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clothes for good



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# Behind the Seams

ISSUE 7

# Thankyou

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# Wearing Poverty Out

By Maria Chenoweth-Casey,  
CEO at TRAIID

**TRAID's work to stop wearable clothes being thrown away and to reuse them instead, has extraordinary environmental and social benefits.**

Our clothes donation banks and free home collections stops the unnecessary waste of clothes, while reuse keeps wearable clothing in circulation for longer.

At the same time, TRAIID charity shops provide an alternative to buying new which reduces consumption and waste, while the money raised funds projects tackling the exploitation of people and the environment in the global textile supply chain.

More than one year on from the collapse of the Rana Plaza garment factory which killed over 1133 people, and injured over 2,500 - one of the world's worst industrial incidents - a radical rethink of the way we produce, consume and dispose of our clothes is long overdue.

This issue of Behind the Seams brings together a wealth of likeminded individuals and organisations dedicated to creating a more sustainable relationship with our clothes.

The academic Kate Fletcher argues persuasively that we should pay more attention to how we use our clothes rather than our ownership of them, artist Alex Noble discusses the relationship between creativity and sustainability, and our own Sarah Klymkiv discusses how TRAIID's work challenges fast fashion's grip on the high street.

Not so long ago, the organic food movement was seen as a niche market. Today, the idea that we are what we eat has gained huge traction with the public using their leverage as consumers to bring organic food into the mainstream marketplace. At TRAIID, we also believe that when it comes to fashion, what we put on our bodies is as important as what we put in

them. Progress is slow, and an ethical high street is a long way off, however, right now, there is a rapidly growing movement of organisations and individuals, including TRAIID and our partners, taking practical action to improve social and environmental conditions across the textile supply chain, and calling for a sector which lifts its workers out of poverty rather than consigning them to it.



## Book a Free Home Collection

TRAID collecting unwanted clothes from Nathan, Joanna and Theo in North London  
Photo: © Kit Oates /TRAID

**TRAID has expanded our free home collections service offering scheduled pickups of unwanted clothes and shoes to include households in London, Surrey, Hertfordshire and Slough.**

Your donations enable TRAIID to stock our charity shops and raise funds to protect the environment and fight global poverty.

Simply book a collection online, by phone or email, and TRAIID will collect your unwanted clothes direct from your door in one of our lovely branded vans.

Every donation is precious to TRAIID enabling us to stock our charity shops and raise funds to protect the environment and fight global poverty. Collections take place when you are at home so you don't need to leave donations outside where they are vulnerable to theft and bad weather.

Importantly, by giving your unwanted clothes directly to TRAIID, you also know donations are reaching the charity.

Maria Chenoweth-Casey TRAIID's CEO said: "TRAID's free home collection service brings the charity to your door so it's never been easier for households to donate unwanted clothes rather than throwing them away. Every donation helps us to shrink waste, carbon emissions and consumption, while raising urgently needed funds to fight global poverty."

In the UK, around 30% of our clothes haven't been worn for at least a year, and it is estimated that there are currently 500 Million garments languishing in our wardrobes which have never even been worn. So, clear your wardrobe and book a collection. TRAIID loves the clothes you don't.

To book a collection online go to [www.traid.org.uk/collections](http://www.traid.org.uk/collections), phone 020 8733 2580 (then press Option 1) or email [recycling@traid.org.uk](mailto:recycling@traid.org.uk)

## Late Night TRAIID

Photos: © TRAIID



Throughout 2014, selected TRAIID charity shops are open late for sustainable shopping, events and workshops to help you make the most of your charity shop finds.

At our late nights, browse the rails to the vinyl delights of our charity shop DJ for the best in hand-picked second-hand clothes, vintage and shoes. Plus, the TRAIID team will be on hand with styling tips and ideas of how to take control of your wardrobe to make it more ethical and sustainable.

To complement an evening of charity shopping, late night activities include Sew Good workshops teaching the basic skills you need to up-cycle and repair your garments, signing TRAIID's #SECOND-HANDFIRST pledge to commit to buying fewer new clothes, booking an ethical styling appointment and finding out more about the projects and partners we fund and support – all made possible by reclaiming the UK public's unwanted clothes.

At TRAIID's late night opening in our Dalston store on April 24th, we marked the one-year anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh donating every sale made from 6:30pm – 9pm directly to the National Garment Workers' Federation (NGWF), one of the few organisations directly supporting the most vulnerable and impoverished victims of the collapse.

We are delighted to say we raised £1,035. Thank you everyone.

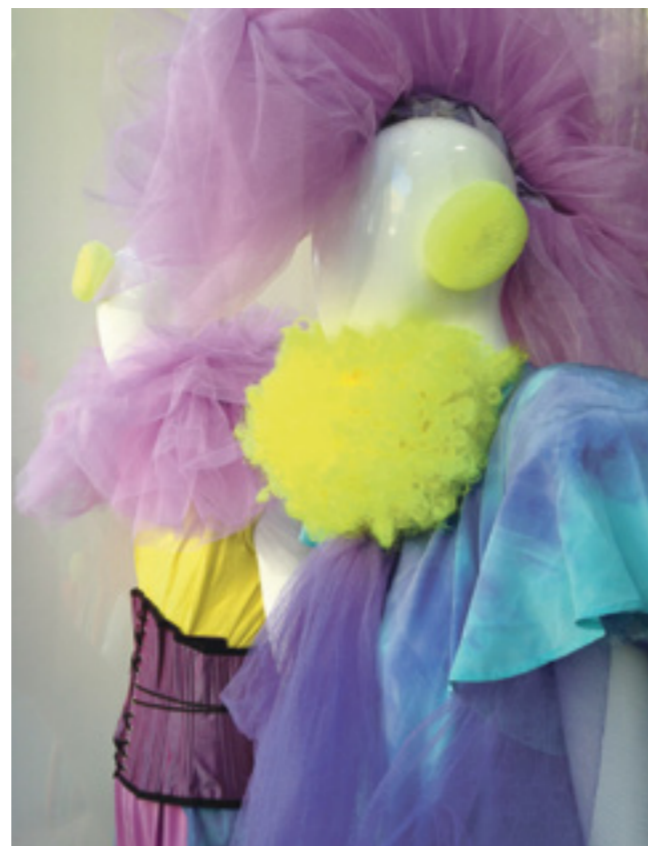
All staff wore second hand tee shirts emblazoned with Katharine Hamnett's iconic slogan No More Fashion Victims, and we supported the Fashion Revolution Day campaign to raise awareness of the conditions our clothes are made in.

Information about TRAIID Late Nights can be found on our website [www.traid.org.uk](http://www.traid.org.uk) or using the hashtag #latenighttraid.



## TRAID remade AW14

Next season TRAIIDremade has an exciting collaboration with Soho based menswear brand Percival. We have been working with the Percival design team to create the new AW14 collection featuring a collection of men's casual shirts, blazers and trousers and some outerwear all manufactured in the UK with reclaimed textiles donated to TRAIID. We will also have a capsule collection of women's wear designed by Olivia Hegarty for TRAIIDremade. The collaboration will combine Percival's design expertise with TRAIID's stock of donated fabrics to create unique on trend pieces for fashion conscious ethical consumers. The collection will be available to buy online at [www.traidremade.com](http://www.traidremade.com), at TRAIID Dalston and in a London pop up to be announced later this year.



