

ANNUAL & SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT
2021 - 2022

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A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear Indego Africa Supporters,

Since 2007, Indego Africa has been propelling the creation, growth and sustainability of women-owned businesses. We have invested in artisan businesses in Africa and the women who run them.

While there are many organizations that work with artisans in the developing world, we are unique in significant ways. Rather than simply providing purchase orders and exporting artisan products into Western markets, we also provide intensive production and education training programs that drive sustainable change. By helping women develop the knowledge and skills to thrive as independent entrepreneurs they are equipped to achieve in the long term.

At Indego Africa, we strive to ensure the artisan economy is truly inclusive of everyone - including those impacted by a deepening global refugee crisis. We are grateful for the community of supporters who came together to provide 225 refugees from Burundi and the DRC with artisan training and jobs that help restore dignity, enable self-sufficiency, and create opportunity for them and their families.

As population growth and double-digit inflation in Africa puts increasing economic pressure on young people across the continent, Indego's commitment to the advancement of youth livelihoods remains critical. Our vocational education, technology training, and leadership development programs continue to guide young entrepreneurs on a path to productive employment in rural communities across Rwanda and Ghana.

I hope you find Indego Africa's 2021-2022 Annual & Social Impact Report as inspirational as I do. It is more than just a quantitative accounting of our work. It is a testament to the longevity of our model, the depth of our programs, and our belief that investing in solutions that benefit women and their families positively impacts broader society.

Your engagement and support help prove that the Indego Africa model can work in the most challenging of environments. Onward and upward!

With gratitude,



Karen Yelick
CEO



INDEGO IMPACT AT A GLANCE

In 2007, Indego Africa helped 30 female genocide survivors in Rwanda form an artisan cooperative. What began as a model to empower women in Rwanda rebuild their lives through market opportunities and access to education has grown to:

- Providing a global market for handmade products made by **1,000+** artisan women throughout Rwanda and Ghana with continued retraining for new products.
- Creation of an Economic Inclusion for Refugees training program for Congolese and Burundian refugees at refugee camps in Rwanda. **225** refugee women to date have participated in Indego's training program and are producing products for the export and local markets. A 6th cohort of **40** refugees is in training.
- Inclusion of young people from the communities where our artisan partners work:
 - Vocational & Business Training: **200+** young women in Rwanda and Ghana
 - Young Leaders Academy: **50+** young artisan partners have formed 4 independent cooperatives after graduating
 - Technology Training for the workplace: **250+** unemployed college graduates in Rwanda and Ghana received digital entrepreneurship training, job application guidance and soft skills related to workforce readiness.



IMPACT - MARKET ACCESS & GENERATING INCOME

Since partnering with Indego Africa:

- 94% of our Artisan Partners earned a steady income from working on Indego Africa purchase orders in the past 12 months



- 47% of our artisan partners are the sole breadwinners of their families.
- According to the World Bank, the international poverty line was \$1.90 per day in 2022.

- In 2022, they earned an average of \$2.45 per day, 30% above the International Poverty Line of \$1.90 per day
- 90% are able to save money for the future
 - The top reason for savings: unexpected expenses (42%) children's schooling (33%) capital for own business (20%) build a house (3%)
- 90% have been able to secure health insurance for themselves and their families
- 88% now have electricity or solar panels in their home
- 87% of our artisan partners have side businesses that they are able run utilizing business tools they acquired from Indego Africa's training program

Serving communities with the greatest need.



Indego Africa focuses on particularly under-served rural communities and refugee camps
Our holistic approach to empowerment is both economic and social:

Fair wages are determined collaboratively.

With every new design our production managers meet with the artisan cooperative's leadership to determine payment per unit, based on the amount of time to produce, difficulty of design and dyeing colors, availability of local raw materials, etc.

Payment for longstanding products, e.g., best selling plateau baskets, are reviewed annually and take inflation into account.



New artisan skills learned through Indego Africa's workshops.

In August 2021 Indego Africa partnered with Rachel Machenry (a professor at Ontario College of Art & Design University) through the Nest Professional Fellowship Program to develop and implement an interactive dye-training workshop taught on-site to 140 women across rural Rwanda. The workshop addressed all process of dyeing – weighing of materials and dyes, proper use of equipment, developing and recording formulas for specific colors, making the dye bath, and dyeing and finishing the materials.

The artisan participants addressed specific challenges they were facing when dyeing sisal fiber and raffia, striving to achieve greater consistency across cooperatives.



Retraining to keep up with trends in the global marketplace.

