



## Fair trade why it matters

Human enterprise is one of our richest resources; through it everyone can be fed, clothed and housed - but only if the benefits of trade are shared fairly. Sadly, they're not.

World trade is dominated by a small group of very rich nations. Huge, international businesses control more money than some developing countries. Surpluses from the developed world are dumped in the markets of the developing world, destroying the livelihoods of local traders, while complex regulations and punishing tariffs frustrate the attempts of Southern producers to sell into northern markets.

Meanwhile, one billion people around the world struggle to survive on less than \$1 a day.

Fair trade sets out to challenge that by:

- trading with poor producer groups, and helping them develop skills and sustainable livelihoods
- paying fair prices that cover the full cost of production and pay a living wage
- supplying credit when needed
- encouraging the fair treatment of all workers and good conditions in the
- building long-term relationships, rather than short-term commercial advantage.

The UK is the world's largest fair trade market with sales worth almost 500 million a year. Globally, the fair trade market is estimated to be worth almost 1.2 billion in 2006 - only a tiny fraction of the world's \$10 trillion of trade. So there's still a lot to do.

Fair trade is inspired by a vision of a just and fairer world. For fair trade organizations like Traidcraft and Tearcraft, and many of their supporters, that inspiration comes from the principles of love, justice and service which were lived and taught by Jesus.

Jesus is biased towards the poor and people often forget how angry he gets about the way they are disregarded, said Peter Collins, Traidcraft's church relations manager. I think he would be even more angry today at the way unfair trade keeps millions trapped in poverty in a world of unparalleled richness.

What drives us on is our vision of a world where trade is just and people and communities can flourish and we work with anyone who shares that vision, whether or not they are people of faith.

Enforced poverty and gross inequality are affronts to the goodness and justice of God. They demand our response and one of the best ways is by supporting fair trade.

So when you shop look for the fairly traded option. Many food products and some clothing carry the Fairtrade Mark. And there are even more products supplied by the growing number of fair trade shops, traders and on-line businesses.

You can donate to charities like Tearfund and Traidcraft Exchange to support their work helping poor producers, and you can get involved in their campaigns and those of the Trade Justice Movement, to change the way the world trades.

For more information see:

- [www.bafts.org.uk](http://www.bafts.org.uk)
- [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- [www.ifat.org](http://www.ifat.org)
- [www.tearfund.org.uk](http://www.tearfund.org.uk)
- [www.tjm.org.uk](http://www.tjm.org.uk)
- [www.traidcraft.co.uk](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk)