

Mano a Mano para el Desarrollo : **Hand in Hand, for Development** *An overview of our social program*



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An overview of our social program



#1

Education



#2

Personal empowerment and development



#3

Professional improvement



#4

Ethical Tourism

In April 2017, Cojolya launched its own social program, the Hand in Hand for Development program, responding to very specific needs within the association and the Santiago Atitlán community. To better understand and assert these issues, a team from Cojolya have done an amazing long-term research, analyzing and reporting on quantitative and qualitative data from several interviews conducted with the Mayan artisans women of the association. From this meticulous field research conducted over the years 2016-2017, we have been able to identified and categorize many important issues - that we have then transform and channel into 4 main fields of actions. From there was born the Mano a Mano program.

1. Education

At Cojolya, we believe that every child deserves equal and equitable access to education, necessary education resources, and encouragement. We also believe that an education rich with support, assistance, and emphasis on learning and goal-creation is vital in improving the lives of our artisans and their families. Here, in the predominantly indigenous town of Santiago Atitlan, school dropout rates are unsettling, as school enrollment falls to only 24% after the 6th grade.

From our extensive data analysis, we have been able to identify three core problems that contribute to high dropout rates of our students:

1. The financial barriers;
2. The lack of role models;
3. The lack of academic support.

The Mano a Mano program is currently putting in place several course of actions to tackle these main issues, and influence the children of our association's women artisan to stay in school.

More reports will soon follow on the encouraging results induced by some of the actions that had already been implemented over the year 2017.

Hand in Hand for the Development... of our children's capacity to stay in school!

For the years 2018-2019: we want to dream big for our kids. But we need your help!

With your donations through this platform, we wish to be able to afford a coordinator for the program full time so we can continue our work and continue to evaluate and improve our program for the kids.

Please, consider donate to help Cojolya to fortify the education program and to improve it by putting in place:

- Regular tutoring assignments;
- Weekends reading circles;
- Informative self esteem, self development and professional orientation workshops;
- 100% coverage of the school supplies fees for all our children;
- Scholarship, and more...

2. Personal Empowerment and Development

This area of the Mano a Mano program focuses on empowering our artisans through discussions centered on equity, equality, and human rights. As 25 of our 30 artisans are women, we center much of the personal development section of our program around women's rights and women's empowerment. Furthermore, above all else, we listen to what type of discussions and training our artisans desire, and create our discussions based on their needs.

At Cojolya, we believe that empowering women through their personal and professional rights is a key element to a sustainable way of living for them, as well as making them powerful role models for the generations to come. Offering interactive and informative workshops once a month, here in Cojolya, we aim to give as much knowledge on related subjects to our members, giving them the power to make informed decisions about their lives and work. With them, we arrange discussions about health, gender equality, self-esteem, work rights, equity through the principles of Fair Trade, and much more. Moreover, this initiative offers the women of our association a safe space to talk about their preoccupations, and share their accomplishments.



3. Professional Improvement



We believe that empowering women through their artisanal work is a truly precious way of giving their ancestral expertise the recognition it deserves, not only as an historical relic, but as an economically viable source of employment for our women weavers.

Our professional development training focuses on teaching our artisans techniques necessary to further diversify their abilities. If a design requires specific weaving techniques, which our weavers haven't yet mastered, we seek out people in and around our community who can help. This allows us to produce more diverse products, and ultimately aids our weavers if they go on to create their own businesses.

As a part of this branch of the Mano a Mano program, Cojolya has been invited to participate at the Emerald Expositions, in New York City, for the upcoming August edition of NY NOW®. This fair is an incredible opportunity for our association to spread Cojolya mission internationally, and show the incredible work of our women to the world.

Please consider supporting us through this opportunity, in helping Cojolya covering the fees implied by this venture: <https://www.crowdrise.com/o/en/campaign/cojolya>. We have until the 5th of August 2018 to achieve our goal!

4. Ethical Tourism

Since 2012, Cojolya is proud to be a Fair Trade certified by the Fair Trade Organization (WFTO). With this last section of the Mano a Mano program, our association wants to actively take part in a more ethical and eco-sustainable tourism for Guatemala. Our first step is to inform as much as possible the tourists that come visit us in Santiago about the ten principles of Fair Trade, and explain how we embrace this vision while selling our handmade products.

We are also currently reviewing the form of our special guided tour for the people that wish to visit our association and artisans. We wish to use this opportunity to share our vision of a safe, eco-sustainable, child labor free, and fairly paid work environment that we aim to offer to all our women artisans' members. More news on that to come this summer!





Our most sincere thank you for your consideration,
The team of Cojoyla

