

Sourcing from Cambodia

SUSTAINABLE TEXTILES

Product & Supplier Brochure



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Cambodia at a Glance

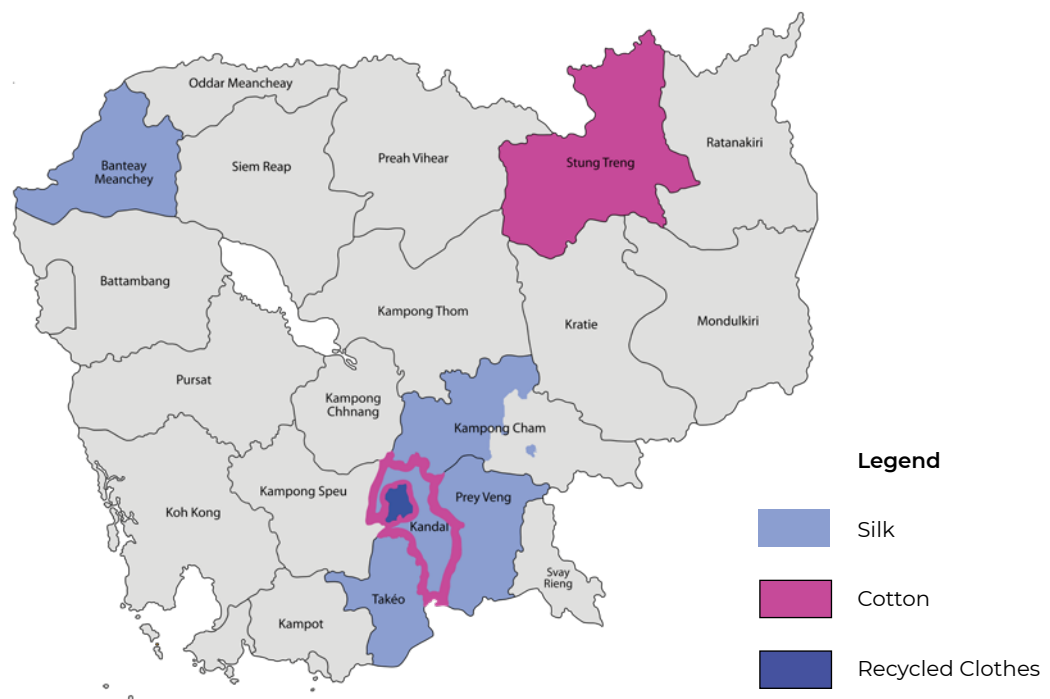
Cambodia has enjoyed over two decades of economic and urban development, averaging an annual rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 7% from 2010 to 2019. Growth is explained by favourable internal and external conditions.

The country has a young, growing population and an increasing middle class, which will fuel future consumption and investment. The Royal Government has embraced free market principles and sees the opening of the country to foreign investment as a priority. For example, selected investment projects – called Qualified Investment Projects (QIPs) – are offered several benefits, including tax holidays.

Cambodia also benefits from its strategic location, at the crossroads between major trading partners. The recent signing of free trade agreements (FTAs) is expected to connect Cambodia's economy to international markets. Examples of such agreements include the China-Cambodia FTA and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Volumes of international trade have been increasing, in part thanks to ballooning garment and footwear exports to major international suppliers. Exports rose by 17% between 2018 and 2019, from 12.7 to 14.8 USD billion. Imports also increased by 17%, from 17.4 USD billion in 2018 to 20.3 USD billion in 2019.

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Cambodia's Production of Sustainable Textiles



Cambodia Factsheet

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Currency

Riel (KHR): 1USD \approx 4,100 KHR. Dollarised economy between 82 to 84%

GDP

27.08 USD billion (2019)

GDP growth rate

7.1% (2019)

GDP per capita

1,643 USD (2019)

Official language

Khmer, English widely used

Capital city

Phnom Penh

Major cities

Siem Reap, Sihanoukville, Battambang

Government type

Constitutional Monarchy

Head of State

His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni

Population

16.49 million (2019), annual growth 1.4 %, <25 years old: 47%

Economy

Garments, Tourism, Construction, Agriculture

Climate

Wet season: May to October

Dry season: November to April, average temperature: 27°C

Major religion

Buddhism (95%)



Source: Unsplash





Source: Unsplash

Sustainable Textiles

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The garment and footwear industries play a pivotal role for the Cambodian economy. The sectors employ around 800,000 workers, distributed across approximately 1,000 factories and making up 86% of the country's total factory workforce. Export-oriented factories – located mostly on the outskirts of Phnom Penh and in Kandal province – produce clothing and footwear items for international brands such as Levi's, H&M, adidas and Gap. The garment and footwear industries have increased significantly in the past three decades, becoming the main engine of national economic growth. After a slight dip due to Covid-19, they remain strong as of late 2020, representing 54% of total export revenue (22.1 USD billion) and around 80% of the national GDP. The rising number of factories has seen rural workers, especially women, flock to the cities seeking better pay. The creation of new jobs has significantly reduced poverty and facilitated Cambodia's rise to a lower-middle income country.

Despite these positive achievements, however, the textile industry has begun to pose major problems to the country's environment and social fabric. Almost all factories fail to comply with international carbon emission and toxic waste requirements, as they heavily pollute surrounding air, land and water resources. A study cited by the Global Green Growth Institute points to textile factories as the single largest polluting source in the Phnom Penh area. Large amounts of raw fabrics – up to 15% of the total according to some estimates – are discarded as unfit to use in production and are either dumped in landfills or disposed of freely into the environment. Some of this textile waste is then used to fuel the infamous "blood brick kilns" on the outskirts of Phnom Penh. Here, textiles are burnt to provide temperatures hot enough to produce bricks for the nation's burgeoning construction sector, in blatant disregard of workers' safety and the environment. In 2020, the European Union partly withdrew Cambodia's preferential trade

access status, citing a worsening of the country's political situation and a turn towards authoritarianism. This left the future of Cambodia's garment industry in disarray. As the sector attempts to recover from its downturn due to a combination of trade status withdrawal and Covid-induced order cancellations, this might be the right time to set the textile industry on a more sustainable track. Change and new models are needed, especially as global consumers are increasingly aware of the need to make value chains "greener" in resource-heavy industries such as textiles.

Global brands are gradually committing to "greening up" their value chains, removing local suppliers that fail to comply with international environmental requirements. In Cambodia, major brands have already announced a switch away from traditional suppliers. Coupled with reduced export volumes to Europe, this transition risks closing factories down, rendering many workers jobless and threatening to reverse past

gains in poverty reduction. Promoting more sustainable textiles is essential to maintain the momentum in economic development. A key way to do so is by promoting upcycling and circular economy principles. Upcycling means processing a recycled product so that its final form has a higher value than what it was before. The concept of a circular economy implies that product components never cease to be useful but are instead re-used constantly in cycles of production and recycling. According to insiders, up to 95% of textiles and garments can be recycled.

The concept of sustainable textiles apart from mass market described above is gaining ground in Cambodia. Production methods that are alternative to "fast fashion" are being promoted by international development organisations and NGOs. Eco-friendly and/or upcycled textile products are being produced and sold by an increasing number of small boutique studios, by processing silk, cotton, and industrial waste (not just

fabric but also plastics). Items include clothes, scarves, as well as accessories. Most of these small enterprises employ women, have an eye for traditional weaving techniques, and embrace social responsibility principles.

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Source: Unsplash







Silk

The silk industry is part of Cambodia's culture, history and heritage. Production dates back at least to the 13th century, when Chinese diplomats reported the presence of local silkworm farms, which grew mulberry plants (the worms' favourite food), bred silk moths and wove silk. In the late 19th century, during the French colonial period, sericulture developed to encompass large plantations, each covering 5-6,000 hectares, and national production reached 15 tonnes per year by the end of World War 2. The art of silk breeding and weaving was passed down through generations, particularly through female family members in rural areas. The silk industry was interrupted by the ravages of the civil war and the Khmer Rouge, and almost all knowledge

transmission stopped. Today, albeit on a smaller scale, silk production has seen a revival, though virtually all the raw material is imported from abroad. There are between 18,000 and 20,000 weavers in Cambodia, mostly living in Takeo, Kandal, Kampong Cham, Prey Veng and the Northwest. Locals still like to wear traditional silk clothes and accessories – such as wedding dresses and scarves – on formal occasions. Golden silk, which is cultivated in Prey Veng and Kampot, is particularly renowned for its strength and lustrous fibre.

