



# The International Fair Trade Association

## Speaking Out for Fair Trade

An IFAT Advocacy and  
Communications Handbook

A resource for Fair Trade Organizations  
with sponsorship from Christian Aid



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# Introduction

## What is this handbook?

This handbook is written for Fair Trading Organisations – but it can be used by anyone who wants to speak out for Fair Trade.

Part A looks at the link between Fair Trading, communications and advocacy.

Part B looks at why Fair Trading Organisations might do communications and advocacy work and suggests some activities that they could do.

Part C looks at the global movement for Trade Justice and how IFAT, as a global network of Fair Trading Organisations, can join together to speak out for Fair Trade.

## Why has it been written?

“Fair Trading Organisations raise awareness of the aims of Fair Trade and of the possibility for greater justice in world trade through Fair Trade. They advocate the objectives and activities of Fair Trade according to the scope of the organisation.” IFAT Standards for Fair Trading Organisations, October 2002.

This handbook reflects IFAT’s latest thinking on Fair Trade, advocacy and communications, to help Fair Trading Organisations become more involved in communications and advocacy work. It has been written for 3 main reasons:

- To help them see the relevance for their trading work and give them the confidence to get involved. Other advocacy resources are not written for those involved in trading.
- As a resource to use at the grassroots level – with producers, volunteers or customers - or to campaign at a government level or higher.
- To make the link between Fair Trade and the Trade Justice campaigns around the world to make trade fair. It gives practical suggestions of how to get involved.



### Note!

By its very nature, Fair Trade is a challenge to the existing structures of business and trade, part of the global call for Trade Justice. Most Fair Trading Organisations are already involved in communications and advocacy activities, but they may not call them by this name. This handbook aims to help them to plan this work and link it to the activities of others.

# Part A

## Understanding Fair Trade, Advocacy and Communications

This handbook offers an IFAT perspective on the link between Fair Trading, Advocacy and Communications.

### Why Advocacy and Communications?

Fair Trade makes a practical contribution to sustainable development through a special trading partnership. Like other businesses, Fair Trading Organisations communicate to their customers, suppliers, and other groups connected to their trading work. But in the wider battle for ideas and influence, Fair Trade companies and Organisations must make their voices heard.

In the world today, information is flowing ever more quickly. It is more important than ever to influence the environment in which people take their decisions – business leaders, politicians and consumers. For Fair Trading Organisations, communications work is key.

Another word for speaking out in public affairs is “Advocacy”. Advocacy is needed when Fair Trading alone cannot address the root cause of a problem.

The key issue we face in public affairs today – how trade can contribute to sustainable development – is at the heart of Fair Trade. Successful Fair Trading Organisations prove that a fairer way of doing trade isn't just a dream. Through Fair Trade, greater justice in world trade really is possible.

Advocacy is needed to share our vision.

### What is Advocacy?

- Advocacy is about speaking out to influence other people – their opinions, behaviour, or policies – to bring about change.
- Advocacy is about influencing people with power – but there are different kinds of power. A government minister has power but so do consumers. Communities and businesses also have power.
- Advocacy is not necessarily confrontational. A lot of effective advocacy work is based on partnership and cooperation.
- Anyone can do advocacy work – it does not need to be left to professionals or experts. Most Fair Trading Organisations are already involved in advocacy and communications in some way or other.
- Advocacy work can include many different activities – producing a position statement on a public affairs issue, lobbying and public protests, writing to businessmen and politicians, talking to shop customers, talking to producers, talking to the newspapers or television – these are just a few.
- Advocacy is always backed up by communications.
- Advocacy work can be done alone, with others, or as part of a network. It can be a spontaneous reaction to an unexpected event, or a planned and proactive programme.

# Who can do advocacy?

Advocacy work can be done by the people and communities who are most affected by unfair trade. They know which issues are most important to them. But, they may have access to fewer resources and information. If they speak out, they may be punished. This means that they may need support at first if they are to make their voices heard.

Advocacy work can be done by Fair Trading Organisations. All businesses need to communicate to opinion formers and policy makers to create a better enabling environment for their companies. They also need to communicate to consumers. Advocacy work can be done by Fair Trading Organisations, professionals and NGOS working with the people and communities most affected by unfair trade. The communities identify the issues that are most important and share in the planning and activities. Working with partners, they can get better access to information and to people with power. They can develop the skills for making their own voices heard in the future. But the process can take longer because all parties have to agree.

Advocacy work can also be done by Fair Trading Organisations, professionals and NGOs on behalf of the people and communities most affected by unfair trade. They may have better access to information, resources and government officials. They often can act more quickly. But, this is unlikely to help empower the communities in the future to make their own voices heard.

## Challenges of advocacy

Advocacy and communications bring challenges as well as benefits for Fair Trading Organisations:

- It can divert resources and energy away from core trading activities.
- Speaking for the people and communities most affected by unfair trade, without consultation or agreement, can further disempower them.
- If you are trying to work with those in power, it can be tempting to tone down your message or compromise your goals.
- "Speaking Out" on political affairs may contrast with efforts to "mainstream" business activity and attract new customers.
- In some places, advocacy is dangerous: people try to punish those who speak out.

# Part B

## Speaking out for Fair Trade: Communications and Advocacy Campaigns

There is no science to advocacy and communications.

Some companies have enormous communications budgets but an honest message from a Fair Trading Organisation can have more impact. Some NGOs have years of campaigning experience but sometimes a fresh approach can help!

The best approach is usually the most simple.

### How do you begin?

The first step is to identify the problem that you might use advocacy to solve.

What do you want for your organisation and for the people you work with? What do you want for other people in the same position? Why can't you get there?

Sometimes the issue is not so obvious. But once you have identified it, everyone will be clear about what you want to achieve.

The next step is to understand the problem. Do you have enough information to know what has caused it and what are the effects? Some research may be necessary. The next stage is planning. What is the goal? How will you get there?

And then there are your activities – which are only limited by human imagination. You can work with drama groups, organise public meetings, write letters, talk to the press, organise marches, demonstrate and a hundred and one other things in order to show your passion, tell your stories and expose the truth.

### The advocacy cycle

1. Identify the problem
2. Understand the problem
3. Should you advocate? Making a decision
4. Plan the advocacy
5. Do you have the capacity? Mapping resources
6. Take action
7. Evaluate your success and make changes if necessary

### Identifying the problem

Much of the communications work that Fair Trading Organisations do is connected to the ongoing nature of their trading work. But it should also be linked to their strategy for the future. What are you trying to achieve in the longer term? What changes in wider public affairs would help you?

The first step in advocacy work is to identify the specific problem that needs to be addressed. This means taking a look at the environment your organisation works in and deciding if you could use advocacy to improve it.

Identifying the problem is not always easy. A problem can be complex and connected to many others! Remember to prioritise! You can't tackle everything at once.

To help you to prioritise, it is a good idea to involve others. Why not create a focus group? What are the pressures on your organisation and on the communities you work with? Why not consult more widely? Talk to other Fair Trading Organisations in your country or region. Are similar issues a priority for them?

## The problem in Africa

### Ideas from IFAT members at the 2002 Africa Regional Conference, Aburi:

Semshak as facilitator asked participants about the ways that trade rules affect them, as businesses, or simply as people living in African countries.

"In Kenya EU restrictions on fish imports have caused the fishing industry at Kisumu to collapse."

"Liberalisation of the coffee industry in Kenya means that producers are now free to market their own coffee. This may bring benefits if it is done right."

"Without sufficient information to adjust to the technical barriers to trade of the EU - such as regulations governing the use of textile dyes or the nickel content of jewellery - producers of these products lose their market."

"In Kenya trading is impeded by a very poor road network, which appears to be a low priority for both the government and donors."

"The newly formed East Africa trade block means that Kenyan grain and sugar producers are being pushed out by foreign competition. There is a nascent trade war between Kenya and Egypt, which is threatening to block imports of Kenya tea if there is no reciprocal access for its manufacturing exports."

"Now that European chocolate manufacturers are allowed to use different vegetable fats to make chocolate, there has been less business for cocoa producers in Ghana."

## Understanding the problem

Can you provide both facts and analysis? Can you put your problem into a wider context?

Some questions you can ask yourself:

- What recent events have helped to create this situation? Put these onto a time line. Add any events you can predict in the future that might have an influence.
- Who makes the economic or political decisions that affect your situation? In whose interests are those decisions made? Who is included in those decisions and who is excluded? Who are they accountable to? How do they maintain their power?
- What are the different forces acting on this situation? Where are they coming from? Which are the strongest influences?
- Does this problem exist elsewhere?

Is the problem you have identified really the issue - or a symptom of something else? Sketch out the many causes of your problem like the roots of a tree. Work out which of these issues you must work on for the problem you have identified to go away. Then sketch out the other problems that you think your key problem is causing - like the branches of the tree. Ask yourselves, "If we solve this problem, will we really solve the others too?"

## Understanding the problem: A Fair Trade example from Tanzania

### Fair Trading honey producers lose their market

Farmers near Tabora in central Tanzania gather honey from hives hung in trees in the surrounding forest. The extra income helps to pay for expenses such as schooling, clothing and medicine. Fair Trading Organisations such as AMKA promote these small-scale programmes and help the farmers to market their crop.

The European Union is a very important export market. Honey is produced in Europe, but for many years imports have helped to meet consumer demand. 91% of imports come from Argentina, China, Mexico, Hungary, Uruguay, Romania, Cuba, Australia, Canada, Bulgaria and Chile - the rest from Africa and other parts of Asia.

### What happened?

In response to food scares and concerns about pesticide, anti-biotic and heavy metal residues, the EU began a programme of measures to ensure that honey imports were safe for human consumption. Each container went through a wide range of phytosanitary checks. The EU then required all individual producers of honey outside of the EU to implement a special monitoring plan. This was challenging for the smaller Fair Trading producer organisations, but with support from partners in Europe they managed to meet this requirement.

Then in February 2001 came an additional requirement. To export to Europe, each country now had to have a monitoring plan - run by the country's government, usually through the Ministry of Agriculture. The EU listed 29 non-EC countries whose monitoring plans it approved. Not a single country in sub-saharan Africa was included.

Many of the producers penalised through legislation were organically certified. By definition their honey was pure. More ironic still, the EU was actually funding a number of African forest honey projects with money from its development department - expecting to sell the honey to Europe!

For the producers of honey in these countries this situation was potentially catastrophic. For Fair Trading import organisations in Europe it was also difficult.

### The problem in summary:

Food safety is an important issue, but the current guidelines went too far. For lesser-developed nations or those with only small honey exports, the regulations placed a disproportionate burden at all levels of administration.

There had been no proper assessment of the likely costs and benefits of a nationally implemented monitoring scheme. The EU had provided no capacity building to national governments to implement the schemes in a sustainable manner.

No special consideration had been given to certified organic production. As a result, honey producers had lost their market.

## Do you need more information?

You may already have all the information you need to start advocacy work. Remember that in this field of sustainable development and trade, Fair Trading Organisations are experts! The stories that you collect in your trading work can be powerful tools for advocacy work later on.

If you don't have enough information, be clear about what else you need.

Do an initial scan for information available and then go back to do more detailed research.

Assess the information carefully. Who produced it and why? Are the facts accurate and up to date? Do you agree with the analysis and conclusions? How will others view this information?

## Deciding your Position

Sometimes it can be useful to draw up a statement that articulates precisely what your organisation believes about this issue.

This can clarify your own thinking – it is often only when things are written down that the position becomes clear.

Again, it is a good idea to consult more widely. Share your ideas with friends and allies. Do they agree that your position makes sense?

## Should you advocate? Making a decision

Do you want to do advocacy work on this particular issue?

### Questions you can ask yourself:

- Does this issue need to be addressed now? Is it a priority? What will happen if no action is taken?
- Do you have a good understanding of the causes and how they can be addressed?
- Are you clear about who is responsible for this problem and who has the power to bring about change? Do you have access to them and a chance to influence them?
- Can you identify the effects of the problem and back this up with reliable information?
- Is advocacy the best way to tackle this problem? Are there other possible actions?
- Are you clear about who will support you and what help they will give?
- Who would you be doing this advocacy for? Are they mobilised? Are they working with you?



### Should you advocate?

- Yes -> Start planning
- Possibly – but more information needed -> Do research
- No – but review later
- No

# Planning the Advocacy

## What's the goal?

Be clear about what you are trying to do.

