



ORIGIN

Impact Report

2021

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Foreword

Origin exists to give opportunities to social entrepreneurs in Sub Saharan Africa (SSA). Through the sale of our ethically produced clothing, we aim to do all we can to support communities exposed to extreme poverty to irreversibly remove themselves from that state and into one of opportunity and culturally appropriate development. Our method for doing this is by donating capital investment cash donations to social business entrepreneurs. This method is our conclusion after extensive information gathering from individuals and groups living in those communities and extensive research for the best evidence based methods for poverty alleviation. If the research were to suggest better methods, we would adapt. In the interests of ensuring our supply chain work remains at the highest standard, we also invest in inspiring organisations working to ensure this crucial aspect of our footprint as well.

We generate our cash donations through the sale of sustainably produced and certified ethically supplied casual clothing. The best information on this and in the interests of taking a value added activity back to Africa, our main material in this method is organic cotton. The Transformers Foundation published a report in 2021 further supporting the well evidenced prior belief that rainfed organic cotton production is one of the most planet friendly methods for producing clothes so, while ensuring we do this in a sustainable way that promotes the responsible use and respect for clothing and where it comes from, our range is unisex organic cotton basics that make the customer, the workers in the supply chain and the planet feel better.

It has been our goal since establishment in 2018 to source our clothing from Africa and this is an ongoing process where we want to supply our customers with high quality clothing that lasts, that respects the ground it comes from and that has style and substance. See 'The Future' for where we intend to go next.

The OR Foundation in Ghana

We first came across The OR Foundation in 2020, and began to learn about their work, which stands at the intersection of environmental justice, education and fashion development, with the mission to identify and manifest alternatives (OR stands for alternatives/choice) to the current dominant model of fashion. More specifically their goal is to catalyze a 'Justice-Led Circular Economy'.



There are so many different facets to the work of The OR Foundation to try to combat the incredibly complex issues wrapped up in the fashion industry and its overwhelming impact in Ghana. This work includes a focus on immediate relief through direct action on human rights and environmental abuses, educational programming and awareness in order to shift individual actions, and research and institutional advocacy to steer systems level policy. [Learn more about the OR Foundation](#)

Origin's Donation in May 2021

£1,507

E-Literacy in Mali

Andre Kone has been working for 5 years to establish a remote working tool to allow rural Malian families to teach themselves to read and write in Bambara. He now has the blueprint, the product and the business plan. It is truly an inspiring story he is living and one that Origin was desperate to support.

His e-learning tool (Yerekalanbarani) will teach both children and adults to read and write Bambara then he aims to employ prior students in tech roles typing and translating documents and visual media from the global north bringing a significant value added activity to the Malian economy.

[Read about the launch of Yerekalanbarani here](#)



Origin's Donation to Andre Kone

£750

The Artisanat in Mali

Kadiata Thiam explained to us in September this year that she was dependent on her family for financial support and with that came a lack of self-confidence therefore resultant difficulty finding a job.

She sought solutions to take control of the situation. Bear in mind, Mali is a very difficult business environment for the start up female entrepreneur. She speaks with passion and, given the opportunity, she openly discusses the things that have been holding her back: dependence, mental health decline & stagnant creativity as a result.

So she went out and learned a different skill in order to build herself a unique business, based around origami. She uses waste materials from Bamako to make unique decorative and functional products and, in the next year, she aims to employ 5 people and establish a *tontine* (a women's collective savings group).

Now she joins the cross cultural global community of social entrepreneurs forging change for themselves and for those around them.



Origin's Mali hub directors Judith and Didier Ndane are supporting Kadi to realise this dream and we wish her well in her artisanal endeavours.

Origin's Donation to The Artisanat

£500

Kujuwa Initiative in Kenya

Established to educate and empower around Sexual and Reproductive Health for girls, Kujuwa (*meaning knowledge*) works with young women and men to spread good information and knowledge on the subject as well as empower those suffering from a lack of access to safe menstrual hygiene and appropriate support.

Kujuwa is a social enterprise that employs women trained through their Stitching Academy to produce the reusable sanitary pad kits using up-cycled waste fabric from the SOKO Factory. These are physical products that accompany and support their inspiring awareness and support campaigns. [Read more about Kujuwa's inspiring work.](#)



“Together we can make a real difference.”
Kujuwa 2021

Origin's Donation

£500

Women's Initiative Gambia

This was a relationship that was inevitable and this year, it's here. Isatou Ceesay is Gambia's 'Queen of Recycling'. On top of her lobbying and educational roles, she runs Women's Initiative Gambia which employs marginalised women, educates them on entrepreneurship and finds them jobs.



WIG works with financially poor women to find ways for them to improve their and their families' standards of living. There is a clear focus on environmental education within their projects too - creating market gardens, encouraging the cultivation of indigenous plants and trees, reducing plastic use and contributing to recycling across the country.

She has a message for women out there:

"There are millions of young girls and women out there who have dropped out of their careers in life. To them I say, do not let the hurdles define your life. Look around you and try another approach, and keep trying and you will find one that works for you. Believe in yourself and believe in what you want in life, and go for it. Be prepared to persevere in the face of adversity and success will be yours."

