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Indego Africa Celebrated for Positive Change Created in Rwanda

Washington, DC (September 23, 2010) – Indego Africa, a New York-based Fair Trade importer, has been recognized for outstanding work empowering women in Rwanda.

Since June 2008, Indego Africa's Hand Up Program has provided training in management, entrepreneurship, computer skills, literacy, and other initiatives to build long-term capacity among more than 250 women in five independent, for-profit artisan cooperatives. Each aspect of the program is designed lift their families out of poverty through Fair Trade partnerships, international export market access, and long-term skills.

“We know that the true potential of Fair Trade is attainable when coupled with three crucial ingredients: skills, information, and confidence,” says Matt Mitro, Indego Africa co-founder. “We want to encourage entrepreneurship and independence - rather than aid dependence - and focus on long-term skills and financial sustainability, rather than short-term interventions.”

As a Fair Trade Organization, Indego Africa has been rigorously evaluated for their full commitment to nine Fair Trade Principles, including transparency, capacity-building, paying promptly and fairly, environmental sustainability, and respect for cultural identity. Their products are available at more than forty retailers throughout the United States and online at IndegoAfrica.org.

“Indego Africa stood out among the six nominees for our 2010 Positive Change in a Producer Community Award,” says Carmen K. Iezzi, Fair Trade Federation executive director. “Their innovative business and education model creates a broad, deep, and sustainable impact on the artisans' lives.”

Indego Africa has been a member of the Fair Trade Federation, the trade association that strengthens and promotes North American organizations fully committed to Fair Trade, since 2009.

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