# TRAID Window Love



TRAID window displays are attracting huge amounts of praise, love and tweets from customers and passers-by. Put together with flair and wit by our Visual Merchandiser Francesco Colucci, with able assistance from our creative team, the windows take direct inspiration from our work to reuse unwanted clothes. The result is bold unconventional displays which use and celebrate the colours, shapes and textures of the thousands of garments donated to TRAIID every day. If you have seen a TRAIID window you love tweet us with the hashtag #traidwindowlove.

Photos: © Francesco Colucci





Left: Honor Evans (left) and Louise Benard in their final up-cycled pieces.  
Photo: © Moses Powers

By Sarah Klymkiw, TRAIID Educator

## Reimagining Textile Waste

As a teenager in the 90's, growing up in the suburbs, my Saturdays were spent wandering around the shopping centre of the nearest town. This was our entertainment and how we would while away the weekend.

Before fast fashion's grip on the high street, we would go into a clothes shop, try something on, then save our money returning a month later to buy it. At this point, you knew whether or not the desire to own the garment was real.

Fast forward 20 years and our high streets are packed with cheap high turnover clothes which has changed, even corrupted our relationship with clothes as we consume without purpose or thought, but just because we can.

Being TRAIID's Education Officer puts me in contact with young people and it's clear that there is huge pressure on them to subscribe to, and keep up with, rapidly changing trends through their purchases.

With sewing and textiles in formal education no longer seen as a core subject there is a generation that are, according to a recent Craft Council report, losing important haptic (tactile) skills. Craft is vital to building these haptic skills, and careers in dentistry and in surgery rely on them.

What is also clear is that losing these skills clouds our understanding of value, quality and craftsmanship. When it comes to our clothes, the ability to fix and mend garments, to think creatively about textile waste, and to understand how clothes are made is crucial to slowing fashion down.

For the last three years, TRAIID has worked on a series of projects with young people from the Zone Youth Club in Islington to introduce them to these very skills. This year, I worked with a fantastic group aged 14 – 19 on a six-month project to build their sewing techniques, to understand how to construct and deconstruct clothes and to explore different ways to up-cycle textile waste through printing, weaving and surface design. It was also an opportunity to challenge the allure and notion of fast fashion, and the subsequent huge increase in discarding clothes and consumption of our precious resources. The final project brief of Reincarnations took the folk art of Mexico's Day of the Dead as our theme



Above: From left, Zone participants Katharine White, Honor Evans, Louise Benard, Topsy Sallows and Jessica Grech.

Photo: © Moses Powers

to bring unwanted textiles back to life using the creative skills and techniques they had learned over the previous months. They worked with the artist and designer Moses Powers to style and photograph their final pieces using TRAIID's warehouse as their backdrop.

The project ended with an exhibition of their work at TRAIID's Camden store showcasing the pieces they had up-cycled and re-imagined, along with their photography, to family, peers and friends. Garments were displayed in our windows to huge acclaim from our customers and the passing public.

Most powerfully, working with the class over 6-months not only created space to develop skills and explore their creativity, but also to understand their relationship with clothes and ultimately, to loosen fast fashion's grip on them.

If you are interested in TRAIID's education programme, email [sarah@traid.org.uk](mailto:sarah@traid.org.uk).

# From the Zone

By Jessica Grech

Jessica, aged 15, took part in the six-month project with TRAIID (see page 8–9). Here she talks about the positive impact the project has had on her.

Left: Jessica Grech at TRAIID warehouse shoot  
Photo: © Moses Powers

This project helped me to make friends for life because we all share a love of sewing. We go to exhibitions and talk about fashion and creating garments. I feel more confident in making decisions and am much more independent in terms of sewing and how I express my style of fashion. After making my final piece which was a cartoon version of the Day of the Dead, I now want to create a ready to wear collection.

I balanced college work and making my final piece at the same time enabling me to plan and meet deadlines. When I face a problem I normally become impatient and frustrated and want to fix it by myself. But, I learned to work with others and ask for help.

This project has started my career. It got me into college, taught me how to sew, and expanded my thinking process. It gave me experience in modelling and seeing how a catwalk works and opened me up to the fashion world. It has given me an insight into the importance of recycling and that all material is precious.

I learned to be creative in terms of the materials I use, and used techniques to create abstract pieces. Being creative is one of the best parts of the workshop because we are in control of the idea and design. As I've got more creative the outfits get harder and I've gained more sewing skills so can keep pushing them as my creativity grows.

I now reuse my unwanted clothes by recycling and up-cycling them. I know how to embroider, add contrast fabric, shorten, am a much better hand sewer and can make a different item from an old piece. I also have the confidence to buy second hand clothes to satisfy current fashion and trends.

My favourite things about the project were the weekly tasks. They progressed by covering a wide range of techniques. I have learnt so much in terms of sewing skills, but also personal skills like socialising. Thanks TRAIID for everything.



# Fashion's Wall of Waste

By Christina Dean

In 2014, TRAIID is supporting the EcoChic Award launched by Redress, a Hong Kong based NGO with a mission to promote environmental sustainability in the fashion industry by reducing textile waste, pollution and energy consumption. Here, Founder and CEO of Redress Christina Dean talks about the wall of waste generated by the fashion industry, and what we can do to tear it down.

There is a wall of textile waste forming. It is fed from textile waste that flows from factories and cascades from closets. This wall reflects a contrasting image to the flashy images that ooze from pages of glossy magazines and off the catwalks.

This wall has size and impact. The total annual generation of all types of textile waste in China is estimated to be more than 20 million tonnes. European Union consumers discard 5.8 million tonnes of textiles every year, and an average of 217 tonnes of textiles are dumped into Hong Kong's landfills every day representing approximately 9,083 discarded garments entering into Hong Kong's landfills every hour. The need to combat this textile waste is as real for the environment as it is for the economy.

Textile production results in drastic natural resource depletion and it causes serious environmental pollution, with The World Bank estimating that 17-20 percent of global industrial water pollution comes from the treatment and dyeing of textiles. With textile production being so polluting, such high waste numbers are even more unpalatable. Textile waste represents lost economic value, with reports estimating that China's potential textile waste market value may be as high as RMB60 billion.

As a result, we are seeing a growing artillery of waste-reducing techniques developed by fashion designers, brands and industry. These multi-stakeholders are making their own dents in the wall and are further driven by the need to protect their bottom lines and to promote 'better' business practices.

This is why we launched The EcoChic Design Award ([www.ecochicdesignaward.com](http://www.ecochicdesignaward.com)), a sustainable design competition challenging emerging designers to cut waste out of fashion through the sustainable design techniques of zero-waste design, up-cycling and reconstruction.