The government has recognised the importance of the silk industry for rural economic development, creating the National Silk Strategy 2016-2020. The document appears

yet to be updated for a new cycle. Projects by international development organisations and donors aim to boost local silk production and value chains. NGO projects promote eco-friendly and sustainable silk products, including hand-woven masks to be worn during the Covid pandemic. Silk production itself is in the hands mostly of small companies and social projects, which use traditional production methods, such as hand-dyeing and the use of natural dyes. NGOs operate through museums and workshops, to educate visitors about the ancient craft of silk weaving. Social projects empower local communities by reinvesting the revenue from silk

products to ensure fair pay to workers. The volume of silk processing reaches 400 tonnes per year, of which only 1% comes from locally-sourced materials, with the rest being imported. This imbalance is a consequence of the Khmer Rouge, which devastated local silkworm production and ensured future activities would rely on foreign imports. Concerning exports, under the umbrella HS code 50, which covers most of it not all silk products, we see that the market is small, with a total exported value of 15,000 USD (1 tonne) in 2020, all of it being to China. In the last decade, past exporting destinations included Germany, Japan and Thailand.



Source: Unsplash



Cotton

In Cambodia, cotton producers are mostly small scale, partly because the bulk of the raw materials is not produced locally but imported. Most of the producers seem to embrace corporate social responsibility and fair-trade principles and are keen to promote sustainable products. Examples include businesses that reconvert former minefields into sustainable plantations and rehabilitate disabled Cambodians. Workshops train disabled women to grow cotton using traditional yarning techniques. Products include scarves, towels, pyjamas, and shawls. Cotton and industrial leftovers are also remade into canvas bags.

Compared to silk, the Cambodian cotton export market is larger. Under the umbrella HS code 52, which covers cotton products, we see that the total export value in 2020 was 9.3 million USD (5,061 tonnes), a seven-fold increase in value since 2016. Top export destinations in 2020 were China (3.9 million USD), Singapore (1.6 million), and South Africa (1.5 million).