Focus on what you really want to achieve. The goal is long term and gives you direction. Your strategy will tell you how to get there.

## Objectives

These form part of your strategy. They are the specific achievements that will take you towards your goal. They will involve action from the 'agents of change' – the people or organisations with power to affect your issue.

Objectives should be "SMART" – specific, measurable, achievable and relevant to your aims – with a time frame in which to achieve them.

To begin with you may want to focus on short-term objectives, provided that they are relevant to your long-term goal.

## Who should you be talking to?

Other people may also have a 'stake' or an interest in this issue. What about other Fair Trading Organisations or small /medium sized enterprises? Are NGOs working on this issue? What about the communities involved?

Try to work out who these are and who is the relevant person to contact. What is their specific interest or stake and what is their position?

Then try to work out who agrees with your position and who disagrees. Is the issue also important to them? What level of influence do they have? This will help you target your time and resources towards the most useful contacts.

## Who to target?

This is a matter of tactics.

## Questions to ask yourself:

- Who agrees with your position but thinks the issue is not a priority? Can you make them see that it's important? Think about sympathetic journalists, media personalities, government officials, business or community leaders, NGOs...
- Who disagrees with you, but has influence? Can you convince them to join you?
- Who agrees with your position but has little influence? Can you help to build their voice? What about your customers? What about farmers, artisans and their communities?

## Choose your methods

### Getting others involved

If this advocacy activity is for a long-term goal, you will need to involve as many people as possible. This is especially important if you lack skills or strength of numbers yourself. Build a movement for change!

Meet other Fair Trading Organisations, community groups, NGOs. Share information via email. Organise joint conferences.

### Lobbying

If the people you are targeting are open and will listen to careful argument, speak to them directly. Explain the problem and propose a solution.

Arrange a meeting. Make a phone call. Send a briefing document. Invite them to a public forum.

## **Raising awareness**

Sometimes an issue is complex or information about it is hidden from view. Make people aware of the issues. This is communications work and often involves working with the media. It is usually the first step in any advocacy campaign.

Speak to a journalist. Produce posters and leaflets. Organise a conference or meeting.

## **Mobilisation**

If your targets can be swayed by public opinion, use strength in numbers to show strength of feeling. Harness public pressure so that as many people as possible will contact decision makers and call for change. This is closely connected with media work and awareness raising.

Ask members of the public to write letters. Organise marches and rallies.

## **Media**

When you cannot get direct access to policy makers, or raise awareness outside of your local area, use the radio, newspapers and television.

Send a press release to a newspaper. Brief a journalist. Make a call to a radio phone-in.

## **Managing risk**

Communications work is a normal part of any business activity, but advocacy in wider public affairs can be a new area for Fair Trading Organisations. It is important to assess the risks involved and plan ways to reduce them.

What are the main risks from speaking out? Why might they come about?

Remember that keeping silent may be the greatest risk of all.

## **Action planning**

Who will do what? When will this be done and with whom? What other inputs will be needed?

## Do you have the capacity? Mapping resources

Your capacity is not just about the financial and human resources that you have. If you are focused you will use what resources you have efficiently and well. You may find you have all the resources you need. But without focus, you are likely to struggle even if your resources are ample.

### Why not get a team together for a group discussion?

- Work out what your organisation does well
- Use and build on your strengths
- Be aware of weaknesses and develop ways to reduce them
- Be realistic!

Perhaps the most important thing to consider is whether this advocacy work really fits into the vision, mission, purpose and strategy of your organisation. If it does not, you will likely lose direction.

If it does fit with your mission, do the internal systems and structures of your organisation support this work? This is crucial for efficiency and focus. Do you have a clear and accountable process for decision-making? Is there a commitment to advocacy at the highest level? Do you have a clear idea of whom you are speaking for? Are you working with other stakeholders? Are the lines of communication clear?

Then think about the skills, experience and understanding that are available to you.

Then think about the resources at your disposal.

Then, think about the external links you have that can support you. What assistance can you get from other networks?

Finally, think about seeking external funding support.

Format for a good concept note

If you are seeking external funds, you need to sell your project to potential donors. There is no magic formula, but a good concept note will give confidence that your project is well thought through.

## Tips

- Keep it short and concise – around 3 pages
- Most notes have an introductory section that lists the basic details of the project:
  - Project title, lead contact, address and contact details, author of the concept note, collaborator(s) in the project, total cost of project, sum being sought from this particular funder, duration of project, date of submission, location of project, eligibility for this particular funding scheme.
- The second section is more narrative and can be set out under a number of headings, for example:
  - Begin with some background - for example, what lessons has your organisation learned that lead to this project concept?
  - Introduce your management team
  - Outline the capacity of your organisation (including the added value you bring)
  - Present an analysis of the external environment
  - Explain the purpose of the project – 'what is the problem?'
  - Set out the planned activities

- What are the expected results (or “outputs”)? What are your targets and the key indicators of success?
  - How will you go about monitoring and evaluation?
  - How, precisely, do the expected outputs relate to the purpose of the project?
  - Who are the beneficiaries?
  - Outline the risks you anticipate and any assumptions you have made
  - What is the timescale for the project?
  - What are the financial requirements of the project?
- The section on finance would contain a number of sub-sections, for example:
    - What plans do you have to make this project sustainable over the longer term?
    - Staffing needs
    - Travel and subsistence
    - Consumables (items that will be used up during the course of the project, for example leaflets or other information materials)
    - Capital equipment (for example a printer, a vehicle)
    - Training
    - Overheads
    - Contingency
    - The sums of money that you can find from various sources

## **Statement from CAFÉDIRECT on the IGD Survey on Ethical Shopping**

The Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) has published results of a new survey which reveal that consumers buy mainly on price, taste and sell-by date. Food shoppers are selfish, unmoved by claims that products are environmentally friendly or fair to the developing world.

Cafédirect believes the survey results come as no surprise. The main finding - that the majority of consumers are not moved by ethical logos and schemes - is a fact the company has been dealing with since its creation in 1991.

We have known for a while that people are motivated by what brings direct benefit to them. They are not very interested in events outside their own backyard. But the reality is that these days, what's happening on the other side of the planet does have an impact on our lives in the UK.

So what do we do? Do we all pretend everything is fine, or do we try to understand the relationship between cause and effect and change how things are done?