It's a career changing opportunity open to designers living in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, UK, France, Germany, Sweden and Denmark.

A panel of industry experts will assess entries to pick one talented designer from each region who will travel to Hong Kong in January 2015 to show their sustainable collections on the runway at Hong Kong Fashion Week where the winners will be announced.

The aim of the competition is to provide knowledge and the skills for designers to design waste out of fashion. If we can see the wall as an opportunity and not an obstacle, then we are halfway towards winning the battle.

The EcoChic Design Award 2014/15 is now closed for entries. Follow the competition results @redress\_asia, and find out how to enter in 2015/2016 at [www.ecochicdesignaward.com](http://www.ecochicdesignaward.com)

We are delighted to announce that TRAIID is opening a new charity shop at 14 – 16 Rye Lane, SE15 5BS in the heart of bustling Peckham! It's our twelfth charity shop across ten London boroughs - Camden, Haringey, Islington, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, City of Westminster, Lambeth, Wandsworth, Hackney, and now Southwark.

It's a big shop and will be stocked to the rafters with quality affordable second-hand clothes, vintage, shoes, accessories, linen, books and bric-a-brac. From fashion lovers to bargain hunters, there will be something for everyone at TRAIID Peckham. The shop is currently being refurbished under the watchful eye of Mark Lawrence, European Visual Manager at Urban Outfitters who has brilliantly steered five of our shop refits to date, and Nik Malek, TRAIID's Area Retail Manager and shop fitter extraordinaire.

Enedina Columbano, TRAIID's Commercial Director said, 'We have been looking for the right shop in Peckham for a few years, and finally found it. It's important to TRAIID that our shops help to enhance the high street and community, and we're confident that the shop re-fit will make it one of the most attractive outlets on Rye Lane. TRAIID looks forward to welcoming our first Peckham customers very soon!'

TRAIID Peckham will be open from Monday – Saturday 10am – 6pm, and Sunday's and Public Holidays from 11am – 5pm.

# TRAIID Peckham Opening

Photo: © Leigh McAlea



Far Left: Dublin 2012, 'This jumper belonged to my Mum in the 1970's. Her sister knitted it. They're both deceased so this piece is very special to me.'  
Photo: © Des Moriarty

Left: March 2013, 'This was my jumper when I was seven. My mother bought it for me on an office trip overseas to Japan Tokyo Disneyland.'  
Photo: © Paul Allister

Left: Marin City, California 2012, 'The top of the dress, it was a little too low cut, so I just pinned a scarf on it.' Photo: © Paige Green

## Craft of Use

By Kate Fletcher

**An important aim of TRAIID's work is to encourage people to reject the quick unsatisfactory fixes of fast fashion and to create a more ethical, sustainable and loved wardrobe. TRAIID has long admired the work of academic and cultural historian Kate Fletcher on fashion, and here she talks about the importance of shifting the focus of fashion away from what we own, to how and why we use our clothes.**

A little over a week ago, the IPCC's latest report on climate change set out the risks a changing climate poses to life and livelihoods. For many of us working in the fashion-sustainability arena, the report, which comes at the end of a bleak 12-month period that started with the devastating Rana Plaza clothing factory collapse in Bangladesh, stresses the diversity of critical issues facing the fashion sector and the urgent need for action.

Fashion is readily characterised as the poster-industry of consumerist materialism; as frivolous, superficial and evanescent. It is shaped by the superfluity of mass production and unlimited consumption; an industry linked to abuses of workers' rights and the creation of waste. And yet it is also a space at the heart of contemporary culture, and one that provides employment, an opportunity for creativity, communication with each other, personal pleasure and products that meet basic needs. So, how to respond to this complex challenge?

Working on the premise that to effect big change, we start small, one of my recent research projects, Local Wisdom, has been talking to the public about what they do with their garments, actions we call the craft of use. Take the example of the Three

Stage Jacket, a waistcoat that over the course of 40 years was transformed – and added to – over and over again to meet changing needs; or the Dress from Antibes, which is shared (in a spirit of friendly competition) by six women from three generations of the same family.

What these examples spotlight are sets of satisfying actions, ideas and skills that show fashion in a different light, where the pinch of resource scarcity is no limit to what is possible, in which fashion is not just about consumption – shopping, watching, purchasing. Furthermore they point to a little-considered idea: that of usership as distinct from ownership, as a route to fashion success.

Beyond a doubt, these tales of use are important to issues of sustainability. What happens after we have bought a garment is often the source of most environmental impact in that garment's life (the energy needed to launder most garments dwarfs that required to make them) and it is also the key source of satisfaction. More than that, it gets to the heart of the issue so central to sustainability themes of growth, consumption and their effects. Wellbeing is about more than having more. To be well, to live well and to thrive as human beings on this planet, we need a different engagement with material things, including our clothes.

The craft of use sees a radical garment as one achieved through time. Using garments intensively for long periods acts to buffer, refine and reduce the pace of consumption – with benefits including our own wellbeing and that of others on whose goodwill we depend. The craft of use has also explored ways to amplify these actions and has grown into a col-

laboration between seven design universities in three continents, led by the Centre for Sustainable Fashion and funded by The Leverhulme Trust.

As designers working on these sustainability themes we realised that often the best fashion outcome wasn't necessarily a piece of clothing. Fashion provision and expression is a broad spectrum featuring garments, supply chains, skills, stories, ideas, behaviours and individuals. Our design work ranges from exploring the satisfaction of pockets, to tools to tend and groom clothes; from work on the creation of seams that invite altering, to the reproduction of much-loved garments. Much of this work exists in places other than the commercial fashion space and so it rattles some cages.

All of it exists in the lives of people who use clothing and so it is both already happening and eminently achievable. The craft of use is both profound and pragmatic. Profound because if sustainability is an outcome of the way we live our lives, and life happens as clothes are worn and used and tended, then this is where the sustainability of fashion resides. Pragmatic because it is in all of our hands and hearts and minds.

Kate Fletcher is reader in sustainable fashion at the London College of Fashion's Centre for Sustainable Fashion. She is author of *Sustainable Fashion and Textiles: Design Journeys* (2008) and co-author of *Fashion and Sustainability: Design for Change* (2012). This piece first appeared in [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk) in May 2014.

Find out more at [www.katefletcher.com](http://www.katefletcher.com) or follow [@katefletcher](https://twitter.com/katefletcher)

Below: 10-year old Miah holding a photograph of his mother who died when the Rana Plaza factory collapsed in April 2013.

Photo: © Rainbow Collective



# Tears in the Fabric

**This year, TRAIID part funded the film Tears in the Fabric, a documentary focussing on one family in the aftermath of the Rana Plaza garment factory collapse in April 2013. Made by filmmakers and social justice activists Hannan Majid and Richard York of Rainbow Collective, here they describe the process of making the film.**

**TRAIID: The film follows Razia Begum, a grandmother, who is now the sole carer of her grandchildren when both daughters were killed in the factory collapse. Have brands or factory owners paid any compensation to Razia and people like her?**

Rainbow Collective: Razia Begum is a grandmother who lost her 2 daughters and a son in law in the disaster. She now looks after her 2 young grandsons and is struggling to make ends meet and to come to terms with the enormity of her loss. When her family was still alive, they all lived together in a nice house with plenty of food and the kids were in school. Now, Razia and the boys have found themselves homeless and relying on the goodwill of others in order to survive. The film follows the distraught but resilient Razia, a year on from losing most of her family, as she struggles to educate her grandchildren while fighting for compensation from the brands.

