SHE WEARS FAIR TRADE
Every garment has a story. When we wear it, that story becomes part of our own.
Fashion has become a sprint, not a marathon. Shoppers run fast because they can. Because prices have plummeted in fashion even though they have risen in almost every other part of life. Because consumers can satiate their desire for the new, now, and next — with a click. Today, Americans spend historically less on clothing, but our closets are bigger than ever.

The industry has always adapted to the times, taking from and influencing culture, and moving between sartorial and street. Fashion icon Diana Vreeland said it best: “Fashion is part of the daily air and it changes all the time, with all the events. You can even see the approaching of a revolution in clothes. You can see and feel everything in clothes.”

We see the tide turning in fashion yet again. This time, however, it’s about a movement, not the latest trends or kicks. It starts by investigating where our clothes come from and acknowledging that our current system leaves the makers, especially women, and our planet in peril. It ends with demanding better and changing the industry together.

This is where fair trade comes in. Every year, our We Wear Fair Trade campaign profiles fashion as part of a positive movement. It honors the anniversary of a fatal moment that gave the industry and people motive to change: The Rana Plaza factory collapsed in Savar, Bangladesh in 2013, where 1,132 people died and another 2,500 were injured. We believe that safe and sustainable production practices will help ensure a more equitable future for fashion.

With that in mind, we bring you the powerful stories of the women inside these factories, as well as seven prominent female advocates here in the US, who are advancing this movement toward a more equitable future. In this lookbook, She Wears Fair Trade, you will learn about their work and their favorite Fair Trade Certified™ styles. We share their voices in the hope that they bring light and inspiration to your own advocacy journey.

Why did we choose women? Because they have the biggest stake in fashion and the most authority to rewrite the story. As one of our advocates, Ayesha Barenblat, said, “Early on, I understood the power of these jobs to lift young women out of poverty. The fashion supply chain is one of the few industries that employs mostly women.” When these jobs are safe, well-paid, and equal in opportunity, women in the garment industry can thrive.

Fair trade helps make this a reality. The same way you look for our seal on coffee, chocolate, and produce, you can also buy clothes made in a Fair Trade Certified factory as an ethical assurance. Our standards regulate working conditions and environmental impact and prohibit egregious social violations like forced and child labor, trafficking, and gender-based discrimination. They help improve the entire fashion ecosystem by regulating employee participation, management, hours, and collective bargaining rights and empower workers to meet their specific needs through Community Development Funds. For every Fair Trade Certified product sold, employees earn additional money that goes into these funds.

From there, a democratically elected committee at the factory meets to decide how to spend their money to address their unique social, economic, and environmental challenges. These stories are in profile on pages 34–35.

By now, we hope you’re wondering how you can play a role because this movement is only possible if we each begin to make more conscientious clothing choices. There are plenty of ways to get involved beyond the closet: Check out page 37 for actions you can take to help the movement and visit FairTradeCertified.org/WeWearFairTrade to see the video interviews with our advocates.

Flip through, be inspired, and act, knowing that you hold the power to catalyze a positive movement for women around the world simply through the clothes that you wear today.

By Kasi Martin and Madison Wilson, Fair Trade USA
“Collaboration is at the heart of any movement toward change. With this year’s We Wear Fair Trade campaign, I aspired to capture and honor the power that comes when we gather our many experiences, skills, and points of view.

Individually, these women work to inspire, organize, and educate their communities. Together, they alchemize to create the kind of transformative power that will influence an entire industry.”

–Rachael Wang, activist and lead stylist for We Wear Fair Trade
Nasreen

Overcoming her past to change fashion’s future
Born in a small, undocumented, male-dominated border village between Nepal and India, Nasreen Sheikh witnessed as a child unconscionable atrocities against children and women. By age nine, she was working 12–15 hours per day in a toxic Nepali sweatshop as a child laborer, receiving less than $2 per shift. Like all girls in her village, Nasreen was not allowed to go to school, but through a serendipitous encounter with a kind stranger who became her personal teacher for 10 years, Nasreen was able to escape the sweatshop as well as forced marriage—the first girl from her village ever to do so.