Trade - or more generally business - is one of the major forces behind globalisation. This is the 'New World Order' and rather than combat it, we should understand how to adjust or reform business and indeed try to build a more sustainable future.

A survey from the Co-operative Bank showed that an increasing number of consumers vote with their purse. 11.9% of respondents believed they could 'best influence the corporate responsibility of business' by 'shopping for ethical products and services'.

Quality and price will always be key buying factors but ethical and Fairtrade products are now making significant in-roads.

The 'recipe for success' lies in providing consumers with a quality product first at a price they are willing to pay. Only after this first step can any explanation of the product's origins and the sustainable business model be explained.

Cafédirect re-launched its premium instant coffee a year ago under the '5065' brand, an innovative illustration of 'the height of coffee taste'. With Cafédirect 5065, consumers get the best of both worlds: a great cup of coffee while making a positive contribution to farmers' lives.

As a result, sales of Cafédirect 5065 have risen by 10% in the mainstream market where total coffee sales are in decline and contributed to the company's overall growth of 29% year on year.

The key learning from IGD's report is that companies will miss out on business opportunities if they ignore the growing number of consumers who do not stop at quality, price and shelf life. These early adopters do set the trend and give an indication of how our society will behave in the future.

*For further information contact: Wendy Richmond, Cafédirect Press Office, Mob: 07866 263242, <mailto:richcomm@dircon.co.uk>*

### **Note to Editors:**

Cafédirect has been blazing the trail for ethical trading in the UK since 1991 and has achieved remarkable growth, despite the continued market domination by multi-nationals in the tea and coffee sectors. The company buys all its product direct from the growers (hence the brand name). It is the only company in the UK to guarantee that 100% of its range carries the Fairtrade mark and is committed to its mission to set new standards for commercial trading in developing countries.

# Taking action

## Communicating your Position

If you have a position statement, adapt it now for public use.

If you have a clear position that you can present to other people – such as decision makers or the media – this can help to make sure you are accurately represented and understood.

It can help make sure that all the people speaking for your organisation give the same message!

It can also ensure that what you are saying on one issue does not contradict something you are saying about another.

Taking a joint position as part of a network may reinforce your voice but remember - it can also take longer to agree! However it can be a good idea to share your position with friends and allies in advance of publication – their suggestions may be helpful!

## What should go into your position statement?

Open with a concise introduction to your organisations, your main activities, your mission, and who you represent.

Outline the issue and the effects it has. Why is it a problem? Make your argument and present your evidence. If you have detailed information, add an appendix and refer to it here.

Make your proposal. What needs to be done and who should be responsible for doing it?

Give recommendations that are specific, measurable, achievable and relevant to the issue.

Propose a timeframe for implementation.

## Tips

- Make sure that your position accurately reflects the views of the people you claim to represent.
- Keep your position brief and to the point.
- Focus on what you can add to the debate, the new and unique evidence that you can provide.
- Make sure your information is relevant and up to date!
- If you want policy makers to know that they can work with you, make sure that your tone reflects this.

You can deliver your position as a short paper (2-4 sides), a longer briefing document, or a letter that summarises the key points of your position.

Your position statement can be a point of reference for your other communications work.

## Using networks

We have said that your advocacy work can be more effective if you involve others.

On the other hand, working with others can take up valuable time! Not everyone may be willing to contribute equally to the effort in terms of time, resources, or information.

There may be rivalry and distrust.

You may find it hard to agree common positions.

You may also find it hard to agree on who should join the network - there may be some members that you would prefer not to be seen to work with!

## So, who to network with?

If you are looking for partners, look first for those organisations that share your vision and values. These are your natural allies. What about other Fair Trading Organisations? Non-Governmental Organisations whose interest is poverty reduction and trade?

Who is already working on this issue? Are you trying to achieve the same thing?

What about other organisations working with small and medium sized enterprises?

Are they willing to work with you? Learn from their experience and keep up a good relationship.

Do you lack information or experience in media work? Do you lack contact with government or with the grassroots? Who can provide these things that you need?

Who would cooperate with you? What can you offer in terms of skills, information or contacts?

Can you help them with what they are trying to achieve?

Would things be worse if you did not work together? Would it matter if similar organisations were saying different things? Is it important to present a united front?

You need to be clear about what each will bring to the network, and that each is committed to deliver on their promises. Be clear about the nature of the cooperation.

## Lobbying

A lot of Fair Trade communications work is targeted at consumers, to convince them that through Fair Trade, their purchasing power can make a difference.

However, other advocacy work is aimed directly at decision-makers in government or businesses.

### How can you reach them?

There are a number of possible approaches. You could try:

- Writing a letter or sending a position paper
- Making a phone call
- Arranging a visit or a meeting
- Participating in a public meeting or conference
- Taking the opportunities that arise, such as a chance meeting

The most common type of lobbying activity is aimed at changing the policies and practices of decision makers in government or business.

Perhaps the government tax policy discourages exports. Perhaps you want another company to adopt an ethical purchasing policy. With good preparation and evidence, anyone has a chance of influence. This does not have to be the domain of experts.

Are you trying to change some legislation that affects your business or the communities you work with? Your targets are the political representatives who make and pass laws, in a national parliament or assembly or a regional or local decision-making body.

This kind of lobbying is more technical and you may want to gain support from someone who is more experienced. It is important to gain an understanding of the legal process so that you know when the time is right to make an intervention.

If a law exists but is not being enforced, you could bring a court case. This can be time consuming, costly and risky, and most likely would require experienced lawyers.

However, if a business or a government is acting in a way that is clearly illegal and the court implements the rule of law, your case is likely to succeed.

## Preparing for a lobbying meeting

If you make contact with a decision-maker, you are likely to want a face-to-face meeting to help you build relationships, gain information, share information with them, and persuade them to your cause.

You may have arranged a formal meeting where there will be specific time for you to raise your concerns. But, good networkers may also encounter decision-makers in more informal settings. What about conferences, industry functions or launch events?

Make use of an opportunity should it arise!

Be prepared. Think about what you hope to achieve from the meeting. What will you ask this person to do?

Has there been any previous contact? Was anything promised from either side and has it been delivered? Will there be future contact?

How do you think the policy-makers view you? What power or influence do they think you have? Why do you think they want to meet you? Do they hope to gain something from you and if so, can you provide it?

