



ARTISANS
DU MONDE
POUR UN COMMERCE
ÉQUITABLE

Autres échanges, Otros intercambios, otro mundo Changing trade to change the world autre monde

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Newsletter of Artisans du Monde and its Southern partners

EDITO

This is the third issue of *Autres échanges, autre monde*, the newsletter linking Artisans du Monde and our partners in the South.

The focus this time is on our movement's General Assembly, a major event for us, which took place in June 2007.

Also in this issue: two kits for learning experiences, which we have produced in partnership with two of our partners from the South to enhance awareness of fair trade among citizens of the North, one of our major challenges.

This issue also brings you an interview with Nicolas Sulmont, the new director of Solidar'Monde, and a report on the latest International Fair Trade Association conference, which took place in Belgium in May.

To finish off, you can read the interview with Laputa Hwamiridza, director of DeZign Inc., whom we were lucky enough to interview in May.

Enjoy!

Jean-Baptiste Cavalier

The **Artisans du Monde Federation** is an IFAT member (International Fair Trade Association).

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ARTISANS DU MONDE FEDERATION'S 2007 GENERAL ASSEMBLY: PARTNERS FROM THE SOUTH ARE FOREMOST IN DEBATES

More than 300 representatives from the 169 Artisans du Monde associations from all over France met in Paris at the end of June to take part in the 2007 General Assembly of our movement. Others attending included James Lew, the representative of the Mauritian organisation Craft Aid organisation, Giorgio dal Fiume, the chairman of CTM-Altromercato (Italy) and Gustave Massiah, the chairman of the Centre de Recherche et d'Information pour le Développement (CRID).



Many issues were raised over the two days. **How will Artisans du Monde fare financially** during this period of crisis for the fair trade association movement in France? **How can we develop our activity** when our network's growth is slowing down? **What sort of guarantee system** do we wish to set up? **What sort of outfits from the countries of the South do we wish to work with**, and under what conditions?



Artisans du Monde's General Assembly brought together 300 activists

work with the most marginalised producers in the world even though they ensure a complete range of original, quality products at reasonable prices. Because we chose to work with struggling producers, it is obvious the supplies are not always regular. In some cases, products which sell well come from well-developed outfits in the South.

The question is where to draw the line between the commercial development of our own outlets and the support we give to some of our most vulnerable partners of the South, those who are the most risky from a commercial viewpoint. By clearly setting out **geographical, economic, political and social criteria** to judge by, the New Partnership Policy should enable us to rise to this challenge. Therefore, in a difficult context and faced with major difficulties, the Artisans du Monde movement at its General Meeting has managed to take the necessary steps to prepare for the future, which we hope will be a bright one for fair trade.

In order to try address this last issue that a **New Partnership Policy** was proposed. As we often have to stress, it is only to be expected that you will sometimes experience delays in delivery or run out of stock if you

GUSTAVE MASSIAH, PRESIDENT OF THE CRID, WAS A GUEST AT FÉDÉRATION ARTISANS DU MONDE'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY: EXTRACTS

"Fair trade is not just a good idea. It's also a way to focus on the producers and on world trade. Our strength as associations in the CRID is to act on the world scale, so as not to remain mere observers.

We can exist on the scale of the world if we want to. If you think small, then you'll act small, and remain in the minority. At the CRID, we know that our questions are the ones that the majority of French society is asking.

If we want to make an impact, we must form alliances and take part in a broader movement, such as the World Social Forums, where Artisans du Monde has been extremely active – perhaps a little less so there past few years, but this should be temporary.

As Joseph Stiglitz, the former chief economist of the World Bank said, what the alternative to globalisation shows is that nothing will happen if public opinion in the North is not on side.

Now what a movement like Artisans du Monde proves is that world public opinion is not the prerogative of the countries of the North, the South too has its public opinion. All of this comes together in the forums organised by World Social Forums for example to be taken seriously on the world stage. And let's not forget that it's creative to resist."

What is the CRID?

The **Centre for Research and Information on Development** (Centre de Recherche et d'Information pour le Développement, or CRID) was launched in 1976. Today it consists of over fifty French Actions for International Solidarity working in partnership with associations in the South and in Eastern Europe committed to the development of their communities, with a network of 1500 partners in these countries. In France, the members of the CRID form a network of 7 500 local groups with 180 000 volunteers.

