

EQUAL HARVEST

REMOVING THE BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION
IN SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE



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GLOSSARY

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICES

Originally, extension was largely understood as the transfer of research-based knowledge, focusing on increasing production. Today, the understanding of extension is wider and includes broader dimensions such as facilitation, learning and assistance to farmers' groups.¹

FAIRTRADE

Fairtrade refers to all or any part of the activities of FLO eV, FLO-CERT GmbH, Fairtrade producer networks, national Fairtrade organisations and Fairtrade marketing organisations. Fairtrade is used to denote the product certification system operated by Fairtrade International.

FAIRTRADE PREMIUM

An amount paid to producers in addition to the payment for their products. The use of the Fairtrade Premium is restricted to investment in the producers' business, livelihood and community (for a Small Producer Organisation or contract production set-up) or to the socio-economic development of the workers and their community (for a hired labour situation). Its specific use is democratically decided by the producers.

FAIR TRADE

The term fair trade defines a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalised producers and workers – especially in developing countries.

GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.²

GENDER GAP

Differences or inequalities between men and women, based on factors such as social and cultural factors.

SMALL PRODUCER ORGANISATION (SPO)

Legally registered groups whose members are primarily small producers/small-scale producers able to engage in commercial activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recognition of the role of women farmers in agriculture is fast rising up the policy and business agendas, including a growing commitment from companies and donors to invest further in empowering women in agricultural supply chains.³

Women, on average, comprise 43 percent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries but own far less land and livestock than men, have less access to agricultural credit and are rarely targeted for extension services.⁴ The cost of ignoring this situation could be high, as highlighted in a recent World Bank report:

'It is clear that we ignore this gender gap at our peril and ultimately at great cost. It is a real injustice to Africa's women farmers and their families that women make up nearly half of the labour force in agriculture but, on average, produce less per hectare than men. This absurd gender gap driven by women's disadvantages in securing their land rights, accessing labour, and other factors, further undermines the sector's potential to drive inclusive economic growth, improve food security and create employment and business opportunities for millions of young Africans entering the job market every year'.⁵

At the field level, one of the main obstacles to empowering women in agriculture continues to be the limited participation of women farmers within co-operatives and other structures of collective enterprise. The most recent Fairtrade International data shows that women's membership of Fairtrade Small Producer Organisations (SPOs) around the world is just 22 percent. There is therefore a need to address structural barriers to women's membership and participation as well as ensuring the activities of the producer organisation are more inclusive and that the benefits are more equitably shared.

This report summarises research commissioned by the Fairtrade Foundation to explore potential barriers to women's involvement as members, leaders and salaried employees of Fairtrade certified SPOs. Case studies were carried out with six SPOs in the Dominican Republic (bananas), India (cotton) and Kenya (tea), and a workshop was held with representatives from Fairtrade organisations, supply chain businesses and development agencies, in a joint effort to understand barriers in different contexts, and to identify steps which could be taken to overcome them.

Three main barriers to women's active participation as members, leaders and employees emerged from the case studies:

- **Producer organisation rules, structures and practices:**

Membership which is linked to ownership or registration of land or crops creates a bias in favour of men. This is perpetuated at the leadership level, as leaders are drawn from the membership. In addition, a lack of gender awareness in SPOs means women's needs and interests, and constraints on their participation, are not sufficiently taken into consideration in planning and policymaking or in recruitment.

- **Sociocultural norms and practices:** Local norms, attitudes and customs related to the role of men and women in society often create barriers to women's participation in SPOs. This includes time poverty resulting from expectations that women should perform the majority of unpaid care work, which often limits their availability for active participation. Attitudes regarding women's suitability for leadership and technical roles are also common barriers.

- **Women's individual circumstances and choices:**

Women's age, marital status, education, wealth, degree of support from relatives and experience in other organisations can all affect their freedom to participate in SPOs, and their decision-making around whether to do so. If they see sufficient benefits associated with participation, they are more likely to accept any trade-offs involved (such as an increased workload or disapproval from members of their households or communities).

There are many connections and interdependencies between the different barriers and they are in turn linked to the wider context in which women and SPOs are situated. This context includes national laws and government policy (eg governing distribution of land and membership of co-operatives) and local institutions such as the justice system, religious bodies and popular culture, as well as international standards, conventions and market dynamics (including those related to Fairtrade).

UNDERLYING ALL EFFORTS MUST BE A FOCUS ON WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES AND CHOICES



Weighing station and collection centre that collects fresh green leaf tea for transport to Siret OEP factory, Kenya.

Participants in the case studies identified a range of positive outcomes which they felt would result from enabling women to engage actively in SPOs. These include practical benefits such as increased productivity of farms and a source of income for single mothers, and more strategic gains such as greater economic independence, rights and influence for women, plus improved leadership and governance of producer organisations. But they also recognised the risks, which include adding to women's workload and creating tension by challenging sociocultural norms.

There was widespread agreement that removing barriers to women's participation requires action by multiple parties. SPOs are central to the process and need to analyse the barriers to women's participation in their specific context, then design and implement gender equality policies and action plans to address them. But they need support to do so, as well as incentives, both of which are largely absent at present. Businesses along the supply chain, particularly brands and retailers, as well as standards systems such as Fairtrade, are well placed to influence the rules and practices of SPOs. But this should not be reduced to targets for women's participation without acknowledging the complexity and risks involved. Supply

chain businesses and standards systems therefore need to develop their own gender policies and action plans based on a thorough understanding of the issues.⁶

Crucially, it must be recognised that there are limits to what SPOs, supply chain businesses and standards systems can achieve individually, particularly in terms of addressing deeply rooted behaviours and attitudes. Bringing about significant, lasting change requires partnership and collaboration at various levels: between SPOs, women's organisations, government bodies and development agencies nationally; between businesses and others at the sector level; and between Fairtrade, other standards systems, NGOs, donors and intergovernmental agencies globally.

Underlying all efforts must be a focus on women's perspectives and choices: creating opportunities for women to fulfil their potential and live their lives as they wish to, and avoiding the assumption that involvement in producer organisations is the best way to do that. Bringing men on board with the process is also vital for mitigating risks and for achieving broad-based change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Against the backdrop of a new wave of private sector development, making women's participation and inclusion a reality requires taking a series of complex steps together with partnership and collaboration at various levels of the supply chain. Below, we offer some suggestions on how these actors can work to sustainably improve women's participation in SPOs including, where relevant, existing examples of good practice from other Fairtrade certified SPOs and fair trade producer organisations⁷ which can be learnt from. It should be noted that while this report focused on SPOs, many recommendations are also applicable to hired labour situations.

Recommendations for supply chain businesses

1. **Invest in gender analysis of supply chains** to firstly establish where women are in their value chains and secondly, where barriers to women's participation exist and the business case for addressing them. This can be done collaboratively with other businesses, or with other actors such as Fairtrade to reduce costs and duplication.

This could include, for example, a gendered analysis of members' total work hours and work day to see where investments could be made to reduce difficult, arduous tasks, whether in production or care work, or to reduce limitations on mobility such as by advocating for childcare services.



2. On the basis of this analysis, **develop gender equality policies and action plans**, and secure resources for implementation either internally or through co-funding arrangements (eg with other businesses in the supply chain or with donor funding).
3. **Develop internal capacity and responsibility on gender**, especially among staff involved in buying, producer support and corporate responsibility and sustainability.

- Share expertise and knowledge on gender and diversity already in the organisation (eg around company employees) to support this internal capacity building.

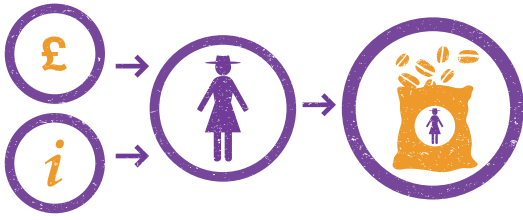
- Allocate overall responsibility for ensuring gender equity in supply chains to a senior manager or managers (depending on the size of the company).

4. **Support SPOs to develop and implement their own gender equality action plans.** Provide financial and technical support to SPOs or facilitate access to third party support. Facilitate exchange visits and information sharing between SPO representatives (especially women) so they can learn from each other. Again, this can be done collaboratively with other businesses and third parties to reduce costs.
5. **Develop appropriate indicators and processes for monitoring progress internally, and explore how the business can support the UN Global Compact Women's Empowerment Principles⁸ in the supply chain.** Businesses should seek support from organisations with relevant expertise to determine the most appropriate indicators to use (eg UN Women, NGOs and gender specialists).
6. **Collaborate with other businesses, women's organisations and development agencies** to work collectively to address barriers to women's inclusion, access to wider benefits and participation in supply chains. This is particularly important for addressing barriers which exist at a national level, or where businesses have limited influence over the practices of SPOs.
7. **Seek opportunities to raise awareness of women's contribution to production**, for example through communications materials and marketing. Depending on the sector, it may be possible to market products produced by women which earn an additional Premium to be used according to the priorities of women. This will help increase awareness of the role of women in farming and create an enabling environment for gender-sensitive practices in supply chains.

Recommendations for governments in producer countries

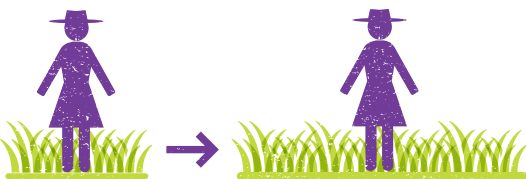
1. **Respond to the specific challenges that women farmers face through orienting spending and policy towards targeted programmes, including extension, finance, research and subsidy programmes.** This includes, for example, training more women to become agronomists who can deliver targeted extension training to women farmers.
2. **Review existing policies and strategies** related to support for agriculture and agricultural producers and workers to ensure they adequately take into account the gender issues and influences on women's participation in SPOs covered in this report.

HELPING SPOs TO ADDRESS GENDER INEQUALITY



Various Fairtrade buyers have provided support to SPOs they trade with to implement gender-related work, including provision of technical advice, facilitation of third party support, and direct financing of SPO-initiated activities. One example is Twin Trading, and its sister non-profit organisation Twin, which for many years have worked with coffee and cocoa co-operatives in Africa and Latin America to improve gender outcomes. Building on this work, Twin recently secured funding from Comic Relief to roll out the Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology with co-operatives in Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Another recent innovation is the development of products which promote and reward women's involvement in Fairtrade production, such as the Grown by Women products marketed by Fairtrade brand Equal Exchange, and Café Femenino coffees developed by the US importer Organic Products Trading Company. These initiatives serve as examples of how supply chain businesses can engage constructively with SPOs on gender.⁹

- 3. Ensure laws and policies governing membership of co-operatives and farmer associations do not create barriers** to women's participation in SPOs. For example, co-operative laws should not require members of agricultural co-operatives to own land. Governments should also take action to reach out to rural women and inform them of their rights, including rights to land inheritance.
- 4. Allocate more land and facilitate low interest agricultural loans for women**, especially single mothers. Gender affirmative action in land reform and agriculture is called for to correct historical biases towards men.



- 5. Extend government support to farmers beyond technical land ownership.** Government support for farmers, such as loans, training and extension, tools and inputs, often only reaches farmers with land titles, which often excludes women, tenant farmers and sharecroppers.

Government support should focus instead on people who spend the most time on agricultural production, who are often not land owners.

- 6. Invest more resources in infrastructure and services which reduce hours required for care work.** Examples include piped water and concrete flooring in homes, gas cylinders for cooking (instead of wood-burning stoves) and village level childcare, healthcare and/or eldercare services.

Recommendations for governments, donors, intergovernmental agencies and NGOs

- 1. Develop/fund coordinated programmes involving multiple strategies** to address the barriers to women's participation in SPOs. Programmes should be based on thorough, contextualised gender analysis which identifies the most effective ways to address different types of barriers in a systematic way. This could involve a combination of working through intergovernmental forums to put pressure on national governments, influencing business agendas through campaigning on gender justice,



Teresa Kurgat, 47, tea farmer who has directly benefited from a water tank project in Kenya

USING THE FAIRTRADE PREMIUM TO SUPPORT WOMEN

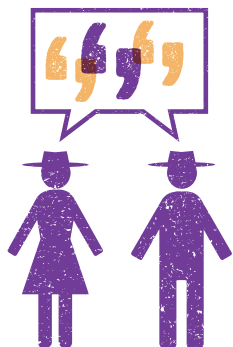
There are many examples of the Fairtrade Premium being used in ways which benefit women (and girls). This includes the case study SPOs in Kenya and India in this report which have used Premium funds to help women develop new income earning activities. Use of the Premium to improve access to water, healthcare, childcare facilities and transport, and for communal food processing equipment (eg mills for grinding corn, maize and other staples) and household domestic goods (eg stoves, water storage and fridges) can all reduce the time women spend on unpaid care work. This frees up their time to focus on other activities such as paid work, education and training, and organisational life.¹⁰ Positive gender impacts can also occur as unintended side effects of Fairtrade Premium investments. For example, electrification of a village in Malawi resulted in private owners installing hammer mills, which reduced the time women dedicate to getting maize milled as they previously had to walk 5 kilometres to do so.¹¹ If women see the Fairtrade Premium being used in ways such as these, bringing them both direct and indirect benefits, it should incentivise them to participate more actively in SPOs, particularly if they believe they will be able to influence decision-making around Premium use.



Women in India take their children to a crèche funded by the Fairtrade Premium.

providing co-funding to businesses and/or standards systems to implement gender strategies, and supporting women farmers to organise and connect with others in national, regional and international platforms. Different actors can take on different roles, depending on their positioning, but coordinating action across different spheres will increase the likelihood of success.

- 2. Develop a business case for increasing women's participation** in producer organisations, based on benefits such as those outlined in this report and assessment of the risks associated with not taking action.
- 3. Ensure the UN Open Working Group-proposed Sustainable Development Goal (Goal 5) to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls is adopted, as well as gender mainstreaming across the other goals, targets and indicators.**
- 4. Ensure programme design takes into account the views and opinions of women and men farmers, and involves SPOs** as key agents of change in farming communities. This includes providing technical and financial support to producer organisations to develop and implement their own gender policies and action plans in a participatory way.



PROGRAMMES SHOULD BE BASED ON THOROUGH, CONTEXTUALISED GENDER ANALYSIS WHICH IDENTIFIES THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ADDRESS DIFFERENT TYPES OF BARRIERS

Recommendations for Fairtrade

- 1. Ensure clear and sustainable financing, complemented by third party finance, for implementation of Fairtrade International's gender strategy.** Bringing about widespread change will require significant resources to be invested over a period of time. This includes building internal capacity on gender, supporting certified SPOs to develop and implement gender action plans, and funding cross-country initiatives.
- 2. Engage the support of external partners to advise and inform implementation of the gender strategy.**
- 3. Actively seek gender disaggregated findings within Fairtrade's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning programme** and any external commissioning of impact assessment to support Fairtrade's work on gender equality.
- 4. Develop and communicate the business case for increasing women's participation** in SPOs, based on benefits such as those outlined in this report, and assessment of the risks associated with not taking action. Work with business partners to identify how they might add value in their supply chains in relation to gender equity.
- 5. Support the formation of networks of women Fairtrade producers and workers** at national and regional levels. These networks will provide a platform for women to collectively agree priorities and advocate on behalf of all women producers and workers.
- 6. Build alliances with NGOs, donors and intergovernmental agencies** with a strong commitment to gender justice to identify areas where we can commonly influence the agendas of policymakers and businesses, in line with the findings of this report.
- 7. Introduce a gender bonus or annual awards** for SPOs which are systematically addressing gender issues. This would reward organisations which are spearheading work on gender justice, and incentivise others to do the same. It would also facilitate sharing of good practice between Fairtrade certified SPOs (see below).
- 8. Develop knowledge sharing systems and processes** which will enable SPOs, supply chain businesses and Fairtrade staff to access relevant resources on gender and to learn from each other. This should include opportunities for face-to-face knowledge sharing which can be linked to other events in the Fairtrade system's calendar (eg AGMs of Fairtrade producer networks) to minimise costs and maximise women's participation in both events.
- 9. Ensure reviews of Fairtrade Standards include analysis through a gender lens** and invite stakeholder feedback on how gender perspectives might be strengthened.

- 10. Do more to encourage SPOs to use the Fairtrade Premium in ways which benefit women** and other disadvantaged groups. Possible actions include revising guidance materials and training to provide gendered examples, and introducing annual awards to recognise SPOs that have used the Premium in line with women's priorities.

Recommendations for SPOs

- 1. Develop a gender policy and action plan.** A systematic approach needs to be taken based on analysis of the reasons why women don't participate as much as men and should include a range of actions to bring about change.¹² The policy and plan should be developed through a participatory process involving men and women from producer communities. At minimum the policy and plan should include the elements listed below.
- 2. Assign an annual budget for implementation** of the gender action plan. This should be part of the organisational budget, but could be funded using the Fairtrade Premium, or the Premium could be used as seed money to attract further funding for agreed projects.
- 3. Extend government support for membership of producer organisations beyond land or crop ownership.** Wherever possible under law, producer organisation statutes or byelaws should decouple membership from land ownership, recognising 'operators' of land/crops instead. They should allow for family membership with wives automatically becoming members when their husbands join the organisation and vice versa.



IMPLEMENTING GENDER POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS IN NICARAGUA

Formed in 1987, UCA SOPPEXCCA is a Fairtrade certified union of 18 co-operatives which serves around 650 farmers in Nicaragua – 32 percent are women. Its first gender policy was introduced in 2003 which mandated the formation of Gender Committees in the organisation itself and in each member co-operative, and outlined responsibilities for gender-related activities. The second gender policy was developed in 2011 through a process of reflection, analysis, discussion and negotiation across different parts of the organisation. It outlines five strategic areas for mainstreaming gender, including sensitisation at the level of primary societies, promotion of women's right to benefit economically from their productive work and encouraging co-operative staff and members to act as role models of equal treatment in their communities. Activities include facilitating women to obtain land and capital for coffee production, supporting women's education and skills development, and marketing coffee grown by women under the Las Hermanas brand.¹³

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH NEEDS TO BE TAKEN BASED ON ANALYSIS OF THE REASONS WHY WOMEN DON'T PARTICIPATE AS MUCH AS MEN



Kuapa Kokoo co-operative, Ghana.

PROMOTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN GHANA

Kuapa Kokoo is a large Fairtrade certified cocoa co-operative in Ghana, representing around 1,300 village societies and more than 80,000 members. Recognising that women are heavily involved in cocoa production but were under-represented in leadership positions, Kuapa Kokoo has taken various steps to increase women's participation in decision-making. At the level of village societies, it is required that at least three of the seven elected representatives are women, and one male and one female delegate must be sent to attend the Annual Delegates Conference (the highest level of decision-making in the co-operative). After implementing a leadership development programme,¹⁴ and forming district level Gender Committees, the number of women delegates putting themselves forward as candidates for the National Executive Council (NEC) in 2014 increased by 75 percent on the previous election to 39 percent. As a result, 46 percent of Kuapa Kokoo's current NEC members, including the new President, are women.¹⁵

- 4. Guarantee proportional representation of women on the board.** Seats should be reserved for women proportional to their contribution to production rather than proportional to their involvement as members. A rotational system of leadership should be used for both men and women to build leadership skills and improve accountability.
- 5. Create a Women's Directorate or Gender Committee.** This will create a space for women to meet, collectively identify their priorities and promote their interests within the organisation. It will also develop women's leadership skills.
- 6. Take action to employ and retain more women** at senior levels and in field-based positions. This may entail additional costs (salaries, training) that have to be planned for.
- 7. Build links with local women's organisations and networks** to learn from their experiences, gain access to gender expertise, and open up new spaces and opportunities for women to participate in the producer organisation.

8. Facilitate women's participation in meetings, training and decision-making. The location and timing of meetings and other activities should be adapted to meet women's practical needs, eg hold board meetings on a rotational basis in villages where women board members live; time meetings for periods of the day/week/year when women have less work; make use of existing spaces where women meet such as self-help groups; solicit and document women's views separately from men.

