two pieces of press coverage, get 50 new names on your mailing list, or pack in an audience of 150 people.
- Put a plan in place to reach these targets and decide who needs to be involved and what your deadlines are.

Create an atmosphere

- Be as creative as you like. Why not try create an Indian, African or global atmosphere? Use music, decoration and outfits to make the theme come alive and create an unforgettable event.

When and where?

- Who do we want to attend and when are they free? Will a weekend or evening event work best?
- How long will the event last? Industry fashion shows last about half an hour and you may want your event to include time for mingling, tasting Fairtrade products, or watching a short film.
- The venue – is it large enough to fit the catwalk, entertainment, a backstage changing area and the audience? Does it have disabled access? Does it have good transport links and parking? Does it have a suitable PA and sound system?



TOP TIPS

- 1** The Ealing Fairtrade group hosted their event in a local church hall, building closer links between the local Fairtrade campaign and the church, as well as getting a free venue. Aim high! The group in Aberdeen booked the Aberdeen Music Hall for their fashion show – the largest venue in town.
- 2** The Fairtrade group in Ealing borrowed their staging from a local school and students from Loughborough University borrowed staging from a local theatre group.

GETTING STARTED

Other ideas

- Consider student unions, school halls, town halls and community centres – keep in mind who you want to target and make sure the venue is convenient for them.
- Leave plenty of time to book the venue you want. The Aberdeen group booked the Music Hall a whole year in advance to use it for Fairtrade Fortnight 2008.
- Book the venue for two dates – one for a dress rehearsal.

Planning

- An ideal venue will already have a catwalk/stage and dressing room but be prepared to put these together yourself.
- If a raised catwalk isn't possible, use masking tape to mark out a runway on the floor.
- If your venue doesn't have a small side-room for models to change, create a private space by curtaining off a corner.

Publicity

- Good publicity is essential. Send out press releases and invite local journalists to your event. Design and display posters and leaflets in local shop windows, across the university campus or in local schools. You can order and customise Fairtrade event posters from the Fairtrade Foundation's website at www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources. A Facebook group is another good way of reaching lots of people.
- You'll need a hook to grab the attention of local media. Could you invite the mayor or a local celebrity to open proceedings? This will make a good story for the local paper.



WHERE TO FIND FAIRTRADE COTTON

All the companies below are happy to lend clothes for your events. Please order well in advance to make it more likely you will get the clothes you want.

Bishopston Trading is a pioneer fair trade company. All their profits benefit the people of K.V. Kuppam district through their registered charity, the South India Rural Development Trust.

Bishopston are able to provide fashion show kits to campaigners for a charge of £20 as a contribution towards the cost of transport.

gill_kibble@bishopstontrading.co.uk
www.bishopstontrading.co.uk

Craghoppers specialise in all year round travel and outdoor clothing. Fairtrade cotton is featured in their World First collection and includes products such as chinos and shirts.

Clothes are available on a sale or return basis and supporting point-of-sale materials are also available.

helpdesk@craghoppers.com
www.craghoppers.com

Epona sell promotional clothing made from Fairtrade certified cotton.

Epona can supply 2 x hoodies and 2 x T-shirts for events, plus promotional material. You can order more clothes on a sale or return basis but you will need to make full payment in advance in order for it to be refunded. The products available are men's and women's T-shirts and hoodies.

info@eponaclothing.com
www.eponaclothing.com



The Fairtrade Foundation's promotional range includes T-shirts, aprons, sashes and bags. A discount of 10% is available when ordering more than 10 of each item.

Leaflets explaining all you need to know about Fairtrade cotton farmers are also available.

www.fairtrade.org.uk

Five G at Debenhams by Sir Steve Redgrave would be delighted to assist where possible by providing menswear for fashion shows and other activities.

alok@ruia.co.uk
www.steveredgrave.com/fiveg.htm

Gossypium design and make great quality clothing, bedding and accessories using organic and Fairtrade certified cotton, sourced directly from independent farmers in India. Gossypium send out free fashion show packs on a 30-day invoice. The packs usually include about six items along with cards and leaflets. You are free to choose what sizes and ranges you would like and Gossypium will try their best to match your request.

Gossypium also offer the organisers the chance to sell the items at the event at the RRP to make a little money for your cause.

karen@gossypium.co.uk
www.gossypium.co.uk



WHERE TO FIND FAIRTRADE COTTON

Natural Collection offer eco, organic and Fairtrade fashion. Their clothes are available at a 15% discount for fashion shows, except when another offer occurs.

al@naturalcollection.com
www.naturalcollection.com

Onagono unites art, fashion and ethical issues. The clothes are available on a sale or return basis.

info@onagono.com
www.onagono.com

Pants to Poverty sell Fairtrade organic and sweatshop-free pants that carry a message: manmade poverty is a scandal and together we can find beautiful ways to wipe it out.

