



## Hope For Women, LLC *Fair Trade Business Model*

### What is Hope For Women?

Hope For Women, LLC ([www.hopeforwomen.com](http://www.hopeforwomen.com)) is a socially responsible for-profit organization committed to providing sustainable employment for economically disadvantaged women worldwide. Hope For Women was created to market artisan greeting cards handmade by women in India and develop a sustainable financial resource for them. From this vision came the primary mission of Hope For Women:

***To provide retail and e-commerce opportunities for products made exclusively by women so they can take control of their lives and futures.***

Within the scope of this mission, Hope For Women attempts to work exclusively with women and businesses owned and operated by women. From our graphic designer and merchant banker to our accountant and copywriter, we have chosen to work with women owned businesses and will continue to make every effort to support women based organizations around the world.

### What is Fair Trade?

The Fair Trade Federation ([www.fairtradefederation.org](http://www.fairtradefederation.org)) defines Fair Trade Criteria as follows:

***Fair trade means an equitable and fair partnership between businesses and organizations in North America and producers in the developing world. Fair trade businesses foster long-term and direct relationships with producers, because they know these connections are a highly effective way to help producers help themselves.***

Fair Trade Federation wholesalers, retailers, and producers are fully committed to:

- ***Paying fair wages in local context;***
- ***Supporting participatory workplaces;***
- ***Ensuring environmental sustainability;***
- ***Supplying financial and technical support;***
- ***Respecting cultural identity;***
- ***Offering public accountability; and,***
- ***Educating consumers.***

### How does Hope For Women execute the Fair Trade Criteria?

- ❖ **Paying fair wages in local context**
  - *Hope For Women works with economically disadvantaged women who have few (if any) employment opportunities. Any employment opportunities for these women would be at the Indian minimum wage standard of about \$1 per day.*

- *Hope For Women artisan partners have the opportunity to make up to 7x the local minimum wage per day.*
- *In addition to a fair wage for each item that is produced, Hope For Women pays the women artisans a guaranteed monthly wage that they can depend on. This stability of guaranteed income has allowed some women to quit other, less satisfying and more physically threatening jobs (street sweeper, road crew, subsistence agriculture).*
- ❖ **Supporting participatory workplaces**
  - *Hope For Women artisans have created and developed all of the greeting card designs. We actively seek our women partner's input on new product ideas and rely on their creative skills.*
  - *Hope For Women also provides a supportive, clean, and safe work environment – the opposite of “sweatshop” labor.*
- ❖ **Ensuring environmental sustainability**
  - *Hope For Women greeting cards are made using 100% “tree free” paper, handmade from recycled cotton rag scraps. Not a single tree is involved.*
  - *Hope For Women packaging is 100% eco-friendly, using 100% recycled paper and innovative EarthFirst® PLA compostable film made from corn.*
  - *For all of the printing on our cards and packages we use only non-toxic food grade ink classified as “vegetable ink”*
  - *All of our flowers and ferns are either grown in our garden using organic farming methods, or are sustainably harvested in the wild without damage to the plant or soil.*
- ❖ **Supplying financial and technical support**
  - *Hope For Women pays the women we work with in advance for their hand-crafted products, ensuring timely and guaranteed payment for their work. This is tremendously important to the women since most typical companies pay for product 60 to 90 days after it has been delivered, which denies the women the ability to leverage the funds for more opportunities (i.e. secure raw materials) and utilize the funds for covering their basic needs.*
  - *For technical support – Hope For Women provides design guidance for US market tastes, and marketing guidance for packaging and promoting the product.*
- ❖ **Respecting cultural identity**
  - *Hope For Women respects the culture of the producers we work with by not imposing foreign beliefs into their work environment, and we consider cultural appropriateness in everything from the materials we source to the organizational systems we have in place.*
- ❖ **Offering public accountability**
  - *Hope For Women's management policies, and business practices are open to the public and monitoring by the Fair Trade Federation.*
- ❖ **Educating consumers**
  - *Hope For Women educates consumers about the importance of purchasing fairly traded products that support living wages and healthy working conditions. We provide information about our women producers' history, culture and living conditions on our website and use our packaging to educate consumers about why purchasing Fair Trade can make a difference.*