9. Involve men in the process of building capacity and sensitisation on gender issues. Gender training and sensitisation is needed at all levels, from senior management through to community members. This should include sensitising men to traditional roles and responsibilities and how they may be more equitably shared.

TRANSFORMING GENDER RELATIONS IN UGANDA

Bukonzo Joint Co-operative Union brings together around 5,500 coffee-growing households in the Rwenzori mountains of western Uganda. Over 83 percent of its members are women, due to a policy of joint membership for married couples. Through using the GALS methodology,¹⁶ the members and leaders of Bukonzo Joint have engaged in a participatory process of analysing and addressing gender inequalities in their organisation and communities. This has involved men and women farmers committing to specific actions to overcome inequalities, such as equitable allocation of work in their households and joint decision-making on how to use household income. They keep diaries to chart progress and report back to their community groups. At the same time co-operative staff and leaders have reflected on organisational policies and practices and taken steps to ensure women are able to participate actively in all aspects of co-operative life. To build on its success, Bukonzo Joint is now being funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and Oxfam Novib to share its experiences and the GALS methodology with co-operatives in Tanzania.¹⁷

10. Explore how to alleviate the burden of other work to facilitate women's participation and inclusion (for example through a Gender Committee) and allocate a share of the Fairtrade Premium to be used according to women's priorities. Examples include: support to develop new income generating activities; literacy and numeracy training; loans to buy land; investment in labour saving technology (including community infrastructure); and investment in childcare facilities.



Women sorting coffee.

WORKING FOR GENDER JUSTICE IN NICARAGUA

Some Fairtrade certified SPOs have demonstrated strong commitment and capacity in relation to the promotion of gender justice. One example is PRODECOOP (Promotora de Desarrollo Cooperativo de Las Segovias), a second tier coffee co-operative in Nicaragua which unites around 2,300 producers from 39 primary co-operatives. One of PRODECOOP's core objectives is 'to contribute to improvements in gender equality and equity and the socio-economic position of women.' In 2008 it introduced a comprehensive gender policy which mainstreamed gender across all levels and activities of the organisation. This includes a 40 percent quota for women in leadership positions, allocation of a percentage of the Fairtrade Premium for implementing the gender programme and training for field staff on working with women farmers. To create an enabling environment for change, PRODECOOP carries out awareness raising in coffee-growing communities on women's rights, including their right to participate actively in the co-operative, and encourages more equitable distribution of resources and work between men and women.¹⁸

11. Provide targeted training and sensitisation for women. Women should be provided with training on themes such as leadership, institutional structures and governance, business management and agricultural practices. Awareness-raising events should be held with members and non-members to increase women's understanding of the benefits of active participation.

12. Provide targeted support for single mothers, including loans, training and employment.

1/ INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Fairtrade's Theory of Change¹⁹ rests on the assumption that strengthening SPOs and helping them access fair trading conditions is an effective way to build sustainable livelihoods and contribute to empowerment among rural communities. However, there is growing recognition both within Fairtrade and in the wider development community that such organisations are often dominated by men.

Recognition of the role of women farmers in agriculture is fast rising up the policy and business agendas, including a growing commitment from companies and donors to invest further in empowering women in agricultural supply chains.²⁰ In the build-up to the G8 summit in June 2013 the Fairtrade Foundation ran a campaign to emphasise the importance of smallholder farmers and co-operatives, including the joint hand-in²¹ of over 75,000 signatures to UK Prime Minister David Cameron in May 2013. In the primary G8 communiqué 'smallholder farmers, especially women' were acknowledged for their important role in rural development.²²

However, the most recent data from Fairtrade International indicates that only 22 percent of the officially registered members of Fairtrade certified SPOs worldwide are women.²³ Often, legal, social and cultural norms play a significant role in determining the extent to which women can join co-operatives and have access to formal rights and benefits through them. As such, the effects of Fairtrade for men and women farmers are unlikely to be the same. Research shows mixed results for women but a general tendency for them to benefit less from Fairtrade due to a range of gender inequalities underlying the production and trade of agricultural products.²⁴ However, it is also apparent that in some contexts women gain substantially from their links to Fairtrade certified SPOs, even if they are not themselves members. This is particularly true where SPOs are making a concerted effort to reach out to women farmers and address both the symptoms and the causes of gender inequality.²⁵

Where women are able to fully participate in co-operative structures, there are significant gains to be had in terms of social and economic empowerment.²⁶ This indicates both a challenge (low participation of women in co-operatives) and an opportunity (participation in co-operatives as an important pathway to social and economic empowerment).

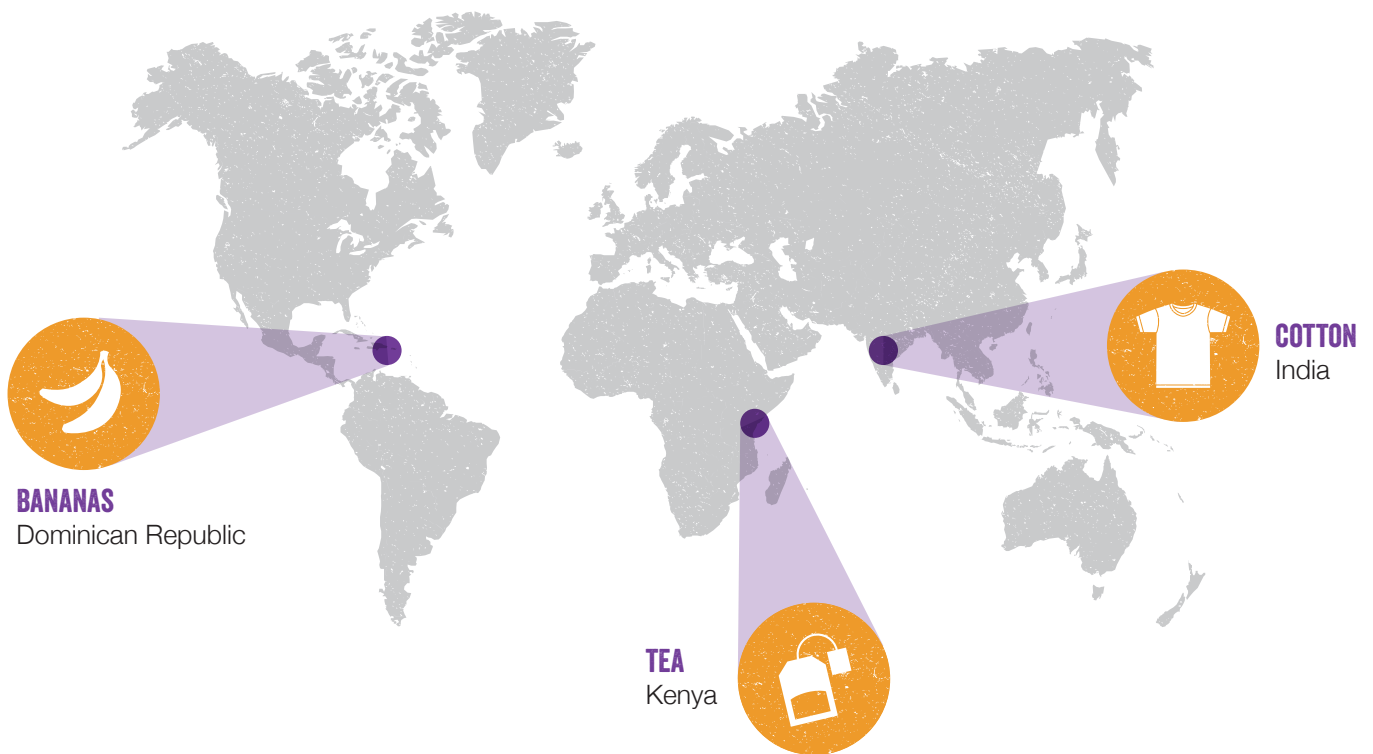
1.2 Research objectives

In order to further develop the Fairtrade system's work on gender equality and empowerment, the Fairtrade Foundation conducted this research to:

- Better understand how, when and why women participate in, and benefit from, Fairtrade certified SPOs, and the barriers to their participation.
- Identify measures which could be taken to enhance women's participation and ensure they are able to benefit equally from Fairtrade.

The overall aim of this study is to gain insight into mechanisms which promote women's effective participation in co-operatives, which can be shared and encouraged in dialogue with governments, donors, businesses, NGOs and Fairtrade actors.

“WHERE WOMEN ARE ABLE TO FULLY PARTICIPATE IN CO-OPERATIVE STRUCTURES, THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT GAINS TO BE HAD IN TERMS OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT.”



1.3 Methodology

The research primarily involved case studies in three countries, focusing on different Fairtrade certified crops:

- Dominican Republic bananas
- India cotton
- Kenya tea

The case study countries and sectors were selected with the aim of including all three regions where Fairtrade production occurs and different cultural contexts of gender relations (see section 2 for more details). In each country, two Fairtrade

certified SPOs were purposively selected by the relevant Fairtrade producer networks in discussion with the lead researcher and the Fairtrade Foundation. The aim was to include SPOs with contrasting situations in order to expose as full a range as possible of barriers to women's participation, using the following criteria:

- Organisational form
- Involvement of women
- Implementation of gender-related activities
- Localised gender context.²⁷

Table 1: Details of participating SPOs

Name	Location	Year founded	Type of organisation	Fairtrade product	Number of members	Number of male members	Number of female members	Year certified Fairtrade
SPO1	Valverde, Dominican Republic	2007	Not-for-profit association	Bananas	100	83	17	2009
SPO2	Valverde, Dominican Republic	2009	Not-for-profit association	Bananas	93	72	21	2010
SPO3	Odisha, India	2007	Primary co-operative	Cotton	1,112	1,057	55	2007
SPO4	Maharashtra, India	2006	Society and trust	Cotton	1,251	1,173	78	2007
SPO5	Nandi, Kenya	2004	Public limited company (producer owned)	Tea	6,235	4,978	1,257	2006
SPO6	Kirinyaga, Kenya	1981	Public limited company (producer owned)	Tea	Approx. 8,500	Approx. 7,650	Approx. 850	2009

SPOs' interest in taking part was also a factor determining the selection, given the participatory methodology.²⁸ In India the selection was limited to the only Fairtrade certified SPO for cotton.²⁹ In this case, two regional organisations affiliated with this second tier SPO were selected for participation, based on contrasting contexts for women's participation. Table 1 gives an overview of the six case study SPOs.³⁰

The Fairtrade Foundation issued a call for proposals for the research through various networks and subsequently commissioned independent researcher Sally Smith as the lead for this project. Sally Smith carried out fieldwork in the Dominican Republic, Kavitha Kuruganti in India and Joyce Gema in Kenya.

