



# the good business

ETHIOPIAN IMPACT ENTREPRENEURSHIP



## Shopping

Must-have  
Pieces by Ethiopian  
Designers

## The Kids are Alright

Helping Children  
with Skateboards  
and Notebooks

## Female Entrepreneurs

The New Shift in  
Ethiopian Equality

## 9 Reasons Why Bamboo is Ethiopia's New Gold

## Cool Interiors

Contemporary  
Furniture  
from Addis

## Coffee

Growing Excellence  
- And New Cafés  
that Serve it

## Every Dish Empowers A Woman

A Very Special  
Eatery in Addis

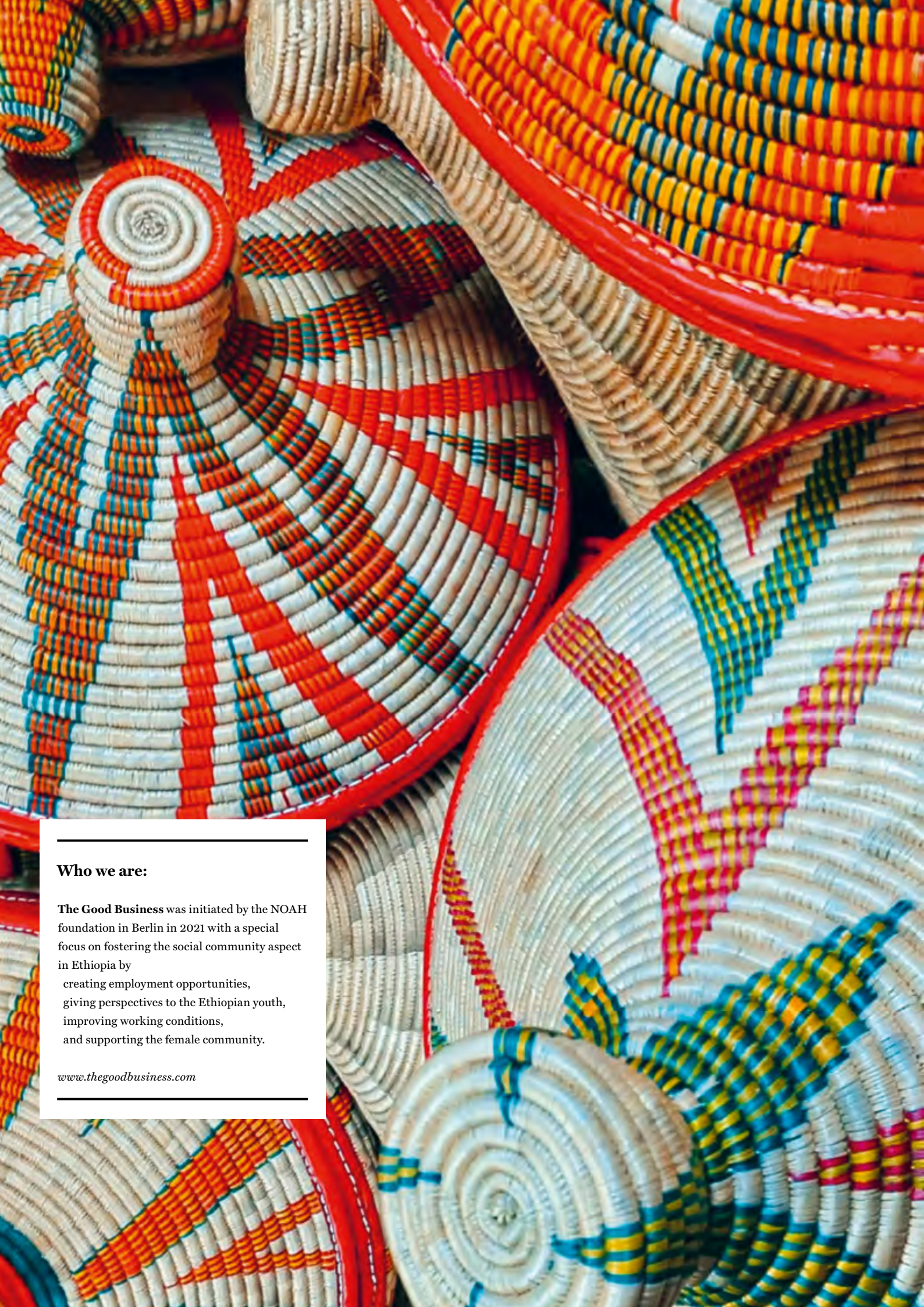
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ISSUE 01  
JUNE 2021

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Meet Ethiopia's young and vibrant entrepreneurial scene:  
Start-ups and small businesses that are transforming the country





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### Who we are:

**The Good Business** was initiated by the NOAH foundation in Berlin in 2021 with a special focus on fostering the social community aspect in Ethiopia by

creating employment opportunities,  
giving perspectives to the Ethiopian youth,  
improving working conditions,  
and supporting the female community.

*[www.thegoodbusiness.com](http://www.thegoodbusiness.com)*

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## SALAM! Hello and welcome to The Good Business Magazine,

These pages are brimming with innovation and growth: They are a vibrant and exciting showcase of the diversity of the incredible entrepreneurial spirit, innovation and creativity that is modern Ethiopia, brought to you by **The Good Business Programme**.

Did you know that Ethiopia is currently transforming into an innovative hub for **design, lifestyle, food, health and sustainability**? With the young generation taking over, Ethiopia's rapidly growing population has an increasing need for jobs. The demand for innovative local solutions and impact businesses is growing accordingly.

*This is where the two TGB programmes come in:*

The TGB Accelerator is aimed at young start-ups with a sustainable angle

The TGB Evolver is a business boot camp to boost existing SMEs (small and medium-size enterprises)

We focus on the high potential of these entrepreneurs and businesses. We help them with business objectives, growth expansion and by unlocking funding and access to international networks and markets. By supporting them in their efforts, we are building a better future for Ethiopian communities, the environment and the people of Ethiopia together.

This magazine shows **18 inspiring and innovative Ethiopian business ventures** who successfully took part in these two TGB programmes. They all reflect the high potential and speed-growth that Ethiopia has to offer as a start-up ecosystem.

You can find out more about our programmes on page 25. But first, enjoy the abundance of ideas, products and stories of all the TGB participants. A celebration of their passion, dedication and entrepreneurial spirit!

*The Good Business Team*



# The Good Business Magazine

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Cover photo: Design by Yonael Marga (see pages 6-9), Photographer: Nafkot Gebeyehu, Model: Meti





# Back to the Future

**Fashion Designer Yonael Marga and his eclectic Ethio-Futurism designs**



An interpreter of cultural heritage: Designer Yonael Marga with some of his designs (left). Delicate garments in white and black are inspired by Ethiopian culture and heritage, sporting intricate embroidered details. Marga calls his concept “Ethio-Futurism”.

*Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, is home to one of the most vibrant fashion scenes on the continent. Meet one of its trailblazing talents: Designer Yonael Marga, who plays with the aspects of past, present and future in his luxurious designs inspired by ancient Ethiopian culture.*

## Yonael Marga Designs

Ethio-Futurism? Yes, it's a trend. And much more than that. At least according to Ethiopian fashion designer Yonael Marga. His eponymous label embraces Ethiopian heritage and puts a new spin on it.

Yonael's designs and philosophy are rooted in Afro-Futurism, a concept of which Ethio-Futurism is a subset. And he plays that well, with a highly conceptual and artsy take.

Elements of fantasy, storytelling, visual art, graphic design, science fiction, music, fantasy, black history and culture all come together in his striking designs. His current collection is made from beautiful handwoven fabrics, mostly in white, and called “Chereka” – moon in Amharic.

Expect “travels in time”, as he calls it – an aspect that the designer is highly interested in. He likes to take a deep dive into the past and likes to see how it interplays with the present and



the future. “Ethio-Futurism allows us to fuse different elements that often don’t mix – offering up new perspectives.”

Yonael is no stranger to mix and match: Growing up in different parts of Ethiopia has exposed him to multiple cultures and traditions of the country. He originally comes from the historical city of Harar in Eastern Ethiopia – a melting pot of myriad cultures, ethnicities and Ethiopian traditions. A rich heritage that reflects in his designs.

“We like to translate these rich cultural elements into contemporary contexts and unique modern garments,” he says. There is a strong focus on geometric lines and shapes. Inspirations include architectural elements, taken from historic churches, mosques, and gothic architecture, as well as decorative elements from garments of ancient Ethiopian royalty. Another signature component of Yonael Marga designs is his use of traditional embroidery.

As for combining the past with the here and now, Yonael Marga’s entire production process is all about hand craftsmanship and supporting local artisanship. He preserves and passes on the longstanding traditions of Ethiopian cloth making and ancient indigenous arts and crafts. “The fabrics we mostly use are gabi (the handmade cloth worn by Ethiopians) and other traditionally woven garments which we then often mix up with the elaborate forms and silhouettes of royal attire.”

