

ANNUAL IMPACT



REPORT

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDERS

As co-founders of Wearsos, we are thrilled to present our 2023 Impact Report, showcasing our journey as a 'Repurpose with Purpose' Partner of Southwest Airlines®. In this report, we discuss our commitment to empowering women in Turrialba, Costa Rica, and driving sustainable change through upcycling.

Although our journey began in 2019, the past six months marked a significant milestone as we significantly increased our production and moved into our dedicated workshop space. Our upcycling initiatives have not only yielded high-quality products but also transformed lives. We've educated, employed, and empowered women in Turrialba, fostering economic independence and social progress. Along the way, we shared our story with many people in Costa Rica, the USA, and Canada in a variety of settings.

As we often say, **"Costa Rica doesn't lack talent; it lacks opportunity."** We extend heartfelt gratitude for trusting us with the opportunity to unlock the talent within our community. With your unwavering support, we've witnessed remarkable transformations: from shy individuals to community advocates, from financial struggles to newfound freedom, and from novice teamwork to a cohesive community. Our employees are proud that products made with true labor of love in their small town of Turrialba are reaching an international market.

The impact of the Repurpose with Purpose program extends far beyond just our employees. We aspire for its impact to continually grow and improve year by year.

"Muchas Gracias" from the Wearsos team to you,

Lynne & Chris



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1 | MISSION

To inspire every person to believe in a better future, while also – wearing it.

We seek to create a socially conscious brand that reduces waste, creates income and empowerment opportunities in rural areas and supports educational spaces through the production of high quality upcycled goods.

VISION

Waste Reduction

By repurposing retired airline seat leather and utilizing other sustainable materials we divert tons of material from landfills, promoting a circular economy.

Economic Activation

We provide meaningful employment to women artisans in Turrialba, Costa Rica catalyzing economic growth and community empowerment through fair work opportunities.

Education Empowerment

Equipping women with leatherworking and entrepreneurship skills, we're also enhancing individual lives by supporting educational spaces that foster innovation, growth and skills-building.

VALUES

Commitment – We are committed to relationships, to those we work with, to the world, and to our collective future.

Responsibility – We believe we have a responsibility to the environment and its people to provide products with the least amount of impact.

Quality – We stand to create ‘wear’ of superior value that provides customers a reason to be proud.

Learning – We believe in innovation and learning through hands-on practice.

Community – We believe real positive change will come from all of us.



2 | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In a world where change is imperative, we believe in businesses that prioritize people and the environment. That is why we're aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs represent a universal call to action, a roadmap for a better, more sustainable world for all. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, these 17 interconnected goals address a wide range of global challenges. Here are the **7 goals** that align with our project:



We **Reduce Poverty** by providing economic opportunities and employment to women in Turrialba, Costa Rica.



We support building **Quality Education** by creating educational spaces for our employees, supporting schools, inspiring global youth, and educating them about our initiatives to address pressing issues.



We empower women and men, addressing job security and economic disparities, fostering **Gender Equality** through skills development and inclusive practices.



We advance **Decent Work and Economic Growth** by offering employment opportunities and skills development, promoting community empowerment and economic diversification in a region with limited opportunities.



We drive **Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure** through innovative upcycling practices, fostering sustainability and reducing environmental impact.



We actively **Reduce Inequalities** by offering employment opportunities to women in rural communities who face many barriers to employment.



We champion **Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Production** by upcycling discarded leather seat covers and utilizing sustainable fabrics in our creations.



3 | MEET THE CORE TEAM

At Wearsos, our staff members are the heartbeat of our brand's success. Their dedication, creativity, and commitment are integral to shaping our vision and bringing our products to life.



Lynne Corvaglia
Co-Founder



Christian Riquelme
Co-Founder



Gabriela Artavia
Finance & Human
Resource Manager



Amber McNeil
Projects Assistant



Dra. Laura Yuré
Phycologist &
Wellbeing Manager



'Karo' Araya Rodríguez
Administration
Manager & Artisan



'Coco' Ronald Zúñiga
Leather Teacher
& Artisan



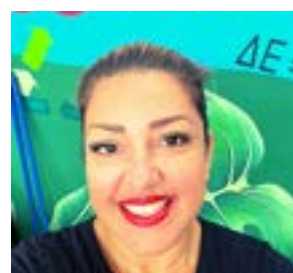
Carolina Martínez Jiménez
Production Manager
& Artisan



Johanna García
Fuentes
Quality Control
Manager & Artisan



Inés Hernández Solís
Maintenance Manager
& Artisan



Jennifer Bell Marín
Culture Team
Coordinator &
Artisan



'Teresa' Pérez Badilla
Culture Team
Coordinator &
Artisan

Above is our core team, but it's important to mention that we have also employed over 6 additional people in a part-time capacity. They were brought on to assist us during times when we were short-handed.