Between May and July 2014, the researchers visited the members and stakeholders from each SPO. Qualitative methods were used to gather data in an iterative manner, including focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, life history interviews, key informant interviews and workshops (see annexes 1 and 2). This allowed for in-depth exploration of women's participation in Fairtrade certified SPOs, including interrogation of gender dynamics in households, organisations and communities, and a participatory process for developing recommendations.

Following the field research, in-country workshops were held with representatives from the boards, management and staff of the SPOs. The purpose was to present and validate preliminary findings from the field research, and to discuss measures which could be taken to address barriers to women's participation (see annex 2 for details of participants).

After carrying out the research with SPOs, a workshop was held in the UK with a wider set of stakeholders to discuss the

case study findings and recommendations, and to identify priority actions in the future. The 14 participants included representatives from the Fairtrade system, businesses trading in Fairtrade certified products and Oxfam.³¹ Finally, the draft report was fact-checked where possible with the case study SPOs. It was also shared with key stakeholders to check the accuracy of our findings and to further inform our recommendations.

1.4 Limitations

Owing to resource constraints, and the limited scope and scale of the research, the findings of this study cannot be considered exhaustive. Neither can they be generalised even within each country context, given the purposive approach to sampling of the case studies. Nevertheless, the findings highlight a range of gender issues which are likely to resonate with other Fairtrade certified SPOs, and are broadly consistent with previous research on women's involvement in producer organisations.³² As the case study SPOs had only undertaken limited work on gender, this report also draws on examples of other Fairtrade certified SPOs and fair trade producer organisations³³ which have made significant advances in reaching out to women and addressing the barriers to their participation (see the examples of good practice boxes in 4.2 recommendations). The intention of doing so is to provide concrete examples to learn from, and be inspired by, particularly in relation to key recommendations.

It was not within the scope of the study to explore gender issues for waged workers, with the exception of looking at numbers of women employed by SPOs in skilled positions.³⁴ However, anecdotal evidence from the case studies suggests there may be a range of gender issues in relation to paid work in production and processing (at the level of farms and within SPOs), including access to regular work and employment-related benefits, and equal pay for work of equal value. As this

ENHANCING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPOS REQUIRES UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF DIFFERENT ACTORS IN BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE



Pamela N'gososei, tea farmer in Kenya, and member of Sireet OEP co-operative, has been granted access to a tea farm owned by her husband. This has allowed her to be financially independent.

could be an important avenue for enabling greater benefits for women in Fairtrade producer communities, it is important that research in this area is undertaken to complement the findings of the present study.

While interviewing people mainly in groups was appropriate given the research objectives and budget, inevitably it means limitations in the extent to which a precise account can be given in relation to certain themes. This is particularly true for intra-household dynamics, including a lack of clarity on resource flows within households in all three country case studies.

In India the participating organisations had not traded any Fairtrade cotton for the past two years as local market prices for cotton had been higher than could be achieved through selling to Fairtrade buyers. This coloured the enthusiasm and interest of community members in the research, along with

their willingness to contribute. This was further confounded by the presence of multiple agencies at village level, and a lack of clarity in people's minds regarding which activities were linked to the case study SPOs.

In Kenya, agencies which manage tea processing and marketing activities on behalf of the case study SPOs have considerable influence over their policies and practices. While this was assessed in the case study, it was not within the scope to interview representatives of these agencies separately for their perspectives, although some were present at one of the closing workshops.

While the findings in this report must be read and appreciated in light of these limitations, the analysis can be considered useful for overall learning and future research.

2/ CONTEXT

The case study countries provide contrasting contexts in terms of size and type of economy, per capita income, access to basic services and gender dynamics. As indicated by the headline statistics in table 2, India is the largest economy of the three, but average per capita income is highest in the Dominican Republic. Agriculture contributes nearly a third of GDP in Kenya, compared to 14 percent in India and 6 percent in the Dominican Republic, but is an important source of employment in all three countries. This is particularly so for women in India and Kenya, with 60 percent and 68 percent

of female employment being in agriculture respectively, while for male employment the figures are 43 percent and 55 percent. Conversely, in the Dominican Republic there are more men than women employed in agriculture, at 21 percent of male employment and just 3 percent of female employment. The difference is likely to be due to multiple factors, including sociocultural norms and attitudes around gender roles (as explored later in the report) and the range of economic opportunities available to women outside agriculture in each of the countries studied.

Table 2: Overview of case study country contexts

	Dominican Republic	India	Kenya
Population (2013)	10.4 million	1,252m	44.3m
GDP (2013)	US\$ 60.6 billion	US\$ 1,877bn	US\$ 44.1bn
Per capita GNI based on PPP ³⁵ (2013)	US\$ 11,150	US\$ 5,350	US\$ 2,250
% GDP from agriculture	6% (2013)	14% ³⁶ (2013)	30% (2012)
% Total/Male/Female employment in agriculture	15% 21% 3% (2011)	47% 43% 60% (2012)	61% 55% 68% (2005)
% rural population with access to improved water (2012)	77%	91%	55%
Life expectancy at birth (2012)	73 years	66 years	61 years
Global Gender Gap rank (out of 142) (2014)	78	114	37
Ratio of female to male secondary school enrolment	112% (2012)	94% (2011)	90% (2009)

Source: World Bank data³⁷ and World Economic Forum, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2014*³⁸



Nearly half the rural population in Kenya has no access to safe water, and high poverty rates and the limitations of public health services are reflected in a life expectancy of just 61 years. India has a somewhat higher life expectancy and lower levels of poverty following rapid economic growth since the 1990s, but embedded poverty and inequality still affect a large number of people – around a third of the world’s poorest people live in India.³⁹

Gender inequality is particularly acute in India – in 2014 it ranked 114 out of 142 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index, the worst performer of the case study countries. The Dominican Republic also suffers from intractable poverty and gender inequality, especially in rural areas, but is notable for advances made in girls’ education with more girls than boys now attending secondary school. In Kenya and particularly the Dominican Republic, women also have more favourable economic opportunities than in India, in terms of access to paid work, wage equality, level of earned income, and employment in senior and technical positions. In all three countries women’s participation in political life has improved in recent decades, due in part to the adoption of measures such as reserved seats for women in parliament, but still remains well below that of men.⁴⁰

2.1 Case study sectors

Bananas are the second most valuable agricultural export from the Dominican Republic, valued at nearly US\$ 270m in 2011⁴¹ and it is one of the top sources of organic bananas worldwide. There are around 1,800 registered banana producers (including small, medium and large-scale producers), 66 percent of whom cultivate no more than 3 hectares.⁴² The sector is estimated to provide work to more than 51,000 people annually, around 66 percent of whom are of Haitian nationality.⁴³

India is the world’s second biggest producer of seed cotton, with nearly 12m hectares cultivated in 2012-13.⁴⁴ Cotton lint is the highest value agricultural export, earning nearly US\$ 3.4bn in 2011.⁴⁵ There are around 4m cotton farmers and an estimated 46m people employed in sectors related to cotton production and processing.⁴⁶

Kenya was the third biggest producer of tea globally in 2011, earning the country more foreign exchange than any other sector at over US\$ 858m.⁴⁷ There are more than half a million registered small-scale tea producers, with more than 3m Kenyans estimated to be employed directly or indirectly by the tea industry.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, producers in all three sectors are confronted with considerable challenges. Banana farmers in the Dominican Republic face stiff competition from countries with lower costs of production, due to the gradual elimination of preferential treatment for banana imports from African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to the European Union. In India, cotton is known as the crop which has the largest concentration of farmer suicides, with a range of causes cited including fluctuating prices, unsustainable debt and crop failure due to drought. With GM cotton dominating production in India, organic farmers face additional challenges from contamination and a rapidly shrinking choice of seeds in the market. Tea from Kenya is recognised for its high quality and typically fetches premium prices in international markets, but increased production combined with a drop in demand from some buying countries is putting downwards pressure on prices. This, along with competition from plantation-grown tea, is having a negative effect on the income of smallholder tea producers, although arguably the greatest impact is on the casual wage labourers they employ, the majority of whom are women.

2.2 Fairtrade and the case study countries and sectors

The case study countries and sectors are important for Fairtrade:⁴⁹

- Kenya has the highest number of Fairtrade certified farmers (261,200 farmers).
- The Dominican Republic reports the fourth highest income from Fairtrade sales, after Peru, Colombia and Honduras.
- Bananas, tea and cotton are three significant Fairtrade products in terms of sales income to producers.
- Combined, the three products represent 24 percent of the total Fairtrade Premium paid to farmers and workers in 2012-13, equivalent to €22.2m.

However, both cotton and tea producers are struggling to increase their Fairtrade sales, with only 33 percent of Fairtrade cotton production and 8 percent of Fairtrade tea production being sold on Fairtrade terms in 2012-13. Global sales of Fairtrade cotton have also experienced steep decline in recent years due to supply chain complexities and price pressures. Banana producers are faring much better, selling 62 percent of their total production as Fairtrade in 2012-13, a higher percentage than all other Fairtrade products.

Fairtrade International data indicates that the percentage of members of Fairtrade certified SPOs who are women varies considerably depending on the geographical region and product.⁵⁰ The proportion of women is lowest in the Asia and Oceania region, at only 12 percent, compared to 24 percent in Africa and the Middle East, and 20 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean. For the case study products the percentage of women is highest for tea, at 32 percent, and relatively low for both bananas and cotton at 14 percent and 16 percent respectively.

BOX 1: WHAT DO THE FAIRTRADE STANDARDS SAY ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY?

