

## shoemates GmbH: Get One, Give One

Munich, GermanyHerat, Afghanistan



Obaid Rahimi

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhJkBD0r0R0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=341ZWzvsXek>



Year Founded:

2014

**Organization type:**

for profit

Project Stage:

Growth

**Budget:**

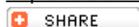
\$100,000 - \$250,000

Website:

<http://www.shoemates.de>

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/shoematesshoes/>

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### Project Summary

#### Elevator Pitch

**Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.**

As a very young brand of footwear shoemates® wants to establish itself in the area of "Social Business for shoes" and represent a high-quality and fashionable product. For every pair of shoemates® sold we guarantee that one pair of shoes will be donated to a school child in Afghanistan.

**WHAT IF - Inspiration: Write one sentence that describes a way that your project dares to ask, "WHAT IF?"**

What if shoes could help children in Afghanistan go to school and build the economy in Afghanistan?

#### About Project

**Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?**

Many local families in Afghanistan cannot afford to buy shoes for their children. Therefore many children run barefoot or in very bad shoes to school or play outside. Unfortunately, the roads are only rarely asphalted and full of small stones or even junk like glass or metal pieces. This means that the children draw cuts, leading to diseases and infections. This can lead to many physical illnesses and can have long term effects on their health.

**Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!**

With the purchase of a pair shoemates additionally one pair of shoes is donated to a child in Afghanistan. However, the donated shoe is not the same shoe, which is sold in Germany. The donated shoe is a solid shoe made of leather, which is adapted to the road needs on the ground. The solid leather shoe keeps the feet safe from cuts and cold and the children can go to school at any time or play outside. shoemates goes even one step further. Since donations usually do not strengthen a country's local economy, but rather weaken it, shoemates produces the donated shoes in Afghanistan itself. This way the shoe producers in Afghanistan also gain from the donation we do in Afghanistan and they gain business instead of losing business.

#### Awards

## Impact: How does it Work

**Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact for the coming years.**

With shoemates we want to establish a high quality brand and offer an opportunity for people in Germany as well as Europe to consume and buy high quality and fashionable products and directly help people in need. We want to make shoemates the definitive brand for high quality products with social impact. Doing something good shouldn't mean to give something away. Being good can mean to be good to yourself and to others. In three years we want to sell at least 50.000 shoemates, not only in Germany but also in other European countries and help at least 50.000 children to get new shoes. In five years we want to offer at least three different categories of high quality goods with social impact including shoes. We want to offer extraordinary fashion good bags and clothing products each with a very clear social benefit and social impact.

**Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?**

shoemates has a very classic and proven business model. We produce shoes with our own brand and sell these shoes to the end customer through vast distribution channels. Since we sell the products under our own brand, the value of our products increases with our brand value. Additionally, we offer a social component to our products, what almost no other brand on the market does. The market for social goods is one of the most emerging markets in Europe. Customers consume more consciously and look for sustainable products. shoemates offers products which fulfill both requirements of the customer.

## Sustainability

**Financial Sustainability Plan: What is this solution's plan to ensure financial sustainability?**

So far we chose the model of profitable growth. This gave us the opportunity to grow without borrowed capital. We still own 100% of the company. The initial investment was made by using private equity as well as equity from our former project headmates. We have zero debt at this moment and make about 30% to 50% turnover on every Euro we sell.

**Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?**

A company from the united states called Toms also have a similar projects. But they are often criticized for their business model: <http://cause-affect.org/of-interest/toms-shoes.php> We go further than Toms and produce exactly in those places where the shoes are donated. Our longterm goal is to make a change in the country where we donate the shoes, create new jobs and make the life of the people better and do not stop by giving away shoes.

## Team

**Founding Story**

shoemates was started with the first project called headmates. The starting point was the student organisation called SIFE. The idea of SIFE was to create business models which are sustainable, social and profitable. headmates was founded by the idea to create knitted hats which are made by elderly women in Germany and sell them online. This idea was realized with a group of students. Since the project was extremely successful we had to make a company out of it. With the lessons learned from headmates we wanted to go one step further and create an project which is even more scale able and successful. After a lot of brainstorming we created the idea of shoemates.

**Team**

The management team, Obaid Rahimi and Marc Langener, has recognized this potential and developed a sophisticated business concept. Both founders have completed the Business Administration Master's degree at the University of Passau and have a lot of experience in the field of e-commerce and distribution of fashion products. Obaid takes up most of the area of e-commerce and key account management. Marc is responsible for customer acquisition and sales. With this knowledge, the team has developed an innovative business concept, which is profitable, scalable and social. By combining e-commerce with classic retail distribution shoemates@ solves the problems of conventional NPOs. With a sophisticated supply chain system shoemates@ becomes more social, the more the company grows.

**Value Chain: Where does your work fit into the apparel value chain? [check all that apply]**

Manufacturing, Consumption.

**Your Role: What is your relationship to the apparel industry? [check all that apply]**

Brand Representative, Retail Representative - Mass-merchandise Chain, Trading Company Representative.

**Target Population: What stakeholder groups do you engage or empower in your work? [check all that apply]**

Brands, Children, Consumers, Designers, Factory Workers, Retailers - Department Store, Retailers - Specialty Store, Retailers - Discount Chain, Trading Companies, Youth.

**● Intervention Focus: What are you trying to achieve / influence? [check all that apply]**

Access to Finance, Conscious Consumerism, Transparency.

**Lever for Change: Select up to 3 ways your work is helping to transform the industry.**

Enforcement, Organizing, Media.

**Is your project targeted at solving any of the following key barriers?**

Consumers Aren't Motivated to Care: Neither Compelling Reasons Nor Easy Means to Change Consumption Habits, Sustainability is Not Yet in the DNA: Fast Fashion's Current Model Disincentivizes Value-Driven Economies.

**Does your project utilize any of the innovative design principles below?**

Unite More than Voice: Tap into Community Capital and Collective Resources, Disrupt Business as Usual: Target Key Players Who Can Influence the Bottom Line.

**Innovation Inspiration: When you first conceived of your project, did you think of it as applicable to the apparel industry?**

yes

**If you answered "no" to the previous question, which industry was your project originally aimed at transforming?**

● **Replicating in the Apparel Industry: If your project didn't initially target the apparel industry, how are you specifically tailoring it to do so now?**

**Are you nurturing or inspiring others to be changemakers? If so, how?**

● **Tell us about the partnerships that enhance your approach. How have you collaborated with others in the industry to increase your impact?**

We are working with several retail stores to sell our shoes. We also work with several online shops for sustainable goods.

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**Source URL:** <https://www.changemakers.com/fabricofchange/entries/shoemates-gmbh>