

**Sustainable Entrepreneurship
Research Platform Case Study**

Stories from sustainable entrepreneurs about trade-offs

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These stories are from the data collected from various sustainable entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs established small companies on sustainability principles and place sustainable production and materials as part of their business proposition. The names of all the entrepreneurs are pseudonyms.

Carol's story

Carol explained her search for the perfect materials and production supplier. She wanted to use handmade products and first considered wool. It was too expensive to import. Then she considered kimono silk but the shipping costs were too high. Then she traveled to India and saw saris but they are not sold on markets. Using saris meant that she had to make exchanges with Indian families. After searching some more she found a second hand textile company to work with, with the benefit that the communication line was direct and she knew they'd get paid the full amount. And that was just sourcing the material.

It makes sense to produce in India if your fabric is sourced there. Carol traveled for a long time through India to find a place that she thought would work, "It's a bit weird if you would go for 100% recycled material and child labor would be involved". Then she found "a company owned by two women who employed a few people as well, it looked and felt good but you do not know for 100%, there is a possibility that with big orders they give some work to others of which you will never know". However, communication was troublesome and it took weeks for delivery and the quality was inconsistent. She realized that her company was too small to organize production like this and had to produce closer to home. She "wanted something near home and for less money than usual and to pay a fair salary." She found a partner to work with (I-DID) and started producing locally.

The trade off: not producing in India ... "that sounded so perfect, a circle, everyone in the chain could earn something. The labor is in India; they receive a fair salary, which they can use to buy their necessities. But well, perhaps this might be something I could do in the future if I have more consumers."

Carol is a pseudonym. She designs and sells dresses.