4 | IMPACT AT A GLANCE

At Wearsos, offering employment and women's empowerment are the heart of our operations. Our commitment to real change guides every aspect of our business, driving us to create a more equitable future for our community.



BIG HIGHLIGHTS

We currently have 7 full-time artisans and 6+ artisans who have also come on part-time for special projects.

7+ employed and empowered artisans

500+ airline seats diverted from landfill

We have currently estimated around 500+ Southwest Airlines seats have been used to produce Wearsos Products.

We first started with a workshop in April of around 30 sq. meters, then in September, we were able to move into a new one that is 200 sq. meters.

Moved into a 6x larger workshop

Reached 500+ students

We shared our story and inspired change at multiple schools, such as Eastwood Collegiate in Canada and local schools like Jorge Debravo in Turrialba.

We were able to attend major events such as Collision Toronto, Southwest GBTA and Creator Day in Dallas, TX, Toronto Business Summit and more sharing our story.

Attended 5+ major events

Over 10+ partner visits to workshop

Microsoft, Abeilene Christian University, Algonquin College, Verto Education and more came to visit us in Costa Rica and learn about our project first hand.

5 | COMMUNITY IMPACT

At Wearsos, we're more than just an employer; we're catalysts for change. By providing employment opportunities to marginalized individuals, especially single mothers and those who've faced adversity, we create a profound impact.

We offer comprehensive support, including professional guidance from a psychologist, as well as skill training, and financial empowerment. Our employees, equipped with newfound skills and confidence, become positive influences on their families and communities. We understand that true change goes beyond jobs; it's about empowering individuals to lead better lives.

Through our holistic approach, we are not only improving the lives of each of our team members but making positive contributions to the greater Turrialba community. At Wearsos, we're dedicated to building a brighter, more resilient future together.



OUR 4-STEP RECIPE FOR EMPOWERMENT

Financial Support

We recognize that a critical aspect of empowering our artisans is extending financial support when they face urgent needs, such as covering electricity bills and putting food on the table. So providing them a fair and sustainable wage enables them to navigate through challenging times and lays the foundation for their empowerment.



Well-Being

We believe that the next vital step in empowering our artisans is to provide them with a safe and nurturing environment. Many of our artisans have experienced physical and emotional abuse, making it essential to prioritize their well-being. To achieve this, we offer psychological support through a dedicated professional psychologist.

Skill Development

Once artisans feel financially and emotionally supported, we believe that skills development can truly flourish. That's why we offer training to enhance their sewing skills as well as other essential skills like literacy (both written and financial), public speaking, and more.



Personal Development

Finally, in addition to sewing quality, we prioritize the personal development of our artisans. Our focus extends beyond technical skills to include teaching resilience, time management, emotional intelligence, and active listening. We also foster a growth mindset and provide strategies to overcome difficult situations.

We know that tracking our impact is important that is why we have implemented questionnaires and private interviews with a local psychologist who is focused on cultivating well-being, and personal and professional development Here are some of our results:

- 57%** of Wearsos artisans are single mothers and have suffered from various forms of physical and/or psychological abuse.
- 100%** of Wearsos employees reported to financially support other family members such as brothers, sisters, parents, and more.
- 50%** of Wearsos employees have only completed primary school, and the other 50% have only completed up to high school.
- 100%** of employees were either unemployed or employed in the informal sector before joining Wearsos.

IMPACT STATISTICS



100% of Wearsos artisans agree that their stress levels have significantly improved since joining Wearsos.



100% of Wearsos employees are either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the support offered to them at Wearsos.



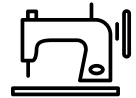
100% of Wearsos employees reported an increase in their ability to participate in leisure activities after work.



86% of Wearsos artisans state that they are now in a better position to provide for their families.



100% of employees report an improvement in their sewing skills since beginning their job at Wearsos.



100% of Wearsos artisans state that they have learned skills that they can apply to their personal lives.