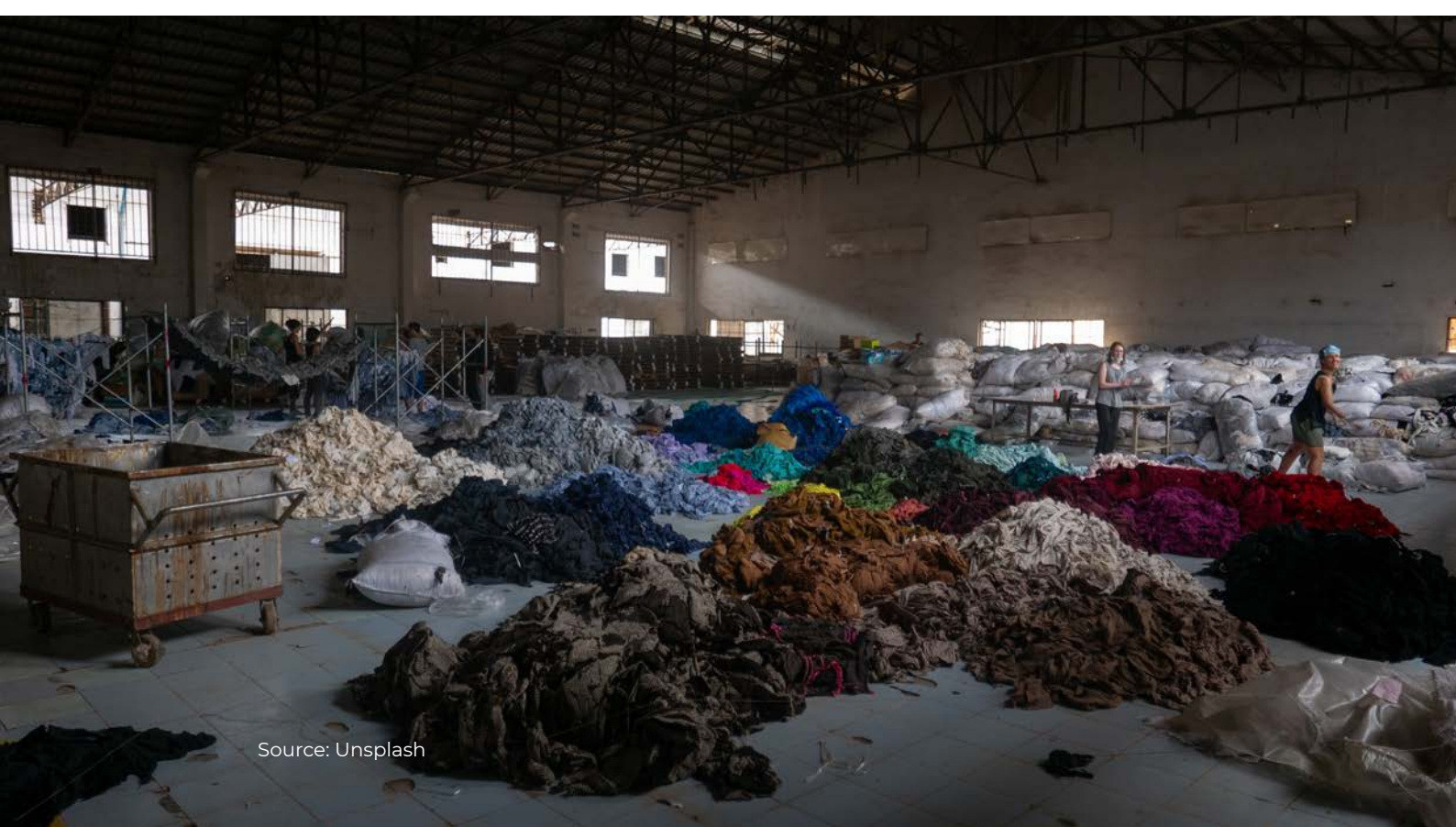
Industrial Waste

Textile factories, as we have seen, produce lots of fabric waste, which is called deadstock. This is a big problem in Cambodia, where the waste from the factories has no system in place to be processed. It is instead taken to landfills or simply dumped into the environment.

However, there is a big opportunity to change this trend. Research states that the adoption of circular economy principles in Asia would bring additional economic growth of 324 billion USD and create 1.5 million more jobs over the next 25 years. International best

practices are leading the way for upcycling. Reverse Resources is a global platform that tries to unlock future circular business opportunities within the textile industry. In China, a single company managed to recycle 40,000 tonnes of used clothing in 2018. Cambodia is starting to set virtuous examples too. Good Krama is an ethical clothing brand that uses garment industry excesses. Nomi, a research institute, employs survivors of human trafficking in Cambodia to produce upcycled goods and trains them with new job skills.

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Company Profiles

The following section features selected sustainable textiles companies.

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Source: Freepik



TONLE

Tonlé Studio is a zero-waste clothing line based in Phnom Penh and the USA. It was started in 2008 by an expat, who was aware of the huge fabric wastes in the garment and fashion industry. Tonlé reuses garment waste from factories to make ethical clothing items, helping lighten the fashion's environmental footprint. Tonlé partners with Weaves of Cambodia - a social collective of weavers from Preah Vihear - to make their products, which include hand-knitted sweaters, scarves, bags, and home accessories, sourcing deadstock fabrics from mainstream factories in Cambodia. The fabrics are then dyed naturally. 80% of their dyes come from edible ingredients, such as soy milk and lemon. Packaging is eco-friendly, as 100% of the material is recyclable.

The business has been increasingly successful and has clients in Japan, Canada, Australia, and the USA.

tonlé

MAIN PRODUCTS

Zero-waste Clothing and Accessories

Ethical zero-waste fashion and accessories for the conscious consumer.

CONTACT

<http://www.tonle.com/> | +1.415.510.9405 | hello@tonle.com

Toul Tompong, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



STUDIO DORSU MULTIVERSAL GARMENTS CO LTD

Operating since 2012 and since 2020 by local owner, Dorsu is committed to transparency and social responsibility with regard to environmental impact and labor practices, at least 30% above minimum wage for garment industry, 5-day work week, etc.

Dorsu offers custom manufacturing of high-quality items made from remnant and deadstock fabric left over from the larger garment industry in Cambodia. The brand is known as a CMT partner (Cut, Make, Trim) in the garment sector which serves as the main hub for all production activities needed to fulfil custom manufacturing orders.

Dorsu aims to help create a world where fashion means fairness, and all workers are treated fairly and respected for their skilled labor and craftsmanship.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Cotton Jersey Garment

Custom manufacturing and export of cotton jersey garments that are ethically and sustainably sourced in Cambodia.

