

Meet the Afro-centric kidswear brand uplifting PE communities

[Myang](#) is an all-woman company, which provides employment and upliftment opportunities for several women in the poverty-stricken communities of Port Elizabeth. Producing shoes and fashion items with a strong African sense, it has made headway with its Afro-centric products for kids aged birth to six years.



Founded some five years ago by designer Sarah Massy-Hicks, the company started moving up the scale from its beginnings with the arrival of Marge Sheard, a well-known figure in the creative industries.

“From our first steps, we had a core premise that we could combine great fashion and empowerment in a uniquely African product,” says Sheard. “We have fans and developing markets across the continent, who love our Shweshwe fabrics and fashion-forward designs.”

Myang started producing mainly tiny shoes but has developed the range to include accessories, toys and the like. A new clothing range will be launched for summer 2017.

“There are devotees of the brand in several African countries including Uganda, where we are exploring using some of their local fabric designs in our products.” The company has resisted the temptation to manufacture in the East to cut costs. It has eight full-time women in their design and manufacturing studio.



“We soon realised, however, that part of the challenge for our women is that they have young families that need them at home, so we provide training, mentoring and material that enable additional dozens of women to earn a living - without compromising their duties as a mother and often a breadwinner.

“European and American clients are supportive of our ‘ethically-sourced’ products and find the designs appealing. Our main challenges are logistics and the cost of delivery but we are making headway,” concludes Sheard.

The company now says it's interested in hearing from African countries about distribution opportunities, as well as textile designers whose products suit the gorgeous fashion products.

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