

## Coloring a Solution in Nepal

My goal when I departed for Kathmandu was to observe dyeing procedures, and, if needed, establish standards creating a framework that could easily be followed for years to come with little or no future intervention. The people I worked with were a delight and most gracious for my efforts. KTS is wonderful with the people truly concerned at the heart of the organization. Together these dyers and I worked to help the future of KTS.

– Patricia Martin, Specialist in dyes & SERRV Consultant



SERRV is committed to addressing the needs identified by our artisan partners. We share the responsibility of finding solutions to problems. That means a lot happens behind the scenes to build the capacity of our partners. Kumbeshwar Technical School (KTS), a SERRV partner in Nepal, shared with us the challenges they face dyeing fibers. Despite careful preparation of dye recipes, the dyers struggled to produce consistent colors from one dye lot to the next. Last spring, SERRV worked with KTS to find the right person with the right skills to help improve their techniques and procedures for dyeing.

Patricia Martin, a dye color specialist from San Luis Obispo, California, was that person. Eager to share her knowledge and experience, she agreed to travel halfway around the world to work with KTS as a volunteer. She began by assisting KTS via email, asking questions, making recommendations and learning their procedures. Kiran Khadgi, director of KTS, was traveling in the U.S. in late 2008 and met Patricia during his visit. He brought the dyes they used, and Patricia conducted experiments with them in her lab. When the dyes didn't produce the expected colors, she began extensive communication with the dye manufacturer to gather as much information as possible. By the time she landed in Nepal in March, she was prepared.

(continued on page 2)

*(continued from page 1)*

In Nepal, the age-old fiber tradition of dyeing is passed down through generations. It is an art learned through many years of practice and experimentation. At KTS, dyeing is done on an outdoor platform equipped with large dye pots. Water is hauled by hand to the pots, where the women dip and stir skeins of wool, cotton, and silk into the dye. The dyed skeins hang side by side on the school's roof, draped over lines in the sunlight until they are dry. Even the most experienced dyers face challenges, and the women responsible for dyeing at KTS are no exception.



As soon as Patricia arrived, KTS reported, her keen eye and vast experience with dyeing processes helped her quickly identify ways they could improve. In some cases, they were using more water than was required. In others, she found they had missed some processes or added unnecessary washing of the dyed yarn. The five women Patricia worked with dedicated themselves to ten straight days of work which started in the morning and finished in the evening. They worked outdoors over steaming dye pots, experimenting with and adjusting the dye proportions, the temperature of the water, the time the yarn was immersed, and the application of the color fixer.

At KTS, dyeing fibers is an integral part of their program. Using yarns dyed on site, KTS provides employment and training for hand knitters and carpet weavers. Last year alone, nearly 1,600 trainees graduated from KTS' fiber programs, with skills that will help them secure future employment. When the livelihoods of hundreds of women depend on creating high-quality handcrafted items, getting it right is essential, so Patricia's training on dye processes is especially important.

Sending a volunteer to KTS is just one of the many ways SERRV makes connections for our partners to get them what they need. That behind-

the-scenes work is what makes the difference. It's the extra efforts of SERRV, volunteers like Patricia, and our partners that improve artisans' lives and give them the tools to provide for themselves and their families. Together, we eradicate poverty wherever it resides.



*Midnight Knit Set  
page 62 of the Fall catalog*

## Help Indian Woman Achieve their Goals

As a group of dynamic, willful women, SHARE in India understands the power of women earning their own income. They have improved the lives of basket makers in southern India and have real proof that their work helps women become more confident, meet their basic needs, and have a voice in their families. But to generate income, this group of 400 needs basket designs that will sell. SERRV's new Plant a Seed Project is helping the women of SHARE to meet their goals by providing them with the basket design training they need.

The Plant a Seed Project supports specific efforts that build a stronger future for groups like SHARE and other artisans and farmers around the world. These projects plant a seed for the future, by helping organizations with training, equipment, and other materials they need to grow.

You can positively impact artisans around the world by contributing to Plant a Seed. Donate as an individual, as a gift in someone else's name, or adopt a project with your church group, school, or neighbors. In return, you'll receive a card with more information about the project AND the satisfaction of making a difference in someone else's life. Find out more by visiting our website, [www.serrv.org](http://www.serrv.org) or calling SERRV at 1.800.423.0071.