At this moment in time the only money families have received is from Primark and Matalan and that was a small amount. Primark and other brands have promised to give more but as yet they have not delivered. Negotiations between brands, unions and campaign groups are ongoing whilst the families in Savar struggle to put food on the table.

**TRAIID: Tears in the Fabric takes an observational approach looking at the issues through the eyes of one family, why was this important to you?**

Rainbow Collective: When we make documentaries we prefer to use an observational style to tell our story. This method also gives the viewer the opportunity to get a feel and understand what life is like for Razia Begum. We think it is a much more effective way rather than filming a straight talking head interview. Originally, the documentary was going to focus on one family and the National Garment Workers Federation (NGWF) but when we met Razia Begum we found her story so compelling that we chose to focus on her. Her story is a microcosm of the entire situation. She represents hundreds of other families as there are many that are in her situation.

**TRAIID: A lot of your work to date has focused on the exploitation of garment workers, do these issues have particular resonance for you?**

Rainbow Collective: Yes in many ways. Exploitation of workers, whether it be in the UK or the developing world, is something that should concern us all. In Bangladesh in particular, you easily see the exploitation of garment workers and children for cheap labour. These two issues are close to our hearts and we have spent many years and made numerous documentaries and campaign videos to highlight this.

**TRAIID: The work of the NGWF, a Bangladeshi garment trade union supported by TRAIID, are a symbol of hope for garment workers in this film. How important a role do they play in improving conditions?**

Rainbow Collective: They have a huge role. They are doing some extraordinary work in Bangladesh particularly with female garment workers. We have been working with them for many years. We have chosen to work with them because of the excellent and important work that they are doing. While shooting Tears in the Fabric, we could really see firsthand the work that they are doing to support families who were victims of Rana Plaza. It's very touching to see how the NGWF are supporting communities in Savar including providing funds and food as brands are not providing compensation. Plus, they demonstrate and protest regularly to keep the issue alive when many people want to see it fade away.

**TRAIID: Tears in the Fabric is available free online along with a wealth of other resources about Rana Plaza. Why did you do this?**

Rainbow Collective: OpenVizor, our partner on this project came with one condition that we make this documentary free for everyone to see and share. We fully agreed with that. We wanted this documentary to have many uses including for educational and campaign use. To do this, the film had to be easily available like it is now. On our resource site [www.tearsinthefabric.com](http://www.tearsinthefabric.com) there are many testimonials, videos and photographs which are available for free for people to watch and use. Since its release we have had many lecturers and campaigners contacting us wanting to use the film.

**TRAIID: What do you think people can do here to make the garment sector fairer and safer for workers in countries like Bangladesh?**

Rainbow Collective: As a community we need to campaign on behalf of the garment workers in Bangladesh. They are campaigning and protesting but their voices are not being heard by the brands. But when people here in the West campaign, the brands are certain to hear their voices. That's the reality of this situation. When we were in Bangladesh there were many protests by victims on Rana Plaza but the brands are not listening to them. We need to

demand that these brands make clothes in a more ethical way. Brands also need to be aware that there are people watching the way that they are operating and will continue to scrutinise them until they start treating workers with respect.

**TRAIID: Has your work on garment factories, and especially Rana Plaza, changed the way you buy clothes?**

Rainbow Collective: We are both scruffy filmmakers so we do not really follow the latest fashion trends. We both have been wearing the same wardrobe of clothes for many years. Charity shops are great places to buy clothes and we picked some great bargains from the TRAIID store in Dalston a few weeks ago. Also we tend to make our clothes last for a long time.

**TRAIID: What is Rainbow Collective working on next?**

Rainbow Collective: We are just releasing Mass E Bhat a documentary we made in Bangladesh about child labour. That will be on the festival circuit. We are developing a street children documentary which will be set in multiple countries.

To view the film, photographs, video and survivor testimonies of the Rana Plaza factory collapse, go to [www.tearsinthefabric.com](http://www.tearsinthefabric.com). Follow [@trcdocumentary](https://twitter.com/trcdocumentary)



# The Right Project

By Roxy Houshmand

**TRAIDremade is working with The Right Project, a new ethical brand consultancy agency set up by Roxy Houshmand.**

In January 2014 I launched The Right Project, an ethical brand and talent consultancy. We aim to create our own retail destination, products and supporting events in partnership with the brands and talent we work with.

We believe in responsible and sustainable sourcing and design, product development and distribution. We work specifically in the clothing and textile sector but cross over into other affiliated industries in the process.

I have rooted the consultancy in this ethos because the clothing industry, one of the largest in the world, is responsible for catastrophic and negative social and environmental impacts. The obvious victims are people working in the supply chain from cotton farmers to garments workers, working in conditions tantamount to slavery. From farming through to textile processes the environment has also been seriously affected and this will impact on us all, our health, wellbeing and the future of our planet.

My knowledge and insight into the industry comes from working closely with Katharine Hamnett for the last 10-years where I had the opportunity to be part of a movement to create positive change in the fashion industry. Katharine's commitment to improving the lives of conventional cotton farmers in Africa has been unrelenting, and her efforts have made industry and consumers listen and take notice of the issues. It's been an inspiring environment to work in, and taught me that change is always possible.

It's in this context that I conceived The Right Project as a way to find the 'right' projects to work with, to share and invest my experience supporting people and brands to become the right minded next generation of thinkers and doers.

So, we work to connect and support 'good' projects. We strive to be noisy, to create beautiful products but fewer products. To bring about change and raise awareness of social and environmental issues while embracing opportunities, sharing ideas, understanding our desires, controlling our wants and needs, and focusing on exploring mindfulness and creating happiness.

I continue to work with Katharine, and we are launching an online store this year recreating archive styles from her incredible 35 years in fashion, while always considering the ethical and environmental impact of every garment she makes. The Right Project is also collaborating with TRAIID, a fantastic charity with a clear and simple strategy – to improve the environment by reclaiming and selling the UK's unwanted clothes, then funding international development projects to improve conditions in the textile industry.

We are focusing on continuing to develop their up-cycled fashion label Traidremade – a standalone fashion brand TRAIID set up to make and distribute clothes from pre and post-consumer 'waste'. By reclaiming and reusing these textiles, TRAIID transform waste into a resource and their Traidremade label is one of the routes they use to extend the life cycle of garments and create fashion using existing rather than new resources. Look out for the next Traidremade collection in AW14.

The Right Project is also working alongside partners supporting the work of Labour Behind the Label,

Pesticide Action Network, Environmental Justice Foundation and Anti-Slavery International – to name but a few. I'm also excited by the launch of Climate Revolution, founded by Vivienne Westwood. All are driving change in the clothing industry and using their voices to effect change.

