



Stimulating Grassroots Economic Opportunities

The **Crafts Center at CHF International** contributes to economic development through field programs and coordination of an international network dedicated to supporting low-income artisans. Distinguished by a focus on grassroots initiatives, we build the capacity of organizations and individuals to become artisan entrepreneurs. Since 1986, the Crafts Center has offered technical assistance and training in the development, marketing, and sale of crafts.

Crafts programs can generate increased incomes and opportunities for the poor, particularly women. Our programs give hope to families for a better life and increased self-reliance.

Expertise: The Crafts Center's expertise includes:

- > spurring community-based economic development;
- > providing market linkages and market support services through field programs and an international membership program;
- > improving the capacity of artisans and businesses to produce and market quality handicrafts;
- > forming crafts cooperatives and developing small businesses;
- > offering training and technical assistance for low-income artisans, displaced persons, and entrepreneurs; and
- > increasing demand and awareness for fair trade and fair labor

Activities: The Crafts Center engages in a wide array of activities and client services, including:

- > business consulting
- > market readiness assessments
- > product assessments and recommendations
- > market orientations to prepare participants for the import/export process
- > participation in trade fairs and industry events
- > tracking of relevant legislative issues, such as the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA)



Product Development trainings in Bolivia are increasing the economic income for artisans and opening up new markets for their products, pictured above.

Approach: CHF International's 54 years of experience in improving communities, coupled with its expertise in economic and business services, ensures a holistic approach to serving artisans. ***Our programs create better lives and livelihoods for participants and bring about positive change for entire communities.***

CHF International programs bring added value through the Crafts Center's wealth of resources:

- > a database of 14,000 crafts-related contacts and entities;
- > a series of 14 training modules;
- > a website offering exclusive online resources to members and program participants;
- > an up-to-date resource library;
- > guidebooks on export processes, funding opportunities, and retail sources;
- > quarterly issues of the technical publication *Crafts News*, which is authored by experts in the field; and
- > the *Annual Crafts Center Trend Report*, which forecasts longer-term design changes that affect crafts businesses.

> The Crafts Center at CHF International

Selected Highlights:

Asia

> **Rehabilitation in Indonesia:** CHF International and the **Association of Exporters and Producers of Indonesian Handicraft (ASEPHI)** are partnering to assist Indonesian entrepreneurs and producers in the handicraft industry. The partnership focuses primarily on the areas directly affected by the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami, in Aceh province and selected other communities of Sumatra. CHF International is offering expertise in project management, capacity building, organizational development and economic revitalization.

Africa

> **Market Expansion in Ethiopia:** Along with other initiatives, the **GEBI (Generating Employment and Building Independence) program** is helping rural artisans generate greater income through the creation of handmade products. By collaborating with a local women's organization to assist in the areas of silk production, pottery, embroidery, and weaving, the Crafts Center at CHF International is working to help artisans tap into existing demand in regional markets through our marketing and crafts expertise.

The Crafts Center has also invested resources in training export-ready entrepreneurs from Ethiopia to adapt their products to perform better in the US Market.

Middle East

> **Facilitating Women's Entrepreneurship through Policy Reform in West Bank & Gaza:** Through the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) program with funding from the Department of State, CHF International is implementing a program entitled **Policies and Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs' Readiness (POWER)**. POWER provides artisans with business and marketing training, exposure through local and international exhibitions and works with the Ministry of Women's Affairs as well as other stakeholders to develop policies to increase business opportunities for women.

Europe and the Caucasus

> **Generating Sustainable Income Opportunities in Georgia:** CHF is currently implementing the **Georgia Employment and Infrastructure Initiative (GEII)** which is designed to improve essential infrastructure services and generate income for a socially and economically empowered citizenry in Georgia. CHF is creating sustainable in-country market linkages for artisan entrepreneurs who are rejuvenating the art of traditional Georgian handicrafts and imparting this knowledge to the younger generations. CHF International is committed to assisting artisans through training, technical assistance, association development, grants, credit facilitation and developing strong connections to new markets.

CHF International/Georgia hosted the first Samtskhe-Javakheti Handicraft Fair in September 2005. This important event highlighted the crafts currently being produced in the region by artisans, who in the past have been isolated from Tbilisi and other urban markets.

Latin America

> **Training in Bolivia:** The Crafts Center at CHF International's training and capacity building efforts in Bolivia have strengthened the management capacity of artisan organizations, yielding increased income for craftspeople. Pilot programs offered direct training to 60 individuals and made an impact on 200 artisans. The efforts boosted the self-esteem of women's groups, who were held up as examples for other businesspeople. Development of innovative business approaches (such as working with managerial teams) resulted in an increase of sales by 433 percent.

As a result of the initial pilot project, CHF received funding to implement the ARTETROPIC project, which will increase the competitiveness of craftswomen by improving their productivity, assisting with product development, and gaining access to new markets both in Bolivia and global markets through e-commerce.

> **Market Access for Colombian IDPs:** CHF International's Economic Assistance Program (EAP) in Colombia has been working to improve the lives of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) since 2002 by continuing to assist them after initial, relief-type activities are provided. It is also generating jobs in areas where there is high unemployment, especially due to displacement.

Under the program, persons who were displaced by violence and are now living in communities such as Eje, Cafetero, Cali, Buenaventura, Santa Marta and Barranquilla have been chosen for handicraft training, leveraging the great potential for economic growth in these regions. Most recently, CHF International has assisted with improving product quality, packaging and marketing of the various products to help IDPs grow their businesses, improve their quality of life, and generate jobs for others. By providing the artisans with marketing, accounting, and product presentation support in their local markets, the IDPs are also being taught how to become better sales people. Since its inception, the program has helped an estimated 5,500 small businesses, including 1,600 producers of goods, crafts, clothes, candies, and so forth.