The CRID is made up of French International Solidarity Associations, which:

- share common values of human development, emphasizing **principles of solidarity and sustainability**,
- work in **partnership with organisations of the South and Eastern Europe**,
- implement **learning experience programmes** on development in French schools and promote **citizen advocacy campaigns**,
- take part in constructing a **world citizens' movement in favour of international solidarity** and in transposing it to France.

JAMES LEW, FROM CRAFT AID, AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FEDERATION ARTISANS DU MONDE: A FEW COMMENTS

James Lew is the representative of Craft Aid (Republic of Mauritius). He took part in the Federation Artisans du Monde's General Assembly in Paris on 23rd and 24th June 2007. Here are a few comments he made on the occasion of his visit...

"It's the first time I've been to a general assembly with so many people attending from so many different backgrounds with so many different ideas. I'm very glad to have been invited. Coming here has given me an insight into the way you work. I've been able to speak with many, many activists.

What is CRAFT AID ?

Craft Aid was founded in 1982 and its field of action is Mauritius. The organisation hopes to develop trade to create jobs and raise the standard of living for handicapped people. The aim for Craft Aid is to bring handicapped – or **differently able** – people back into society and to allow them to work with able-bodied people.

To do this, Craft Aid has four lines of production: making cards, decorating pressed dried flowers, wrapping and conditioning sugar and vanilla in textile. Craft Aid employs around 130 people, **60% handicapped**, all over sixteen years of age. About one hundred craftspeople look after the production, and the rest deal with the administrative side of activities. They work eight hours a day with regular pauses at fixed intervals.

I realise that there is a problem between the volunteers and Solidar'Monde. But you know that Solidar'Monde does very good work in the textile industry. It's one of our most efficient partners for this type of products. The requests we receive have a lot in them, and it's a pity that they are not followed up with enough orders. It's a big job to prepare a dossier and frustrating when you only sell 3,500 items. I think there is a problem of Solidar'Monde's products not being displayed prominently enough in Artisans du Monde's shops. The volunteers don't know them well enough.

You really must go out and see the producers. You know, you only see the outcome of this work, but what you do in France has a real impact on the producers in the South. Fair trade changes their lives. To see this, you must go and visit them on the spot, see how they work, discuss things with them. Things are changing, little by little.

BLANKENBERGE 2007: FEDERATION ARTISANS DU MONDE AT THE IFAT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

From 12th to 17th May 2007, more than 350 representatives of fair trade organisations from the North as well as the South took part in the **biennial International Fair Trade Association (IFAT) International Conference**, at the Belgian seaside resort of Blankenberge.

Both **Federation Artisans du Monde** and **Solidar'Monde** were present. The conference gave the opportunity to meet a good few of our partners.

- From the South : Jute Works (Bangladesh), Creative Handicraft (India), Mikono (Tanzania), Fundacion Solidaridad (Chile), Association for Craft Producers (Nepal), Comparte (Chile), Silence (India), Podie (Sri Lanka), Thai Tribal Crafts (Thailand), Kairos (Brazil), Bombolulu (Kenya), Craft Aid (Mauritius)...
- From the North : Oxfam – Magasins du Monde (Belgium), Ideas (Spain), CTM (Italy), Pangea (Italy), Traid-craft (UK), Au-delà des Frontières (France), Artisanat Sel (France)...



Participants in front of the conference building

It was also the opportunity to discuss many burning issues for the fair trade movement: ISO standardisation, the project to develop a Fair Trade Organisation label to be put on products, access to market for fair trade crafts, tourism etc.

Among the various subjects discussed, the approval of the IFAT association project for 2007-2011 was at the top of the agenda. This working plan gives voice to the **main strategic orientations** of the international organisation for the coming five years. It is constructed around five aims:

- **To strengthen the international fair trade movement** while reflecting its extraordinary diversity and its different outlooks;
- **To strengthen the general public's confidence** in Fair Trade Organisations;
- **To promote access to markets** for Fair Trade Organisation;
- **To speak out of fair trade** (communication, awareness raising, education, advocacy);
- **To strengthen the IFAT organisation** (governance, daily working, representation of members...).

One of the priorities stressed was **to strengthen the IFAT system of guarantees**, in particular in vetting members as soon as they join the movement, going through a probationary period, and in increasing the number of external evaluations. It is indispensable to improve the system in order to gain better credibility in the eyes of the general public.

INTERVIEW OF NICOLAS SULMONT, THE NEW MANAGER OF SOLIDAR'MONDE

By Violaine Joffart, who writes for the communication department at Solidar'Monde

What is your approach as the new General manager of Solidar'Monde?

