



Chloé x MADE51: Celebrating Afghan Heritage & Skills

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We are proud to announce a Chloé x MADE51 collaboration. Starting with Chloé's '22 Spring/Summer collection, **Chloé is engaging refugee women** to produce components that are incorporated into their products. **The first collection incorporates the craftsmanship of Afghan refugee women into Chloé's accessories range**, including their iconic Marcie and Woodie handbags. Chloé is a French luxury brand, known for ethical craftsmanship and free-spirited femininity, that recently became a certified B Corporation.



The iconic Marcie bag, featuring a strap that is hand-embroidered by Afghan refugee women. © Chloé

Afghanistan has a rich history of craftsmanship, particularly intricate embroidery. Different styles of needlework are tied to particular geographic locations and ethnic groups. **The hero pieces of the collaboration, the Marcie bags, feature a strap of intricate embroidery made by women of the Hazara ethnic group**, a Persian-speaking population that is native to the mountainous region of Hazarajat in central Afghanistan. **The embroidery for the straps takes up to three weeks of full-time work to create.**

This style of embroidery is called Tarshumar, which is a reflection of the technique: ‘Tar’ means thread, and ‘shumar’ means counting. This needlework relies on thread counting, rather than free-hand work, resulting in very fine, precise stitching. Artisans use silk thread to make brick stitches or short satin stitches on a cotton or silk base fabric.



Each strap was meticulously embroidered, measured, and cut to ensure the highest quality for every bag. © UNHCR / Saiyna Bashir

When Chloé incorporates beautifully embroidered pieces made by refugee women in their products, they demonstrate how **a private sector company can act in solidarity with refugees in a tangible and impactful way.** Through the collaboration, 606 Afghan refugee women living in Pakistan as well as 30 Afghan women living in the border region in Afghanistan have been able to earn reliable income according to Fair Trade principles. For the majority of the refugee women working on the order, the income they earned will go towards meeting basic needs, including healthcare and supporting their children’s education. It also helped them to support family members in Afghanistan.

Dignified livelihoods opportunities for Afghan women, like those created by Chloé's order, are critical. At present, over 2.2 million refugees have fled Afghanistan to neighbouring countries, 80% of whom are women and children. Since January alone, over 82,000 Afghans have fled their country with many fearing these numbers will continue to grow given the Taliban's takeover this fall.



Each strap is intricately stitched by hand creating a beautiful and detailed pattern. © UNHCR / Saiyna Bashir

Artisan Links, the social enterprise partner that worked on this order has been a part of MADE51 since 2018. Artisan Links is the first and only World Fair Trade Organization Guaranteed Member in Pakistan. Together with UNHCR, they carried out an extensive artisan identification and training project in order to expand the number of artisans able to work on this order. Artisan Links trained over 800 women in order to select the 636 women who possessed the skills necessary to work on this order.



The embroidery present in the straps of each bag was meticulously handcrafted, supporting the livelihoods of these women, and positively impacting their families. © UNHCR / Saiyna Bashir

We are thrilled to see the work of refugee women from Afghanistan presented to the world so beautifully through these bags and are incredibly thankful to Chloe for creating livelihood opportunities for these artisans and for valuing such honoured heritage skills.