



Founded in 2016 and headquartered in Mexico City, Someone Somewhere (SS) produces and sells sustainable and ethically-sourced lifestyle and fashion products such as apparel, back packs and accessories. SS connects indigenous artisans in Mexico who are mostly women, to consumers and corporations worldwide. This significantly improves their livelihoods and allows them to break the cycle of poverty while preserving centuries-old traditions.

SS is a Certified B Corporation with a Business-to-Business (B2B) and a Direct-to-Customer (D2C) channel. The D2C channel connects artisan products to retail customers through their online selling platforms and two physical stores in Mexico. Through its B2B channel, the enterprise collaborates with large corporations to incorporate artisan products into their operations.

In 2021, SS partnered with Delta Airlines to produce amenity kits for Delta’s business class passengers. This collaboration benefits hundreds of artisans working directly on this project and has reduced Delta’s plastic use by 90,000 pounds¹.

Impact Background

Mexico is home to at least 12 million artisans, representing roughly 10% of the country’s population². Most of these artisans are women who belong to indigenous groups and produce crafts and textiles that are unique to their communities.

IMPACT OVERVIEW

Empowerment of women and indigenous artisans in Mexico through income generation that also encourages cultural preservation	
No. of beneficiaries	295 artisans
% Women	75%

COMMUNITY

	Country	Mexico
	States	Puebla, Hidalgo, Edo. Mex, Ciudad de México, Oaxaca, Michoacán, Guerrero
	Communities	Náhua, Otomí, Mazahua

¹ Delta introduces artisan-made amenity kits from Mexican apparel brand Someone Somewhere. | Delta News Hub
² Mexican crafts and craftspeople to be celebrated on March 19 (mexiconewsdaily.com)

Despite the significance of the artisan sector, it is estimated that 7 million artisans in Mexico live in extreme poverty³. The market for their products is usually limited to local buyers. Some of these artisans sell handicrafts on the streets to attract tourists directly. Some send consignments to souvenir shops where products are usually just piled without conscious efforts to sell them. Either way, the artisans still lack the proper distribution channels for their products, and their creations remain underappreciated. They are also subject to discrimination, unfair haggling, and intermediation as buyers tend to negotiate their prices down. These poor market conditions add to the already dire situation that indigenous people, especially indigenous women, face.

Indigenous women in Mexico have been suffering from multiple forms of discrimination and violence that limit their access to education, health care, and economic independence. This has eroded their opportunities for empowerment and diminished their chances to improve their situation. Indigenous women often face high poverty and mortality rates and record lower rates of literacy and employment compared to men⁴.

Impact Delivery



Someone Somewhere works with 295 artisans, 221 of whom are women. These artisans come from 11 communities across seven Mexican states, including three of Mexico's poorest states—Guerrero, Puebla, and Oaxaca. SS collaborates with 3 indigenous ethnicities *Nahua*, *Otomi*, and *Mazahua*. The Nahua and Otomi people are concentrated in the Central regions of Mexico. The *Nahuatl*, spoken by the Nahua people, and the *Otomi* language, are two of the most spoken indigenous languages in the country⁵. Meanwhile, the Mazahuas are inhabitants of the northwestern portion of Mexico. They speak the Mazahua language and have at least 136,000 speakers⁶. These 3 indigenous groups are known for their close ties to nature. This is reflected in the handicraft traditions that have been passed on from their ancestors. The Otomis, for example, are famous for the Otomi embroidery techniques such as *pepenado*. It bears hallmarks of Spanish and Aztec influences⁷. Meanwhile, the Mazahua women utilize weaving such as through *mbutri* (sash) to express symbols related to nature⁸.

SS connects these artisans to clients around the world who recognize the value of their work. Through this, artisans can leverage their traditional craftsmanship skills to improve their economic conditions. The enterprise engages the communities through the philosophy of “*Buen Vivir*” or Good Living. Akin to this philosophy is listening to and partnering with the communities to learn about the traditions they carry. The different artisanal techniques of each community are then integrated into high-quality products that are catered to the needs of the global market. The enterprise provides necessary support to the artisans by providing the materials needed for production and logistics to deliver the finished fabric to Mexico City. They also pay the artisans 50% in advance. SS complements this by supporting local artisanal workshops that train the communities on innovative design techniques, digital literacy, financial skills, and waste management.

³ [Mexican fashion that undertakes to fight poverty • Forbes Mexico](#)

⁴ [The Indigenous World 2022: Mexico - IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs](#)

⁵ [The Nahuatl Language of Mexico: From Aztlán to the Present Day - Indigenous Mexico](#)

⁶ [libro_lenguas_indigenas_nacionales_en_riesgo_de_desaparicion.pdf \(inali.gob.mx\)](#)

⁷ [What is Otomi embroidery? - THE CRAFT ATLAS](#)

⁸ [Mexico: Mazahua Sashes - Between Art and Symbolism - Comboni Missionaries](#)

The enterprise ensures a fair-trade relationship with its artisans. Artisan work represents 9% of the total cost for each Delta piece. This can range from 6 to 25%, depending on the product and technique used. On average, SS pays their artisans US\$ 512/month (or 10,000 MXN pesos), which is 93% higher than Mexico’s minimum wage⁹. More than income improvement, this also empowers the women artisans, who make up 75% of the SS network. They now have an increased role as income earners in a predominantly macho culture, boosting morale and uplifting their roles in their communities. For their families, the additional earnings can be used to invest in health care and education.

SS works with four artisanal weaving techniques: *Chicotillo* loom, hand embroidery, *pepenado*, and waist loom. By pairing artisanal weaving with modern clothing and accessories, SS opens the door for young people (artisans’ children and grandchildren) to be more interested in preserving their families’ traditions and heritage. This also allows the artisans to have an outlet to reproduce and preserve their traditions while still having decent living conditions.

Outcome

<i>Improvement of livelihood</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases the income of artisans and gives opportunities to improve the well-being of their families. ▪ Strengthens the financial capacities of women artisans, boosting their morale and their role in the communities. ▪ Supports workshops conducting training on design techniques and digital and financial literacy
<i>Culture preservation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporates century-old artisan techniques and designs into modern clothing and accessories, encouraging younger generations to continue the traditions.
<i>Environmental protection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotes the use of sustainable and ethically-sourced materials in all their products. ▪ Uses eco-friendly products in the Delta One Amenity Bags, thereby reducing Delta’s plastic use by 90,000 lbs.

⁹ Mexico’s Minimum Wage Increased by 23% for 2022 (mexperience.com)