



Fair Trade Apparel 101

Use these facts to educate yourself and others about the need for Fair Trade apparel

General Fast Facts

- Americans purchase around **20 billion** new items of clothing each year.
- Global clothing production has more than **doubled** since 2000.
- Almost **60 percent** of clothing ends up in incinerators or landfills within a year of being made.
- **China** is the world's largest apparel exporter, followed by the EU, Bangladesh and Vietnam.
- **80 percent** of garment workers are women.
- It takes over **2,700 liters** of water to make one t-shirt – equal to the amount of water the average person drinks in a three-year period.

The Need for Fair Trade Apparel

- In 2013, the Rana Plaza garment factory in Bangladesh collapsed and killed 1,100 workers – one of the deadliest industrial tragedies in history.
- Garment manufacturing accounts for 20 percent of global industrial water pollution.
- Cotton production is responsible for 18 percent of global pesticide use and 25 percent of insecticide use.
- Garment workers often receive less than 4 percent of the final retail cost of a garment.

Conventional Apparel

- Factory: Child labor, low-wages, and long hours are common as factories seek to increase production and reduce costs.
- Farm: Textile production has environmental and health impacts from high-pesticide use in conventional cotton fields, to water contamination from toxic dyes used in fabrics

Fair Trade Apparel

- Fair Trade certification delivers direct economic benefit at two different levels of the supply chain: cotton farmers and cut-and-sew factory workers.
- Fair Trade standards address proper waste disposal, limiting chemical use, and water management.
- Fair Trade standards require that women receive equal pay and equal rights in the workplace, as well as maternity leave and freedom from harassment.