Trends in styles and weaving fibers are constantly changing – affecting customer demand and potentially causing volatility in production volume between artisan cooperatives. Indego Africa takes pride in having helped all its cooperatives learn new styles and designs, and – in many cases – entirely new techniques and material usage. This re-training initiative supports a broader and more even distribution of purchase orders among artisan partners and strengthens their capacity to fulfill large volume orders – thus creating more jobs.



BUILDING CAPACITY IN NORTHERN GHANA

Indego Africa began operating in Ghana in 2015, working with artisan groups in Kumasi and providing vocational training to unemployed youth.



Lack of economic opportunity for women remains challenging in rural areas, especially northern Ghana where 80% of the population lives below the international poverty line.

Migration – Many women from the north migrate to Accra or Kumasi in search of work, which is difficult to find and can leave them vulnerable.

In 2018, we created an opportunity for women in northern Ghana to work locally as we began working with a collective of artisan women in Bolgatanga to craft products for the export market.

Bolgatanga is the birthplace of Ghana’s well-known and well-loved bolga straw baskets handwoven from locally grown elephant grass, a skill passed down from generation to generation. It can take one artisan about five days to complete one to two baskets.



Meet Patricia Apita!



In 2021 we expanded our training and partnership to include Bongo, bringing our capacity to 75 artisan women. We secured two high-volume production orders from Tory Burch and Loewe, which generated 5 months of steady work. In 2022 our artisan partners in northern Ghana are currently at work for a 500-unit order, with pipeline for February 2023 of a 250-unit order from a new American luxury brand.

Loewe Paula’s Ibiza Spring/ Summer 2022 Collection using surplus Loewe runway fabrics



“I am grateful to Indego Africa for helping us feed our children when farming season is over, thanks to the large orders we have, especially at the end of the year when we have no other means of earning an income.”

Faustina Azure, Bongo Collective



Tory Burch Summer 2022 Ella Straw Basket Tote Multi



Indego is one of the few organizations partnering with artisans in northern Ghana that has a proven track record of product quality to meet the demands of the luxury retail market. We achieve this through a hands-on approach, working with the artisans and focusing on skills training.

ARTISAN SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

Our model to empower and educate women which began in post-genocide Rwanda has grown into a movement to benefit artisans in rural areas in Africa and refugee camps.

Here's how we do it:

ARTISAN SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR

“An organization designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial businesses through an array of business support resources and services”

ACCESS TO CAPITAL:

- Indego Africa's Igereri Credit Union launched in 2015 during our Leadership Academy training with a group of 20 artisan women. Today, it has 160 members across 16 cooperatives. Hundreds of micro loans totaling ~ \$32,000 have been made and repaid over the past six years.
- In 2022 Indego Africa's Rwanda team helped 4 cooperatives apply for UN Development Program grants to grow their businesses. Each coop was awarded between \$5,000 - \$6,000

BUSINESS TRAINING:

- The business component of our year-long Business & Vocational training and Indego Africa's Leadership Academy provide comprehensive support to our partner cooperatives as they manage and expand their businesses.
- Our Young Leaders Academy aims to provide advanced entrepreneurship training for the next generation of female leaders in Africa.



PRODUCTION / SUPPLY CHAIN:

Rather than make the artisans come to us, our production teams on the ground travel to the rural communities our artisan partners work in to:

- Facilitate technical training for custom orders
- Provide purchase orders
- Conduct Quality Control for finished products
- Transport products back to our local offices and pack for air cargo shipments to the US



SUPPORT SERVICES:

On a Quarterly basis, our Country Director's meet with cooperative leadership for feedback on challenges and ideas for workshops. Examples include sexual and reproductive health (in collaboration with Weill Cornell Medical Center) domestic violence seminars, dyeing workshop, artisan advancement program and occupational therapy yoga classes.

“*The Artisan Advancement Program changed my decision-making ability. Before this training I did not think of decision-making as a skill. I believed that everything happening to me was a result of chance. I never put faith in planning and hard work, but today I know that the harder you work the luckier you are. For sure today I am in the drivers seat.*”

*Benigne Niyokwizerva
Member of the Enrico youth cooperative*



We celebrate handmade work by investing in rich cultural traditions, sustainable materials, and women-run businesses that have collectively employed 1200+ artisans across Rwanda and Ghana, in rural communities and refugee camps.

The extraordinarily high quality of Indego Africa's products is driven by:

- **Technical Capability** - Our artisan partners have unique craft-making talent honed over years of working together and continuous on-the-job training and mentoring from Indego Africa's local production teams.
- **Design Adaptability** - Our artisan partners are willing to continuously learn new skills and Indego Africa has acquired extensive experience managing the production/supply chain for large volume orders and meeting the demanding specifications of luxury brands for custom orders.



Local is durable. We source natural fibers from the communities where we work and strive to be environmentally responsible in the local production of all our products.