At age 16, Nasreen founded Local Women’s Handicrafts (LWH), an eco-conscious women’s collective in Kathmandu that empowers and educates marginalized women. LWH has now trained over 100 Nepali women—many of whom have escaped forced and abusive marriages and all of whom are determined to escape poverty—and given away tens of thousands of hygienic supplies to women and girls who cannot afford them. In 2015, Nasreen visited the US and founded Empowerment Collective, a nonprofit organization with the goal to empower 10,000 women by 2025 through two training centers, one already established in Kathmandu and one under construction in a remote Nepali village.

Nasreen gives talks around the world about her work, the plight of child laborers, the devastating effects of fast fashion, and survivors of forced marriage. Her work has been featured in Forbes, Cosmo, the Huffington Post, and Amnesty International. She is currently writing a book, and a documentary about her life story is in production.

“When I was working in the sweatshop, I was only nine or ten years old, working 12-15 hours a day, and nobody knew about it. There’s a responsibility for us to know where our things come from.”

–Nasreen Sheikh, Founder, Empowerment Collective
Whitney & Dominique

Building community around inclusive sustainability
Dominique Drakeford and Whitney McGuire are the founders of Sustainable Brooklyn, a community-based initiative that works to bridge the gaps between the mainstream sustainability movement and targeted communities.

Dominique addresses the intersections of sustainability to heal humanity’s relationship to the earth and create equitable change for economic wellbeing. In addition to being co-founder of Sustainable Brooklyn, she is Lead Editor and Creator of Melanin ASS (Melanin And Sustainable Style), an online publication highlighting Black/Indigenous People of Color in sustainable fashion, beauty, wellness, and agriculture (including land sovereignty). Dominique educates via public speaking, including workshops, keynotes, and panels across New York, California, London and Australia. She has been featured in Elle Magazine, The Cut, Fashionista, i-D, Nylon, Fashion Mag, Cosmopolitan, Who What Wear, SELF, Essence and Green American Magazine.

Whitney is an attorney for creative entrepreneurs, co-founder of record label swiMMMers ear, designer, producer, and mother. Through her work, she champions the sustainability of those hailing from targeted communities including Black/Indigenous artists. Prior to beginning her solo practice, Whitney held positions as a federal judicial law clerk in Las Vegas, and as a contract attorney and later, of counsel, at a Los Angeles based firm, formerly known as The Fashion Law Group. Prior to relocating to New York from Las Vegas, Whitney was an integral board member of the Las Vegas Arts District and the Las Vegas Fashion Council. Currently, Whitney helms Sustainable Brooklyn with her co-founder, educates via workshops, keynotes, and panel discussions, and advises clients in various creative industries utilizing a holistic approach to the practice of law.

“We exist to disrupt the whitewashing of sustainability across all spectrums, especially within agriculture, fashion, and wellness.”

–Dominique Drakeford & Whitney McGuire, Co-Founders, Sustainable Brooklyn
Cameron

Modeling activism for the industry
Cameron Russel is a model, organizer, and writer who has spent the last sixteen years working as a model for clients like Prada, Calvin Klein, Victoria’s Secret, H&M, Vogue, and Elle. She gave one of the top ten most popular TED talks of all time, with over 32 million views and counting, called “Looks aren’t everything. Believe me, I’m a model.” In 2012 she graduated with honors from Columbia University with a degree in economics and political science and wrote a thesis about grassroots cultural workers and political power. After graduating, she organized a collective of artist activists based in Brooklyn. In 2016, she cofounded the Model Mafia, a growing network of hundreds of fashion models committed to building a more equitable, just, and sustainable industry and world. She’s currently finishing work on a book about fashion, intuition, and power.

“Women make up 80% of the fashion industry, and while we are rarely in charge, we do the bulk of the labor and are the bulk of the consumers.”

–Cameron Russel, Founder, Model Mafia
Ayesha

Remaking fashion by mobilizing the masses
Ayesha Barenblat is a social entrepreneur, activist, and educator with a passion for building a sustainable fashion industry that respects women and our planet.

She is the founder and CEO of Remake, whose #WearYourValues campaign has sparked a conscious consumer movement to turn fashion into a force for good. Public education, leadership development, and transparency campaigns are the heartbeat of her social justice organization. Remake’s films, fact-filled stories, and how-to guides help its audience break up with fast fashion, while its ambassador program encourages women to vote with their voice and wallet to build a more equitable fashion industry. Remake’s Sustainable Brand Directory makes it easier for shoppers to embrace a sustainable fashion lifestyle. In just four years, Remake has inspired 150,000 people to remake their closets. Ayesha is focused on growing Remake’s conscious community to 1 million by 2025.