Solidar'Monde is a limited liability company, a *société anonyme* in France, which means that there is a board which plays a predominant role. Odile Proust chairs the board and my role as general manager is to carry out the action plan as it is defined. I was first a volunteer in a local association belonging to Artisans du Monde, so I know what it's like to work in a shop, and then as a board member of this association I took part in the various debates over the orientations which the network should take [...].

What's more, my knowledge of the rules of trade and business principles, my experience in running a warehouse, of purchasing and developing new lines of products, of managing a business qualify me for the responsibilities of a managing director.

Today fair trade is booming, with all that entails in terms of positive and negative outcomes. New competitors are arriving on the market all the time with new ideas, different methods and means, and we must call ourselves into question if we want to achieve our development and our goals, in harmony with the strategic choices as defined by Artisans du Monde.

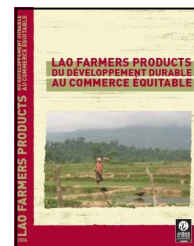
What does fair trade mean to you today?

I believe in trade if it's done correctly. I am not much of a consumer and I don't approve of the consumer society, but I do not reject trade holus bolus. [...] I think that it should be carried out with respect, and along well defined lives. [...] We must aim at a basic balance of things. I think that is what the future is. And Solidar'Monde must trade, in our own way, with our own approach, our convictions and our own ideas!



TOWARDS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF FAIR TRADE IN FRANCE: A LEARNING KIT ON OUR PARTNERS IN THE SOUTH

In order to raise awareness among young people in France about the problems of world trade and the alternative represented by fair trade, Artisans du Monde has just published two learning kits, which map out the supply chain taken by two products in fair trade: Lao Farmers' Products' rice, and olive oil from the Palestinian NGO PARC (*Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees*).



These two kits, produced in cooperation with our Lao and Palestinian partners, contain a video, a teaching handbook, giving guidelines for a learning experience, background notes and activities, and the full story of how rice and olive oil are traded. They show what is special about fair trading, from the producer to the consumer, and give a critical view of conventional trading. They also let children see what different conditions the producers engaged in fair trade are confronted with. For our partner in Laos, fair trade is first and foremost part of a global approach of sustainable development, bringing together economic, social and environmental criteria. For our partner in Palestine, it means securing an outlet for the foremost farming activity in the country, and is considered a form of non-violent resistance.

In the years to come, Artisans du Monde should continue to produce these sorts of teaching aids in partnership with other organisations of producers in the South. Portraits of Artisans du Monde's partners.

INTRODUCING ARTISANS DU MONDE'S PARTNERS

LAPUTA HWAMIRIDZA : « Let's be political »



Laputa Hwamiridza is the managing director of Dezign Inc, a Zimbabwean fair trade business specialising in printing T-shirts, cards and games for children. Time was when he was a senior executive for Unilever, one of the world's leading groups producing

consumer goods, and he strove to respond to his employer's single expectation: to sell at all costs.

One day, he discovered fair trade, gave up the advantages which his job in a multinational firm in a country of the south gave him to join the Dezign Inc outfit. Today around a hundred people work for this business which does not simply produce but also raises the awareness of Zimbabwean consumers and students.

This is only logical for Laputa, who stands up for political free trade, from the producer to the consumer, and fair trade organisations which stress solidarity and unity.

Dezign Inc.

Dezign Inc was set up in 1988 by two South Africans who had gone to Zimbabwe. It is a limited liability company whose main aim, beyond producing goods for sale, is to combat certain inequalities by giving black wage-earners their place in the workforce and an income. The 115 wage-earners thus own 40% of the capital and take part in the decision-making process.

"In Dezign Inc. each wage-earner is a stakeholder in the business. I think that this is the best means to promote democracy: practice it on a day-to-day basis." (Laputa Hwamiridza).

Dezign Inc. strives to develop products and production systems which respect the environment, especially through the use of recycled materials and biodegradable products. Part of the revenue from sales is ploughed back into a tree planting scheme.

Dezign Inc. is also engaged in many welfare activities: it finances supplements to pensions/pension supplements, trains people (secretarial skills, use of the computer...), sets up a credit fund run by the workers themselves, takes part in a solidarity plan for people infected with the AIDS virus.



ARTISANS DU MONDE

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If you wish to write an article about your organization, an experience you are involved in, or any other subjects that you find interesting, do not hesitate to contact us at:

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