What other information can you find out beforehand so that you are prepared?

- At a formal meeting, arrive on time! Make sure that everyone in the room is introduced. Give a brief background to your organisation if you are meeting for the first time. Be clear why you are meeting and agree on how to proceed.
- In your own mind, have a clear and achievable goal. Seek win-win solutions – but know the issues on which you would compromise and on which you will not.
- Find out if other people with different perspectives are going to be lobbying in the meeting. Do they share your goals? If they are your allies, try not to contradict each other in the meeting!
- Be precise when you state your case. You don't have much time. Focus on your most important concerns first, leave smaller issues to the end. Make a moral argument, but not an emotional one.
- Keep the discussion on track! Test and summarise progress at various points.
- Your approach and manner should reflect the values of your organisation. Try to maintain a positive atmosphere.
- Be polite – you can criticise actions and policies but avoid personal attacks. Listen to the other point of view and try to respond in a constructive way.
- Be watchful of their responses – a change in mood, an unexpected revelation or reaction, a defensive attitude, boredom or lack of interest. Then change your approach.
- Know when to stop! Be sensitive to how far you can push a particular line that day. If necessary be prepared to meet again a different day.

## Raising Awareness

In the world today, information is flowing ever more quickly. To influence the environment in which people take their decisions is more important than ever. Effective communications are key!

When an issue has a high enough profile, decision makers are forced to respond.

## Winning opinion-formers to your campaign

Key opinion-formers can be crucial to your campaign. Think about media personalities, business leaders, civil servants, bright young stars in policy units and "think tanks." If they are aware of the issue and see things your way, they will influence the decision makers for you!

You can approach many opinion formers – such as business leaders or civil servants – in a similar way to decision-makers.

Media personalities in particular can raise the public profile of your campaign.

The main challenge when recruiting a 'celebrity' is to make contact with them in the first place! Celebrities have many "gatekeepers" such as their agents. These are the people you have to get to first.

### Tips

- If you have them, personal connections are probably your greatest advantage. Look inside your own organisation first. Where do your networks lead you?
- Finding the contact details of celebrities can be time consuming. Their television production companies can be a good place to start. Sometimes directories are available of actors and their agents. The Internet can be a very good source of information.
- Be prepared to spend a lot of time chasing up your contact – without being pushy.
- Remember that you are dealing with people who are very busy – or at least, they think they are! Let them know that you appreciate this. Keep your communication brief, simple and clear.
- Offer them some options in terms of the different ways they can help you – though not too many! If they can't help you in one way, maybe they can help in another. Remember that their schedules may be booked long in advance.
- When celebrities offer free support it is usually to charities, not businesses. Many successful companies pay celebrities a handsome fee to take part in their promotions. For this reason, their agents may expect a fee to be paid. If you want them to waive this in your case, emphasise the altruistic dimension of your work.
- Think about the other things that you can offer. If you will do a lot of the press and promotional work yourself, this will raise the profile of the client but save the agent time and effort.
- Where Fair Trade is perceived to be important and exciting, working with a Fair Trading Organisation may be good for the celebrity's image. Take care however that their image is also a good image for you!
- Remember that you can also make your own "celebrities". All organisations should have a good spokesperson who is articulate, charismatic and media friendly.

The purpose of raising awareness is to inform people about an issue, but also to show them how they can make a difference.

You can also organise public meetings and rallies, produce information leaflets, newsletters and posters, issue press releases, contribute to radio broadcasts and newspaper articles, organise open air film showings, slide shows and community meetings – wherever your imagination leads!

## Mobilisation

When people are aware of the issues and are convinced of the need for action, help them to mobilise.

They may be the people who are affected by the problem – for example the people and communities who are affected by unfair trade. They may also be people who are concerned for others, such as Worldshop volunteers or customers.

One way that Fair Trade Organisations ask consumers to mobilise is by asking them to buy Fair Trade products. But they can do much more!

Mobilisation shows decision makers that there is public concern for an issue – from a wide range of groups, with a high level of awareness and understanding.

It can bring media attention and raise the issues' profile. Then decision makers are ready to listen!

Mobilisation gives ordinary people a way to make their voices heard.

### Some Ideas for Mobilisation

On the first ever World Fair Trade Day in 2002, Fair Trade Organisations around the world showed some great examples of mobilisation!

#### Public meetings

Bring people together for a public debate and invite decision makers to hear the voices of the people directly. This offers a chance for lively discussion and can bring good publicity. But, be careful - they can be time-consuming and expensive to organise, and there is a risk of disruption or confrontation.

*Tara projects India organised a public meeting attended by more than 600 producers, social activists, educationists, students, volunteers and government officials. Key political figures were present such as the Government's Director of Social Justice and Empowerment.*

#### Vigils, demonstrations and protests.

Bring people together at a symbolic place to make a visual protest to decision makers. This can be visually impressive and powerful, and can bring good media coverage.

However there is a risk of violence, disruption or confrontation.

*The Fair Trade Forum India celebrated World Fair Trade Day in the South of the country with over 2000 people from more than 40 villages taking part, mostly women. Artisans carried placards explaining Fair Trade concerns and standards. "It was a great sight to witness the enthusiastic women walking along with so much confidence," said Panchu of SIPA.*

#### Supporters meet with decision makers

Ask your supporters to meet with decision makers – perhaps their local officials, to voice their concerns and reinforce your message. This builds grassroots support for the campaign. You lose a degree of control over the message, but ordinary people speak out for themselves.

*In June 2002 Fair Trading Organisations like Traidcraft joined other British non-governmental organisations in the Trade Justice Movement to encourage their supporters to lobby their parliamentary representatives. 250,000 ordinary British people met face to face with members of the British Parliament, who in turn put questions to the Prime Minister about British policy in international trade.*

## **Exhibitions**

Setting up visual or audio displays in public places – possibly linked with actions or stunts - will make people stop and take notice. There is a cost and time involved to set them up however – and they may be dependent on the weather!

*Getrade Fair Trade Producer Society in Ghana organised an exhibition of African Fair Trade handcraft for World Fair Trade Day, dubbed "Fair Trade in Diversity". The event drew the attendance of officials from the European Commission in Ghana, the Russian and American Ambassadors, and other West African diplomats. It also produced a series of articles in the leading national papers. Later that week, Ghana's President slipped Fair Trade into conversation with the Commonwealth Secretary General!*

## **Letters to decision makers**

Decision makers find it harder to ignore letters that have been personally written to their representatives. But, writing a letter is time consuming and can deter some people from action. Make it easier by making sure they have all the information they need. Providing an example letter can help.