T-Shirts, dresses, and other cotton essentials.

✂ Volume: 1,500/month

CONTACT

<https://dorsu.org/> | +855.16.674 680 | vanna@dorsu.org

Road 33, Junction of Street 736 and Road 33, Kampot, Cambodia



PACTICS CAMBODIA CO. LTD

Pactics is an environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing company of high-quality and sustainable lifestyle products such as eyewear accessories, travel, and luggage accessories, as well as sports- and face wear.

Pactic's manufacturing facility in Cambodia allows the company to minimize its environmental impact by combining sustainable supply chain and workshop practices with architecturally cutting-edge workspaces. The brand implements a people-first policy putting their team at the core of their business and providing them services such as free on-site childcare, insurance, and healthy lunches.

Pactics provides a one-stop shop for brands that hold sustainability and responsible manufacturing at heart.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Backpack

High-end custom build backpack from repurposed local materials. Screen printed or in-house dye sublimation of fabrics. Fully supported supply chain.

✂ Volume: 370,000 (2020)

🌱 REACH (Substances)

Facewear

EU Certified reusable facemasks with/without a filter. Material customizable by the customer. Short lead-time.

✂ Volume: 2,100,000 (2020)

🌱 NBN COVID-19, REACH (Substances)

Eyewear Pouch

Pouch to store eyewear glasses with lens-cleaning features. Fully customizable design, SMI supported stocks in US/EU/CN.

✂ Volume: 9,600,000 (2020)

🌱 REACH (Substances)

CONTACT

<https://pactics.com/> | +855.69.677.700 | sales@pactics.com

Pactics Road, Krong Siem Reap, Cambodia



COLORBLIND ASIA CO., LTD

As a premium garment manufacturer, ateliers colorblind is situated in the heart of Phnom Penh, the iconic capital of Cambodia, the 9th largest garment producer in the world. Founded by Jean-Benoît Lasselin in 2019, ateliers colorblind carries on the tradition of legendary French fashion know-how. colorblind brings to life collections for leading companies as well as luxury experiences, the skilled team opens the doors to French haute and prêt-à-porter couture.

From casual polos to tailor-made suits, ateliers colorblind has been created to make high-end garment manufacturing in Cambodia easy and accessible.

colorblind

MAIN PRODUCTS

Tailor-made Suit

Tailor-made 2-piece suit for men and women including trousers and jacket. colorblind design made by Jean-Benoît Lasselin.

Tailor-made Shirt

colorblind shirts available in six unique designs which can be paired with the desired color and fabric.

Reusable Face Protection Masks

Crafted out of leftover materials, colorblind masks are high-quality and can be individualized with embroidered company logos.

Tailor-made Dress

colorblind dresses for stylish occasions.

CONTACT

<https://www.colorblind.asia/> | +855.81.588.738 | sales@colorblind.asia

No. 195E1, street 63, Sangkat Boeng Keng Kang 1, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



KHEMARAK SILK

Established in 2005, Khemarak Silk is Cambodia's top local raw material manufacturer of silk fabrics, supplying everything from nationwide distributors, to tailors, and dressmakers.

Addressing diverse market and fashion requirements, Khemarak produces a range of different raw silk fabrics including smooth silk, rough silk, and organza.

Handmade, silk is one of the eco-friendliest materials available since its production process involves no electric energy nor fuel. Leftover pieces are sold to local handicraft makers ensuring as little waste as possible and unusable pieces biodegrade quickly due to their natural fabrication by silkworms.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Smooth Silk

Made out of 100% silk, smooth silk is glossy and lustrous on both sides.

Raw Silk

100% silk with a rough, gummy texture, popular for shirts, suits, blouses, pajamas, and jackets.

Organza

Organza is a soft, light, and semi-transparent fabric, popular for female garments and curtains.

Houl

Made out of pure silk, Houl features eye-catching patterns and designs.

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CONTACT

<https://bit.ly/3x0IXTF> | +855.10.259.459 | chansophop@gmail.com

49D Street Sothearos, Sangkat Tonle Bassac, Khan Chamkarmon, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



SAMATOA LOTUS TEXTILES

Samatoa is a Cambodian social business manufacturing innovative textiles made out of lotus stems. Experiments and researches conducted in remote villages enabled Samatoa to bring back to life almost forgotten weaving skills, using Khmer traditional spinning and weaving techniques for the production of lotus fabric. Taking it one step further, Samatoa created an innovative ecological textile made entirely from lotus stem and agro-waste.