There are also unheard voices in the supply chain which we support like the women embroidery home workers in Delhi, India supported by SEWA and TRAIID to organise themselves into a co-operative called Ruaab. This project aims to influence brands and suppliers to shorten supply chains by dealing directly with homeworkers, rather than exploitative middle men ensuring workers are paid a fair wage.

The Right Project wants to be part of a change in the clothing industry which supports transparency in supply chains, so brands, retailers and consumers know where cotton is grown, manufactured, dyed and embellished, that garment workers are treated fairly, that children aren't used to make our clothes. We want to engage with the fashion establishment to support the next generation of designers, to support established brands to effect change in their supply chains and to support forward thinking up-and-coming brands to raise their profile.

Blake Mycoskies, of Toms Shoes sums up exactly what The Right Project would like to achieve: 'Start something that matters'.

Contact [www.therightproject.org](http://www.therightproject.org) / [roxy@therightproject.org](mailto:roxy@therightproject.org)

# Improving Health and Incomes for Cotton Farmers in Ethiopia's Rift Valley

Photo: © Pesticide Action Network UK



**TRAID has funded the Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK) since 2009, supporting their work in Benin and Ethiopia, to support cotton farmers to reduce and stop using dangerous pesticides on their crops. Here, PAN UK's Paul Lievens updates us on project progress in Ethiopia.**

Cotton is grown extensively in the Ethiopian Rift Valley, where farmers rely heavily on hazardous synthetic pesticides to control pests. These farmers tend to have little or no training in pesticide use and use these chemicals excessively and inappropriately. The result being high levels of pesticide poisoning among farming communities, water and soil pollution, livestock deaths and loss of biodiversity. To address these problems TRAIID is funding Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK) and local partner PAN Ethiopia, to work with 2300 farmers in three districts in the Rift Valley to grow cotton profitably and sustainably using alternative, non-chemical, methods of pest control.

In doing so, PAN UK are drawing on their experience of successfully implementing similar projects which have already brought improved health, greater income and greater food security and safety to thousands of small-holder cotton farmers across various parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

The first year of the project has just been completed, and the first tranche of farmers have attended farmer field schools for training in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques - an environmentally sensitive and ecological approach to pest management.

A key element of this approach is the adaption of a novel food spray, made with cheap local materials such as yeast, sugar and ground neem seeds to Ethiopian conditions. The food spray has already proved effective in West Africa in attracting beneficial insects into the cotton fields to predate on insect pests that harm the cotton crop.

Initial trials with the food spray in the Rift Valley have produced yields twice that of local conventional

farmers. In addition to increased yields, using the spray also increases farmers incomes, as the cost of ingredients for the food spray are only a fraction of the cost of synthetic pesticides. Removing pesticides from their fields also has the added benefit that food crops for sustenance or sale can be grown safely in those fields in between each cotton harvest.

As the project continues, it will also build upon early work already undertaken to establish community based health monitoring programmes to raise awareness of pesticide hazards, as well as supporting farmers to better market their cotton to local textile manufacturers.

Read about the project at [www.traid.org.uk](http://www.traid.org.uk) / [www.pan-uk.org](http://www.pan-uk.org)



## Better Cotton, Better Lives

Photo: Organic cotton farmer Chekero Sidibe with his crop, Mali, 2014

By James Leith

**In April, TRAIID's Head of International Programmes (Maternity Cover) James Leith visited a TRAIID funded project in Mali working with farmers to produce cotton organically and sustainably.**

Profits from TRAIID's work to reclaim and reuse textiles in the UK support projects all over the world to improve the lives of poor, often exploited people whose work we all rely on to get our clothes and more - but who get little in return.

In April, I went to visit one of these projects in Mali, where Royal Botanic Gardens Kew works with cotton farmers to enable them to produce organic cotton. Seeing the impact and potential of the project first-hand was hugely uplifting and really brings home the importance of the work TRAIID supports.

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world. Cotton accounts for 75% of its export earnings and millions of poor farmers and their families depend on growing cotton for their livelihoods.

But the international cotton trade is a dirty business. It uses far more chemicals than any other crop in the world. And these chemicals are dangerous. Most cotton farmers in poor countries, including in Mali, use little or no protective clothing. As a result, they and their families, including children, are routinely exposed to high concentrations of toxic chemicals. Vomiting, loss of consciousness and even death are not uncommon.

And because the repeated use of chemicals degrades soil, farmers need to use more and more chemicals to maintain yields, exposing them to ever greater risk.

TRAIID's project supporting cotton farmers to grow organic in Benin, West Africa was featured in the Guardian Magazine on Saturday 9 August. Read it online <http://is.gd/traidbenin>

As well as securing a premium for growing organic, by not using chemicals farmers are healthier and make more money. They save money because they don't have to buy chemical pesticides and fertilisers, and improved health means people don't lose their capacity to work.

In these circumstances it seems obvious that moving to organic production makes sense, but at the same time farmers need to protect their cotton from pests. Moving away from using chemical pesticides is possible. And thanks to TRAIID funding, RBG Kew, working with the Malian Institute Rural Economic Research and the Malian Organic Movement is helping making it happen.

It works by using harmless plants that attract pests that in turn predate on cotton pests.

The Malian Organic Movement helps communities establish member co-operatives and provides training and seedlings of a variety of pesticidal plants and of other valuable plants that can be grown as both cash crops and to help maintain soil fertility. During my visit I met many farmers in Mali, some who had changed to organic farming and some who still used chemicals.

Among the organic farmers was Chekero Sidibe. He said, 'People's lives have changed for the better thanks to the training that enables us to use and understand organic systems and avoid using chemical pesticides.'

With his arms open wide he declared 'I want to tell the next village and for them to tell others.' Yvette Cissé, the President of one of the co-operatives, and Kadiza Sidibe also explained how being part of a co-operative had improved the position of women in the community. 'Nowadays men and women discuss things together, about the same issue,' said Kadiza. One of the women was 'not literate but can still communicate and take full part in discussions'.

Farmers I met who still use chemicals said they had suffered health problems and were always having to use more and more chemicals, which made them worry about children. But they needed to be sure that they would not get lower yields if they switched to organic and did not know how they would achieve this.

Meeting farmers like these, who want to farm organically but do not yet have the capacity to do so, demonstrates just how important this project is. It shows how the work done so far can be replicated, improving the health and financial wellbeing of more and more people.

My parting gift to Mali, one to go down in history, was a long, helpless and joyous mass dance including at least fifty kids. Inevitably other dancers slowly fell away, too overcome with giggling at my happy but hopeless efforts.

In the meantime, thanks to all those who support TRAIID helping to ensure this wonderful project continues, changing lives with better cotton. It is a great reminder that we can all do our bit to support organic and improve the lives of poor families in many parts of the world.

To find out more about the project visit [www.traid.org.uk](http://www.traid.org.uk) / [www.kew.org](http://www.kew.org)

# Supporting the Children of Garment Workers

By Amit Arulanantham

Opposite: Children at the TRAIID funded ChildHope day centre learn the alphabet.  
Photos: Top left & right: © Rainbow Collective, bottom: © ChildHope

Although the garment industry in Bangladesh has provided opportunities for women to earn a living, it has also had a seriously negative impact on their children. The majority of textile workers are single mothers, who have very low education levels and are unskilled.

Working long hours for extremely low pay and without access to childcare facilities in their place of work, single working mothers are unable to adequately care for their children. Mothers are forced to leave their young children (2-5 years) alone or in the care of older siblings, exposing them to accidents, trafficking and sexual abuse.

Poverty forces older children (6-16 years) to supplement their mothers' meagre income by entering into illegal activities, notably drug trafficking, or informal sector jobs. This deprives them of education and exposes them to extremely hazardous working conditions, irregular pay and violence.

In order to support some of these mothers and children, ChildHope UK with its local partner Nagorik Uddyog is implementing a project 'Challenging injustice and promoting the rights of female garment workers and their children' in Dhaka.

The project funded by TRAIID aims to protect and improve the lives of 400 extremely vulnerable children aged 2-16 years, whilst raising awareness amongst textile factory employers, community leaders and government policy makers of the need to better respect the rights and improve the working conditions of garment workers. At the same time, the project will work to expand access to education and skills training opportunities for their children.

Amidst the challenges of political instability in Bangladesh, the project has progressed very well in the first six months. Major highlights include:

**1. Day care centres** - 79 children (40 girls, 39 boys) aged 2-5 years are regularly attending two day care centres established by the project. Children are given basic numeracy and literacy classes as a pre-school preparation along with sports sessions. Activities run from 7 am to 8 pm during which they also take rest and mid-day meals.

**2. Drop-in centres** - 129 children (86 girls, 43 boys) aged 6-16 years are regularly attending two drop-in centres for 2-3 hours from 10 am to 7 pm. The enrolled children are mostly dropouts, working in the informal sectors or helping their families in household activities. The centre is providing some basic literacy classes along with vocational livelihoods training. So far, 35 children have received training on making plastic and cane bags and are supported to enroll to the nearest government school.

**3. Awareness and Advocacy** - Two project volunteer groups with adults and adolescents are acting as community mobilizers to sensitise their families, friends and neighbours on child rights issues. Monthly meetings are held to make parents working in the garment sector aware of their rights and entitlements. The project is also networking and liaising with the National Garment Workers Federation and Bangladesh Labour Rights Forum to protect the rights of garment workers.

Find out more at [www.childhope.org.uk](http://www.childhope.org.uk)  
Follow [@childhope](https://twitter.com/childhope)

Award winning film makers Rainbow Collective put together a short film about this project.  
Watch it at [youtube.com/traidfilms](https://www.youtube.com/traidfilms)



# Fighting Waste with Creativity

Photo: © Alex Noble / EMG



We worked with artist and designer Alex Noble supporting his EMG Initiative to reduce high end textile waste. The profits raised were committed to a TRAIID funded project with ChildHope providing care and education for the children of garment workers in Bangladesh. Alex talks about what motivated him and how creative processes have positive outputs.

The idea for EMG – Everything Must Go - was born out of frustration about many areas of the industries in which I have worked for over ten-years. Fed by endless consumption and obsolescence, our culture has become fast paced and transient which is terrifying and tragic to someone who understand the time and skills put into making things, even 'throw away' items.

I set up the EMG Initiative as a way to collaborate with artists and designers to use 'waste' materials from high-end industries to create sustainable products from existing resources. Each design cycle will culminate in an event selling what we make in pop up stores and galleries.

These products will celebrate craft and the process of making, while raising awareness and funds for a range of issues and charities working to improve

conditions for people and planet. EMG launched with an initial focus on raising awareness of the exploitation of people in the textile industry. As the design cycles progress, EMG will look to other human rights issues like the problems facing LGBT communities.

I was keen to work on projects that had greater environmental and humanitarian value, and that weren't only satisfying small privileged groups. I wanted to apply my skills to work on projects tackling bigger issues outside of our immediate pop culture and carefully prescribed television and news feeds. I wanted to work on collaborative projects that had an overall positive and progressive reach but were still rooted in creativity.

I wasn't sure exactly where to go, or how to broach this calling so I pulled together some friends who are creative activists and shared my ideas with them, and EMG was born. The idea for the projects were well received by everyone I spoke to, and a meeting with TRAIID, who I knew as a hub of great work to reduce clothes waste, promote reuse and improve the global garment industry, gave the final green light to make EMG happen.

Cycle 1 of the EMG Initiative was the Salvage T's Project creating a unique collection of T's from the

donated waste materials of leading London designers including Zandra Rhodes, Giles Deacon and Louise Gray. Although technically 'waste', these fabrics are of course beautifully printed silks and chiffons which when reclaimed become useful again. From these we designed and created new t-shirts, each one completely unique and incorporating up to five designers on their decorative panels.

The collection was sold at the EMG Pop Up Store in Soho and the profits raised from the collection - a fantastic £3,694 - were committed to a project providing the children of very poor garment workers in Bangladesh with day care, education and nutritious food, rather than being left alone or working on the streets.

We reduced waste using good design, fostered debate on our responsibilities and hopefully showed both industry and consumers that fashion can be sustainable. Visit [www.emginitiative.com](http://www.emginitiative.com) and follow [@emginitiative](https://twitter.com/emginitiative)

# #SECONDHANDFIRST

Photos: © TRAIID



This year, TRAIID launched the #secondhandfirst pledge to encourage people to commit to sourcing more of their wardrobe second-hand. To date, hundreds of people of all ages and backgrounds have signed the pledge to use more of our existing resources rather than new. Sign up to the pledge at [www.traid.org.uk/secondhandfirst](http://www.traid.org.uk/secondhandfirst) and keep us posted with your progress using the hashtag #secondhandfirst

# What Better Looks Like: A Fashion Revolution

By Carry Somers

Carry Somers is a pioneer in Fair Trade and ethical fashion in the UK. She founded the ethical hat company Pachacuti in 1992, and set up the global campaign Fashion Revolution Day to press for change in the fashion industry. Here she talks about the launch of the campaign and the connections it is building throughout the supply chain.

On April 24th 2013, 1133 people were killed when the Rana Plaza complex collapsed in Bangladesh. Today, people are still suffering as a direct result of our fashion supply chain. Fashion Revolution Day is the good that has come out of that tragic day.

The first Fashion Revolution Day took place on April 24th 2014, marking one year on from the factory collapse, and each year, we will campaign on different issues to tackle some of the fashion industry's most pressing issues.

Whilst much has been done by individual organisations over the years to bring about change, Fashion Revolution brings many of these best practice initiatives across the supply chain under one umbrella. From Fairtrade which focuses on the cotton farmer at the end of the supply chain, to the companies who are finding creative ways to re-use and up-cycle garments.