Fairtrade International's Generic Standards for Small Producer Organisations⁵¹ stipulate that SPOs and their members must not discriminate on the basis of gender in relation to membership, recruitment, promotion, access to training, remuneration, allocation of work, termination of employment, retirement or other activities. Within three years of certification SPOs are required to identify disadvantaged or minority groups within their organisations, and by six years should develop programmes to improve the social and economic position of these groups. In doing so, they are encouraged to give special attention to the participation of female members.

3/ FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

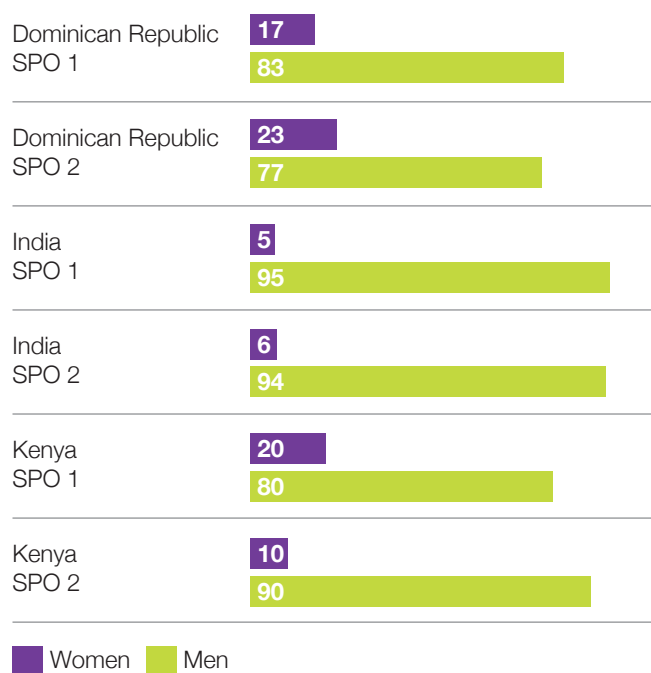
3.1 Overview of women's participation in Fairtrade certified SPOs

Women form a minority of the membership, leadership and professional staff for all six case study SPOs (see figures 1-3). This is most extreme in India, where only 5 to 6 percent of the SPOs' members are women and there is only one woman board member between the two organisations. There are also very few women among SPOs' staff in India, one organisation having none and the other only three out of 52 employees in total.

In the two case study organisations in the Dominican Republic women's membership levels are higher (17 percent and 23 percent), but only around half of women members are managing their farms themselves. There are no women board members but both have one woman in the Disciplinary Committee, an elected body with an oversight role. Women are also a minority of SPO employees and mostly located in finance and administration, although the general manager of one SPO is a woman.

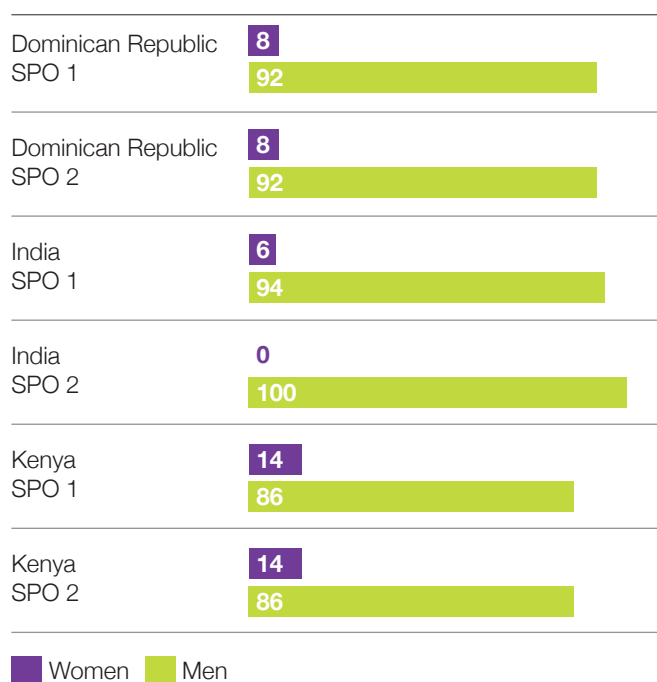
In Kenya women make up approximately 10 percent of registered tea producers in each region, and 20 percent of shareholders in one of the case study organisations.⁵² The number of women registering as tea producers is reportedly increasing, with 343 of 603 new members being women for one of the organisations. However, again there is only one woman board member in each organisation. In terms of skilled staff, women are employed in substantial numbers in administrative roles and at lower and mid-levels of management, but men dominate technical positions and senior management, with only one female senior manager in each SPO.

Figure 1: Percentage of members that are women/men in case study SPOs



NOT BEING A MEMBER, LEADER OR EMPLOYEE DOES NOT NECESSARILY EXCLUDE WOMEN FROM PARTICIPATING IN PRODUCER ORGANISATION ACTIVITIES OR BENEFITING FROM THE SERVICES THEY PROVIDE.

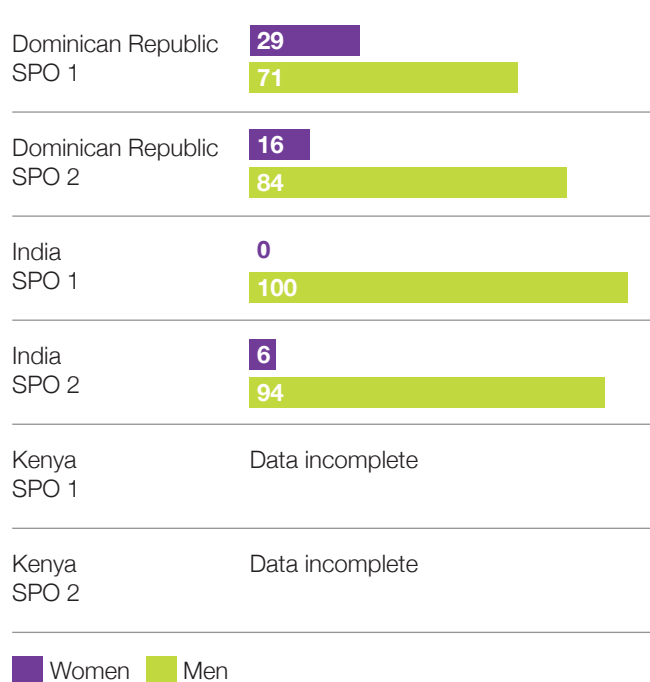
Figure 2: Percentage of leaders⁵³ that are women/men in case study SPOs



It is important to recognise that not being a member, leader or employee does not necessarily exclude women from participating in producer organisation activities or benefiting from the services they provide. This is particularly true when organisations provide a holistic service to farming communities which goes beyond supporting the production and trade of the core product. Involvement in Fairtrade often enhances such an approach, through use of Fairtrade Premium funds for social and community development. The Fairtrade Standards and support systems also establish a framework for organisational development, which goes beyond Premium investments.⁵⁵

The extent to which the case study SPOs provide additional services and benefits varies, but in all countries at least some non-commercial services are being provided to members' households and communities and sometimes these benefit women in particular. For example, in both Kenya and India

Figure 3: Percentage of professional staff that are women/men in case study SPOs⁵⁴



case study SPOs are supporting women to develop new income generating activities.⁵⁶ Scholarships for children's education are another common benefit across all three countries, in some cases targeting girls or the children of single mothers in particular. One of the SPOs in Kenya has used the Fairtrade Premium to build water tanks and improve school and health service infrastructure in tea producer communities, including two maternity wards. Female relatives of male members in India and the Dominican Republic also talked about improvements in household income due, for example, to access to lower cost inputs and higher prices. Some also mentioned decreased tension within the household as a knock-on effect. Going beyond the numbers to take a wider perspective on women's participation, it is clear that there are many ways in which women may be benefiting from the case study SPOs, even when they are not themselves members.

Having said that, it is also clear that there are many barriers to more active participation by women, some of which constitute gender biases which are embedded within organisational structures and processes. This becomes evident when the contribution of women's labour to production is considered, particularly in the cases of Kenya tea and India cotton (see box 2). Proportionate to the amount of time they spend working on family farms, women are under-represented at all levels of the case study SPOs in Kenya and India. In the Dominican Republic women generally devote less time than men to banana production, and relatively speaking are better represented in the membership of the case study SPOs, but they remain on the margins at the leadership level. The barriers to women's participation in each country are discussed below, first in relation to membership, then leadership and finally as employees.

BOX 2: WOMEN IN FAIRTRADE PRODUCTION

Women are heavily involved in the production of Fairtrade tea in Kenya and Fairtrade cotton in India, but less so in Fairtrade banana production in the Dominican Republic. This reflects broader trends in agriculture in the case study countries (see section 2.2). For both tea and cotton there is a marked division of labour, with women typically engaged in labour intensive work such as weeding and harvesting, while men are more likely to undertake heavier work and tasks which involve the use of tools (eg ploughs and spraying equipment). Because of the gendered separation of tasks, women and men contribute different amounts of labour at different points in the crop cycle, but in general women put in more days than men because of the nature of their work. For example, in one village in India women worked 50 days per acre per season of cotton cultivation, compared to 15 days worked by men. In Kenya female family members are estimated to provide around 70 percent of labour on smallholder tea farms, as they are engaged in plucking tea year round.

In contrast, banana farming in the Dominican Republic is a male-dominated activity. Women members of SPOs who manage farms themselves (around half of women members) mostly supervise waged workers, although some do get directly involved in cultivation activities. Female relatives of male members may work on processing days, and also often cook for waged workers and do the bookkeeping.

3.2 Barriers to increased women's participation as members of SPOs

Across the case studies there is a high degree of coherence in the factors which can limit women's membership in Fairtrade certified SPOs, although there is variation in how they are manifested. The main factors can be grouped under the following headings:

- Membership rules and norms
- Sociocultural norms and practices
- Time poverty and competing demands on women's labour
- Lack of incentives or awareness of potential benefits
- Lack of gender sensitivity and capacity in SPOs
- Limited external facilitation and support.

3.2.1 Membership rules and norms

Producer organisation membership rules are a barrier to women's participation in the Dominican Republic and Kenya, while in India the limitation relates more to how members have been recruited in practice.