*In 2002, customers and supporters of the Belgian Fair Trading Organisation Magasins du Monde-OXFAM helped to put pressure on European companies to reform their practices. The aim was to improve the working conditions of the employees in factories overseas who supply these companies. Over the run-up to Christmas, Magasins du Monde-OXFAM used their website to publicise the addresses of the major Belgian distributors of children's toys. The website inspired supporters to write to these companies with the message, "One Does Not Play With Human Rights".*

## **Postcards and petitions**

Give people a piece of paper to sign or a postcard to send with a message to decision makers. This action is quick and easy, so many people will be willing to take part. It can be a good starting point for getting the public involved. You can bring in those with Internet access by asking them to send an email or sign a web-based petition. The drawback is that these methods are more impersonal so decision makers find them easier to ignore.

*Oxfam-Wereldwinkels in Belgium used World Fair Trade Day to start a campaign targeted at the leaders of the coffee market in Belgium. These big trading and roasting companies make large profits from the low purchase prices they pay to farmers. Oxfam-Wereldwinkels campaigners enlisted the support of shoppers outside the stores where they buy their coffee. They were invited to sign a petition to these companies, and received a Fair Trade cup of coffee in thanks!*

## **Stunts**

Organise an unusual event that will draw media attention to your cause. This can work well to get the message across to the public and decision makers. But, beware of anything too controversial. You are drawing attention to yourselves, so make sure it is well organised!

*The Network of European World Shops produced thousands of small boxes containing samples Fair Trade food. The " food box" was a play on words referring to the system of "boxes" used by the World Trade Organisation. The shops were calling for a " food box" exempting developing countries from certain trade rules so they were free to adopt measures to protect their peoples' access to food.*

*The shops were finding it difficult to get the attention of European policy-makers amidst the crowds of professional lobbyists in Brussels. In November 1999 they built up a huge wall in front of the European Commission building with 300 of their boxes. Before EU Trade Commissioner Lamy departed for his trade negotiations, he was forced to accept the packages!*

### **Newsletters and production of materials**

Detailed material that shows the facts behind the campaign gives you credibility with supporters and decision makers, keeps them up to date, and helps to educate others. They are time consuming and expensive to produce, but you can keep down the costs of regular mailings with email where possible.

*On World Fair Trade Day Apikri Inc. in Indonesia distributed brochures about Fair Trade to the Yogyakarta community along the important streets.*

### **Tips**

- Involve the people who are directly affected by the issue so that they can speak out for themselves. This increases the power of your message.
- Be clear what you are trying to achieve so that your actions do not appear confused.
- Choose your methods carefully. Think about what will be effective and appropriate, and what people will be willing to do.
- Have a clear message – using slogans if appropriate.
- Offer easy, simple actions so that people will be encouraged to act.
- Make events fun! How about a festival or parade? This builds solidarity and support.
- Plan actions that will attract media attention to get your message across to a wider audience.
- Work with your allies to reach and involve a wider number of people.
- If you are already in discussion with decision makers about changes they can make, think first whether mobilisation will increase or decrease your chances of success.
- Avoid violence!





# Tip the balance of global trade

## What is the Trade Justice campaign?

In a growing number of countries around the world, groups of people are coming together to call for radical changes to world trade. Churches and other faith groups, trade unions, students, environmental organisations, social movements and many others are campaigning together for trade rules which are weighted in favour of the poor. To find out more, e-mail: [campaigns@christian-aid.org](mailto:campaigns@christian-aid.org)

## What's wrong with trade at the moment?

Trade should help to eradicate poverty and make the world a fairer and better place. But at the moment it's doing just the opposite. Rich countries and the companies based there have set rules which mean that they get all the benefits. Poor people and poor countries are losing out.

'International trade between my country and the West is like an antelope and a giraffe competing for food which is at the top of a tree. You can make the ground beneath their feet level but the contest will still not be fair.'

Dr Robert Aboagye-Mensah, Christian Council of Ghana

## Can things really change?

It's easy to think that nothing will ever change – but that's just not true. All sorts of things have changed because ordinary people have campaigned to bring them about – think of liberation struggles around the world, the end of apartheid in South Africa, and the campaign to cancel international debt. We can all do something, however small, and those small actions can add up to a big pressure for change. Signing the Trade Justice petition really will make a difference!

## What else can I do?

When you've signed the petition, ask your friends, neighbours and family to do the same. Think about opportunities to spread the campaign message – through churches or other faith groups, community groups or trade unions. Make as many photocopies of this petition as you can. Be creative about communicating the message of the campaign to your community!

## Can anyone sign the petition?

Yes! No-one is too young, or too old, to sign – so long as they believe trade needs to change.

## What happens to the petition when it has been signed?

When this form is complete, please return it to the local or national organiser named at the bottom of the front page. Petitions collected nationally will be presented to your national government before being forwarded to a central point for inclusion in the global total, which will be presented to government leaders at international trade meetings. If you do not have the name of a national organiser, please return to Christian Aid at the address overleaf.

## Where can I get more copies of the petition?

Contact your local or national organiser or Christian Aid. But don't forget that if you expect to use several copies you can always photocopy this form first!

## **Working with the media**

One of the greatest challenges for Fair Trading Organisations is to deliver their message without the communications budget or the manpower of bigger companies.

Radio, television, newspapers, magazines, email and web magazines make up a powerful force that can build awareness, shape public opinion and influence policy decisions.

However as vehicles of communication, they are not easy to control!

### **Things to remember**

Whenever you ask a journalist to report on a story, you give away a measure of control. Before you approach a newspaper, TV or radio station, try to understand their values and assumptions. This helps you to assess how they will view your issues.

Free publicity is not free – it takes time and resources to generate and manage. On the other hand, it can be very effective!

Be clear about why you want media coverage over the longer term. Do you want to raise the profile of your organisation to attract new customers? Do you want to win and maintain support for your aims? Do you want to ensure a Fair Trade perspective in political debates?

The chances are you will want to use the media for some or all of these things. Clear objectives will help you to make the most of each and every media opportunity.