This year we asked 'Who Made Your Clothes?' aiming to focus attention on the fact that we don't know the true cost of the things we buy. The fashion industry supply chain is fractured and the people who make our clothes have become faceless. This is costing lives. Fashion Revolution Day has helped to build connections throughout the supply chain, giving a voice to the cotton farmer, the mill dyer, the seamstress, the designer and the end consumer. This year, the campaign ran in 58 countries, with every major newspaper and fashion magazine covering the campaign. Tens of thousands of people around the world wore an item of clothing #insideout which became the number one global trend on Twitter, and together, we called on brands to tell us Who Made Your Clothes? Brands and retailers were challenged to take responsibility for the individuals and communities on which their businesses depend.

An incredible variety of events took place throughout the world including Nepal, Spain, Bangladesh, Finland, the USA, the UK and Kenya. Events and actions ranged from showcasing best practices across textile processes, to sustainable fashion shows, to round table debates in Parliament.

We celebrated fashion as a positive influence, and all those who contribute to making it so, rallying the high street, the designers, the brands, the shoppers, the media, the commentators, the activists and everyone in between.

The message from fashion-lovers was loud and clear – we want to know who made our clothes. While some brands responded, the majority did not. Gap said 'this is proprietary information which we don't wish to disclose'; M&S said 'All our clothing is



made in factories that apply our strict ethical standards and we always label with the country of origin.' Ted Baker said 'The tragic event in Bangladesh has made Ted dig even deeper into his own clothing supply chains, seeking out areas that need improvement and further support.'

One of the best responses was from German streetwear brand Ragwear who simply gave us the name and job description of their workers in China, alongside an image of the worker holding a sign saying 'I Made Your Clothes!'

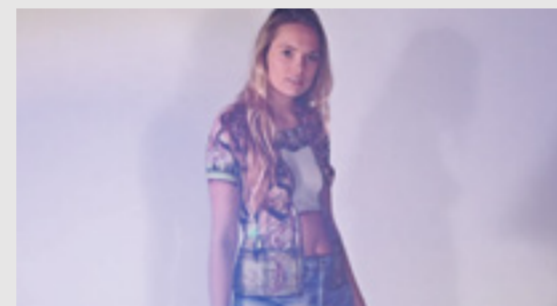
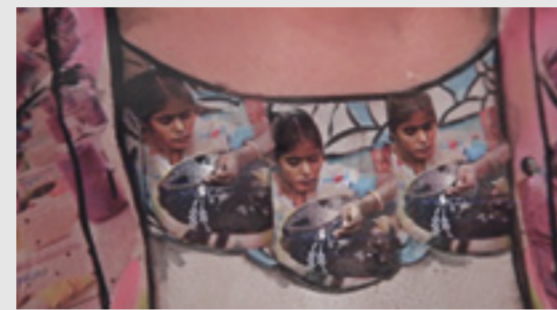
Who Made Your Clothes? should be a simple question, but a recent Australian Fashion Report found that 61% of brands didn't know where their garments were made and 93% didn't know where the raw materials came from. We need to re-establish the broken connections in the supply chain because greater transparency is a prerequisite to improving conditions.

We believe that ultimately the big companies will listen because their customers want clothing which makes them look good and feel good. If the brands and retailers haven't responded to our questions, we need to keep on asking these questions every day until they reply.

To find out more visit [www.fashionrevolution.org](http://www.fashionrevolution.org) or follow [@fash\\_rev](https://twitter.com/fash_rev)

Photo above: © Keiron O'Connor

## Watch This: Who Made Your Clothes?



Artist Emma Allen used body painting, photography and animation to answer the question of Who Made Your Clothes? This brilliant short, part funded by TRAIID, reveals the garment workers, farmers, pesticides and processes involved in fast fashion. "Like our high streets, this film shows that things are not always as they seem. From the outside, a pretty dress or pair of jeans seems unproblematic, but scratch the surface and you will find huge environmental impacts and human exploitation to be able to produce clothes so cheaply and frequently. Words are sometimes not enough, and with this short, I aimed to communicate this visually." To watch Emma's film visit [www.youtube.com/traidfilms](http://www.youtube.com/traidfilms) and visit her website to find out more about her work [www.emmaallen.org](http://www.emmaallen.org).

## #TRAIDTALKS



#TRAIDtalks is a series of talks hosted by TRAIID giving inspiring speakers a platform to debate and share different aspects of sustainability, while galvanising our communities to embrace a more sustainable life.

Most recently, we welcomed Tansy Hoskins author of *Stitched Up – The Anti-Capitalist Book of Fashion* to discuss whether fashion can ever really be ethical. She argued that behind fashion's fluffy image lies a multi-billion dollar industry dependent on cheap labour and the consumption of huge quantities of natural resources. She examined the relationship between fashion and global capitalism looking at how the industry treats people and the environment, and called for the industry to take more responsibility for the conditions our clothes are made in.

Find out more about upcoming #TRAIDtalks on our website [www.traid.org.uk](http://www.traid.org.uk) and you can view all TRAIIDtalks on our Youtube channel [www.youtube.com/traidfilms](http://www.youtube.com/traidfilms)

Left: Tansy Hoskins, 2013  
Photo: © Ruby Wright

## Local Authority Workshop

Local authorities are one of TRAIID's main partners, helping us to bring clothes into the charity by giving us permission to place our clothes donation banks on council land. In return, TRAIID increases clothes reuse rates by providing charity clothes reuse services from textile banks, to environmental education, to a free home collections service.

Earlier this year, TRAIID shared its fifteen years of experience working to reclaim unwanted textiles delivering a workshop to local authorities on increasing textile reuse, while engaging with communities in their boroughs.

We know that reducing textile waste is about more than simply providing facilities. It's also about the service you deliver, it's about prioritising the reuse of donated clothing, it's about transparency which means being clear about who benefits from the public's donations, it's about working with the local community in a myriad of ways to increase reuse by encouraging people to treat their clothes more sustainably.

At the workshop, we welcomed over 30 people working in recycling and waste in local authorities across the UK including London, Oxford, Somerset and St Albans. Presentations were delivered by TRAIID staff responsible for key areas like reuse, collections, education and retail product management. Plus, Michael Singham from Wandsworth Council and Christina Wells from Hackney Council talked about their experiences of working with TRAIID to boost textile reuse, and Mike Webster from LCRN discussed how services like reuse can and should be used by councils to dramatically improve the social and environmental well-being of communities.

It was a hugely productive and inspiring day, and TRAIID will continue to offer structured workshops giving insight, advice and support to local authorities, community groups and housing associations looking to boost textile reuse in their communities.

If you are interested in registering your interest for our next workshop, please email [lyla@traid.org.uk](mailto:lyla@traid.org.uk)

# A Year in Second-Hand

By Sarah LaBrequé

Photos: © Sarah LaBrequé

**TRAID comes into contact with incredible organisations, communities and individuals, working in a myriad of ways to take practical action to create a more sustainable wardrobe. Here, Sarah LaBrequé talks about her inspiration for a year in second-hand.**

Sustainable fashion hasn't always been an interest of mine. In my late teens I worked in a clothing store in my hometown of Ottawa, Canada and remember opening boxes with the new seasonal collections with giddy relish. I used my 50% discount to its fullest potential and had not a passing thought for the hands that had stitched my new garments or the grim wages that person had most likely taken home while I revelled in my staff discount.