He calls it “slow fashion” and offers custom-made as well as ready-to-wear designs. His concept prizes community and heritage alongside commerciality, with a dedication of finding innovative ways to approach fashion design: A potent vision for Ethiopia’s fashion future.

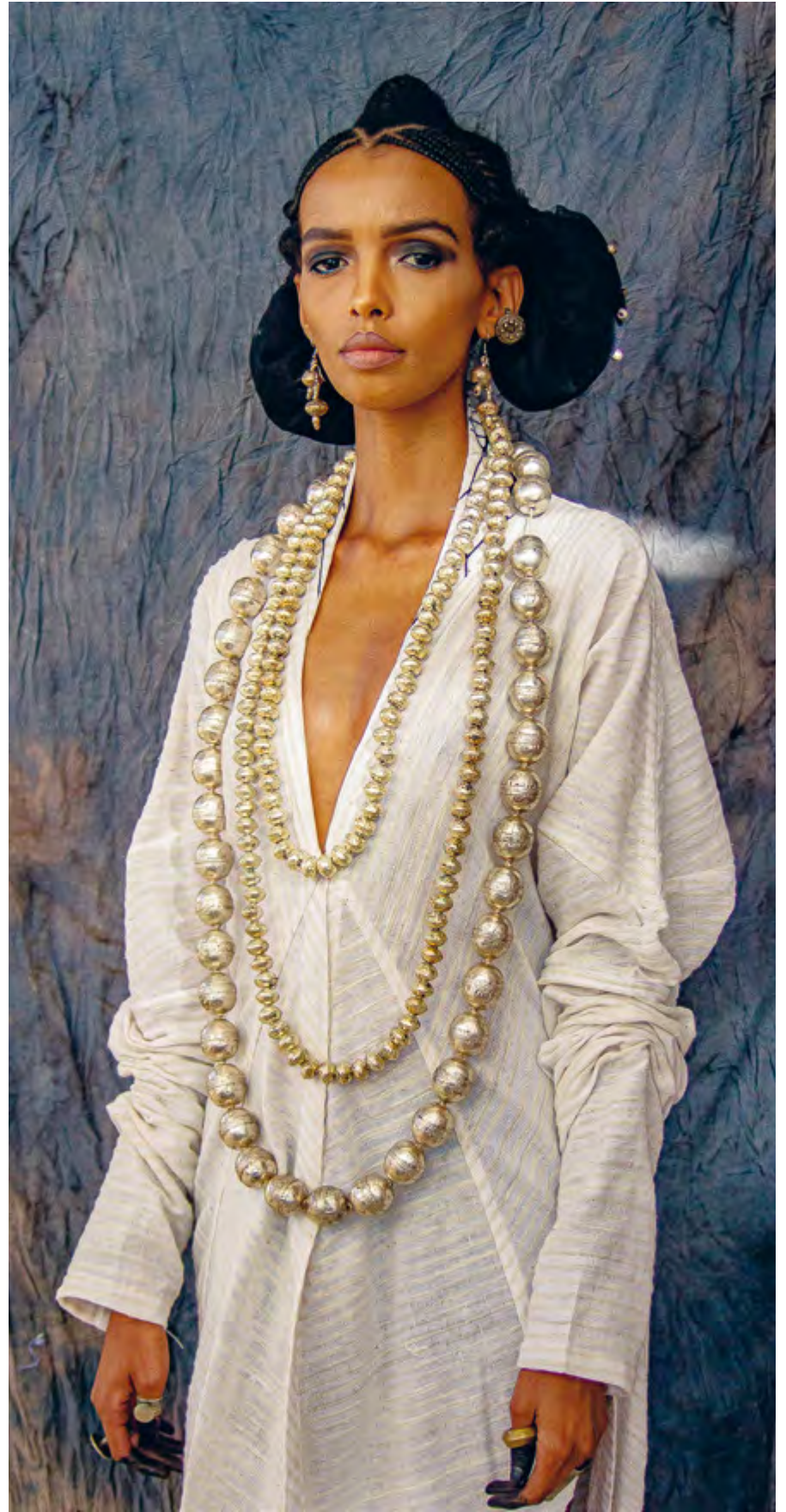
Instagram – @yonaelmarga

Email – yonaelmarga.brand@gmail.com

Cutting fabrics: Yonael Marga uses a lot of traditional gabi fabrics, all of them hand-woven.



## In Line to the Throne: Inspired by Ethiopian Royalty



A few designs and an illustration from the latest Yonael Marga collection called “Chereka” (meaning Moon in Amharic), inspired by the countless cultures and traditions of Ethiopia. Yonael Marga found his inspiration on a research trip to the palace

of former Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II (1889 - 1913), in the rich embroidery of the garments of Empress Taytu. All the elements are based on and inspired by the lunar themes. The stunning contrasting details in black are all hand-embroidered.



# Ancient Craftsmanship: Where Would Fashion Be Without It?

*The Ethiopian fashion and textile industry has been growing rapidly in recent years. Ethiopian fabrics, designs and leather goods have always enjoyed popularity and are now conquering the global fashion world. Whether as designer outfits on the runways of Addis Ababa or as printed tribal cloth, they all have one thing in common: they rely on ancient craftsmanship and traditions.*



## The Heritage of Ancient Crafts

### Spinning

This tradition of preparing raw Ethiopian cotton has existed since ancient times and is still widely practised. The skill of hand-spinning is passed down from mother to daughter, and most rural women spin at home on drop spindles and spinning wheels for extra income.

**Did you know that...** Although Spinning has always been practised by all social classes in Ethiopia, it was once considered a fashionable and appropriate activity for noblewomen, well into the twentieth century.



### Weaving

Handloom weaving is a craft that has been around in Ethiopia for centuries. Even today, almost all traditional Ethiopian garments are made on handlooms. The techniques have not changed much, only the patterns, colours and designs being woven have become more and more sophisticated. The historic double treadle loom (sometimes a pit loom) is still used today by most “shemanes”, the weavers.

**Did you know that...** The art of weaving is passed down from father to son, so almost all weavers in Ethiopia are men.



### Dyeing

Traditional Ethiopian clothing is white, with a touch of colour at the bottom. One of the most important garments in Ethiopia’s cultural history is the white cotton “shamma”, a cloth or toga-like shawl which is the fundamental part of every traditional garment, worn by both men and women, in different variations. The shamma’s border colours are all based on natural dyes. Traditionally extracted from flowers, leaves, bark, roots and insects, for finely nuanced colours.

**Did you know that...** Sustainability is automatically guaranteed? These dyes are all organic (AZO-free and REACH-certified).



### Leather

Ethiopia is Africa’s number one leather producer, with modern handmade accessories just beginning to gain momentum. The leather tradition, however, has ancient roots: The production of leather from animal skins and hides through tanning processes began in prehistoric times. Despite new techniques such as chrome tanning, the traditional method of vegetable tanning is still being practised in Ethiopian artisanal tanneries. Leather businesses and tanneries support many livelihoods.

**Did you know that...** Ethiopia’s 90-million cattle, sheep and goat population is one of the world’s largest?





Ethiopia’s Textile Future is Looking Bright

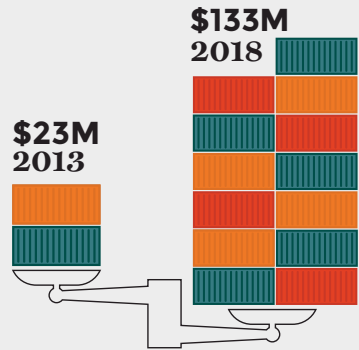
Textile crafts have a long tradition in Ethiopia. Centuries ago, guilds of specialist weavers, embroiderers and tailors used to work for Ethiopia’s religious and political elites. In fabric and leather production, most manufacturing is done by hand and still relies on the traditional techniques.

The country’s longstanding history in industrial textile manufacturing began in 1939, when the first garment factory was established. In the last 5 to 6 years, the textile and apparel industry has grown at an average of 51%, with the country increasingly attracting foreign investors looking to set up production sites due to low labour costs and the high quality of Ethiopian cotton and craftsmanship.

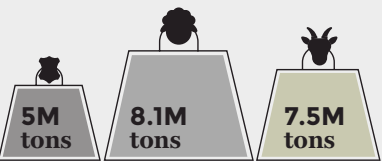
Now, with the global demand for Ethiopian textiles growing and the local demand for jobs and livelihoods increasing, more and more small Ethiopian fashion and apparel businesses are booming, reviving and reinterpreting ancient craftsmanship and heritage. This not only keeps these ancient traditions alive, but also creates essential livelihoods. Meanwhile the government is expanding production sites and infrastructures for international investors.