Their clothes are available on a sale or return basis and supporting point-of-sale materials are also available.

pantstopoverty@googlemail.com
www.pantstopoverty.com

People Tree create gorgeous garments and accessories by forming sustainable partnerships with fair trade and organic producers in developing countries.

People Tree provide fashion show kits for a week free of charge. The kits are extremely popular so you will need to book well in advance.

Francesca.Mangano@peopletree.co.uk
www.peopletree.co.uk

Plain Lazy offer clothes on a sale or return basis. They include the Lazy Baby range of T-shirts, long-sleeve tops and hoodies, for ages 0–24 months.

sales@plainlazy.com
www.plainlazy.com

Traces of Rock offer clothes for children aged 0–3 months to 12 years on a sale or return basis.

chazza@tracesofrock.com
www.tracesofrock.com



Your local **BAFTS** store may be happy to help. For more information, please visit:
www.bafts.org.uk

For an up-to-date list of Fairtrade cotton products, please visit:
www.fairtrade.org.uk/cotton

PRE-EVENT AND ON THE DAY

Finding models for your event

You may be surprised at how many would-be supermodels there are in local schools, universities, clubs or even businesses. The number of models you need depends on the number of outfits you're planning to showcase and don't forget that some models can change clothes through the show. Try to show off clothes for men, women and children – which means finding models for each.

Entertainment

- Why not complement the fashion show with other entertainment and activities? Other groups have included speakers on Fairtrade, live bands, quizzes, raffles, film screenings, DJs, campaign stalls for people to look at during the break and/or Fairtrade refreshments and tasting.
- Download lots of Fairtrade cotton images from www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/photo_library/images.aspx and project them onto your venue's walls.
- To show the impact Fairtrade is having on cotton farmers in several villages in Cameroon, check out www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources/films/cotton_cameroon.aspx You can also project this for your audience to watch.

Don't forget ...

- Who will do the hair and make up of the models? You could approach student hairdressers or your local department store cosmetic counters.
- You might be able to get sponsorship for your event. This could come from a local council or student union, a local business or a national organisation committed to supporting Fairtrade. Decide whether you are going to sell tickets.
- If funds allow, you could put together a short leaflet or programme with the names of the models, the benefits of Fairtrade and stockist information about the clothes. Don't forget to thank any companies or individuals who have helped you out. It's excellent advertising for them and it encourages them to get involved next time.



TOP TIPS

- 1 Hold a competition to encourage local school children to design the pattern on a Fairtrade cotton T-shirt. The winning designs could be shown at your event.
- 2 A local church group in Garstang organised a fashion show and persuaded congregation members to strut their stuff on the catwalk.
- 3 In Fairtrade Fortnight 2008 the Fairtrade group in Aberdeen organised an event which included a barbershop quartet and local schools singing Fairtrade-related songs.

PRE-EVENT AND ON THE DAY

Delegating roles

Putting on a fashion show can be a great way to get new people actively involved with Fairtrade campaigning. Potential roles include:

- **Event manager** – needs to be an organised person with a good overall knowledge of the event, willing to answer any questions. The event manager coordinates the event and volunteers and ensures everything runs smoothly. This person could also source your outfits made from Fairtrade cotton.
- **Backstage manager** – to make sure everything backstage flows smoothly. They will have to ensure models get on stage in the right place, at the right time, and in the right clothes. This person could also be in charge of styling the models and making sure everyone looks good before they hit the catwalk.
- **Entertainment manager** – to organise any other entertainment (think about your audience and what kind of entertainment they will enjoy) and to ensure it all runs smoothly on the day.
- **Publicity manager** – to promote the event and get media coverage. This can include sending out press releases to local newspapers or designing posters and leaflets advertising the event and displaying them in local shop windows across the university campus or in local schools. Some groups found that setting up a Facebook event page was a good way to reach new audiences.



Fairtrade Foundation
3rd Floor, Ibex House
42-47 Minories
London, EC3N 1DY

Tel: 020 7405 5942 Fax: 020 7405 5943
Registered Charity No. 1043886 A company limited by guarantee,
registered in England and Wales No. 2733136

Other roles

- **Decorators** – a job everyone can get involved in. Order Fairtrade-themed materials from www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources
- **Photographer** – a good way to recruit local students to your campaign
- **Stewards and ushers** – to ensure the event runs smoothly and everyone is enjoying themselves
- **Fairtrade refreshment and tasting stall**
- **DJ/compere** – someone to play/change the music as the models come down the catwalk. You could ask someone to announce what the models are wearing and where the clothes have come from.

Good luck

Thank you for organising a Fairtrade fashion show. Don't forget to tell us all about it and send us some pictures. We hope you found this guide useful and your event is a great success. It's thanks to dedicated people like you that Fairtrade continues to go from strength to strength and can benefit more of the people who need it most.

For more information and updates on Fairtrade, please visit

www.fairtrade.org.uk