### **Who do you want to reach?**

Read the papers and listen to the radio. Do a bit of research. Who is targeting the audience that you want to reach?

### **What do you want to say?**

Think long term. Once you build up momentum, you may find that you are getting a lot of coverage. It's important that what you are saying is consistent and clear.

What basic message sums up what your work is all about? Make it simple, attractive, memorable and clear.

Prepare key messages on other main topics you may want to talk about. These will be short, sharp phrases to summarise Fair Trade, the problems of international trade, the goals of your organisation and your attitudes to various, more specific issues. You can draw these from your position papers if you've developed them.

Once you have these key messages, stick to them. You will not be able to represent Fair Trade fully in a one-page news release or a 5-minute radio interview. Concentrate on the key aspects of Fair Trade that are relevant to your story.

Use every opportunity to repeat and emphasise your basic, core message. Eventually it will stick!

### **Getting the media to listen**

Identify the particular journalists, feature pages or programmes that may be interested in you. Target key people. To use the media well you need to cultivate good relationships with relevant people. Get to know journalists – they are human. It's easier to work together if you get on!

But, remember that the media is made up of people who have their own job to do. They need a good story!

Know your key messages, but think about the different angles you can present.

Put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself, 'Why is this interesting? Why is it news?' What will catch people's attention? Be enthusiastic and make your story irresistible for them!

Make journalist's lives easy. Send them clear press releases and pictures if possible. Will there be an eye-catching picture to go with it? If so, your news story is much more likely to be used.

### **Writing a media release**

A media release is the usual way to alert journalists to your story. It is a short, concise, attention-grabbing communication.

### **Tips**

- Be concise, use simple language, but be true to the style of your target publication. Be engaging and intriguing.
- Begin with a short, attention-grabbing title that gives a sense of the story. Your first paragraph should state clearly what is happening, where and when. Make it sound exciting!
- If further paragraphs are necessary they should provide new information or a new dimension to the story.
- Quotes can add a human aspect to the story, which interests journalists. Make sure that they are relevant and add to the story in strong, authoritative language.
- Remember to add your contact details! If the journalist can't reach you with ease, they will chase a different story.
- Then read it back to yourself. Is it really interesting? If not, start again! Once you have sent the release, follow up by contacting the journalist to find out if they will cover your story or want further information.

### **Radio interviews**

If you feel confident and prepared, a radio interview lets you deliver your message clearly and quickly.

Remember that you are the expert. You have been invited onto the programme because of the special information that you have got to share.

### **Tips**

- Have your key messages in your mind. Develop some stories or examples to illustrate your points.
- Check the latest information and have the facts written down in front of you. This will help you respond quickly to any questions.
- Check first if the interview will be live or recorded and whether you will be the only person interviewed or if it will be a debate. If possible, find out what the first question will be.
- You are there to entertain as well as inform so talk in a natural, conversational style. Don't be too complicated or technical!
- Don't ignore questions – but use them to steer towards the point that you want to make.

## Public Relations Tips: If a journalist calls you...

- Make sure that you have the approved press release and an information sheet with facts and figures already to hand.
- Remember that you don't have to answer the journalist's question straight away. Ask them for their details - their name and telephone number, the topic that they are interested in, what their questions are, when their deadline is. Get back to them when you are ready - but don't keep them waiting too long!
- Remember that anything you say to a journalist can be quoted, even if you say "off the record".
- Have a spokesperson ready to talk to them or give them a quote.
- Be helpful and friendly - they have taken the time and trouble to contact you. But remember, you don't have to help them if they are being difficult.
- Have a list of other useful contacts to pass on to journalists - such as your friends and allies! It makes their life easy!

## Evaluating your success and making changes if necessary

Monitoring is a way of checking whether your advocacy and communications work is being implemented as planned. If not, why? How will you get the strategy back on track?

Evaluation assesses the impact of your work. Are you achieving what you set out to achieve? If not, why not, and what do you need to change? Are your objectives still realistic and worth aiming for? Do they really contribute to the goal? If the objectives are still realistic, what are the sticking points?

It can be difficult to evaluate the impact of your actions on events in the outside world when there are many other influences at work. To some extent you may have to make a sensible but subjective guess at the contribution your own work has made.

However, a variety of resources have been developed which may help you with monitoring and evaluation - see our bibliography.

### Tips

- Invite all the relevant people to participate in the evaluation so all the experience is there.
- Refer back to the SMART objectives you drew up in your original strategy (SMART means "Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant - to your goals - and Time bound").
- Think about your specific activities and ask yourselves what went well and what did not go well. What can you learn for next time? Be as specific as possible.

# Part C

## How IFAT can speak out for Fair Trade together

IFAT is a global federation of businesses with an alternative approach to trade. Members of IFAT have trading experience, making them unique among non-governmental organisations currently engaged in trade campaigns. Together they have a special perspective to offer on trade and sustainable development.

Effective advocacy and communications work builds public and political support for the work of Fair Trading Organisations. Gaining profile contributes to market development and improves access to decision makers and donors. It brings a better chance to influence the rules of the game.

Through collaboration in IFAT, Fair Trading Organisations can be more effective at making their voices heard.

### IFAT: A global network of local businesses

IFAT aims to be representative in its policy work, drawing on the perspective of its members in each country and region. It is a united but flexible coalition of Fair Trading Organisations. By embracing local networks and structures, IFAT provides opportunities for a diversity of effective partnerships.

IFAT aims both to deliver the message and develop the voice of its members.

### Delivering the message

#### At a National and Regional level:

We have said that identifying and understanding problem issues is not always straightforward. IFAT members can help each other by comparing experience and perspective.

Working as a network, IFAT members can develop joint positions on these issues. IFAT members can help each other to identify other potential partners for local advocacy.

We have said that working as local, national and regional coalitions, Fair Trading Organisations can increase their capacity for advocacy – and their visibility. Cooperation may bring new opportunities to access external funding support.

IFAT members can work together in countries or regions to promote their Fair Trade activities to key political and trade targets. They can speak with a louder voice by establishing joint positions on priority issues. They can make joint presentations on Fair Trade to improve the understanding of government officials, politicians, donors, trade bodies, faith-based organisations and NGOs. They can share costs by producing joint materials.

