

Be Kind

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The face of change



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Fairtrade fashion for women, by women
 Loskey is a sustainable, Fairtrade and women-focused capsule clothing brand. Founder, Lori Cunningham, tells us more about their ethical mission.

Q. Tell us about Loskey

The story of Loskey started more than 25 years ago when I was a young 20-something working in international development in Washington, DC. I loved the purpose of my work, but after several years, I found myself confounded and frustrated by the bureaucracy and inefficiency of working with big government organisations. Ultimately, I left development for a career in business, and the decades that followed seemed to have passed in a flash. I got a job in the digital world, married and had two wonderful sons. I then decided I wanted to return to development, but there would be no large government organisations or NGOs this time. Instead, I would build a business that would focus on women's economic empowerment. My purpose was clear, but I then needed a product, one where women could participate across the entire supply chain. It didn't take me long to focus on T-shirts and tops. I, like so many other women I know, have been on what seems like a life-long quest for the perfect T-shirt. And, as the saying goes, 'If you want something done right', thus, Loskey was born.

Q. Can you explain some of your eco-credentials?

The production of our T-shirts had to be organic, ethical and sustainable, otherwise, I would be just trading one issue for another. All of our tees are made from 100 per cent GOTS-certified organic cotton. By using GOTS-certified organic cotton, we ensure that our raw material is produced in the best possible way. The key piece of our sustainability commitment is the tees themselves. They are the antithesis of fast fashion – not disposable clothes that get throw away after a few wears. In fact, that was one of my original inspirations – to create a T-shirt that would last not just beyond a few wears and washes, but ultimately for years.



Q. Tell us about the Fairtrade values and how this helps the women who make the clothes?

The core mission of Loskey is the economic empowerment of women through Fairtrade. Fairtrade is not simply about the price that is paid, it's about the overall wellbeing of the workers. It means treating them with respect and care, but also protecting their culture and traditional artisanal skills. We are honoured to partner with Sonica Sarna (sonicasarna.com) a supplier who represents everything that Loskey is about – women's empowerment, and ethical and sustainable production. As an Indian woman, Sonica's self-named brand is breaking the cultural norms by starting her own business in cooperation with her family's factory. She has a deep and personal commitment to organic fabrics, artisanal design and training through her amazing #projecthrive initiative – a sewing centre for at-risk women from the slums of New Delhi aiming to help those with no socio-economic opportunities.

Q. Why is it important to Loskey that production is plastic-free?

Plastic-free production is core to our sustainability commitment. I was thrilled when Sonica introduced me to Elrhino paper (elrhinopaper.com) for the production of our tags and thank you cards. Elrhino's paper is made from the fibrous dung of elephants and rhinos in the Assam forest of India and is therefore 100 per cent sustainable. Not only that, but the production of the paper employs and empowers the indigenous population, and a portion of the proceeds is invested in the protection of the endangered great one-horned rhino.

For more information, visit loskey.com