

Partner Profile: Novica



Photos courtesy of Novica



The artisan sector is a major source of employment in many emerging markets, and in some regions, artisans represent the second largest sector of rural employment behind agriculture.¹ Most artisans do not have access to international markets that would enable them to reach more customers at better prices.

Novica United, INC (Novica) is a multi-country social enterprise and a partner in Global Partnerships' Artisan Market Access initiative.²

WHO IS SERVED:

Novica currently serves over 21,000 artisans in hub locations across Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, and beyond, including in Peru, Ghana, Guatemala, and Mexico.³ The majority of these artisans operate individual or small family workshops, using traditional techniques to make goods such as jewelry, clothing, home décor, art, and other handcrafts.

WHAT IS DELIVERED:

Novica gives artisans access to an online

Fair-Trade marketplace where they can sell their hand-crafted goods to buyers from around the world.

"We work directly with the artisans," says Novica's co-founder, Mina Nercessian. "We allow the artisans to set their own prices and how much they want to sell, and they have complete control of their business."⁴

Not only do artisans retain full control of production and pricing, but Novica covers the costs of transporting goods from the artisan to their regional hub (as well as from that point through final sale to customers). In addition to providing market access and higher prices than available market alternatives, Novica also works one-on-one with artisans to support product development, marketing, sales, and quality control. Novica also offers zero-interest loans to artisans who want

to expand their business.

WHY IT IS IMPACTFUL:

By providing greater market opportunities, removing middlemen, and reducing costs, artisans living in poverty can increase their incomes, in turn improving their resilience to economic shocks as well as food security for their households. Novica reports that 75 percent of the artisans working with them say they've improved their production, ability to invest in materials and inventory, ability to save, or ability to afford more household expenses.⁵

Novica artisan and Ghanaian single mother, Rachel Armah, is proud of having joined. "My kids feel good that 'hey, our Mommy is doing this,'" she says. "I feel great that people from throughout the whole world will buy my products through Novica. It's a big achievement."⁶

1. Nest. "The State of the Handworker Economy 2018." 2018. <https://www.buildanest.org/shereport/>.
2. Novica was a current borrower of Global Partnerships Impact-First Development Fund, LLC as of June 30, 2023.
3. Data as of March 31, 2022, as reported by Novica.
4. KCAL News. "Novica Helps Artisans Open Their Own Small Businesses." YouTube. September 1, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpVaSFmQu-4>.
5. Data as of March 31, 2022, as reported by Novica.
6. Novica. "Single Mom from Ghana Takes Control of Her Destiny," YouTube, July 21, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KojUlg-DDCg>.