#### Internationally, as a network:

IFAT's value at the global level is to promote the principles of Fair Trade and the activities of IFAT members at key international fora and to key international institutions, including multilateral funders, trade and finance.

As a global network, IFAT can also draw together regional experience and disseminate collated research.

With the outcomes of its members' research, IFAT can give strength to proactive lobbying.

## Developing the voice

IFAT aims to build the capacity of its members, individually and as a network, to conduct effective advocacy and communications campaigns.

IFAT members are already engaged in numerous communications activities, many of which are advocacy activities in their own right.

Even so, different members have a range of experience in advocacy and communications.

The challenge is to ensure that all IFAT members who are interested in developing their advocacy skills and influence have the opportunity to do so.

Network building activities to increase communication between IFAT members in each country and region can include IFAT country fora, collaboration on profile raising events, mutual review of progress, and collaboration on marketing strategies.

*For information, support and ideas, contact the IFAT Secretariat.*

## World Fair Trade Day

World Fair Trade Day has the potential to grow year on year as a focal event for Fair Trade advocacy and communications work. It is a day when Fair Trading Organisations can speak out with one voice for Fair Trade and for their vision of global justice.

The first ever World Fair Trade Day took place on May 4th 2002. From Austria to Zimbabwe, all around the world, events were held on the same day to celebrate and promote Fair Trade. IFAT members joined with networks of Fair Trade shops and other Fair Trade Organisations to take part.

Each year IFAT helps to coordinate World Fair Trade Day, providing a common website, logo, supporting the initiatives of its members.

Get involved! Why not use this event to organise some joint advocacy and communications activities with other IFAT members in your country or region? What about a common theme that will capture the public imagination?

*For information, support and ideas, contact the IFAT Secretariat.*



**Saturday 8th May**

*The World Fair Trade Day logo 2002: Made in Diversity. A common symbol represented the diversity of Fair Trade organisations acting in flexible but unified coalition.*

# International Trade Justice Campaigns

In the world today the gap between the rich and the poor is getting wider. Rich individuals control more wealth than entire nations, whilst over 1 billion people live in poverty. The global trading system lies at the heart of this inequality.

Fair Trading Organisations are not alone in their desire for greater justice in world trade. They can add their voices to the millions of others around the world in the growing campaign for Trade Justice. More and more individuals and organisations are coming together in Trade Justice alliances to campaign for a fairer international trading regime. National Trade Justice campaigns are forming and growing. They are all autonomous, but linked together, making a truly global campaign.

They are united by one core message and 4 basic policy demands.

"We are campaigning for trade justice - not free trade - with the rules weighted to benefit poor people and the environment. World leaders must:

1. Stop forcing poor countries to open their markets; and champion their right to manage their own economies
2. Regulate big business and their investments to ensure people and the environment come before profits
3. Stop rich countries promoting the interests of big business through trade interventions that harm the poor and the environment.
4. Ensure trade policy is made in a fair, transparent and democratic way" There is also a common symbol – unbalanced scales – that supporters can wear as a badge or use on materials.

## Fair Trade and Trade Justice

Trade Justice and Fair Trade go hand in hand. Members of the Fair Trade movement were among the first to challenge the unfair global trading system. With their trading experience, they have an important part to play in the international Trade Justice campaign. By speaking out with others to expand and strengthen this campaign, they can raise the profile of their work and deliver their message to more and more supporters around the world.

## How you can get involved

If a national trade campaign exists in your country, then why not join it and make it stronger?  
If there is no national campaign –

- Contact as many partners as possible and hold a meeting to discuss the possibilities of starting one.
- Start campaigning! Use the sample petition in this manual to get people involved. It works as an educational tool, to mobilise campaigners and to put pressure on decision-makers.
- Use the Trade Justice name and symbol to identify your campaign and to give it a higher profile.

For more information and ideas, contact the IFAT secretariat or [mgordon@christian-aid.org](mailto:mgordon@christian-aid.org)

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- Advocacy for Social Justice: A global action and reflection guide, Written by Oxfam America and the Advocacy Institute, published by Kumarian Press (2001)
- The Advocacy Source Book, Institute for Development Research (1997), Boston USA. Meet the Press: Marketing the Fair Trade Message, Millenium Communications
- Group Inc., 13th Annual Fair Trade Federation Conference, 1996, Washington DC
- Getting Your Message Across For Free: Ideas for creating effective medial relationships, Gareth Wilce and Rob Greenland, Trade for Change (2001)
- Finding Out Fast: Investigative Skills for Policy & Development, Edited by Alan Thomas, Joanna Chataway & Marc Wuyts, published by Sage Publications
- Impact Assessment for Development Agencies, Chris Roche, Oxfam Publications
- Networking for Development, Paul Starkey, IFRTD – International Forum for Rural Transport & Development

## Internet links:

United Nations organisations can be accessed at [www.unsystem.org](http://www.unsystem.org)

- Details of UN Summits, conferences, events, themed years and days are given at: [www.un.org/events/index.html](http://www.un.org/events/index.html)

Two US-based advocacy support organisations:

- The Advocacy Institute – [www.advocacy.org](http://www.advocacy.org)
- The Advocacy Project – [www.advocacynet.org](http://www.advocacynet.org)

On-line learning and media support:

- [www.mediachannel.org](http://www.mediachannel.org)
- [www.learningchannel.org](http://www.learningchannel.org)

## Trade Campaigning Coalitions:

One World.net Network:

- [www.oneworld.net](http://www.oneworld.net), [www.oneworld.net/campaigns/trade](http://www.oneworld.net/campaigns/trade)

Christian Aid:

- [www.christianaid.org.uk/campaign](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaign)

Oxfam International Trade Campaign:

- [www.maketradefair.com](http://www.maketradefair.com)

Third World Network:

- [www.twinside.org.sg](http://www.twinside.org.sg)

Focus on the Global South:

- [www.focusweb.org](http://www.focusweb.org)

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# The International Fair Trade Association



IFAT is the global association of Fair Trade Organisations, aiming to improve the livelihoods of disadvantaged people in developing countries and to change the unfair structures of international trade.

## Christian Aid



Christian Aid is an agency of the churches in the UK and Ireland, working wherever the need is greatest, irrespective of religion. Christian Aid believes in strengthening people to find their own solutions to the problems they face. It strives for a new world transformed by an end to poverty and campaigns to change the rules that keep people poor.