Prior to Remake, Ayesha led brand engagement at Better Work, a World Bank and United Nations partnership to ensure safe and decent working conditions within garment factories around the world. She has also provided strategic advice to brands including the Gucci Group, Levi Strauss & Company, and adidas on the design and integration of sustainability into business.

The resilience and hard work of garment makers remains her constant source of inspiration.

“Fair trade clothing is a step in the right direction to show dignity and the well-being of the women who make our clothes.”

– Ayesha Barenblat, Founder, Remake
Jessica

Giving sustainable fashion an editor's eye
Jessica Andrews is the Deputy Fashion Editor at Bustle. She oversees all things fashion, from red carpet roundups and beauty launches to trend reporting and moving personal essays. Jessica has over 10 years of experience in the fashion industry. Previously, she was the fashion features editor at Teen Vogue, where she wrote some of the brand’s most viral stories, including her essay on cultural appropriation which was one of the most-read articles of 2017. Prior to joining Teen Vogue, Jessica contributed to ELLE, Vanity Fair, The New York Times, and Essence while also running her award-winning blog, Glimazonsblog.com.

“When you do shop, you shop with intention. Look for sustainable materials, ethical business practices, brands that respect labor rights and pay fair wages.”

–Jessica Andrews, Fashion Editor, Bustle
Alexandria

Modeling the next wave of climate activism
It was less than a year ago that Alexandria Villasenor, a fourteen-year-old living in New York City first understood what it meant to be impacted by the climate crisis. Alexandria was visiting her hometown of Davis, California in November 2018 when one of the deadliest wildfires ignited just 100 miles away in Paradise, California and blazed across 153,336 acres, destroying nearly 14,000 residences and killing about 85 people. Alexandria’s experience with the Paradise fire inspired her to speak out about the consequences of climate change. Inspired by Greta Thunberg, Alexandria began protesting outside the United Nations, where she has held a sign with the words “School Strike 4 Climate” every Friday since December 14, 2018. Alexandria has become a leader of student strikes for the climate in the United States and has also launched her own youth-led nonprofit, Earthuprising.org.

“I turned my climate anxiety and ecogrief into action by going on strike every Friday.”

~Alexandria Villasenor, Founder, Earthuprising.org
The Advocates
She Wears
Fair Trade

#WEARFAIRTRADE
With over 75 Fair Trade Certified factories in 15 countries, the fair trade movement is well on its way. Below, stories from three women garment employees in Fair Trade Certified factories on how fair trade changed their lives.

S. Kalavathi, left, and Suryalakshmi G, both members of the Fair Trade Committee at Bestitch Knits, a Fair Trade Certified apparel factory, help organize and serve a daily nutritious refreshments program started by the committee. Kalavathi says, “There are multiple instances where workers arrive for work without breakfast because they live far away or are too busy helping their family prepare for the day. The daily nutritious refreshments we organize is something they can count on to get them to lunchtime.”

Ana Patricia Cocom Mutul, 21, from Tekum, Mexico, provides a final check for a tank top after assembly. She has been working at the Hong Ho apparel factory in Yucatan, Mexico since 2015. In 2017, employees at Hong Ho were given the choice to select from a laptop, TV, or washing machine, purchased through Community Development Funds. Ana states, “I chose a laptop, because I am studying computer science and I needed one for school. It’s not easy to buy a laptop, so, thank you. We do the best we can so that the products we produce are of top quality.”

R. Sumita, 28, joined Connoisseur Fashions, a Fair Trade Certified apparel factory, in 2011 and now works in the cutting department layering cloth to be cut into parts. She has been a member of the Fair Trade Committee for two years, helping implement important community projects for the working group at the factory. “People see me as an initiative taker and someone who’s responsible. I speak to everyone without reservation,” says Sumita. “Before coming to work here, I had no idea what fair trade was, when we started the program here in 2015, I was kind of surprised and in disbelief that this existed. Factories that give back to the workforce and care in this way are few and far between. With our Fair Trade Community Development Funds, workers often receive household goods like rice and oil, which are key to celebrating the Tamil New Year. Workers from other factories are amazed when they hear of the benefits of working at a Fair Trade Certified factory.”
Take Action to Change Fashion

You’ve seen why #WeWearFairTrade, now it’s your turn: Below are a few ways to get involved in the fashion revolution.