Ethiopian Textile & Leather: Some Facts

Value of Leather exports rose:



Leather Produced each year:



Exports of goods by small companies rose:

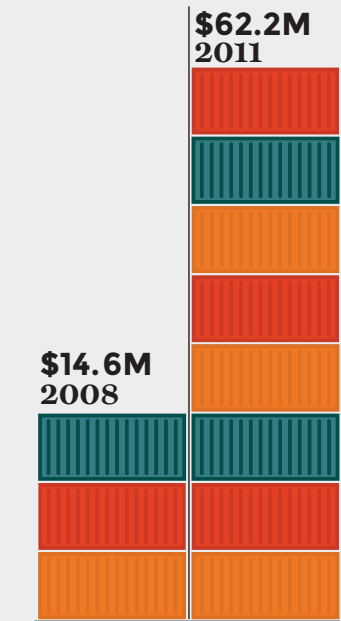


Photo this page: Ethiopian fashion production (here at Black Rhino) relies on handmade leather skins and beautiful handwoven fabrics.

Fashion Must-Haves by Ethiopian Designers

Be stylish and do good! Yes, you can have both with any of these must-have accessories. All of them are made by both established and up-and-coming Ethiopian fashion designers who are not only immensely talented, but are also sourcing locally, supporting women and giving back to communities. Here’s our selection of the best pieces and labels Ethiopia’s sustainable and social fashion scene has to offer.



African Wax Fabrics: / Afropian



## Proud to Wear Local

*The longest Earrings / Afropian*



*The Statement Ring / Afropian*



*The Bag with a Street Style Edge / Black Rhino*

### Black Rhino: Ethnic-Inspired, Durable Bags and Backpacks

Fine Ethiopian Leather and fabrics with African designs make a great pairing in Black Rhino's eye-catching bags and backpacks.

**Signature Style:** An edgy, street-inspired look – bags and young backpacks for urbanites on the go – think surfing or mountain bike style. It's all about combining an active lifestyle with stylish accessories.

**What the label is about:** A streetwear brand for urban accessories and lifestyle products with a sportswear edge, founded in Addis in 2016, with a young urban fan base.

**What else you should know:** The collection is completely produced locally in Black Rhino's own workshop.

[www.facebook.com/ownthequest](http://www.facebook.com/ownthequest)

### Afropian: Traditional Wax Fabrics With A Twist

Mix up some graphics with a colourful pattern of a typical African wax fabric and a T-Shirt (see previous page)! Or go for one of the striking pieces of African jewellery (above).

**Signature Style:** For textiles, Afropian is all about graphic and new interpretations of the beautifully patterned handwoven and hand-dyed fabrics from several African countries: Cotton from Ethiopia, batik from Ghana and Ivory Coast, bogolan and indigo from Mali, ndop from Cameroon, baule from Ivory Coast, silk from Tunisia, etc.). Some are certified organic. Their jewellery is eye-catching, antique statement jewellery.

**What the label is about:** African Pride. Since 2017, Afropian is all about blending styles from Ethiopia and other African countries and African storytelling through their pieces. “We tell stories of the past and present: about the modern day weavers in Ethiopia, the army of Amazons in Dahomey (current Benin), the amazing Dogon astronomers in Mali, the sultans of Cameroon and their ndop textiles.”

**What else you should know:** If jewellery comes into play, all pieces are either handmade by artisans or reclaimed antiques from up to 200 years ago. Also, the label upcycles fabric for patchworks or to make small pieces like coin purses or packaging.

[www.afropian.co](http://www.afropian.co)



*The Fun Bag / Amour Leather*

### Amour Leather: Playful and Fun Leather Pieces With a Cause

This hand-stitched cowhide bag with a bamboo handle (above) is not only a fashion statement, but also an homage to Ethiopian tradition. Traditionally, hide was always used for holding milk and water while travelling. If you fancy something smaller, Amour also makes beautiful wallets or luggage tags.

**Signature Style:** Playful leather designs with an edge – apart from accessories, Amour also offers home accessories made from leather.

**What the label is about:** Fun, yet high-end, colourful leather goods and accessories that are sustainably sourced and made with social

responsibility. Amour sources from tanneries that adhere to ecological water treatment and practices upcycling, avoids child labour, and gives back to the communities.

**What else you should know:** With each Amour Leather purchase, the company supports an Ethiopian woman or girl in rural areas with Amour's so-called Aqua Pack, a backpack with durable straps that makes their water trek (with heavy containers weighing 20-25 liters) less strenuous.

[www.amourleather.com](http://www.amourleather.com)



*Eco-Friendly Combinations / Tuba Ethiopia*

### Fabric and Leather: Tuba Fashion

A large black bag is the equivalent of the “little black dress”: always right. If you are not one for the all-leather look, this black Tuba bag (above) might just be right for you.

**Signature Style:** Tuba's totes, purses and duffle bags (top) are made out of a cool mix of fabric with an interesting handmade structure (made from highly durable yarn) and leather.

**What the label is about:** A commitment to durability and quality. Every Tuba bag has an eco-friendly product lifecycle, starting with its product design. Apart from being easy to care for, every Tuba bag can be upgraded, disassembled, reused and recycled – so you certainly won't be leaving a carbon footprint. What else you should know: Tuba gives back to Ethiopian communities: Since having started out in production with six women, Tuba has created job opportunities for about 35 people by now; 31 of them women working from home. Added bonus: employees are treated to free life skill training every month.

[www.tubaethiopia.com](http://www.tubaethiopia.com)





Because  
“sustainable”  
& “social”  
are the new  
fashionable

Minimalist Bags  
/ Samra Leather

**Samra Leather: Finest Ethiopian Leather With a Scandi-Chic Vibe**

Geometrical? Check. Clean lines? Check. Excellent leather? Check. No wonder Samra is one of Ethiopia’s – ahem – Africa’s top leather brands. Any one of Samra’s geometrical and minimalist bags is a timeless investment.

**Signature style:** Less is more. Samra’s carry-alls, totes, clutches, backpacks or briefcases all have a very minimal, cool and urban look. So don’t be confused if somebody asks you if you got your “made in Ethiopia” leather bag in Stockholm.

**What the label is about:** High-quality, premium leather and great design. Samra Leather has been in business for about ten years, making

high-end luxurious bags (and even jackets) both for men and women. And two more words: sustainable and social. Samra is an eco-friendly company, adhering to a strict zero waste strategy. Also, owner Samirawit works with women only as she strongly believes in creating job opportunities for and empowering women.

**What else you should know:** This is the stuff leather aficionados dream about: Ethiopian hides and skins are known for their exceptional quality, smooth surfaces, flexibility, strength and compact texture – especially the highland sheep leather which is exclusively found in Ethiopia – but, then again, as owner Samrawit puts it: “Great leather is nothing unless you design it properly”.

[www.facebook.com/SamraLeather](https://www.facebook.com/SamraLeather)



Minimalist design: Totes, clutches and shoulder bags by Samra are all made from finest Ethiopian leather.





Flowy Textiles  
/ Paradise Fashion

## Breezily Stylish: What Can't a Caftan do?



### Paradise Fashion: Wrap Party With Handwoven Fabrics

One of Paradise's short or long caftans is always a great buy – they do double duty at parties and thrown over a bikini on the beach. What can't a caftan do?

**Signature Style:** Light colours and lots of pastels are Paradise's signature style. Simple and elegant stripes do not take the attention off the great, flowy material, which is mostly finest Ethiopian cotton. Nothing says sophisticated yet bohemian citizen of the world more than a handwoven caftan or shawl. Breezily stylish!

**What the label is about:** Ethiopian weaving tradition, high-end fabrics and timeless, yet

trendy design in pastel colours. Artful caftans, scarves, shawls, home décor, and beachwear are all authentically crafted, handwoven and made locally. They also produce unique and custom-made pieces.

**What else you should know:** Of course there is also a social cause behind this label: Paradise Fashion's founder and designer Genet Kebede (above, pictured in her store) supports the livelihood of 55 women who, with their skills, preserve and enhance the art of the rich Ethiopian textile heritage.

[www.paradisefashion.net](http://www.paradisefashion.net)





Ethiopia is  
Number One in  
African Bamboo

# 9 Reasons Why Bamboo is Ethiopia’s New Gold

*Ethiopia has the largest bamboo resource in Africa. But little has been done so far in terms of awareness for this highly sustainable natural material and its uses. Now the eco-friendly resource is on the rise as a sustainable game changer. Bamboo is set to become one of the most important natural resources to push sustainable production globally. And Ethiopia is picking up on that potential. Why that is – and how two innovative businesses are putting a (green) spotlight on it.*

**1. Ethiopia is Africa's bamboo leader**  
Bamboo is one of the more important natural resources in Ethiopia, estimated at around 1.75 million hectares of land, which means that Ethiopian bamboo accounts for about 70% of continental Africa's bamboo coverage and seven percent of the world total. However, while the country is the largest producer of bamboo in Africa, the bamboo sector in Ethiopia still remains underdeveloped, with lots of potential growth.

**2. Bamboo is a sustainable game-changer and allrounder**  
Bamboo is one of the most important resources of global sustainable development. Bamboo is an eco-giant in many ways: It is a fast growing grass requiring significantly less land and water to grow than other woods and timber. Bamboo plants are also able to absorb up to four times more CO2 and release up to 35% more oxygen than an equivalent stand of trees. Bamboo is therefore considered to



be one of the most sustainable materials of the 21st century.

**3. Bamboo grows fast**  
As a resource, bamboo is highly renewable and easy to grow. Some species can grow up to 30 meters and even grow one meter per day. Compared to other trees, bamboo stalks start to lignify just after a short time and can already be harvested after three years, whereas it might take other woods thirty years to grow before they are ready for processing and production.

**4. Bamboo thrives in Ethiopia's climate**  
Bamboo is robust and not picky about weather conditions. A combination of shadow and sunlight, warmth and cold, precipitation and humidity are the best conditions for bamboo to thrive in. All of these exist in Ethiopia. Because it even thrives on problem soils and steep slopes which are unsuitable for other crops, bamboo is easy to cultivate.

**5. Bamboo can help combat climate change**  
As it regrows quickly and matures faster than most timber, bamboo can take pressure off other forest resources, reducing deforestation. Bamboo can also help avoid fossil fuel use, as it offers an alternative,

highly renewable source of biomass energy. And did you know that bamboo can bind up four times more carbon dioxide than other trees?

**6. Bamboo allows for frequent harvesting**  
Bamboo's rapid establishment and growth allow for frequent harvesting. This allows farmers to flexibly adapt their management and harvesting practices to new growing conditions as they emerge under climate change. Bamboo can provide a year-round source of income for farmers.

**7. Bamboo is strong, renewable and durable**  
Bamboo is a perfect material: stable as steel, light as aluminium, comfortable like carbon. The "gift of god", as bamboo is also called, is also renewable, extremely durable and light. These properties make it a sustainable resource with almost limitless possibilities, to be converted into a wide variety of products, from environmentally-friendly cutlery and plates to house building material.

**8. Bamboo gives back to rural communities**  
Ethiopia cultivates two types of bamboo: highland and lowland bamboo. Highland bamboo accounts for around 15 percent of







the country's bamboo coverage and is mostly cultivated on a smallholder's own land (whereas lowland bamboo grows in natural groves and forests in the southern parts of Ethiopia.) On the smallholder farms, the bamboo stalks are harvested by hand. Bamboo cultivation thus has the potential to create more jobs in rural areas and to contribute to rural Ethiopian households.

**9. Bamboo inspires entrepreneurs**  
There is limitless potential for the bamboo market to grow further. Ethiopian entrepreneurs have discovered bamboo's all-round potential for high-quality bamboo products such as textiles, furniture or vehicles. Today, more and more Ethiopian businesses are starting to work with the highly sustainable resource. Two of our TGB participants have developed innovative business models around bamboo:

### bamboo labs: Sustainable Mobility

**About:** "bamboo labs" is an award-winning social enterprise, all about building a future of accessible, affordable and sustainable mobility – with bamboo, of course.

**What they do:** Use bamboo in a previously unknown context: bicycles and wheelchairs. All locally sourced and locally made. By the way: Bamboo bike frames are just as strong as steel and are able to absorb shocks and vibrations.

**Why they do it:** bamboo lab's mission is to come up with sustainable and affordable local transport possibilities and to create jobs that will strengthen the local economy, by using locally grown bamboo.

[www.bamboolabs.org](http://www.bamboolabs.org)

### Aklill: Textiles on the Bamboo Trail

**About:** Aklill is Ethiopia's first venture in bamboo textile: an inspiring accessory-company producing different types of textiles made from renewable materials, currently with a strong focus on bamboo.

**What they do:** Find surprising ways to work with bamboo for everyday basics and home textiles: Think socks, blankets, cushions and woven rugs. All products are made from bamboo fibres and made with "love, culture, environment, history and present" in mind.

**Why they do it:** Despite its abundant quantities, bamboo has traditionally been undervalued as a resource in Ethiopia. Aklill has discovered bamboo's great potential to enhance socio-economic and ecological development and have come up with innovative ways to use bamboo as a fibre, as a textile. Aklill is also on an environmental mission: passionate about local sustainable development and job creation, while wanting to raise public awareness for environmental values and sustainable living. By starting production with locally grown bamboo, the company is currently exploring the potential to create more local employment opportunities along the entire bamboo production chain.

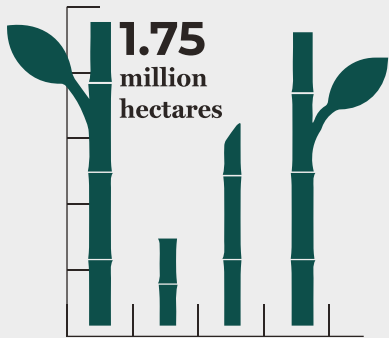
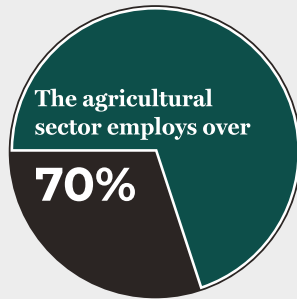
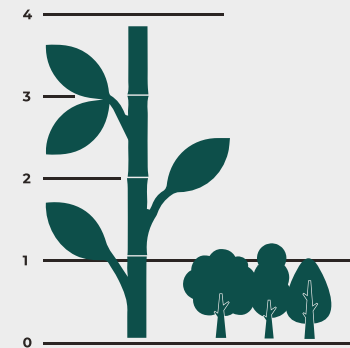
[www.shebathreads.com](http://www.shebathreads.com)

Left: Turning bamboo into bike frames as strong as steel, at bamboo labs.

Right page: Colourful and sustainable: Handmade bamboo accessories by Aklill.



Bamboo plants bind up to four times more carbon dioxide from the air than other trees





# Helping Realise Potential

New strategies are needed for Ethiopia to overcome its social inequality and environmental challenges after decades of growth. This is where we come in – by empowering from within.

*Our objective is to provide a valuable impetus for growth and innovation for talented Ethiopian entrepreneurs. Their ideas are all there, as well as determination and discipline – but sometimes what is lacking is strategic focus. The Good Business immersion workshops provide just that.*

*The Good Business (TGB) is a COVID-19 response programme for impact entrepreneurs based in Ethiopia, which is carried out with the help of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and in cooperation with the NOAH Foundation, the Ethiopian innovation hub iceaddis and the ESCP. The programme helps sustainably focused companies to develop and implement individual growth concepts and expansion strategies. The focus is on impact ventures that have a positive impact on social and environmental sustainability. TGB is supported by the Special Initiative on Training and Job Creation of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Under the Invest for Jobs brand, BMZ has put together a package of measures to support German, European and African companies in investment activities that have a high impact on employment in Africa.*

*Both TGB Accelerator and Evolver are based on a comprehensive workshop package that gives both startups and SMEs access to professional coaching on the business-related topics that matter most. The focus lies on empowering them and their communities, social and sustainability topics as well as female empowerment.*

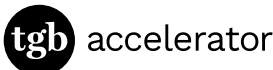


## 1. TGB Accelerator: Helping Promising Startups Grow

If you are a young, sustainably operating start-up based in Ethiopia, chances are that TGB Accelerator will give you the push you need: The immersive business development programme offers a combination of training, mentorship and seed financing. The programme supports young and dynamic Ethiopian entrepreneurs to align their processes and to expand market and customer reach.

Kicking off in 2021, TGB Accelerator has successfully helped Ethiopian businesses from the sectors Food & Nutrition, Style & Leisure and Health & Wellbeing.

**These are the 2021 participants of the TGB Accelerator programme:**  
Aklill, MaledaCrafts, Bamboolabs, Afropian, Berbera Market, The Goat Café, Fili Coffee, Tuba Ethiopia, Yonael Marga, Kushineta



## 2. TGB Evolver: Boosting Growth à la Carte for SMEs

The TGB Evolver programme is our business immersion workshop for Ethiopian SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) that are already well on their way, but might be struggling to grow. Business consulting through local and international experts is tailored to the needs of the participants. TGB Evolver programme is targeted to help them improve production and services, to enter new markets and to grow their businesses. It kicks off with the assessment of individual requirements and objectives which are then converted into strategies and a hands-on business plan.

**These are the 2021 participants of the TGB Evolver programme:**  
Terra PLC, Amour Leather, Samra Leather, Tamsalet Kitchen, Actuel Urban Living, Black Rhino, Paradise Fashion, Felek



Photo: The TGB programmes help Ethiopian entrepreneurs and businesses such as accessory label Black Rhino prosper.





# Let the Children Play & Learn

*41 million children live in Ethiopia, with nearly 36 million of them being “multidimensionally” poor, says a 2019 report released by Unicef. Even though poverty is highest in rural areas, one in five children in Ethiopia’s capital Addis is also poor. Fortunately, a few young start-ups have now joined the fight against child poverty and lack of child education, among them two participants of the TGB programme: Kushineta Skateboards and Felek Notebooks.*

We asked the founders of Kushineta Skateboards, Gabriel Yared and Yeabkal Abreham, who give poor kids access to skateboards, skate parks and training, about their motivation for their charity side project:

“We want to make skateboarding accessible to everyone in Ethiopia; the board is such a great bridge to educate, employ, and empower youth across the country. Extracurricular activities for kids are really limited, especially for poor kids and teens... but if you have a skateboard, you can practise anywhere, as long as there is asphalt”, says Gabriel. “Skateboarding promotes positive life skills including self-confidence, goal setting, perseverance and social competence, just to name a few. It’s a non-competitive sport and gives the kids an outlet for creativity and self-expression – apart from being fun, of course!”

Left: A boy with his supply of exercise books, sponsored by Felek notebooks.  
This page: Children having fun with skateboards in Kushineta’s social project.



## Kushineta: Skateboarding for everyone

**About:** Kushineta is a skateboard pioneer start-up based in Addis, also involved in building the local skateboard scene through new skateparks and networking.

**What they do:** Offer quality affordable skateboards, skateboarding apparel and streetwear (manufactured locally) for the young local skate community. “The skate scene is relatively new in Addis, but in the past seven years it has grown very rapidly.”

**How they help kids:** Kushineta empowers kids by giving them access to free skateboards, to skateparks, and to skateboard training, thus allowing them to practise and gain skills.

[www.instagram.com/kushinetaskate](https://www.instagram.com/kushinetaskate)







The Kids Are Alright: How Skateboards & Notebooks are Building Self-Confidence for Ethiopian Kids



“  
*Skateboarding is a non-competitive sport and provides kids with an outlet for creativity, self-expression & for venting stress – apart from being lots of fun!*  
”



Felek Notebooks: One luxury notebook = one year of school

**About:** Inspired by Ethiopia’s heritage of handmade books, Felek combines contemporary eco-friendly designs with traditional artisanship to produce quality handmade notebooks, bags and other textile products.

**What they do:** Leather-bound notebooks made with recycled paper are one of their specialties, but they can basically turn anything into a cool notebook, recycling materials such as tires, jerrycan covers and waste paper.

**How they help kids:** By turning the sales of every leather-bound Felek notebook into one years’ supply of school exercise books for one child: In rural parts of Ethiopia, not being able to afford school learning materials has a direct impact on a family being able to send their children to school or not. “We strongly believe that education is key to ending the cycle of poverty in a family, and that is why we chose to make our mark there.”

[www.myfelek.com](http://www.myfelek.com)

Top left: Kushineta Skateboards team: Ruel, Henok, Gabriel and Yeabkal.

Top middle: Made by hand: Felek Notebooks.

Top right: Proud to go to school: Kids show off their exercise books from Felek’s charity project.

Left: Fun on wheels: A skate park in Addis.



# Ethiopique, C'est Chic!

*A new generation of interior and furniture designers are on the rise across Ethiopia, mixing up tradition and modernity, playing with local materials and interpreting them in a sleek and architectural way. Meet Actuel Urban Living: Their striking and unique handmade pieces not only have the power to brilliantly transform your living space. But also the craftsmanship scene in Ethiopia.*



If you think about sleek and minimalist interiors, Milan, Stockholm or Copenhagen will probably spring to mind... well, think again: Actuel Urban Living is putting Addis on the map as a new and exciting hub for sleek yet unique furniture designs.

Founded in 2016 by Hamere Demissie, this SME is THE go-to-label for chic contemporary furniture with an Ethiopian twist; with a dedicated vision to become the number one brand for contemporary design and furniture for the African market.

Their chances are as promising as their take on "sleek" is striking. "Our designs are inspired both by the minimalist spirit of traditional Ethiopian furniture design and craftsmanship, as well as elements of the modern design movement", says owner Hamere. Apart from beautiful furniture pieces crafted from indigenous woods, they also offer unique rugs, modern lighting and accessories.

But Actuel Urban Living is more than just a designer brand with a unique style that will stand out in your living room: The brand also comes with a social mission. By working with local artisans only, Actuel Urban Living is completely dedicated to "Made in Ethiopia": "All our products are designed and crafted locally by our skilled artisans who take great pride in their work", says owner Hamere Demissie. This not only creates jobs and keeps longstanding craftsmanship alive. In the long run, businesses like these will make Ethiopia more independent from foreign imports. "We firmly believe that we can break the dependence on substandard imports and produce

wonderful furniture and home furnishings in Ethiopia - actually, that is our main motivation." Actuel Urban Living build the skills of these local artisans in close collaboration. Therefore, a piece by Actuel Urban Living is always more than just a shelf, a sofa or a rug: It is also a commitment to Ethiopian craftsmanship and a boost for the local scene and its network economy. The results are beautiful and exceptional: be it a colourful patterned cushion or a side table with a strong mid-century vibe. Expect functionality and emotion-inspiring warmth at the same time, all with a visible passion for beauty and quality. Watch out, Milan!

“  
*We want to inspire global audiences by taking contemporary African design identities to the next level.*  
”

Left page: One of Actuel's unexpected wax fabric pieces: an "Arc" lamp, with a velvet armchair.

Top: Ottomans covered in wax fabrics.

Right: The narrow "Etagère" shelf in metal.





## Room With a View: A Warm Mid-Century Vibe



Left: A Penthouse furnished by Actuel, in Addis.

Below: Handcrafted armchair, inspired by Fifties Scandinavian furniture.



### Actuel Urban Living: What you need to know

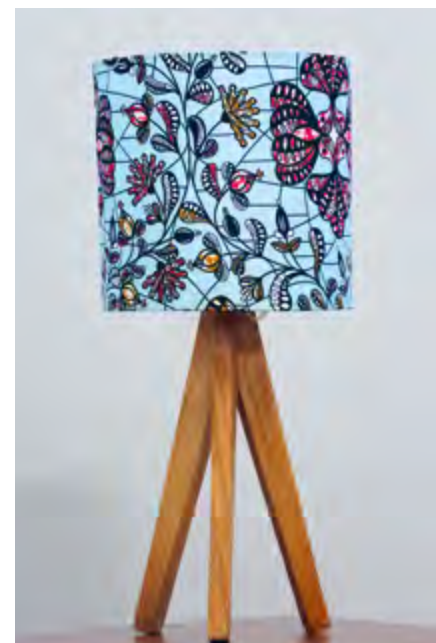
**What it is:** THE one-stop shop for contemporary design furniture and up-and-coming brand for interior design, based in Addis. Sofas, coffee or dining tables, rugs, cushions and lighting are all handmade in Ethiopia.

**Signature Style:** Sleek contemporary design with an exciting Ethiopian twist and a refined organic feel, thanks to natural materials such as solid indigenous woods, cotton, wool and iron. Specialty: creative use of traditional

African wax prints in unusual contexts – such as armchairs or custom-made lampshades for designer lamps.

**Mission:** Apart from becoming the No. 1 design brand in Ethiopia and beyond, founder Hamere Demissie's objective is to build the skills of local artisans to keep their traditions and craft alive – and to become less dependent on furniture imports.

*[www.actuelinteriors.com](http://www.actuelinteriors.com) or [www.instagram.com/actuelurbanliving](https://www.instagram.com/actuelurbanliving)  
Or visit their showroom in Addis.*



Left: Custom-made lamp with floral wax print.

Above: Handwoven wool rugs with geometric patterns are custom-made.







Above: Roses being collected on the organic fields of Terra Plc (see p. 36-37).

Right: Giving a second life to waste plastic at Maleda Crafts.

# Projects with Double Impact: Saving the Planet & Creating Livelihoods

*Modern Ethiopia is struggling with environmental concerns in addition to employment and poverty issues. That is why projects that give back to the environment as well as the communities are especially powerful. Here are two of them: An organic farming and an innovative upcycling accessory business.*

It is no secret that Ethiopia's growing population comes with lots of social and ecological challenges. Agriculture remains essential to the Ethiopian economy. Yet soil and land are often degraded. Here are some other not-so-great facts: About 61 million people in Ethiopia lack access to clean and safe water. About 80% of Ethiopia's population are rural subsistence farmers, who are among the most vulnerable to food shortages. Ethiopia's air suffers from pollution due to climate change and limited rainfalls, and is on top put in jeopardy through the rise of mobility in urban population, which goes hand in hand with a rapidly growing industrialisation. All in all: environmental projects and sustainable solutions are needed. All the better if they also create livelihoods, such as these two projects.



## Turning Plastic Waste into Cool Accessories: Maleda Crafts

**What they do:** Maleda Crafts manufactures quality accessories made from disposed plastic bags and textile leftovers – materials that would usually be disposed of and pollute the environment. All of Maleda's products are handmade.

**How it works:** Used plastic bags (mainly diapers packaging) are recycled and, in combination with textile cutouts, woven into new and durable fabrics. Maleda turns these fabrics into stylish and colourful bags or shoes, all by hand, combining the unique woven fabrics with finest Ethiopian leather. Maleda's eco-friendly product cycle not only reduces pollution in the community but also supports livelihoods. Fittingly the company name Maleda means "Dawn of day" in Amharic.

[www.maledacrafts.com](http://www.maledacrafts.com)







What does The Damascene Rose Have to Do with One of the World’s Favourite Skin Care Brands, Sustainable Farming and the Creation of Livelihoods?



A Rose is a Rose... Is a Protector of the Environment: Terra Plc

**What they do:** Terra Plc is all about environmentally friendly and socially responsible agro-processing projects. Since 2012, the company has been growing, distilling and exporting rose oil obtained from the rare “Rosa Damascena” to German WALA Heilmittel GmbH, manufacturer of models’ favourite natural skin care brand Dr. Hauschka. The extensive cultivation of “Rosa Damascena”, which is one the oldest rose varieties in the world (included in UNESCO’s Intangible

Cultural Heritage List) began eleven years ago. As of 2013, Terra Plc’s production is certified organic and biodynamic, with a “Fair for Life” certification since 2015.

**How it works:** Terra Plc maintains a completely organic agricultural cycle: compost is produced from animal dung and other biodegradable wastes such as rose sludge, dried leaves and branches, fresh weeds and dried grass, all collected from within Terra’s farms (18 hectares of land in its landholdings in Debre Birhan and Angolala). The company supports livelihoods in these rural areas.

Organically certified farming at Terra Plc: the harvest of rare Damascene Roses and chamomile are exported to WALA Heilmittel in Germany – manufacturer of Dr. Hauschka natural skin care.





# “Empowering Women is Empowering Community”

## A roundtable chat with four of our TGB participants

*They are creative, innovative and full of drive and determination. Yet for four of our TGB participants from the fashion sector, it hasn't been easy to get where they are today. They are best suited to be asked about gender (in)equality and the economic challenges Ethiopian women face today – and why it is so important to support them.*



**Genet Kebede, Paradise Fashion**

Genet founded Paradise in 1992, producing handwoven, high-quality textiles and supporting women's livelihoods and artisanship. She is a mother of three adult children (aged 37, 31 and 29) who, she says, are her strongest supporters.



**Samrawit Merziehazen, Samra Leather**

Samrawit is the founder of Samra Leather, one of Ethiopia's finest leather brands. She has a diploma in economics and accounting and took different fashion courses in design, sketching, pattern making, cutting and colour forecasting. She is a single mother.



**Kidist Tesfaye, Tuba Fashion**

Kidist is the founder of Tuba, a sustainable accessory label. She has a Master of Science in Environmental Engineering and a Bachelor of Science in Water Resource and Environmental Engineering. With seven years in non-profit sectors under her belt, she is passionate about social, environmental and education issues as well as women's employment.



**Zemen Amour Tefera, Amour Leather**

Zemen is the owner and founder of Amour Leather, a socially responsible and sustainable leather label. Through her production of colourful leather goods, she creates job opportunities for women, supports local artisanship and empowers the women she works with.

Find out more about our participants' labels and products on pages 14–19.



**Ethiopia's future is female: In modern Ethiopian society, more and more women are becoming very much involved in business – a prerequisite for empowerment and for playing a role in economic development. But who said being a female entrepreneur in Ethiopia was easy? Women are facing educational backsets due to systemic problems stemming from cultural and societal beliefs, as well as huge financing gaps – and on top of all that with an adverse social landscape marked by high poverty and unemployment rates of Ethiopia's rapidly growing population. We spoke to four of our successful participants from the TGB programmes about their take on female entrepreneurship and equality.**

“  
Helping a woman is helping society.  
”

**“One of the most difficult things for us is to get funding.”**

**All four of you are successfully running or have set up your own business in the fashion sector. Can you fill us in on the barriers and difficulties Ethiopian women face in getting ahead careerwise in this male-dominated society?**

**Samrawit Merziehazen:** Above all, I think the main obstacle lies in our social system: there is a prevailing systematic cultural rejection and disapproval of women: Women are still mostly expected to work at home and help the family. Overall, there is a tendency to see women as commodities and a belief that they cannot or will not be leaders, especially when men think women do better than them. All you can do is work hard and prove them wrong! I think there is a lack of raised awareness, of general education and of support systems for women in this area.

**Genet Kebede:** Yes, there are still gender barriers. Women are often less educated than men and face discrimination. So when we venture out to start a successful business, one of the difficulties is getting enough funding to grow.

**Kidist Tesfaye:** The belief that women are not encouraged to be businesswomen, because society believes that women have to stay home and take care of their children. Even if they have to work, recommended jobs are routine jobs. There are some cultural problems too: let alone being businesswomen, in some cultures women even don't walk side by side with men or women can't inherit their families' inheritance. And most of all, men have problems getting along or accepting female bosses.

**Zemen Amour Tefera:** I would also say the lack of funding is a huge obstacle. The biggest entrepreneurial challenge is the inability to unlock capital. It is more difficult for women to get loans than for men.

**“Education is key – but poverty and inequality are obstacles for girls.”**

**Ethiopia has a staggeringly high poverty and unemployment rate, and access for girls to education is restricted. How do you think Ethiopia can develop strategies, solutions or impulses to combat poverty and generate more jobs, especially for women?**

**Genet Kebede:** Yes, unfortunately girls' education in Ethiopia is highly affected by current poverty; in fact, poverty is one of the main barriers to girls' and women's education. Girls are also facing socio-cultural factors – social norms and traditional practices such as early marriage, or gender-based violence and teenage pregnancies... all of these can greatly affect girls' and women's access to education or completing it. So providing basic education is an effective way to empower girls with autonomy and independence. Only education will enable them to make real choices about their lives, their families and their communities.

**Kidist Tesfaye:** The major employment challenge in Ethiopia is to create productive jobs and livelihoods for the millions of people who are entering the labour force each year, also women... the worst part is that this challenge will be facing us even more in the years to come. I personally believe that social enterprises and projects in different sectors offer realistic solutions for Ethiopian social problems – especially the ones that focus on creating job opportunities for the unemployed, uneducated and undervalued communities.



“Unemployment strategy:  
Manufacture locally.  
Create more jobs.”

How would this work? Can you give us  
some examples?

**Genet Kebede:** Speaking for my sector, which is textile: If we could train more women and girls who have dropped out of school in modern weaving techniques to produce quality handwoven textiles, that could really make a difference. There is a shortage of modern handwoven fabrics, and we would face it whilst also creating employment opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. On top of that, we would provide a variety of handwoven textiles for different businesses and designers, thus giving back to the communities.

**Kidist Tesfaye:** Apart from social enterprises that can create inclusive and innovative job opportunities for the unemployed population, I think manufacturing is a major sector offering a huge number of job opportunities. Instead of importing products, manufacturing them locally would create more employment opportunities. Obviously, this needs awareness in the communities to “buy local” – products should go to local communities first before they are exported.

“  
*Persist &  
don’t be  
afraid to  
reach out.*  
”

“The solution is to  
work hard and prove  
prejudices wrong.”

You all took part in the entrepreneur-  
ship training of our TGB Evolver or  
Accelerator programmes. How did the  
TGB coaches and experts help you to  
advance your business?

**Zemen Amour Tefera:** My company faces a lot of difficulties due to Covid-19. The TGB programme helps me to assess my weaknesses and implement a comprehensive growth strategy. Because the training focuses on goal-oriented and result-driven strategy, I find it immensely practical to implement.

**Kidist Tesfaye:** I found all of the TGB experts easy to talk to, cooperative, knowledgeable and dedicated. Before taking part in the TGB programme and right after our business started, I had no clue on how to meet goals or to prioritise tasks. The TGB programme taught us that we need a clear mission, vision and strategic statement and how to set objectives and project key results. It is a bit like seeing your future business and lifetime work on fast-forward within ten weeks! TGB also helped me close know-how gaps on areas such as branding and digital marketing, and how to use tools such as a business model canvas or a pitch deck.

“Don’t forget to give  
back! Entrepreneurs are  
all about connecting  
the dots.”

What would you tell young Ethiopian  
female entrepreneurs starting out today?

**Zemen Amour Tefera:** Have faith in God! Show persistence and don’t be afraid to reach out. After all, entrepreneurs are all about connecting the dots. And do not forget to always give back.

**Genet Kebede:** Follow your dream and do not give up until you realize it. Education is the key for growth, so do not stop to educate yourself, no matter what.

**Samrawit Merziehazen:** Never give up and keep going! You have much more potential and strength than you think, because good things happen because of you. So, keep fighting to be the change and create a healthy environment, be a helping hand to other women, spread positivity and kindness to others. Be the light and hope for others, don’t let others stop you from achieving your dream! Keep shining, you are a star!

**Kidist Tesfaye:** Being a female entrepreneur has many challenges but if you are ready to sacrifice whatever you have for your dream, then you will love every challenge you face.

*Our TGB Accelerator and Evolver programmes also focus on gender equality in small enterprise development, with the goal of discovering the best ways to help women start, operate, and expand a small business in Ethiopia.*

Some interesting facts

Research indicates that investments in women-owned businesses offer one of the highest return opportunities available in emerging markets.\*

However, an estimated 70% of small and medium businesses owned by women in developing countries cannot get enough financing to grow.\*

3,000 women in Ethiopia have been able to tap financing since 2013 to start or expand a small business.\*

40.3% of women aged 20–24 years old were married or in a union before age 18.\*\*

Women and girls aged 10+ spend 19.3% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to 6.6% spent by men.\*\*

\* Source: worldbank.org  
\*\* Source: www.data.unwomen.org







# Female Empowerment à La Carte

*Is she a chef, an entrepreneur or a social worker? A trailblazing feminist? The answer is: all of the above. At Tamsalet Kitchen in Addis Ababa's Sar Bet district, powerhouse woman Samrawit Petros has more on her restaurant menu than just delicious dishes. She also runs a programme for unemployed women and single mothers in need.*



Above: Samrawit Petros, who runs eatery cum female employment-programme "Tamsalet Kitchen" in Addis.

Right page: Women are trained in all restaurant skills.

## Every Dish Emancipates Women



To connect with food is to connect with and support women. At least that's the case for Samrawit Petros. With Tamsalet, she found a way to connect her love for cooking and food with her love for social work and female empowerment.

Established in 2015, her multipurpose kitchen provides job opportunities for unemployed women, training them in situ so that they can become independent and make their living. Women at Tamsalet's "Sisterhood" can then advance to become assistant chefs. The all-female "family" spirit also benefits them in other ways: Unlike other employers, the Tamsalet "sisterhood" will support the women in times of poor health or crisis. Apparently the Tamsalet crew does a great job: The dishes are popular with the locals, and even the coffee (the macchiato!) is renowned.

### Tamsalet Kitchen: Creating Great Dishes – and Jobs

**What it is:** A popular restaurant in Addis Ababa's Sar Bet district, run by women to help women: an eatery-cum-social female empowerment programme that employs and trains women in need and aims to close gender gaps. Oh, and the food is delicious, too!

**How does it help women?** Women from vulnerable backgrounds, unemployed or in need of financial support (such as single mothers or women deported from Arab countries), find work here and are trained in restaurant skills.

**What exactly are they trained in?** Skills such as sourcing and shopping food supplies, cooking, menu development, quality service, barista and waitressing skills... the entire chain of production and service is run by women.

**So how does that work?** Supervisors and new employees are grouped in so-called "sisterhoods", with the women moving through different stages and training cycles of the eatery. The family spirit fosters support, growth and independence. And: profits from every dish eaten at Tamsalet Kitchen go towards an investment fund set up for the women.

**Anything else unusual about the place?** Yup. The raw-wood furnished restaurant space also doubles as an exhibition space, allowing the employees to showcase their artworks there.

*Tamsalet Kitchen:  
Located in the KOICA Building next to Adams Pavilion In Addis Ababa  
[www.tamsaletkitchen.com](http://www.tamsaletkitchen.com)*



# On Today’s Menu: Leadership & Independence



*Naturally, Samrawit (above left) and her Temsalet Kitchen team also serve Injera, Ethiopia's specialty. At Temsalet, the name of every Injera dish pays homage to a unique female figure from Ethiopia's history. Samrawit was kind enough to share one of her secret recipes for this delicious Ethiopian specialty, traditionally eaten by hand.*

## Samrawit Petros’ Signature Dish: The Temsalet’s Combo

*“It’s a combination of our favorite dishes and we call it Temsalet’s Combo. The dish consists of shiro (chickpea stew), Awaze Tibis (roasted marinated beef) Dirkosh be Quanta Firfir (Dried Injera with Dried beef), Kosta(Ethiopian Spinach), Yetetebse Dinch (Roasted Potato) Pasta and Rice. Its preferred by most of our customers because it contains different rarities of dishes. There is a choice of vegetarian, vegan or with meat. Temsalet’s Combo is usually eaten for lunch or dinner.”*

*Preparation: 10min  
Cooking: 40min  
Serves: 4–6 people*

### Ingredients:

**Dirkosh be Quanta Firfir**  
2 large onions, chopped  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1–2 tablespoons Berbere (Ethiopian spice)  
3 ounce tomato paste  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
1/4–3/4 cups water  
3–4 minced ginger and garlic  
1–2 dried Injera, torn into pieces  
10 ounce dried beef  
1/4 cup Ethiopian Kibbeh (spiced clarified butter)  
1 jalapeño cut into thin strips  
Pinch of salt for taste

**Shiro**  
2 large onions, chopped  
1/4 cup vegetable oil  
1–2 tablespoons Berbere (Ethiopian spice)  
3 ounce tomato paste  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
2–2 1/2 cups water  
3–4 minced ginger and garlic  
1–2 dried Injera, torn into pieces  
1/2 cups chickpea flour  
1/4 cup Ethiopian Kibbeh (spiced clarified butter)  
Pinch of salt for taste



### Directions:

**Dirkosh be Quanta Firfir**  
**1.** Place onions in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook, covered, until starting to brown, about 5 minutes. Add vegetable oil and garlic paste; cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Stir in tomato paste and tomatoes; cook until softened, 5 minutes.  
**2.** Stir 1/2 cup water, dried beef, and berbere into the saucepan. Reduce heat to medium and cook until flavors combine, about 10 minutes. Continue cooking, adding 1/3 cup water every few minutes, until beef is softened, and sauce is thick, about 20 minutes. Stir in kibbeh and salt.  
**3.** Tear 1 dried injera into palm-sized pieces; fold gently into the sauce.

### Shiro

**1.** Place onions in a heavy bottom stockpot over medium-high heat. Cook, covered, until starting to brown, about 4 minutes. Add vegetable oil and garlic paste; cook until fragrant, about 5 minutes. Stir in tomato paste and tomatoes; cook until softened, 5 minutes.  
**2.** Stir 1/2 cup water, start whisking in about half of the chickpea flour. Gradually start to add about 1 cup of water. Whisk in the remaining chickpea flour and an additional 1 cup of water. Whisk until mixture is very smooth.  
**3.** Add Kibeh and Simmer for about 5–10 minutes over low heat until the flavours combine.

Bon appétit!



# High Energy: 9 Facts About Ethiopian Coffee

## Plus Two Cool Coffee Shops

*Is Ethiopia the cradle of coffee? Most historians would agree, though there is some debate over the issue. Undisputed, however, is the fact that for hundreds of years Ethiopia has provided some of the world's best single origin premium coffee beans. Here are nine facts about the delicious brew – plus two young entrepreneurs on the coffee scene.*



### 1. Wild thing: Coffee is the taste of Ethiopian wilderness

Ethiopian coffee grows wild, and it grows in the “highlands”. The Ethiopian mountain ranges provide the best conditions for coffee to thrive, with an average temperature around 20°C and a shady and humid environment. The coffee is mostly grown in the forest, plantations and the garden by small Ethiopian farmers, ensuring livelihoods. To make coffee less susceptible to pests, plantations are mixed, with corn and other crops growing through the middle of the coffee plants.

### 2. High on coffee

Ethiopia is (next to Lesotho) the highest country in Africa and offers ideal conditions for cultivating the so-called “highland coffee”. In some regions, Ethiopia's altitude

measures even 2,100 meters. This high altitude provides the best habitat for growing high-quality coffee, which is considered by international coffee connoisseurs to be one of the best in the world for its extraordinary taste. The high elevation of Ethiopia (1,500+ metres) qualifies all Ethiopian green coffees as Strictly High Grown (SHG).

### 3. “By hand” makes it special

Most of Ethiopia's production is still manually harvested ripe fruits.

A small part of the harvested green coffee fruits is dried naturally by the sun, until the residual moisture reaches a mere 12%. Then, the coffee beans are hulled from the fruit by hand. This legitimizes its high price and its unique, sweetish taste. Over



330,000 farms and 19,000 state farms are growing coffee in Ethiopia, securing the income of 60% of Ethiopian people.

### 4. Ethiopians love “their” coffee

Coffee has a long tradition and a deeply rooted importance in Ethiopian's everyday life, though most of Ethiopia's coffee is now cultivated for export into international markets, it is with 50% of the coffee production consumed and sold locally. Coffee is more than just a beverage: In Ethiopia, coffee is an important part of the culture, and a respected daily event is the Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony.

### 5. Ethiopian coffee production is threatened by climate change

Current statistics show a steady decrease in rainfall in Ethiopia over the past fifty years, with the frequency of droughts increasing accordingly. These effects could prove to be disastrous for Ethiopian coffee-growing areas and their farmers. The Ethiopian Coffee Exchange (ECX) was set up in 2008 to smooth out pricing and help protect the farmers from volatility in the market.

### 6. Coffee secures jobs

On the international list of coffee producers, Ethiopia is ranked 5th, after Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia and Indonesia. Coffee production plays a vital role in Ethiopia's economy, with the coffee sector offering nearly

15 million Ethiopians job opportunities to secure their income – that is almost two thirds of the population.

### 7. Rare coffee cherries are the new wine grapes

The days when coffee was traded like grain and soybeans are over. Today, premium specialty coffees enjoy the status of a high-quality wine. Coffee consumption has turned into a lifestyle trend. Specialty flavours, origins

and cultivation methods are the stuff coffee lovers dream of, with preferences varying depending on personal tastes.

### 8. Fair Trade Organic coffees are standard in Ethiopia

Natural growing methods (including pest control) made the sought-after Organic Certification an easy sell for Ethiopian farmers. The global trend of sustainable coffee is supporting this success.

## Ethiopia's Favourite Coffee Varieties



### Sidamo

Best known for its rich, mouthfeel, sweet and complex flavor, low acidity, floral aroma, and a finish that is bright and soft.



### Yirgacheffe

Shimmer with citrus tones combined with a wonderful sweetness in the taste and floral notes in the aroma. Some of the highest rated coffee beans in the world.



### Harar

Winey and fruity, floral-toned acidity with a rich and pungent taste, heady aroma that is reminiscent of blackberries.





**9. Three main coffee regions are all you need to know**

Want to show off your coffee know-how? Then just remember the names of these three main regions in Ethiopia which are well-known and famous for growing and producing premium coffee: Sidamo, Yirgacheffe and Harrar.

If you don't want to bother to remember, you can discover all of these coffee varieties at Fili Coffee in Addis Ababa: The coffee shop is a TGB participant and roasts, sells and distributes the finest Ethiopian coffee.

## Creating Jobs Through Barista Workshops

*Fili Coffee owner Filimon is a passionate and dedicated coffee expert who also hosts barista workshops for young people in his warehouse set on the outskirts of Addis. We asked him about the project.*

**How did you come up with the idea?**

The idea was born when I realised that our country which is the cradle of coffee, where coffee is a daily ritual and where millions of cups are consumed every day... that this country has no barista training center. A complete blind spot. After all, baristas are the decision makers in the coffee industry: they decide which roasted coffee to purchase and to brew... yet most of them are not even certified.

**How do the workshops work?**

It is a specialised barista training which also incorporates our unique Ethiopian way of making coffee. At the beginning, we tested it on five groups of students, a total of twenty aspiring baristas... and those workshops were a huge success. Plus, because all of the barista trainees get to know our coffee and brand, we automatically create new brand ambassadors for Fili Coffee. Through special skills teaching, the barista project also creates job opportunities for Ethiopian youth.

**Fili Coffee: Great Roasts and Barista Training in a Warehouse**

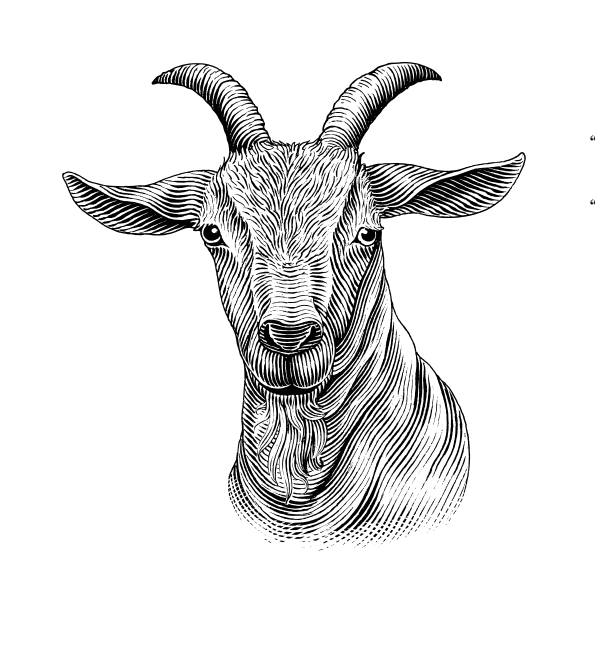
**What is it?** Basically, a really cool coffee company housed in an old warehouse. Both a specialty coffee roaster with a social agenda, and a coffee shop.

**What's special about it?** Owner Filimon Tesfasillassie is a dedicated coffee lover and expert: a coffee roaster and copper, certified from Speciality Coffee Association (SCA) and The Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority, with eight years of experience in the coffee sector, at home and abroad. Filimon also offers barista workshops.

**What to order:** Ask Filimon, the owner. You will not be disappointed by his recommendation.

[www.filicoffee.com](http://www.filicoffee.com)

Above: Fili Coffee owner Filimon at work.



Above: The Goat Café (the name references an Ethiopian legend about the discovery of coffee) in Addis serves up cool coffee beverages based on a sustainable concept.

**The Goat Café: Addis' Coolest Coffee Company**

**What is it?** Think Addis version of a mini-“Starbucks”. With its very own focus on sustainability and fair trade. Or, as the owners put it. “The Goat Café is a new school concept for coffee and an innovative coffee company disrupting the mainstream coffee consumption with its own twist.”

**What's special about it?** At first glance: the recycled and upcycled furniture in the interior design. Behind the scenes, a high awareness for issues like sustainability, eco-friendly processes, fair-trade and traceability. Goat Café offers the first local delivery service for coffee in Addis: through “Deliver Addis”, a local food delivery service in Addis Ababa, sales began to grow exponentially thanks to online orders. The Goat Café

is also a coffee distributor, supplying supermarkets, embassies, restaurants and the local retail channels.

**What to order:** Try the Vanilla Flavoured Iced Coffee, Iced Lattes and Frappuccinos... all dangerously delicious. And forget we ever mentioned the name “Starbucks”.

**What's the “Goat” about in that name?** According to an Ethiopian legend, it was a goat herder who discovered the potential of coffee beans: after chewing berries from a certain tree, his goats refused to sleep at night. The herder told the abbot of the local monastery, who brewed the berries and found that the drink kept him alert through evening prayer... so word of the energising berries began to spread.

[www.thegoatcafe.com](http://www.thegoatcafe.com)





# Young and Connected: The Pioneer of e-Commerce

“We want to introduce local businesses to a new digital client base”

*Bereket Getnet is on a mission to make his mark on the Ethiopian digital scene. His platform “Berbera Market” is a fashion and e-commerce platform hosting young local labels, companies and merchants, aiming to connect them with a young and fashion-oriented target audience. Here, the young student entrepreneur tells us about his business journey, digitalisation in Ethiopia, and why he admires Steve Jobs.*

**You’re a young pioneer in e-commerce. How did you get started?**

**Bereket Getnet:** It all started with me and my friends in college, where we were planning to create a system that allows students to access academic information and resources. We then decided we could just as well contribute to the retail industry considering our resources and skillsets.

**What is your background?**  
Electrical and computer engineering, which I am still studying.

**Tell us a bit about the digital transformation in Ethiopia.**  
Digital transformation in Ethiopia is accelerating at fast speed, with the community opening more toward engaging with digital businesses and services. Even though COVID has taken away so much from us, it has also led to many Ethiopians now considering the digital business more than ever. My hope is that Ethiopia will keep accelerating in the tech and digital industry.

**Berbera Market features a mix of fashion and lifestyle brands. How do you choose or curate them?**  
Our website focuses on a mix of modern and Ethiopian fashion and looks, with the objective of reaching the youth community as our target group. We encourage local and “Made In Ethiopia” product designers and suppliers to become members of our merchant community and then host them on our platform. That gives them greater reach and unlocks access to a wider audience. We also provide consistent market assistance and sales support.

**What are the obstacles you are facing?**  
I am a student entrepreneur, so the main obstacle would be keeping the business flow stable while still being able to pursue my studies. We all know how much time start-up businesses need to become successful!

**You took part in our TGB Accelerator programme. How did that help you?**  
The TGB programme was helpful in endless ways, the programme allowed me to improve my presentation skills, set a solid financial plan, and help me and my team to align effective marketing strategies. I was also able to connect with experts and other amazing people and to fill our financial gaps.

**Who is your business idol?**  
I would have to go with Steve Jobs, knowing what he went through to create the world leading business we’re all interacting with today. His ways of thinking and creativity always blow me away.

**Fill us in on your business dream, please – what is your dream for Berbera Market?**  
For Berbera Market to be the most convenient shopping alternative as well as a facilitator for the local retail market that not only builds local sales but also an international audience for Ethiopian designers and manufacturers.

**What is your greatest motivation?**  
I am always motivated when I look back at where I was before, and when I consider that there are others who are struggling to get to the stage I am at.

**Any saying or quote that you live by?**  
If it was easy, everybody would do it!



Dreaming of a speedy digital transformation for Ethiopia – and helping it along: e-commerce pioneer Bereket Getnet.

## Berbera Market: A New Digital Gateway to Connect Local Labels and Customers

The e-commerce platform Berbera Market was founded in 2019 with the mission and vision of connecting the best local brands and merchants to a new customer base. Berbera Market’s focus is on local lifestyle and fashion labels and merchants as well as local creative businesses, with an objective to open up new markets for them.

[www.berberamarket.com](http://www.berberamarket.com)





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