## How your support of our work makes a real difference to people's lives

"SERRV is our most committed partner in our poverty work."

-Holy Land Handicrafts,  
West Bank

"Through orders we receive from SERRV, our artisan earnings have helped them put food on the table, shelter and clothe their families, educate their children and make a little savings for their future needs."

- Trinity Jewellery, Kenya

"SERRV is a very important and valuable partner for us. Their orders have supported producers as the fair price and timely payments were paid. Also their work is based on the Fair Trade Standards. We could carry out our development activities because of their support."

- Tara Projects, India

"Improving the quality of life of the members and their families, the children of the members have what they need for school, their food/diet is better, and our homes are improved."

-UPA, Mexico

"SERRV's social involvement, from linking their religious partners [a representative from Lutheran World Relief visited CCAP with SERRV staff in 2008] to immerse and converse with CCAP's artisans, to the practical effort of donating reading glasses to our producers and staff, may it be simple or extra-ordinary, were always valuable contributions to the growth of our organization and our partner artisans."

-CCAP, Philippines

## "The Changes are Huge"

"Thanks to the knitting work, I now have a small house with a door, windows, and that is furnished on the inside," said Ayde Riveros, an artisan working with Bridge of Hope in Peru to craft the popular Amazon and Noah's Ark Finger Puppets sold by SERRV. She and fellow artisan, Evangelina Pizarro, recently visited eleven U.S. cities and shared their stories as part of an educational tour sponsored by Partners for Just Trade and Green America.



photo credit: Partners for Just Trade

Ayde was born in a rural Andean village and learned to knit from her mother. To help provide for her three children, Ayde knit crafts and washed clothes in frigid streams for income. She faced many challenges – once she was cheated out of weeks of pay for four sweaters. The knitting never paid enough until Ayde and other women in her community formed a fair trade group called El Mercurio. They had learned about fair trade through a local organization and soon began selling their hand-knit crafts for more than five times what they were previously earning.

While benefiting economically, Ayde still faced difficulties at home. Her husband was unhappy about her leaving the house to work. "He would come to the workshop and tell me I was wasting my time," she said. But soon he came to appreciate her steady and improved income and now he will cook or clean the house while Ayde is working. "The changes are huge," Ayde said. "Now I can say, 'I am helping support the household, just like you.'"

## YOU CAN MAKE BIG THINGS HAPPEN

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\*Investments are only offered by prospectus and available in those states where allowed by law. Please contact us for more information.

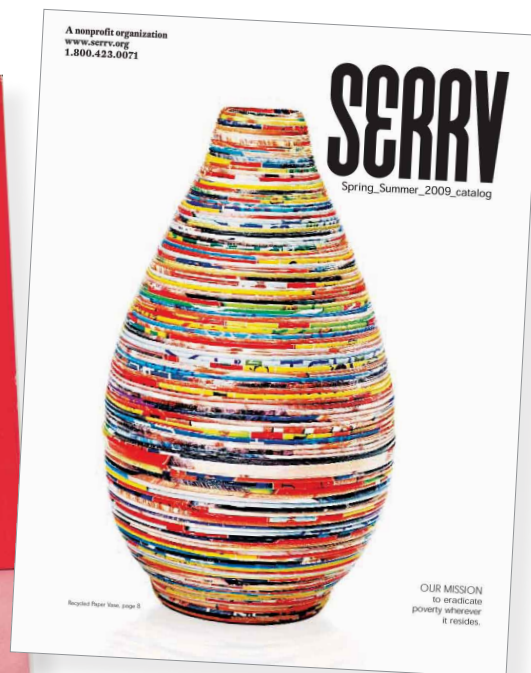
\*\* SERRV is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

# Celebrating 60 years of SERRV!

In 1949, the Church of the Brethren started a program to help German refugees from World War II earn an income through selling their handcrafts. It was named SERRV (Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation Vocations). In 1999, SERRV became an independent nonprofit organization.

SERRV has expanded its work with cooperatives and community-based organizations in 35 developing countries around the world, helping more and more artisans and farmers secure a sustainable income and life for themselves and their families.

This season, watch for additional stories about SERRV's history and development as we celebrate our achievements of 60 years!



Catalog covers have changed over the years! Shown here are examples from 1965 and 2009.



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