- Plan a clothing swap with your friends or community. What a great way to save the planet AND money! Extra credit: pledge to stop shopping for a time period that works for you. Visit FashionRevolution.org for resources.

- Shop Fair Trade Certified factory-made apparel. Ensure that when you do buy new, you buy ethically. Look for the Fair Trade Certified factory seal on your clothes.

- Host a screening of the We Wear Fair Trade videos at your office, home, community group in your city or town.

- Share your favorite look and story from this lookbook on Instagram and let us know why it’s meaningful to you.

- Contact your favorite brand via email or Twitter to tell them you want to see more Fair Trade Certified options.

Visit FairTradeCertified.org/WeWearFairTrade for videos, a shopping guide to fair trade apparel, and more.

Text ‘WearFair’ to 52886 to join the movement.
Credits

ADVOCATES
Nasreen Sheikh
Whitney McGuire and Dominique Drakeford
Cameron Russel
Ayesha Barenblat
Jessica Andrews
Alexandria Villasenor

FAIR TRADE CLOTHIERS
J. Crew
Madewell
MEC
Mountain Khakis
OBEY
Outerknown
Patagonia
prAna
REI Co-op

#WeWearFairTrade
Interested in Fair Trade fashion? Learn more at FairTradeCertified.org/
WeWearFairTrade

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@FairTradeCert

Style Credits

(Page 9)
Shirt: MEC/Women’s All Day Active ¾ Sleeve in Twill Heather
Pants: prAna/Hele Mai Pant in Black

(Page 11)
Shirt: MEC/681772/5057104
Jacket: REI Co-op/Women’s Greenwoods Rain Jacket in Sunbaked Sand
Jeans: J.Crew/9” Toothpick in Tencel Denim in Deep Indigo

(Page 13)
Whitney – Shirt: Mountain Khakis/Women’s Shop Shirt in Navy Solid
Bra: OBEY/Crawford Tube Top
Jeans: J.Crew/Slim Wide Leg in Clean Black
Dominique – Sweatshirt: Outerknown/Solstice Sweatshirt Crew in STR
Pants: Obey/Baldwin Pant in Mustard Multi

(Page 15)
Whitney – Bra: Patagonia/Women’s Active Mesh Bra in Sentinel Stripe Small/Floral Pink
Jacket: REI Co-op/Women’s Rainer Rain Jacket in Sand Storm
Jeans: Madewell/9” High-Rise Skinny in Mackey Wash
Dominique – Bra: Patagonia/Women’s Active Mesh Bra in Sentinel Stripe Small/Birch White/
Atoll Blue
Pants: REI Co-op/Women’s Stormbowl Gtx Pants in Black

(Page 17)
Hoodie: Outerknown/Solstice Cozy Hoodie in PMN
Jeans: Madewell/Classic Straight Full-Length Jeans in Eastend Wash

(Page 19)
Dress: Mountain Khakis/Women’s Strata Knit Dress in Olive

(Page 21)
Dress: prAna/Doryan Dress in Vino Style

(Page 23)
Shirt: Mountain Khakis/Harper Shirt in Indigo
Jeans: Madewell/Classic Straight Jeans in Coldbrook Wash

(Page 25)
T-Shirt: MEC/Women’s Classic Stretch Short Sleeve V-Neck in White
Sweatshirt: OBEY/Women’s Anya Pullover in Mustard
Jeans: Madewell/The Perfect Vintage Jean in Rosabelle Wash/Comfort Stretch

(Page 27)
Dress: Mountain Khakis Women’s Strata Knit Dress in Dove Stripe
Jacket: Patagonia/Men’s Calcite Jacket in Forge Grey

(Page 29)
Shirt: OBEY/Glenview Top in Marshmallow Multi
Jeans: J.Crew/Patch Pocket Slim Wide Leg in Vivid Indigo Wash

(Page 31)
Shirt: REI Co-op/Women’s Sahara Long-Sleeve Shirt in Beachwood
Jeans: J.Crew
Crew and Creatives

**STYLING**
Creative Director/Stylist: Rachael Wang, Rachael Wang Studio
Assistant Stylist: Isabel Garcia
Styling Intern: Yasmine Kenawi

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Text ‘WearFair’ to 52886 to join the movement