In the Dominican Republic the main requirement for membership is a plot of land, either owned or rented, registered in the person's name (known as a *código*). It is possible for land to be registered in the name of both husband and wife, and under law, land acquired within marriage is co-owned, but it is not common for both husband and wife to be members of SPOs on one *código*.⁵⁷ New plots are sometimes bought or rented in the names of wives of male members, leading the wives to become members in their own right, but husbands often manage the farms on behalf of the family. Historically there has been a gender bias in land ownership, with men more likely to inherit land or acquire land through agrarian reform than women. Although legally they have equal rights, in practice women are less likely to pursue opportunities to acquire land (see box 3). Women may also have greater difficulty than men accessing capital to buy or rent land, or to cover the high start-up costs of banana production, either for lack of a guarantee or collateral required by banks, or for lack of social networks.

Becoming a member of the SPOs in Kenya requires ownership of at least 500 tea bushes. In both regions studied, land and commercial crops are traditionally owned by men, although wives may be allocated a portion of land or crops to manage independently. There is reportedly a trend towards women being given tea bushes by their husbands in order to access the benefits of being registered tea producers and to enable them to meet their economic needs.⁵⁸ But many women, including daughters, still do not have their own tea bushes and are therefore unable to register as tea producers, in spite of contributing significantly to the production of tea owned by husbands and other male relatives.⁵⁹

BOX 3: WOMEN'S OWNERSHIP OF LAND AND OTHER ASSETS

It is widely accepted that women own less land than men globally, although the precise breakdown is hard to come by.⁶⁰ Many countries have introduced legislation aimed at increasing women's access to land and other assets, particularly through reform of inheritance and property ownership laws. All three case study countries now bestow equal rights to married women and men, and to sons and daughters, under statutory law.⁶¹ However, customary law and tradition frequently prevail, continuing the bias in favour of men.

In the case study research most instances of women's land ownership were related to widowhood or the absence of brothers, or to opportunism (eg to overcome land ceiling laws or to increase a household's access to services and other benefits). There was little evidence of women acquiring land through intention and strategic interest. In Kenya and India some women expressed reluctance to insist on their right to own land or crops, for fear of creating tension in their households. Marriage customs in India also effectively encourage parents to give land to sons rather than daughters, to ensure they are cared for in old age. In the Dominican Republic farming is largely perceived as an activity most suited to men, and many women do not take up opportunities to own land when they arise.

In the case of Indian cotton, low membership of women is also linked to their lack of land ownership, but not because this is a requirement of membership. Instead it relates to the genesis of the SPOs with support from the second tier organisation. Specifically, the second tier organisation promotes organic production for improving the livelihoods of farmers, and organic certification norms require land ownership details to be recorded. This has inadvertently created a bias towards farmers who own land and thereby excluded women as well as sharecroppers and tenant farmers. However, in some instances SPO staff reinterpreted certification norms to recognise land 'operated' rather than 'owned', allowing more women to become members, demonstrating the potential for a more inclusive approach. Similarly, SPO representatives in the Dominican Republic felt it would be relatively straightforward to change their statutes to allow 'family membership' as a way to enhance women's participation.

3.2.2 Sociocultural norms and practices

Many gender inequalities are embedded in local sociocultural systems, incorporating all the formal and informal rules, values, perceptions, customs and traditions which influence the behaviour of men and women on a day-to-day basis. Gender-based norms and practices often constrain women to a subordinate position at all levels of society, from the household through to national institutions. Examples from the case studies of sociocultural norms and practices which act as barriers to women's participation in Fairtrade certified SPOs include:

- Some people in the Dominican Republic think women, or their husbands, will be viewed negatively if they get involved in banana farming as it is not always considered an appropriate activity for women. Others (including women themselves) do not believe women are capable of performing certain tasks (see box 4).
- In Odisha, India, women in the case study villages rarely undertake activities outside their village by themselves. Their lack of mobility is mainly related to negative characterisation of women who do so, although it is also linked to a lack of transport facilities which women can use independently.⁶²
- Men interviewed in Kenya responded negatively to a suggestion they assist their wives with domestic chores, such as fetching water or collecting firewood, saying it was against the culture of their communities and that women should not abdicate their responsibilities.

Across the three case studies, a strong culture of men as the household heads and primary decision-makers emerged. At the same time, attitudes and behaviours are changing, particularly among younger generations who are receiving more education than their parents and are more exposed to life outside their communities. Examples of men being reluctant for wives to participate in mixed-sex meetings, or of women afraid to speak out, were the exception rather than the norm. However, one area that is still very resistant to change is the household division of labour as explored below.

BOX 4: PERCEPTIONS LIMITING WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC BANANA SECTOR

'It's hard for women to go up ladders, there's a risk of them falling.'

Male producer organisation member

'I helped with putting labels on the bananas, but not with the rest, I was scared of cutting myself [when using a knife to divide bananas into clusters].'

Adult daughter of male producer organisation member



Cotton pickers, Chetna Organic co-operative, India.

3.2.3 Time poverty and competing demands on women's labour

In all three countries women have primary responsibility for unpaid care work (ie domestic chores and caring for children and dependent adults) which increases their total work hours and acts as a constraint on their availability to participate actively in producer organisations. Comparisons of an average day for men and for women in each case study location indicated that women generally start working earlier in the day than men and have fewer hours of leisure time (see box 5 for an example from Kenya).

There is however considerable variation depending on factors such as a woman's marital status and position in the household, their degree of involvement in productive work, and access to labour saving technology such as food processing equipment, fuel-efficient stoves and piped water into houses. For example, in the Dominican Republic women without children, or married women who are not involved in banana farming or other paid work, may work fewer hours in the day than men. In India women in Odisha work more than women in Maharashtra as they spend more time processing fresh food and make less use of machines in farming. Older women who have the support of daughters-in-law typically have more leisurely days, while younger women and those from lower castes and classes tend to be very time poor.

BOX 5: A TYPICAL DAY FOR WOMEN TEA FARMERS IN KENYA

Women get up as early as 4.30am to milk animals, make breakfast, prepare children for school, clean the house and fetch water, before heading to the fields with their husbands. Work in the fields ends around 1pm, with any harvested tea then taken to the buying centre by both men and women, or women alone. In the afternoons and evenings women continue with unpaid care work – preparing food, working in kitchen gardens, tending animals, collecting firewood, caring for children – while men spend more time socialising with friends and relaxing. Women reported that they go to sleep as late as 11.30pm.

In India and the Dominican Republic it was noted that although the gender division of labour is quite rigid, adjustments *are* made when necessary and deemed worthwhile. For example, if a woman in India wants to attend a producer organisation meeting, she may get up even earlier to complete household chores first, her husband may take over her responsibilities for the day, or she may ask a female relative or neighbour to help out. Which happens depends on the individual household and it is not possible to generalise, but this again demonstrates that barriers to women's participation are not insurmountable.



WOMEN AND MEN MAY SEEK WAYS TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IF THE BENEFITS OF DOING SO OUTWEIGH THE COSTS.

3.2.4 Lack of incentives or awareness of potential benefits

As stated previously, women and men may seek ways to overcome the barriers to women's participation if the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. As we have seen, women's membership is often driven by opportunism (ie to access benefits), but typically on the part of husbands or families rather than women acting independently. Possible costs for women from pursuing more active participation include an increased workload and tension within households. For women to deem such costs acceptable, first there needs to be clear incentives, and second, women need to be aware of them. The lack of incentives and/or awareness of them emerged strongly as a barrier in the Dominican Republic, but was raised in Kenya and India as well.

In the Dominican Republic, both men and women farmers were adamant that there are many benefits from women being more involved in SPOs, as set out in section 3.5. They think most women are not aware of these benefits, and if they were, they would be more inclined to seek ways to get involved. However, they also said SPOs could do more to incentivise women by targeting their specific needs and responding to their interests. Ideas included: training on business management and bookkeeping as well as livelihood activities other than banana farming; facilitation of loans for women to buy or rent land; and investing in childcare facilities. It was suggested that the Fairtrade Premium could be used to fund at least some of these activities.

Supporting the development of alternative income streams was also popular with women in Kenya and India. In Kenya, women suggested dairy farming, poultry farming, vegetable and fruit cultivation, and beekeeping as possible options. Women in India also prioritised labour saving technology such as mills for de-husking lentils and piped water into houses.

3.2.5 Lack of gender sensitivity and capacity in SPOs

Willingness to take part in this study is an indication of the openness and interest within all six SPOs to address gender inequality and the barriers to women's participation, and some have already initiated work in this area. In Kenya, for instance, efforts are being made to recruit more women staff and board members, and to provide targeted support to women in tea producing communities. In India frontline staff from the SPOs and umbrella body began reaching out to women a few years ago, mainly responding to requests to support women's self-help groups (eg facilitating micro-level credit and savings schemes), and now have time specifically allocated for this purpose.

More significantly, one of the Kenyan case study organisations was in the process of developing a gender policy at the time of the research, with support from an NGO and Fairtrade Africa. But none of the other five SPOs have carried out a gender analysis or developed a strategic plan to address gender issues in a systematic way. In part this is due to a lack of capacity and skills within most organisations, but it is also linked to the absence, or weakness, of internal and external pressure to do so (see section 3.2.6).

The lack of gender sensitivity and capacity in SPOs means they are implicitly or explicitly creating barriers to women's participation. This is manifested in the rules and norms for membership and leadership (see sections 3.2.1 and 3.3.1), and in the way services are provided. For example, women's time poverty and lack of mobility (for sociocultural or practical reasons) were cited in all three countries as barriers to participation. It is possible to arrange meetings and other activities to fit better with women's work schedules and location preferences, but this is not currently taken into consideration. In each case study women said they attend meetings held at the local level and are often active in community-based groups. In Kenya and India women are particularly active in women-only groups, with Kenyan women specifically requesting that activities be arranged through these groups rather than through the buying centres which they have little connection with.⁶³

3.2.6 Limited external facilitation and support

External actors can have a strong influence on producer organisation policies and practices, including industry bodies, governments, buyers, certification schemes such as Fairtrade, and development agencies (including NGOs). For the most part these actors have to date placed few requirements on SPOs to implement gender policies and strategies or provided support for them to do so. Having said that, there is some evidence that this is changing, as illustrated by the examples in box 6.

