

Eco-friendly conference bags that make a difference



Cape Town based Township Patterns is a social enterprise which designs, produces and markets a range of eco-friendly textile conference bags in order to directly support the sustainable development of women-owned sewing cooperatives operating out of the townships of South Africa.

Their products are 100% made in Africa, using African cotton and provide a high quality, customised conference bag for delegates. Each product purchased from Township Patterns has a direct social impact on the life of cooperative members and their relatives, as each

woman generally supports an average of seven to ten other relatives. Since the creation of Township Patterns, more than 80 jobs have been created in township communities around Cape Town, and as of November 2010, seven cooperatives employing 65 women have been directly supported.

The bags are hand made on a fair trade basis by cooperatives wholly owned by women from the townships and Cape Flats. The co-operatives are brought to life and supported by ASB (their non-profit organisation) providing close to 100 women with free technical,

business & personal training, bringing opportunity, professionalism and economic development to women of previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa.

A Social Impact Index is supplied with each quote, enabling potential customers to directly evaluate the impact their order would have on the communities they serve. By creating this index, Township Patterns is increasing the transparency of its business model and is connecting all its customers to the social object of its mission. Township Patterns have worked with a number of international PCO's

and large medical associations nationally and internationally and have recently signed a distribution agreement with Parthen, one of the largest meetings service company in Europe. 'We hope that this partnership and their commitment to our fair-trade products will further increase awareness and conscience choice among major conference organisers' says Christophe Labesse, Township Patterns Operations Manager.

Township Patterns are proud to have supplied 4000 delegate bags for Meetings Africa 2011.

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