

# The 5X JOBS Model: A Sustainable Business Solution

Kathryn Eastham 24 April 2017

As consumers in a global economy, our purchases play a vital role in the lives of those who make the things we enjoy. Current data from the Global Slavery Index states that there are 2.8 billion people living in poverty in our world today. This level of extreme poverty has led to 35.8 million people trapped in slavery, with 40 percent of them living in India. The fashion industry is a massive source of enslavement in the country of India; the going rate is about two dollars a day for a 12-hour workday. Many people are trapped in the injustice of unfair wages, inhumane treatment, and forced labor. The sex industry is an equally oppressive source of enslavement in India. Sonagachi in Kolkata, India is the largest red light district in Asia. Ten thousand women are trapped in a life of disease and despair. There are an additional 10,000 women enslaved in sex trafficking in India's West Bengal region.

CAUSEGEAR is a human justice fashion brand that was established to provide an opportunity to make a sustainable difference in the lives of enslaved Indian people. CAUSEGEAR employs men and women crafters in

India to make high quality bags, backpacks, totes and the like, which are then sold in our online marketplace. The mission of our brand is to transform the lives of one million people trapped in unfathomable poverty and injustice to become self-sustaining.

When jobs don't provide for life's essentials, many end up in slavery. This is why CAUSEGEAR's President-CEO, Brad Jeffery, created the 5X JOBS Model. The 5X JOBS Model provides life-changing employment that pays crafters five times the average worker's wage in the regions in which our partners work. This dignified wage provides crafters with an income that ensures their ability to pay for living essentials such as food, water, medical, clothing, housing, and education. A 5X wage provides for the crafter and three people that depend on them (children, spouse, or parents). Often, the dependents are family members in need of freedom from a vicious cycle of generational poverty. On average, the purchase of 30 CAUSEGEAR items will provide one month of life essentials for four people. The result? We empower not only each crafter, but protect their families from child labor, and help them move out of poverty in a way that is sustainable and ultimately benefits the entire community.

CAUSEGEAR values enterprise over charity, livable wages over handouts, and the pursuit of human dignity over injustice. CAUSEGEAR was created as a social enterprise, rather than a charity, because the founder wanted to create an example for the for-profit business world. His

desire is to demonstrate that you can have a caused-based, compassionate business, and still facilitate social change. You can be generous and still make a viable profit. CAUSEGEAR operates as an L3C, which is a low profit, limited liability company. As an L3C, CAUSEGEAR operates as efficiently as it can in order to provide the crafters pay and benefits that are 5X the norm. This is accomplished through the most efficient, effective, and ethical supply chain model while partnering with experienced low-profit, vetted partners in the regions we work. CAUSEGEAR also meets or exceeds the wage standards set by the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO).

In addition to the 5X Model, crafters receive the benefits of a 90 percent profit share. CAUSEGEAR partners with local businesses in India who share our vision of seeing lives transformed through dignified jobs. Each partner has an established track-record of not only providing wages that are 5 times the norm, but also providing a safe and loving work environment for the crafters. In order to ensure honesty and transparency, CAUSEGEAR's founder regularly travels to India to meet with current partners and evaluate new potential partnerships.

The 5X JOBS MODEL is a sustainable alternative to hand-outs because it does not follow the classic aid mistake of giving fish, rather than training fishermen. Providing employment is an investment in the local community and a positive contribution to the local industry. The

effectiveness of our job model is evident in the stories of the crafters whose lives are being changed by CAUSEGEAR's mission. Every CAUSEGEAR product has a face tag with the name and face of the crafter who helped to make it. Our website contains profiles of each crafter, connecting the customer to the stories of the individuals who are affected by their purchases.

As mentioned previously, there are many women in India trapped in the injustice of sex trafficking. In response to this, CAUSEGEAR's founder created the MADE BY FREE WOMEN PROJECT. project that is built upon the success of the 5X JOBS MODEL with a mission to provide freedom for the 20,000 enslaved women in Kolkata and the surrounding West Bengal region. We have local partners that share our mission and intentionally employ survivors of sex trafficking who make our MADE BY FREE WOMEN product line. The CAUSEGEAR partner development team is intentionally partnering with businesses and organizations in North America to join the MADE BY FREE WOMEN movement by purchasing quality, custom gear for their company. By partnering with local, established businesses in India CAUSEGEAR is able to provide opportunities for each partner to grow in manufacturing capacity as CAUSEGEAR's market continues to expand. A larger production capacity for the Indian partner results in more jobs being made available to individuals seeking freedom from the cycle of poverty and, in many cases, the threat of human trafficking.

There is a deep need for love, restoration, and empowerment in the country of India. There is also an undeniable need for an ethical global marketplace with conscious consumers. As consumers, we carry the stories of the people who make our products. Each CAUSEGEAR product represents a renewed life of a crafter who has hope to end the cycle of unfathomable poverty for themselves and their families. The 5X JOBS MODEL is an innovative approach with a tangible impact on ending global poverty and slavery.

## **References**

1. "Global Slavery Index 2016." Global Slavery Index. The Global Slavery Index, 2016. Web.
2. "2016 Trafficking in Persons Report." U.S. Department of State. U.S. Department of State, 2016. Web.