There were widespread calls from SPOs and their members for more systematic support on gender. This includes building capacity at all levels, sensitising men on women's rights, assistance to develop gender action plans, and funding to implement gender-related activities. Unsurprisingly the preference was for carrots rather than sticks, with little appetite for stricter certification standards or buyer requirements without concomitant support to make improvements.

BOX 6: EXAMPLES OF EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR SPOs ON GENDER

In Kenya there is growing recognition of the need to address gender inequality in the tea industry. This is in the context of the new 2010 constitution which strengthened women's rights and requires that women are fairly represented in all bodies, as well as media coverage of a failure to recognise women's contribution to tea production and their lack of representation in tea industry bodies. The Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA), the leading management agency for small-scale tea producers, has responded with a gender mainstreaming policy which it is rolling out to all associated tea factories, including one of the case study organisations. Meanwhile, the second Kenyan organisation (not linked to KTDA) has recently become involved in two projects with a gender focus, one initiated by Fairtrade Africa and the other by a Fairtrade buyer.

The second tier SPO in India has received funds from the government under the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana project (Scheme for the Empowerment of Women Farmers), which it is using to set up an all-women producer organisation in Odisha.

In the Dominican Republic a three-year programme (2010-2013) to strengthen the banana sector, involving various government and UN agencies, included various gender-related activities. This was mainly at a sector level, developing local coordinating bodies and providing training on workers' rights, rather than tailored support for SPOs. The local Fairtrade Liaison Officer includes gender-related topics as part of training on Fairtrade Standards, which has helped raise awareness within SPOs.

3.3 Barriers to increased women's participation in leadership of SPOs

While women's participation as members is low, their presence at the highest levels of leadership is almost non-existent, with only three women board members across the six case study SPOs. They are somewhat more present in lower level bodies, such as Buying Centre Committees in Kenya, and Disciplinary and Vigilance Committees in the Dominican Republic, but still in a significant minority. The only bodies with a more equal balance between men and women are the Fairtrade Premium Committees in the Kenyan SPOs, with seven men and five women in one, and six men and four women in the other.

Again there is substantial commonality across countries in the reasons behind this, which fall under similar themes as the barriers to membership:

- Leadership structures, rules and norms
- Sociocultural norms and practices
- Time poverty and lack of mobility
- Lack of experience and confidence
- Lack of incentives or awareness of potential benefits

3.3.1 Leadership structures, rules and norms

The fact that leaders are drawn from the membership of SPOs already creates a bias in favour of men, given they are far more likely to be members. But in Kenya and India there are additional rules or norms of leadership structures which mitigate against women becoming leaders.

In one of the SPOs in Kenya, a minimum threshold of tea is required to be elected to a Buying Centre Committee or the Board of Directors: 1,000kg of leaf per year for Buying Centre Committees and 3,000kg of leaf per year for the board. It is estimated that over 80 percent of the women who are registered as tea producers do not meet even the lower threshold, with their average production ranging from 650kg to 850kg per year.⁶⁴ Those who have more tea are in most cases older and widowed women who are not interested in becoming leaders, or lack sufficient education.

In India each village with members is asked to send one representative to sit on the board of the SPOs. Invariably it is men who are selected, because they dominate the membership and for additional reasons discussed below. Community members said it would have been better to organise the structure of both membership and leadership differently from the start, with specific requirements to include women.

BOX 7: RAISING THE BAR FOR WOMEN BOARD MEMBERS IN KENYA

As part of KTDA's efforts to mainstream gender, it introduced a requirement that associated tea factories have at least one woman as a member of their boards. However, it also included a minimum requirement that interested women should be educated to diploma level, while the minimum qualification for other elected board members is an O-level certificate. This was criticised by women farmers as discriminatory, and also impractical as women with diplomas are usually in full-time employment and do not have time to dedicate to leadership roles.

3.3.2 Sociocultural norms and practices

In India and Kenya women's participation as leaders is also limited by perceptions about their suitability for the role, and norms of male leadership. For example, in India it was felt that having male leaders leads to 'immediate decision-making', whereas women are less able to make decisions quickly as they are required to take their husbands' views into account, as well as being less available for emergency meetings. Given that women travelling alone outside the village is frowned upon, it is also difficult for women to attend meetings in the first place. Furthermore, in both India and Kenya women are not always as trusted as men to do a good job, and involving them is seen by some as a risk. In Kenya there is the added complication that elections to leadership positions are highly competitive and candidates need to mount an aggressive campaign to garner support. This is culturally more difficult for women than men.

In the Dominican Republic most people agreed it would be good to have women on the board of SPOs, not only so they are involved in key decisions, but also to benefit from their personal skills and education (see box 8). Some feel it is more difficult for women to get elected as men tend to vote for men. Others think that so long as people have the right characteristics they can be selected; important characteristics include being responsible and honest, which women are perceived as more likely to be than men. Similar views about women's character were also expressed in Kenya and India, with the perception that having women on boards would result in improved governance and less likelihood of corruption. However, such views are open to question, with some evidence suggesting that lower incidences of corruption involving women has more to do with their lack of opportunities than their intrinsic character.⁶⁵

3.3.3 Time poverty and lack of mobility

Women's involvement in leadership is constrained in all three countries by their time poverty and lack of mobility as it is hard for them to find time for meetings or to spend time away from home (see box 8). As discussed earlier, this is exacerbated by a lack of gender sensitivity in planning meetings, as they are actively participating in group activities which are community-based. But it is the division of labour in households which is at the root of the problem, which is itself rooted in sociocultural norms and practices which can be difficult for both men and women to break free from. As such it is typically only women who have the support of their husbands or other relatives who are able to take on leadership roles, or women with fewer caring responsibilities (eg older widowed women). This is illustrated by the case of the sole woman board member in India, whose husband takes her to every meeting on the back of his bicycle (see overleaf).

BOX 8: VIEWS REGARDING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

'Women make good leaders, there are a lot of women with education and examples of women in rural organisations. The problem is they don't have time if they have children to look after. And some are fearful and so limit themselves.'

Male producer organisation member

'It would be good to have women on the board. Women say how things are, they will speak out if things are not right. Men cannot criticise [their peers] so easily.'

Male producer organisation member

'I was a member of the board but I left because I had too much other work in the home.'

Female ex-board member

'I was proposed as a board member but I didn't want to do it. I've got too much to do already, and I don't want to travel home late at night [for security reasons].'

Female producer organisation member

EXTRACT FROM THE PERSONAL STORY OF KAMLA DEVI RANA, SPO BOARD MEMBER, ODISHA, INDIA



Kamla Devi Rana, 41, is the only woman on the Board of Directors of her co-operative. She says her husband, Kismat Rana, has been the real support behind her work in the co-operative. Unlike most other men in his village, he takes Kamla on his bicycle as a pillion rider to Kutrabahal where the co-operative board meetings

take place. Thanks to his support, she has never failed to attend a meeting. She feels that being a part of the co-operative has been very useful since farmers in the village have learnt new agricultural practices which are sustainable. As far as women farmers are concerned, she believes that joining a producer organisation and taking advantage of opportunities to go out into the world, to take on new roles, is in itself empowering. 'There is so much to learn and we need to seize opportunities for the same', she says.

EXTRACT FROM THE PERSONAL STORY OF ROXANNA WANDA PEREZ ANDELIZ, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



Roxanna is a 38-year-old single mother. When her father died in 2007 her mother had to sell their land to pay off debts, but Roxanna took over running the family's banana farm on 5 hectares of rented land. She didn't know anything about banana farming and had to borrow money to cover costs, but with the

help of technical advisors from her organisation and an exporter, she increased production to eight or nine pallets of bananas a week. In 2012 she was elected onto her SPO's Disciplinary Committee, first as Secretary and then as Coordinator. She has also been elected Coordinator of the Dominican Republic's arm of CLAC (the fair trade producer network for Latin America and the Caribbean). Through this she has had opportunities to meet and learn from producers from elsewhere in the Dominican Republic and from other countries. Roxanna believes that it's important for women be to active members of producer organisations and to be involved in decision-making at all levels. To achieve this, she thinks it's important to reach out to women and motivate them, and also to form a women's directorate within organisations with representatives on the board.

3.3.4 Lack of experience and confidence

Given that women have historically been excluded from leadership, it is not surprising that in India and Kenya people were of the view they do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to be leaders.⁶⁶ Their lack of experience also affects women's confidence in their own ability to take on positions of responsibility. However, in all case study locations there are women who have succeeded as leaders in other types of organisation, as well as those who have bucked the trend in SPOs. These inspirational women can act as role models for others, and with targeted support (such as leadership training and opportunities to exchange experiences with women in other organisations), more women will gain the skills and confidence to demonstrate that they are just as capable leaders as men.

3.3.5 Lack of incentives or awareness of potential benefits

There were several accounts in India and the Dominican Republic of women being offered leadership positions but not being willing to take them up. Again this relates to the absence of clear incentives to compensate for likely costs, but also reflects a lack of consciousness and political awareness among many women. However, there were also some women who were vocal about the need for women to participate at the highest levels of decision-making in SPOs, and the importance of making women more aware of this. As one woman put it:

“WOMEN NEED TO BE SUPPORTED TO BE PART OF THE BOARD, TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE. WE SHOULD TEACH WOMEN MORE ABOUT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES AND THE ROLE OF THE BOARD. YOU CAN'T ASPIRE TO SOMETHING IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS.”

