



step

FAIR TRADE CARPETS

STEP Corona Emergency Fund for Carpet Weavers

Your donation helps weavers and their families through the COVID-19 pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic severely affects handmade carpet production. The weavers are particularly hard hit.

For centuries carpets have been woven by hand according to old traditions. Until today, carpet weaving enables millions of people to earn a living and maintain their cultural heritage. But like many other economic sectors, carpet production has been largely brought to a standstill by the coronavirus.

Carpet weavers are the industry's most affected by the global crisis. They are paid by piece wage and lose their income as soon as they have no carpet on the loom. Due to mostly low wages, only few were able to build up significant savings. Many come from remote rural areas with weak economies, rudimentary infrastructure and poor health care, they often belong to religious or ethnic minorities, the majority are women and many are migrant workers and thus currently cut off from their families and social networks.

As a so-called informal industry with a large number of home-based workers, the carpet industry is unjustly denied access to many governmental social security systems and aid programs. Carpet production is also less in public focus than more formalized sectors such as the fashion industry.

As a fair trade organisation Label STEP has been committed to good working and living conditions for the carpet weavers for 25 years. The many years of experience and an excellent network enable the Swiss non-profit organisation to have unique access to thousands of carpet weavers in Afghanistan, India, Nepal and Pakistan, who are not reached by any other aid projects.

At a very early stage of the outbreak of the pandemic, STEP launched an awareness campaign and informed thousands of weavers about COVID-19 and taught them the main prevention measures. Now activities are focusing

on the distribution of emergency aid in the form of food packets and other goods to cover basic needs. A relief fund for medical and other emergencies has also been set up.

In order to help as many weavers and their families as possible through this unprecedented crisis, we depend on your support. Your donation reaches us through the channels listed below. We assure you that all funds will be used efficiently and responsibly. We will keep you informed about the relief activities on our website.

Donate online

The Swiss development organization *Bread for all*, founding member and one of the supporting organizations of Label STEP, accepts online donations on its website by credit card, PayPal, Postfinance and TWINT. The donations are passed on to STEP.

Important: under purpose of donation, please select "**STEP emergency fund for carpet weavers**"

<https://breadforall.ch/donate-now/>

Donate by bank transfer

You can also send us your donation directly as wire transfer:

IBAN: CH28 0900 0000 8575 2319 5

Bank Code: 9000

SWIFT: POFICHBEXXX

Bank: PostFinance AG, Mingerstrasse 20, CH-3030 Bern,
Account No. 85-752319-5

Contact:

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Label STEP is more than just a label. To address the complex issues of the handmade carpet industry at their roots, it takes a solutions-based approach. Founded in Switzerland in 1995, STEP is committed to the wellbeing of weavers and workers in the handmade carpet industry. The non-profit organization's comprehensive fair trade standards encompass universal human rights, including the prohibition of child labour; working conditions; fair wages and eco-friendly production. Certified STEP Fair Trade Partners commit to independent audits throughout their supply chain. STEP actively supports producer improvements while empowering weavers and workers through educational programs that cover such topics as health and safety and financial literacy. Through these combined efforts, STEP reinforces industry sustainability and helps preserve centuries-old artisanal skills. STEP is the only non-governmental organization of its kind working in all major handmade rug and carpet producing countries.

www.label-step.org