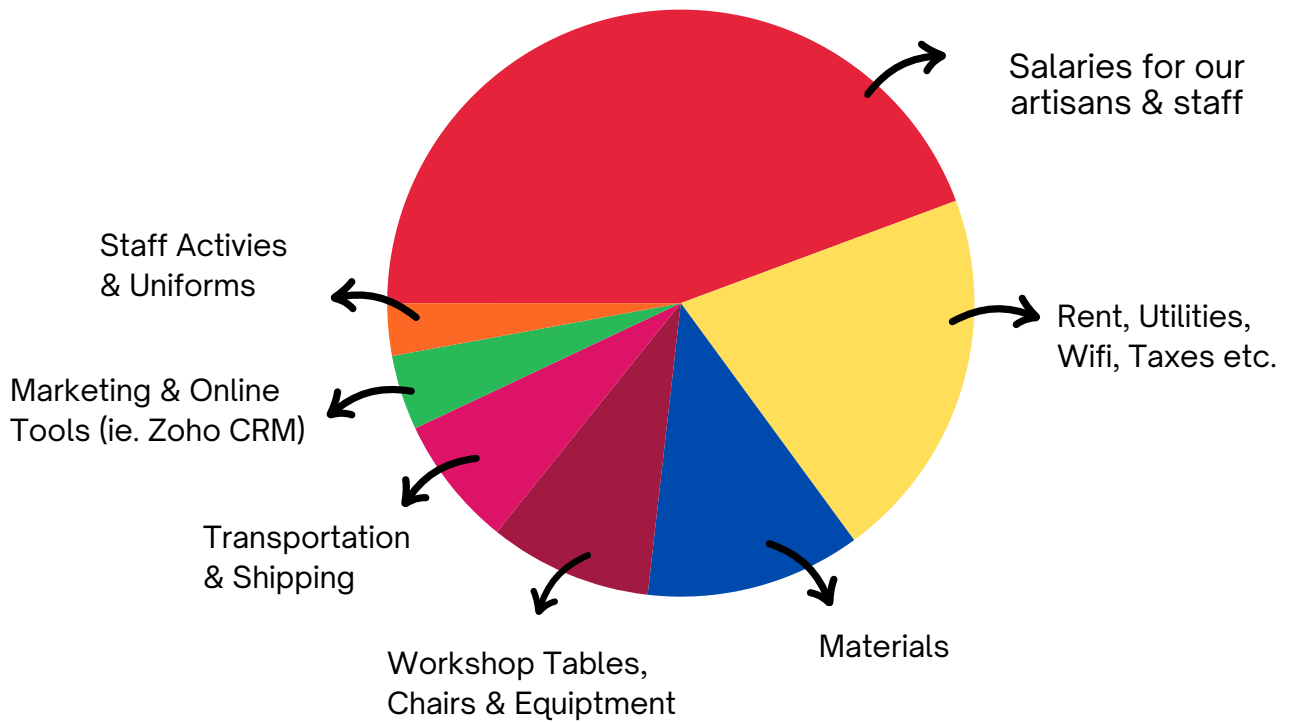
100% of Wearsos employees would recommend working for Wearsos to others in Turrialba.



100% of Wearsos artisans agree that Wearsos gives them a strong sense of community and belonging.



6 | FUNDING UTILIZATION AND OUR COMMITMENT



COSTS OF IMPACT

Empowering and employing women in Turrialba, Costa Rica through our programs is vital. Funding these initiatives involves various costs: training materials, instructor fees, facility rentals, empowerment workshop resources, and fair wages for artisans. These expenses highlight the necessary investment in sustaining impactful programs that foster empowerment and employment opportunities for women in our community. Below are some ideas of how much it costs to make a significant impact through Wearsos:

\$4000 provides 8 weeks of onboarding, training & fair employment for a new artisan.

\$40 provides 1 hour of counseling for our staff who are in need.

\$1400 covers the cost of utilities for 1 year for the Wearsos workshop.

\$150 funds a workshop on a course such as financial literacy & planning.

\$150 funds a workshop on themes such as team building and effective communication.

\$880 covers the cost of one new industrial sewing machine, so we can expand our training and also our production.

\$1200 covers the cost of one new Cylinder Arm sewing machine, so we can expand our training and also our production.

\$4200 supports the implementation of a health and wellness program for all of the Wearsos staff for 6 months.