Mrs Ceesay is our forecasted recipient of Origin's first donation of money at the beginning of 2022. [To learn more about W.I.G's work, go here.](#)

Our Inspirational Partners

Stockists

Aida, Shoreditch ([Pop in](#))

Our presence in London is spearheaded by this independent and ethical store in Shoreditch. We are continuously supported by the wonderful Aida team and their director Helena Chow.

Akojo Market ([Browse and Wonder](#))

Celebrating Africa artistry and talent, we are pleased to be showcased on the wonderful Akojo Market.

Compare Ethics ([Compare now](#))

Dragon's Den 2021 winning investee, Compare ethics continue to support us, feature our stories and allow us a forum to display our ethical supply chain and products.

Know the Origin ([Learn more](#))

Advocate for ethical supply for people and the planet, we are one of many interesting brands they stock.

Not on the High Street ([Explore here](#))

This year, we were accepted onto this well known platform founded and built by an inspiring female entrepreneur, Holly Tucker.

Prior, Bristol ([Visit](#))

Our presence in Bristol is typified by this eco living store with its style and good business principles. Forget not they are not for profit and independent too.

Tabitha & Eve ([Learn and Re-use through here](#))

Beautiful products and an inspiration in the anti-consumption movement, we regularly colab on this front. We also donate our unused materials to reduce waste impact to this lovely brand.

The Ethical Market ([Explore their range](#))

Working to build a strong community in ethical fashion, they stock a great range of ethically produced products and Origin is just one of them.

Wearth, London ([Discover](#))

They showcase all the brands and products ethical consumers are looking for.

Supply Chain

Broadside Screen Printing

An advocate of sustainable production and planet friendly techniques, Broadside continue to advise us and work with us to improve clothing production.

Katherine Barber Jewellery ([Marvel at the beauty](#))

Partner for creating our jewellery line, Katherine handmakes all pieces in her renewable energy powered workshop in North Devon. The range is made using recycled silver and all packaging is compostable.

Lamler ([See the new generation](#))

Founded by Helen Plummer, Lamler have their own unique range. They advise us on supply chain work, design and also do our embroidery.

Stanley/Stella ([Explore](#))

Established in order to offer products that respect people, the environment and customers, Stabley/Stella wholesale supply our original range of organic cotton clothing.

Sunflag & Biosustain ([Learn more here](#))

See more below in 'Organic Cotton in Tanzania'

Events

Unhidden & Model of Diversity ([Unhidden](#) & [Model of Diversity](#))

Fashion Revolution Event hosted by these two inspiring organisations. This event celebrated every body whilst also shining a light on caring for our planet, embodying the meaning of inclusion and ethics.

Happy Place ([Be inspired today](#))

An inspiration and a supportive force for good for so many, Fearne Cotton helps so many and we are happy to be a member of this wonderful community of people, organisations and artists.

Summary of Donations

We are determined to display information on Origin’s business activities openly. This way, our customers, partners and auditors can review our methods and our progress easily. We firmly believe this should be an industry standard and work towards achieving this.

Kujuwa, Kenya	£ 500	Jan 2021
OR Foundation	£ 1,507	Mar 2021
Andre Kone	£ 750	Sep 2021
Kadiata Thiam	£ 500	Oct 2021
Total	£ 3,257	2021

This table transparently summarises our donations in 2021. For invoices and further reports, please feel free to contact us directly.

Awards

Social Enterprise Awards International Impact *(upcoming 8th December)*

Great British Entrepreneur Awards *Finalist for Entrepreneur for Good*

Blue Patch Sustainable Awards *Global Impact Award Finalist*

Best Business Woman Awards *Silver Award Winner*

Wolf and Badger Independent Awards *Finalist for Ethical Brand of the year*

Organic Cotton in Tanzania

We were excited this year to initiate a partnership with one of few suppliers in the industry sourcing organic cotton made in Africa products. The entire supply chain is completely transparent, from the organic cotton from Tanzanian farm groups to the production completed under one roof in the fully vertical factory in Arusha, Tanzania.

Sustainability and equality is at the heart of this African supply chain, sourced from Biosustain, a Tanzanian organisation dedicated to supporting farmers and their businesses at a local level. All their cotton is rain fed, which means they save water compared with regions that use irrigation. Transport from farm to ginnery is by ox and cart saving on carbon emitted by trucks used in other countries and all the water used in the manufacturing process is cleaned so it's free of any dyes or chemicals that could damage the ecosystem.



The factory itself, Sunflag, works closely with the FairWear Foundation and they have welfare programs in place for workers that include housing, subsidised meals, transportation, insurance, medical care, education and health awareness. Perhaps most importantly, everyone has a voice and is actively involved in the workers unions, and maternity, bereavement and sick pay are all guaranteed.

The Future

As we grow, our responsibility grows. While our methods of investment and social impact remain consistent, we are learning and determined to continue our journey on supply chain development and respectful cross cultural working. Therefore, in 2022, we intend to launch our new Africa designed, African born, unique range of products. Our partner in this is Soko Kenya and we are bubbling with excitement to share with all our believers and partners our new take on supply chain and the profit sharing model. Watch out this Spring for the next step in Origin's journey towards proving that fashion can be a force for good.

To our customers, partners and the social entrepreneurs who inspire us all, thank you.