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# TOSHEKA TEXTILES

**UNCTAD World Investment Forum 2016**  
Investing in Sustainable Development  
**PROJECT PROFILE**



**Company Name:** Tosheka Textiles Limited  
**Physical Address:** Wote Community Centre, Nziu Road, Westlands Wote, Makueni  
**Postal address:** P. O. Box 131, 90300, Makueni / P.O Box 30431, Nairobi  
**Contact:** Lucy Lau Bigham  
**Phone:** +254 721401250  
**Email:** lucy@toshekadesigns.com  
**Sector/Type of Business:** Textile  
**Year of Establishment:** 2011

## Company description:

Tosheka Textiles is a social enterprise with extensive experience in commercial and community based textile production. The company was established by Kenyan textile designer and business woman Lucy Lau Bigham along with her business partner and husband Herman Bigham. The company's goal is to become a global leader in the production of eco-friendly fashions for the global market.

The company specializes in the production of "green textiles" for home, clothing and fashion accessories. Its products are made from natural fibres, recycled materials, and eco-friendly dyes. They are handcrafted using fair labour practices, traditional weaving, knitting, and crochet techniques of Kenya artisans who make them from comfort of their own homes and are able to earn a sustainable income. Eco-friendly fashion has become one of the most prominent topics in the fashion and style arena stirring the interest of consumers and participation from global high-fashion brands to local designers.



Tosheka Textile's values encompass partnership, cultural revitalization, training and skill development, fair trade, environmental preservation and corporate social responsibility. Its operations are vertically integrated with Wote Community cluster enterprise groups for production of green textiles and related products. The Wote Community Development Organization (WCDO) is an umbrella organization for 108 self-help community based groups that benefit about 3000 households.

The company successfully introduced the growing of organic cotton using Neem in Kenya. Neem is a locally available, and highly effective, natural plant source of pesticide and fertilizer. As a result farmers increased their yield six-fold, produced a pristine quality of cotton, reduced the cost of production by 40%, eliminated their exposure to toxic chemicals and earned 2.5 times the minimum wage. Tosheka was able to substantially increase the price paid to farmers because of its emphasis on value addition through producing finish products from yarn to apparel.

Tosheka Textiles has three fashion lines:

1. The "Safi Tosheka Collection" - a leather goods line.
2. The "Woven Love Collection" - a collection of bags, textiles and apparel using plarn (plastic yarn) and natural fibres to create new textiles fabrics and products.
3. The "Recycled Treasures Eco-Fashionable Collection" - trend-relevant, contemporary designed, hand crafted bags made by Kenyan artisans from clean recycled plastic bags.

The company's primary market is Kenya and the COMESA region. Its target market is the moderate-to-upper income fashion conscious consumer who may also be environmentally conscious and socially responsible. Tosheka's sells its products through partner retailers, hotels, specialty stores, tourist shops, exhibition shows, supermarkets and its online store.



## Team:

*Lucy Lau Bigham*

Lucy is Executive Director at Tosheka Textiles. She has more than 20 years management experience in development projects, addressing problems that impede social and economic development. She holds a B.A. in Design from Nairobi University and an M.A. in International Business Analysis from the University of Northampton, UK.

*Herman Lee Bigham Jr.*

Herman is a Director and co-founder of Tosheka Textiles. He is a real estate developer and construction manager by profession.

## Project description:

Tosheka Textiles is in the process of introducing Eri Silk production into the Kenyan market. The company recently completed scientific trials and has received the first license to commercially produce Eri silk in Kenya. The silk will be blended with cotton to increase the volume of fibre. It will help to expand the business and reduce the textile industry's vulnerability to rain-fed cotton.

The Eri Silk project will involve:

- Establishing a processing facility to support its vertically integrated production of yarn and woven fabrics. The facility will process the raw silk and cotton into machine spun yarn to be supplied to contracted weavers for production of cloth.
- Introducing silk rearing for production of silk fibre. Eri eggs will be sold to trained worm rearers who will then produce cocoons to be purchased back by the company and processed into silk floss that will be supplied to producers to make handspun yarn.
- Providing technical training to new and existing producer groups, especially youth, for purposes of increasing production capacity and quality.







**Estimated Project Cost:**

Use of Funds	USD	Sources of Funds	USD
Land	120,000	Convertible Debt	422,000
Workshop construction	60,000	Company funds	120,000
Equipment purchase	298,000	AECF Grant	255,000
Cluster enterprise set-up	160,000		
Working capital	95,000		
Farmer capacity building	64,000		
<b>Total Project Uses</b>	<b>797,000</b>	<b>Total Project Sources</b>	<b>797,000</b>

**Estimated NP margin: 35%**

**Anticipated investment commencement date: Q3 2016**

**Employment (FTE)**

Current	New (2021)	Total (2021)
16	97	113

Special thanks to:



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