Many years have passed since then and I'm still getting excited about low-cost clothing, not because I work in a clothing store, but because for the last year I've acquired my clothes, shoes and accessories exclusively from charity shops swapping and parties.

During my graduate degree, I made a short documentary about clothes swapping parties and why they were fun, sustainable and good for your pocket. Realising then that I had been exchanging clothes with my friends for years, but had never thought of these events from a sustainability angle, it dawned on me that we were inadvertently doing a social and environmental good, without leaving our living rooms.

After my degree I went on to do an internship at Futerra Sustainability Communications, primarily to do social media and promotion around 'swishing,' CEO Lucy Shea's coined term for clothes swapping parties. I learned that she had spent a year swishing, without buying anything new, and needing a new challenge, I decided I would do the same. I did go to a few swishing parties but primarily stuck to charity shops for my apparel needs which luckily are everywhere in the UK.

My year of second-hand came to a close on 15 May 2014 and since then I've been thinking carefully about what comes next. I blogged about my experience as the months went by, taking photos of the outfits I'd found and haunting charity shops wherever I went. I realised that it was infinitely possible to stay true to my commitment.

I also discovered that the cravings I used to get for new clothes were very much woven into the experience of shopping. The crispness of the shopping bag, the softness of the unworn fabric, the ambience created by music and money. And these were things bound up into the culture of shopping, the feeling expertly crafted by brands and stores to excite and woo. I still love fashion and now that I've completed my challenge I will allow myself to venture once more into this world, but I feel different about it now.

I haven't rushed out to go shopping since the end of the challenge. In fact, I've still not broken my vow, because I'm more thoughtful about my purchases now. I value quality over fast fashion, because what good for anyone involved, is a pair of flats that won't last longer than a summer? Or £100 spent for \$5 earned?

I ended up saving £422 over the course of the year, which is what I estimated would have been the additional cost had I bought the items new. And I donated to charities in the process. It was a commitment which made me question how and why I consumed, and definitely heavily stimulated the local contingent of charity shops in my area!

There are lots of ways to go against the grain and work towards a more sustainable fashion industry. Buying second hand is one of them. Maybe for my next challenge I'll try only buying garments made in the country in which I live. Or vow to learn how to sew, mend and upcycle. (A daunting thought!). In any case, along the way I've discovered a thriving and active community of organisations, consumers and advocates working for change in the fashion industry, and I'm proud to say I am now one of them.

Check out Sarah's blog about her year in second-hand [www.sarahlabrecque.com](http://www.sarahlabrecque.com) and follow her here [@sarahjulielab](https://twitter.com/sarahjulielab)



# Visible Mending Programme

By Tom van Deijnen

Photos: © Tom van Deijnen



garment was acquired, the occasions it was worn and the motivation of the repair can reinforce that relationship. Invisible mending hides this story, and reinforces the idea that clothes should always look as new. With this mindset it's easy to skip the mending process altogether and buy something new instead. A visible mend on the other hand highlights that the garment you are wearing has been part of your life and serves as a memento.

By writing a Visible Mending Programme blog, sharing my darning skills through darning workshops and volunteering at the Brighton Repair Café, and taking repair work commissions I want to provide inspiration, skills and services to people and thereby persuade them that shop-bought clothes deserve care and attention too, just like that precious hand-knit.

The repair commissions I take on are a mix of hand-knits and shop-bought garments and I'd like to finish by sharing a very special recent visible mending commission. This was a jumper knitted for my client by her mother some time in the 1980s and has been at the back of a cupboard for a long time, as she was no longer happy with colour and fit. After dyeing it she still wasn't quite happy with it, and she cut off one of the sleeves with a view of turning it into a cushion. As soon as she'd cut off the sleeve she regretted it. The jumper means a lot to her, as her mother died a few years ago and they didn't have much in common and knitting was one of her only true connections with her. Her mum always tried to make her the jumpers that she chose patterns for. So I set about repairing it, by re-knitting the missing fabric using a yarn that was quite a few shades darker than the jumper. I chose a stitch that resembled the stitch in the jumper, but wasn't quite the same, to reinforce the idea that this repair was not done by the person who originally knitted the jumper. My client was over the moon with the repaired jumper. It means so much to her to still have it, as it's the one surviving garment her mother had made; and instead of languishing in a cupboard, she has now been able to wear it again with pleasure and fond memories.

To find out more about Tom's work visit [www.tomofholland.com](http://www.tomofholland.com) or follow [@tomofholland](https://twitter.com/tomofholland)

**TRAID's work to reclaim unwanted clothes includes helping people to build the practical skills they need to fix, adjust and repurpose garments, to get more out of existing resources. We love the work of Master Mender Tom van Deijnen who discusses his skilled work to repair clothes, and to share these skills, as one method of resisting rapacious consumption.**

In the Visible Mending Programme I seek to highlight that the art and craftsmanship of clothes repair is particularly relevant in a world where more and more people voice their dissatisfaction with fashion's throwaway culture. By exploring the story behind garment and repair, the Programme reinforces the relationship between wearer and garment, hopefully leading to people wearing their existing clothes for longer, with the beautiful darn worn as a badge of honour. The development and crystallisation of these ideas are closely linked to the development of my hand-knitting skills.

As long as I can remember I have made minor repairs to my clothes. This ranged from sewing on buttons to taking up hems or hiding a stain with some embroidery or appliqué. However, it was only a few years after I took up knitting that I started to truly value repair and mending skills. Anybody who knits socks will probably remember making their very first pair. It seemed to take forever and I learnt a lot from

it. When my first pair of socks aged and inevitably started to develop some holes, it was time to change my somewhat haphazard approach to mending. I taught myself how to darn, and as my mending techniques and skills developed, I started to repair things for friends, or showed them what I had learnt. Taking pride in my craftsmanship of hand-knitting has led to the realisation that I want to take good care of the items I have made in order to extend their longevity. However, although I have always done some repairs on shop-bought clothes, I felt this urge is not quite so strong for clothes purchased on the High Street. However, anybody who's ever made a garment, will understand that even the cheapest t-shirt must've been produced by highly skilled makers. Although considerable constraints in time and materials can affect their quality I feel they ought to deserve the same care as a hand-knit to honour the anonymous makers and their skills.

Hand-knitting creates close ties with the object made; tracing its evolution and progress reminds me of where, when and how it was made. A good darn also requires craftsmanship, and I frequently employ knitting and crochet techniques for mending, or techniques traditionally used for repairing knitwear. The experience of this process allows me to create a similar connection with shop-bought clothes as I have with hand-knits. By thinking about how the



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**Email [recycling@traid.org.uk](mailto:recycling@traid.org.uk)**

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89p in every £1 supports TRAIID's charitable activities to fight global poverty, reduce textile waste and deliver sustainable education in the UK.