

Connecting Gorontalo's Traditional Culture to the Future

Supporting Karawo Craftswomen

We aim to improve the social status of women by helping them build skills and earn a stable income

Most of the workers in Karawo production are housewives, of which there are about 3,000. In addition to housework, they make Karawo at home as a low-wage job with an hourly rate of 10–20 yen for 3–5 hours per day.



We help them improve their Karawo production skills, expand their market, and increase their revenue.

As a result, they can contribute to household finances, which leads to economic stability. In addition, it makes it possible to train the next generation of Karawo craftswomen.



We provide multifaceted support for the process by which women, in becoming economically independent, achieve economic empowerment and improve their social status.

Our Mission

Gorontalo's Karawo is extraordinarily colorful traditional hand embroidery.

The task is very delicate and can not be easily imitated.

We support activities aimed at empowering women who continue this tradition.



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Karawo

Aiming for Sustainability with Gorontalo's Traditional Embroidery

Traditional Karawo Embroidery from the Women of Gorontalo to the World

This traditional method of making embroidery is unique in the world.

It was born out of Gorontalo, Sulawesi Island, in the east of the Republic of Indonesia, and it tells the history of changes in women's social environment, as well as the adversity they face.



Gorontalo is located in northern Sulawesi Island. In December 2000, it separated from North Sulawesi and became independent.

Today, much of the world's embroidery is made by machines.

Karawo is produced by cutting fabric threads with a razor blade to create a mesh, and then sewing threads of various colors into it.

It is a truly amazing method!

Karawo is made by first cutting threads with a razor blade to make a mesh, then sewing embroidery threads into it.

As the woman's fingers move rhythmically, we can see beautiful patterns being drawn.

Flowers, living things, geometric patterns, and other designs are born.

This unchanging creative method is a testament to the history and culture of Gorontalo itself.



The Poverty Problem and its impact

High Rate of Non-Schooling Children

The average monthly income of residents in Gorontalo is approximately 18,000 yen, considerably lower than the national average (approximately 21,000 yen). Especially in rural areas, there are many families that live on roughly 3,000 yen.

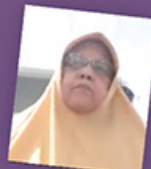
Therefore, children from poverty-stricken communities cannot receive education beyond high school, and more than 20% of them work after graduating from junior high school.

People Working in Dangerous Gold Mines

On the other hand, poverty-stricken communities work in gold mines as their side job. It is said there are more than 10,000 gold miners in Gorontalo, and their working conditions are not only dangerous, but also bring mercury pollution to surrounding areas.

Building a New Community

Housewives have always been community builders, teaching Karawo techniques while enjoying conversation.



Ms. Ramlah, a designer

With the support of researchers, we have formed a community in which Karawo craftswomen can improve their skills and working environment. Members include Karawo craftswomen, designers, supporters, and shop owners.

In this community, we provide training to improve Karawo embroidery techniques, improve the working environment, working conditions, and nurture the next generation of Karawo craftswomen.

At the same time, we provide the women of this community support for introducing their Karawo products to Japan.



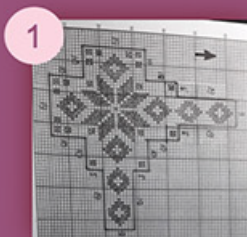
Ms. Lailany, a trainer



Providing training to improve Karawo skills

The Karawo production process

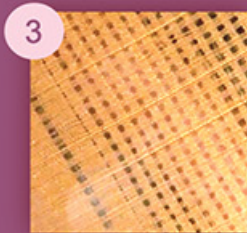
The entire process is done with simple tools and people's hands.



Create a pattern



Remove thread with double-edged razor and needle



Create a mesh



Embroider by sewing threads into the mesh



Completed handkerchief (takes approximately 10 hours)



Toward solving environmental problems

We are working with the people of Gorontalo to preserve their diverse and rich culture, and by addressing the poverty problem. We are helping to find ways to solve the problems of deforestation and mercury pollution caused by illegal gold mines.

We believe the autonomous management of the environment by residents is intrinsically related to success in improving the social status of women.