\$1230 Helps us cover 1 month of rent for our workshop.



7 | EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

At Wearsos, we view education as a tool for achieving a more sustainable and equitable future. In addition to educating women artisans through our training programs, we also seek to spread Wearsos' mission through education initiatives with students from around the world, who are the future generation of change-makers.

ACU

Through our partnership with Abilene Christian University, we've engaged with 25+ students offering them real-world sustainability consulting experience in Costa Rica.

We also welcomed 20+ students from Algonquin College in Ontario Canada, for an enriching educational visit.

Algonquin College

Verto Education

We have engaged with over 60+ students in experiential learning through focus groups and also in-person workshops and presentations.



Jorge Debravo

In collaboration with the organization Cross Cultural Connect, we inspired over 15+ local students about our work and the importance of social entrepreneurship.



We were also able to donate materials to **Oak Lawn Hometown Middle School** in Illinois to their 'Makers Lab', **Branksome Hall School** in Canada for their Department of Design & Technology & **Liceo Rural Aguazarcas** in Costa Rica.





Eastwood Collegiate

Wearsos revisited Co-founder Lynne’s old high-school school, reaching 200+ students, sharing their story, and impact, and inspiring students to chase their dreams.

A group of 10+ business students and their professor from the Universidad Latinoamericana de Ciencia y Tecnología (ULACIT) visited Turrialba to learn more about Wearsos.

ULACIT



Wearsos has been able to speak with over 200+ students at various events across the University of Toronto. We have also received funding from them and have partnered to employ a student from the International Development Program.

University of Toronto

CATIE & Zero Waste Alliance

Conducted multiple events on CATIE campus, engaging local students, and facilitated a workshop with Zero Waste Alliance, even attended by the Costa Rica president Carlos Alvarado Quesada!



Established a valuable relationship with an OCAD professor and her DesignWith space, offering workshops for students and locals.

OCAD & DesignWith

7 | EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

8 | ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The global fashion industry, including leather production, significantly harms the environment. Fast fashion is resulting in extensive textile waste ending up in landfills and harming people and their environment around the world. Therefore we seek to upcycle and use other sustainable materials to minimize our impact.



500+ Southwest Airline seats upcycled

We have used approximately 500+ Southwest Airlines seats to produce our products and prototypes through their 'Repurpose with Purpose' global sustainability initiative which has already repurposed over 2.2 million pounds of waste.

Generation Phoenix ELeather

Generation Phoenix generously donated over 200+ meters of their innovative ELeather, which is made from recycled leather cut-offs. This not only adds diversity to our product line, but also matches the high quality of the Southwest Airline leather. They also power their production with 100% renewable electricity and recycle 95% of the water they use making it a sustainable alternative to traditional leather.



Piñatex & Recycled Polyester

Since the beginning, we've been experimenting with various sustainable materials, including pineapple leather made from pineapple leaf waste known as Piñatex, and recycled polyester derived from repurposed water bottles.

From the passport holder to the backpack, our range includes essential travel companions like the luggage tag, toiletry bag, crossbody, tote bag, side sling, and belt bag. These signature products feature donated Eleather in white, wine, and red. While we have prototyped various other items, these form the core of our collection, embodying our values and style.

9 | OUR FIRST PRODUCT LINE



Passport Holder



Luggage Tag



Toiletry Bag



Crossbody



Tote Bag



Side Sling



Belt Bag



Backpack

HAND PAINTED



Products Sold

From our initial catalog, we have successfully sold over 800+ individual products, catering to approximately 20 different customers. We have not engaged in a significant number of one-on-one sales and have prioritized bulk orders from clients that enable us to maintain financial stability.



Custom Products

We've also done many custom orders, which range from fabric customization for diverse brands to crafting unique hand-painted items. Additionally, we fulfill special requests and one-on-one collaborations.



Partner Gifting

We believe in giving back to our community, that is why we have given over 200+ products away to partners such as CATIE, Tropics Foundation, Southwest, UTSC, ACU Stedmand Hospice, Oak Lawn Hometown Middle School, Branksome Hall School, Liceo Rural Aguazarcas School in Costa Rica and more.



Staff Gifting

We value our staff proudly wearing Wearsos products, so gifting them all multiple products and opportunities to also work with high-end material while prototyping is also part of our business model.



WE'D LIKE TO THANK SOUTHWEST AIRLINES FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT

