

# Les Femmes de Marrakech TAILOR COOPERATIVE

Promoters: *Société d'Investissement et  
de Développement  
Internationale*

Type of activity: *feminine enterprise*



## THE COOPERATIVE STORY

In 1987 an American designer starts an activity with 9 tailor girls; in 1991 the designer sells the equipment she had previously bought to the girls themselves, who create an Association getting a fund from the *Société d'Investissement et de Développement Internationale* (SIDI); in 1994 they become Cooperative.

In the beginning the tailoring coop meets some difficulties, mainly because the orders from the American designer decrease. In 1992 they participate in a meeting of *Terre d'Avenir* in Bourget (France), organized by the Catholic Committee against Famine and for the Development (CCFD). Thanks to this event the girls meet the representative people in *Artisans du Monde*, dealing of fair trade in France with several shops, becoming their provider. And even thanks to the friendship with *Artisan du Monde* finally they can increase their portfolio in Holland and United States.

The nine present associates share the benefits from the sells. The associates are totally responsible about both the cooperative running and the orders satisfaction; they actively participate in the work and they manage a network of thirty tailor girls working remote at home and not being associates to the coop: these tailor girls are payed on the basis of the job they have done. Some of them are also addressed by formation trainings. The great majority of the women somehow involved in the activities of the coop belong to the poor class, and many of them are not learned: their target is simply to earn as much as it is needed for nourishing their families.

## THE PRODUCTS

The pieces made by this coop are very nice, full of surprises, using the *sousdi*, a very light and comfortable textile (60% cotton and 40% viscose); originary from Fez, it is exported all over the world.

The girls start from the dying of the textile, then they design the style and finally they cut and sew.

## LHE SELLING

The boutique where they sell their items is the SODEV shop (fair trade) in the *medina* of Marrakech.

## HOW TO HELP

If you wish to support the tailoring cooperative **Les Femmes de Marrakech** you can **buy their items** directly in the shop in Marrakech or by email (see below for the contacts).

The best contribution you can give to the cooperative is anyway to **go and visit** them: the girls, used to relate to European associations and enterprises, are available to guest the travellers in the *atelier*, a part of course at the shop, tell what they do; if they are told at least one day before they can **cook the lunch** for you.. an occasion not to loose!

## THE CONTACTS

*president of the cooperative*

**Saida Chaabouni**

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