In 2021, Samatoa aims to break the ground for Lotus Leather, an innovative vegan leather made out of 100% natural and biodegradable materials and vegetal waste. Vegan leather is a fabric alternative that could revolutionize the entire textile industry while meeting market demand. Top brands such as H&M, Burberry, and Puma have shown interest in this revolutionary material.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Lotus Textiles

Known as "The most spiritual fabric in the world" it is the first natural microfiber featuring anti-bacterial properties alongside its naturally soft and light texture.

✓ Cambodian Fairtrade Project (AAC)

Lotus Vegan Leather

Made out of natural lotus microfiber, lotus leather is 100% organic, biodegradable, and plant-based.

Natural Fibres Clothing and Accessories

Custom-made garments and accessories made out of homemade yarns (lotus, kapok, banana, silk) or imported yarns (organic cotton, silk, cashmere).

CONTACT

<https://samatoa.lotus-flower-fabric.com/> | +855.92.529.001 | gm@samatoa.com

9, Road 63, Phnom Krom Siem Reap, Cambodia



LOTUS SILK

Lotus Silk was founded in 2003 as a project to support local silk production, connect communities and promote sustainable development. In particular, it aims to connect the fashion industry with hand-crafted, ethical and traditional silk. It specialises in making the famous golden silk. Starting from only one sewing machine and tailor, the business grew to a workforce of 10 tailors. Coming from disadvantaged communities, the employees are provided with job training, skills development and employment. Their work preserves ancient traditions and promotes ethical and eco-friendly silk. The products comply with international ethical and environmental standards. Lotus Silk promotes fair trade by ensuring decent living conditions, providing decent pay (on average, twice that of the common garment worker) and ensuring a safe working environment.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Scarves

Silk scarves made out of ethical and eco-friendly Cambodian silk or blended natural textiles.

100% handmade, sustainable and ethical fashion.

Production volume: 3,000 pcs/ month 23

Garments

Female and male garments and home decor items made out of ethical and eco-friendly Cambodian silk or blended natural textiles. 100% handmade, sustainable and ethical fashion.

Production volume: 2,000 pcs/ month

Handcrafted Jewellery

Silver, recycled brass, upcycled threads, and silk tassel jewellery, handmade by home based Cambodian artists.

CONTACT

<http://lotus-silk.com/> | +855.10.556.226 | vannary@lotus-silk.com | vannarysan@gmail.com

House 116, street 371, Chak Angre Leu, Meanchey, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



KEIMEAS

Keimeas is a community organization founded by Mrs. Tex Simheang in 2015 to provide employment opportunities to women and to improve their livelihoods through fair employment fostering Cambodian textile culture.

Keimeas employs traditional weaving techniques such as handloom weaving and traditional as well as modern fabrics for their innovative and unique creations. Tailored out of sustainable raw materials such as silk and lotus kapok cotton, 100% natural fibers and dye are the baseline for a sustainable production chain.

In 2020 Keimeas won the MEDC Top design award, obtained the Australian certificate of the Women Global Trading program, and became a council member of the International Silk Union.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Silk garments and accessories

Keimeas silk garments and accessories include a diversity of garments, dresses, robes, scarfs, ties, and home accessories. For its production, 100% natural fibres and natural dye are employed.

Kroneav suits and accessories

Kroneav suits and accessories are handmade by skilled female tailors.

CONTACT

www.keimeas-cam.com | +855.78.458.687 | simheangtex@gmail.com

#4EO, St. Lum, Porprok Khangtboung Village, Kakab 1 Commune, Phnom Penh, Cambodia



KHMER ANGKOR

KHMER ANGKOR was established in 2012 by Mr. Bun Sela with the aim to design and produce high-quality fashion accessories such as bags, masks, purses, and wallets made out of cotton and silk.

The brand bets on the use of sustainable raw materials (silk and cotton) in the production process and has expanded its product line to fishing net accessories where recycled nets are upcycled to trendy bags, wallets, and purses.



MAIN PRODUCTS

Silk Accessories

Bags, masks, wallets, and purses crafted out of 100% silk or cotton.

Fishing Net Accessories

Bags, wallets, and purses made out of recycled fishing nets.