What goes into making each home decor item?

There is such a rich history of craft that has existed for generations within the communities we partner with in Rwanda and Ghana. Part of Indego Africa's mission is to preserve the integrity of these crafts and collaborate with the artisan women to create beautiful, modern pieces that connect with a global market. From developing new shapes and patterns for our woven baskets, accessories, and home décor collections, the design and development process is a true partnership, where we learn from each other on what is possible and what would work best within our expanding collections.

Both Rwanda and Ghana are immensely inspirational in their landscapes, lush natural colors, bustling street markets, and vast agricultural fields. It's hard not to find an array of ideas for patterns, textures and colors amongst these scenes and landscapes. We strive for authentic storytelling through our product and connect the customer with the artisans who make these unique, handcrafted pieces. Our Indego teams on the ground in Africa play an integral role and are the ones communicating with and traveling throughout each week to all of the artisan cooperatives. They keep the production moving. It is an incredible process to witness, there is a lot behind the scenes that goes into each Indego Africa product.

Vetted Focus on Sustainability and Transparency:

NEST: Indego Africa was participated in NEST's Accelerator Program and was audited to receive the NEST Seal of Ethical Handicraft, a consumer-facing market that certifies our products have been made in a safe and equitable environment.

Loewe: Indego Africa received a full sustainability audit as part of its ongoing partnership with Loewe, an LVMH company.

Made51: Indego Africa is a prominent enterprise partner of Made51, the artisan livelihood division of UNHCR.

ECONOMIC INCLUSION FOR REFUGEES

The number of forcibly displaced people in the world is at a record high — 84 million at the end of 2021, more than the entire population of Germany, and more than double what the number was a decade ago. They're fleeing their homes for reasons ranging from persecution, war and human rights violations to famines and floods spurred by climate change.*

As of September 2021, Rwanda was host to **127,163** refugees in five refugee camps, 49% are children, 51% are female.



In 2016 Indego was asked by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to bring our Vocational and Business Training program to the Mahama Refugee Camp.

Training 50 refugee women per year we now partner with over **225 Burundian and Congolese** women at two Refugee Camps, providing steady work and retraining. Ours is the only livelihood program in Rwanda where refugees earn income from the export market.



After fleeing violence and conflict, the opportunity to work and earn a living is one of the most effective ways refugees can rebuild their lives in dignity and peace.

For the past five and a half years, Indego Africa's Economic Inclusion for Refugees program has addressed the unique livelihood and financial challenges Burundian and Congolese refugee women face by equipping them with the skills, resources, and tools they need to become successful artisan entrepreneurs.

“*When I fled my county and entered the refugee camp, honestly the beginning was bleak, trust toward others plummeted, I felt isolated...but this is over...when I joined a group of women being trained by Indego Africa it was replaced by a feeling of trust and self-confidence. I became a gregarious woman and delighted weaver, working together with other women ... I weave to provide for my family and give them everything they need.*”

**Claudine Niyonsaba, President, Umuco Cooperative
Mahama Refugee Camp**



83% of our refugee partners are able to run their cooperatives and other businesses more efficiently due to Indego Africa's training.



“*I am a skilled weaver after completing the LA vocational training and then the dye workshop. This year I saw that I can do something more to change my life ... that working with other women it's like killing two birds with one stone; I earn money but also meet with people who tell me that I am capable of doing great things in my life, that my ability and potential have no limits. Those messages gradually changed my fatalistic attitudes and adopted new ways of perception of destiny.*”

Solange Ingabire was able to join the Vocational Training set up for Congolese women transferred from Kigeme to Mahama. Solange is now Vice-President of the Akeza Cooperative.

78% of our refugee partners are able to save for their future, prioritizing the need for emergency funds after the economic shock of the pandemic and subsequent inflation.

“This year the price of food has surged ...this situation is making our camp lives hard, but I am a lucky weaver who use the revenues earned from Indego Africa orders to weather the storm.”

Esperance Mutegvaraba, Kigeme Refugee Camp

In partnership with UNHCR, Indego Africa is playing a powerful role in expanding global livelihood opportunities and boosting economic development for refugees across Rwanda.

The power of artisan skills is multifaceted. Not only do they provide unique opportunities for our refugee partners to enter the artisan economy but more importantly, **artisans skills are transferable skills**. They create long term economic security for the day when our partners and their families are no longer refugees, whether they remain in Rwanda or are able to return to their home countries.

The goal of Indego's Economic Inclusion for Refugees Program has always been to improve their livelihoods and build long-term and transferable careers in the global artisan industry.

“Weaving is the key in my life when I'm back in Burundi there are no people who are weavers like us where I will be living. Hence it will be the key skill to sell and teach the rest of my community in terms of making money.”