✂ Production volume:

Bags: 2,000pcs

Masks: 20,000pcs

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CONTACT

<https://bit.ly/3ihbPSq> | +855.17.993.928 | khmerangkorka@yahoo.com

#4, Phlaur Lum Takhmao, Kandal Province, Cambodia



KHMER GOLDEN SILK

26 Khmer Golden Silk (KGS) started in 2003 as a small family business working with 10 weavers. The business has ever since expanded to employing 200 weavers to meet the demand.

KGS takes a creative approach to its designs by merging tradition and modernity employing typical Khmer weaving styles on modern accessories such as scarves, blankets, and fabric.

With the aim to keep traditional weaving alive, KGS works directly with local weaving communities and sources 100% natural raw materials such as silk and cotton for their products. Socially sustainable practices are rooted just as environmental ones, giving back to the community rewarding their work with fair wages to improve their livelihoods.

MAIN PRODUCTS

Silk & Cotton Scarves

Scarves for him and her in different designs and weave techniques such as plain and twill.

100% natural products in traditional or modern designs.

✂ Production volume: 300/month

Cotton Blanket, Bed and Sofa Covers

Available in 3 different sizes and traditional as well as modern design. Custom size blankets and covers made to order.

✂ Production volume: 250/month

Fabric

Available in plain or twill weave, cotton or silk, and modern or traditional style.

✂ Production volume: 200m/month

CONTACT

<https://www.facebook.com/khmergoldensilk> | +855.17.440.925 | khmergoldensilk@gmail.com

Teaksen Tboung Village, Sangkat Kok Chak, Siem Reap, Cambodia



VILLAGeworks CAMBODIA CO.,LTD

Established as a social enterprise in 2001, Villageworks, now a certified member of the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO), has become a role model for fair trade principles and provides their workers with fair wages, a safe working environment, and gender-equal treatment.

Their large selection of quality products includes bags, scarves, accessories, and interior decoration items made from a range of different materials, including recycled, organic, and natural materials.

Once set up hiring individual rural artists, Villageworks was soon able to open their artisan facility producing hand-made products for the local as well as international market.



MAIN PRODUCTS

From Trash to Treasure (Recycle Cement Bag)

Recycled cement bags star Villageworks' fashionable bag collection and provide an environmentally friendly solution for the mindful consumer.

- ✓ WFTO guaranteed label
- ✓ PSI Sustainability Awards 2017
- ✓ Good Design Award 2004.

Sustainable Drinking Straws

Fully biodegradable, bamboo straws are sustainably produced from all-natural plant materials, don't pollute, and are safer for wildlife than regular straws.

- ✓ Science Technology and innovation national laboratory of Cambodia

CONTACT

<http://www.villageworks.biz/> | +855.15.995.944 | anak@villageworks.biz

#151, Sambour Village, Sangkat Dongkor, Khan Dongkor, Cambodia

Other Contacts

SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS

Artisans Association of Cambodia (AAC)

<https://www.facebook.com/artisansassociationofcambodia/>

Cambodian Federation of Employers and Business Associations

<https://www.camfeba.com/>

Cambodia Chamber of Commerce

<https://www.ccc.org.kh/>

Cambodian Ministry of Commerce

<http://www.moc.gov.kh/en-us/>

Cambodian Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

<http://www.mlvt.gov.kh/index.php?lang=en>

Cambodia Development Resource Institute

<https://cdri.org.kh/>

Cambodian Women Entrepreneurs Association (CWEA)

<http://www.cweacambodia.org/>

Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union (C.CAWDU)

<https://ccawdu.typepad.com/>

Emerging Market Multinationals Network for Sustainability

<https://www.emm-network.org/>

European Chamber of Commerce in Cambodia (EuroCham)

<https://www.eurocham-cambodia.org/>

Global Green Growth Institute

<https://ggi.org/country/cambodia/>

Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia

<https://www.gmac-cambodia.org/>

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

<https://www.ilo.org/asia/countries/cambodia/lang--en/index.htm>

Institute of Khmer Traditional Textiles

<https://www.ikttearth.org/>

Partnership for Sustainable Textiles (SiegelKlarheit.de)

<https://www.textilbuendnis.com/en/>

Reverse Resources

<https://reverseresources.net/>

United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)

<https://www.unido.org/who-we-are-unido-worldwide-asia-and-pacific-offices/cambodia>



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