Jacqueline Miburo repatriated to Burundi in May 2021

As of June 2022, 43 women we trained at the Mahama Refugee Camp have repatriated from Rwanda back to Burundi.

“Indego's education programs changed my life. I am about to go back home to Burundi and feel I have opportunities to create, join and lead cooperatives because I am a skilled person.”

Odette Mukandanga repatriated to Burundi in January 2022



METHODOLOGY

With the generous support of the Cordes Foundation Indego launched a sophisticated online survey platform in 2019 allowing for remote data collection, rapid turnaround and robust program management via tablets. This technology allows Indego's global team to securely gather valuable information from our artisan partners in remote parts of Rwanda and Ghana via face-to-face field surveys, populate a web-based dashboard that updates in real time, and access and analyze integral impact data at scale.

THE SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

At Indego Africa, we are committed to measuring our impact. Each year we conduct a Social Impact Assessment, gathering quantitative and qualitative information on the ongoing progress of our artisan partners and publishing the results. These annual reports allow us to assess the efficacy of our programs, identify areas for improvement, and transparently communicate the results of our work to our supporters around the world.

The 2021-2022 Social Impact Report, which reflects data collected between June 2021-July 2022, marks Indego's fifteen social impact assessment.

This year's report includes the results of comprehensive interviews with 260 artisans across 14 of our partner cooperatives in two countries, Rwanda and Ghana. As we grow and scale as an organization, this data serves as a powerful tool to ensure that our programs are fully and successfully serving the needs of our artisan partners.

HOW IT WORKS

Indego's field team in Rwanda travelled to 12 of our partner cooperatives to gather quantitative and qualitative metrics from 205 women. Our field team in Ghana also collected social impact data, surveying 55 women across 2 artisan groups.

The 70-question survey gathers data across a range of development indicators, including income, education, and quality of life. The questions track year-over-year changes in the demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal information of our artisan partners.

Results obtained from the surveys are presented and compared for each question at an aggregate level by combining the results from Rwanda and Ghana. Historical data gathered in Rwandan Francs and Ghanaian Cedis was converted to U.S. Dollars utilizing the average FX rate for each year.

FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES for the year ending December 31, 2021

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	
Gross Product Sales Revenue	\$ 351,466
Gross Income from Fundraisers	1,312
Contributions	399,414
Other Income, including FX loss	(3,621)
TOTAL REVENUE	748,571
EXPENSES	
Cost of Goods Sold	189,914
Functional Expenses:	
Program Services	464,351
Management & General	28,470
Development	12,545
TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	505,366
TOTAL EXPENSES	695,280
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	53,291

STATEMENT OF POSITION for the year ending December 31, 2021

ASSETS	
Cash and investments	\$ 127,029
Accounts Receivable	45,698
Product Inventory	57,424
Other Current Assets	1,226
Security Deposit	5,400
TOTAL ASSETS	236,777
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	3,201
Contract Liabilities	90,952
TOTAL LIABILITIES	94,153
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	142,624
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND ACCUMULATED SURPLUS	236,777

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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We would like to extend a special thank you to our volunteer Regional Board in New York City for their continual fundraising efforts and support through the pandemic!

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Google
JPMorgan Chase & Co
UBS

Thank you to the **437 grassroots supporters** who also helped make our work possible this year!

GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

“My goal is to continue saving more so that I will run other business outside of the cooperative. I would like to thank Indego for how it empowers the ladies.”

Lilyanne Mukansbuti

“My goal is to go to study for a masters degree in business.”

Clarisse Muragijemariya

“My goal is to see my child finishing her school.”

Octavia Mutetinabo

“My goal is to improve my knowledge in business.”

Nyirakarambi Feza

“My goal is to learn better English and become more skilled using a computer.”

Alexis Uwingabire

“My goals are to help others and train them in weaving. Also I have the goal to increase my savings.”

Beatrice Mukamana

“My goal is to run textile and shoes business. I want to thank Indego Africa for helping me see the vision of my life.”

Derphine Niyomukiza

“My goal is to open and run a boutique.”

Adeline Niyomukiza

“My goal is to buy a piece of land, goats, 3 pigs and one cow - Thank you Indego, thank you a lot and keep it up, we are honored to partner with you.”

Denyse Uwizeyimana

“My goal is to build a house by next year.”

Elevanie Nyandwi

“My goal is to start expanding my farming activities and help vulnerable neighborhoods.”

Solange Usabinema

INDEGO AFRICA GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Expand our Small Business Incubation Services to refugees.

Build capacity to capitalize on proven ability to produce custom orders for luxury wholesale clients.

In conjunction with UNHCR, expand our model to Burundi.





indegofafrica.org
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