Female producer
organisation member, Dominican Republic

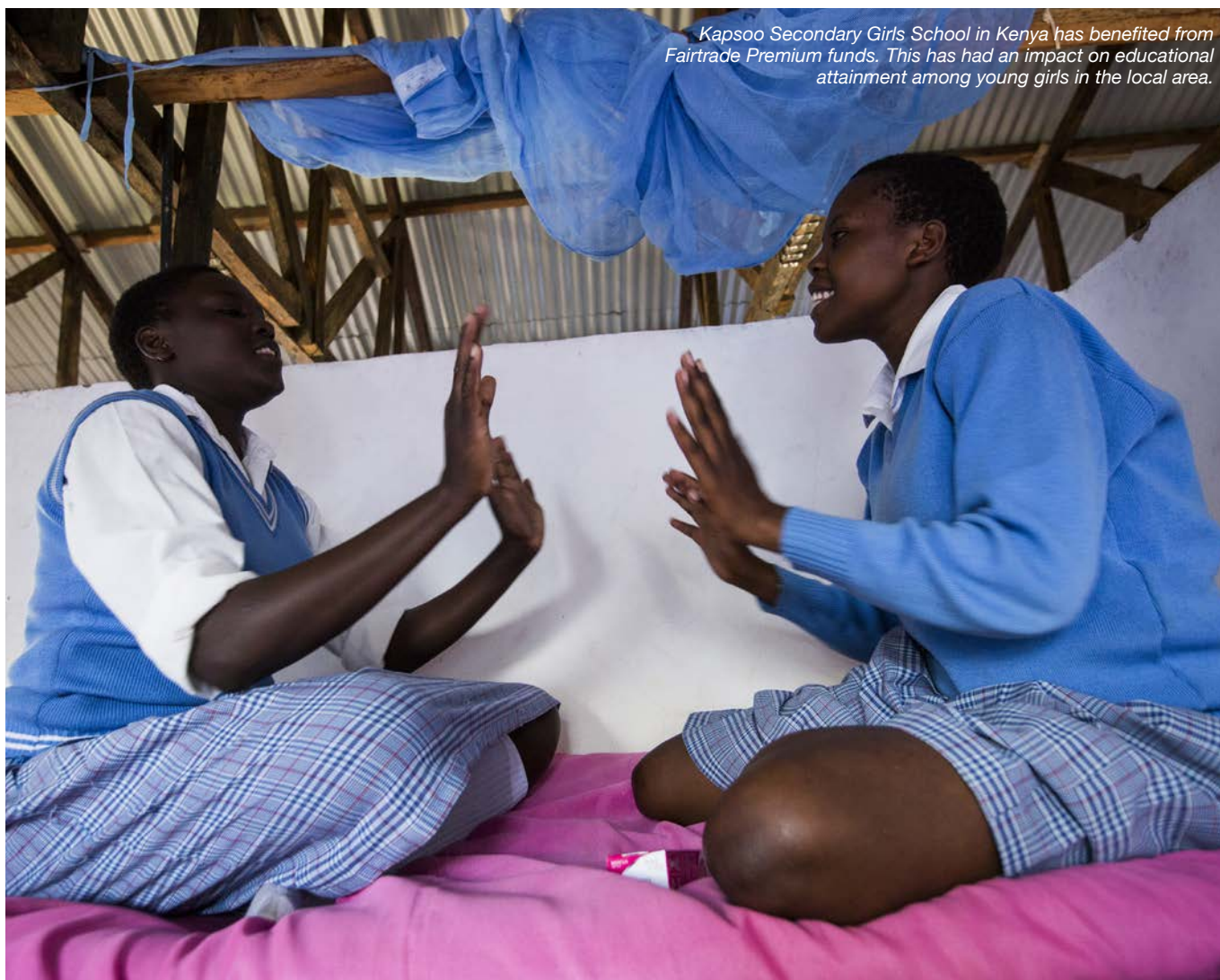
3.4 Barriers to women's participation as employees of SPOs

Although waged labour was not a focus, the study did look at the numbers of women employed by the SPOs in skilled positions, such as technical assistance, administration and finance, and management. While few women are employed in these positions by the case study SPOs in India, in the Dominican Republic and Kenya they form a significant part of the staff. However, gender segregation of roles is apparent, with women more likely to work in administration and finance, and men more likely to work in technical departments and other areas of work which require going out to the field. Senior management is dominated by men across all case study SPOs, although there are some women present at this level in Kenya and the Dominican Republic, and in the second tier SPO in India.

Gender-based segregation in the workplace is a reflection of sociocultural norms around men's and women's roles in society, although it should be noted that these norms are constantly evolving. This was neatly summed up by a female technical assistant in the Dominican Republic who had studied at agricultural college and successfully completed six months of field experience:

'My manager decided that I should do administrative work in the office, because he considered it too dangerous for me to travel to the field and to go by motorbike... Yes, I do think it's possible for me to do these things, women can do everything that men can do.'

To encourage more women to participate in SPOs, it is considered important to have women working both at senior levels and directly with farmers and communities. But finding women to undertake frontline roles is often challenging, especially in contexts such as India where women's mobility is limited by sociocultural norms. Such women may require the support of relatives (husbands and parents, for example) to take on the role, and must be willing to do so in spite of the challenges. Women must also have the necessary technical education, and be available to travel (which can be problematic for those with childcare responsibilities). Where there are relatively few women with these characteristics, and they are in high demand, the salaries that they command in labour markets may be higher than what male employees expect and get.⁶⁷ This has cost implications for the SPOs. As it is often younger women who have the requisite skills, there may also be costs associated with providing maternity benefits. These are additional barriers to women's participation which need to be overcome.



Kapsoo Secondary Girls School in Kenya has benefited from Fairtrade Premium funds. This has had an impact on educational attainment among young girls in the local area.

Table 3: Potential benefits from increased participation of women

Practical benefits of women's involvement in membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater access for women to the benefits of membership (eg training, financial assistance, free/subsidised medical insurance). • Increased productivity of farms and contribution to household and national economies. • Source of employment and income for single mothers and daughters. • Increased investments in children as a result of increasing women's income.
Strategic benefits of women's involvement in membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of women's economic security and independence, particularly in the event of illness/death of spouse, or separation/divorce from spouse. • Improved knowledge and skills among women, which enhances their self-esteem and gains them respect. • Increased transparency around household income, with women having better knowledge of prices. • Improved collaboration and reduced tension within households and communities. • Increased rights and influence for women (ie the right to participate in decision-making).
Practical benefits of women's participation in leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater likelihood of SPO services and activities adapted to women's practical needs.
Strategic benefits of women's participation in leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved leadership and governance of producer organisations, including more accountability and less corruption. • More inclusive and therefore better decision-making, taking everyone's needs into account. • Greater opportunities for support from external actors with interest in gender equality (governments, buyers, development agencies). • Setting an example of joint decision-making involving men and women will have a positive influence on practices in households and communities, and on future generations.

3.5 Reasons why barriers to women's participation should be addressed

During the case study research a range of reasons for increasing women's participation in SPOs were given. These include practical benefits as well as benefits which advance women's strategic interests, as summarised in table 3 and box 9.

However, as previously mentioned, there are also some potential costs associated with increasing women's involvement. The most obvious is an increased number of hours of work. Although women may be willing to take this on if there are sufficient gains to be had, there may nevertheless be significant negative impacts on them, in terms of their physical and mental health, as well as on others who take over their care work – typically daughters and other female relatives. Finding ways to reduce women's workload, such as through

labour saving technology, and to redistribute it fairly (ie without overburdening others), is therefore paramount.

Another potential risk mentioned in Kenya and the Dominican Republic is that insisting on women's separate ownership of crops might create tension in households. This underlines the importance of engaging with men right from the outset of efforts to tackle gender inequality, sensitising them to the issues and women's rights, and bringing them on board with changes being made. This may take considerable time and effort, but it will pay dividends in terms of ensuring sustainable improvements. Another option is to focus on alternative income generation schemes for women, which is a popular idea in all three countries. The downside of relying exclusively on such an approach is that it fails to address the fact that women are often still required to do unpaid work on their husbands crops, and may perpetuate the 'invisibility' of their contribution to production.

An issue raised in the Dominican Republic, where women typically are not very involved in banana production, is that their choices need to be respected. Some women devote most of their time to caring for children and other dependents, and the value of this work must be recognised. Others are more interested in alternative types of paid work. Many men interviewed for the study were keen to increase women's participation for practical and opportunistic reasons, rather than to advance women's strategic interests. In Kenya women also voiced concerns that if they earn more income through having their own tea bushes, their husbands might contribute less to the household budget. Care must therefore be taken to ensure women do not come under pressure to participate more actively in SPOs, against their own interests.

A potential cost mentioned in Kenya is the risk of a negative impact on food security, if enabling women's participation means devoting more land to tea rather than food crops (which women typically dedicate time to). However, the likelihood of this needs to be evaluated, as there are complex dynamics involved.⁶⁸

Finally, in India some SPO representatives raised concerns about impacts related to hiring more women field staff and including more women in the leadership. On the one hand this is about costs, and on the other it is about fears that the work put in so far might be undermined if women without experience get involved. This points to a need to mitigate any negative impacts, for example through external subsidisation of women's salaries (or use of the Fairtrade Premium to this end), and targeted training for new women leaders.

BOX 9: VIEWS ON WHY WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION SHOULD BE FACILITATED

'It's important to be an active member of the association because it gives women the right to vote, to participate in decision-making, the right to receive benefits and to live with dignity. It gives women the right to say 'It's MY organisation', not an organisation belonging to a small group, but everyone's with the right to say what is good and what is bad.'

Female producer organisation member,
Dominican Republic

'Women are more disciplined and organised and will run these institutions better, as per plans, whereas men fight amongst themselves and let egos come in the way.'

Male producer organisation board member, India

'More women should participate so they can earn their own money... There are a lot of single mothers so it's important for them. Women shouldn't be [economically] dependent on men, because a lot of women get married and depend on their husbands but then they get abused and can't leave.'

Female producer organisation member,
Dominican Republic

'Because women also have equal rights and we need to ensure these are implemented.'

Male producer organisation member, India

4/ CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Enhancing women's participation in SPOs

The case study research provides a **clear rationale for taking action** to enhance women's participation in SPOs, whether Fairtrade certified or not. There is a range of practical and strategic benefits associated with increased involvement of women as members, leaders and employees of SPOs. While there are also some risks, these can be managed through careful design of the process by which women are enabled to get more involved.

Across very different contexts, **three main influences on women's participation** in SPOs emerged from the case studies:

- SPO rules, structures and practices
- Sociocultural norms and practices (particularly the gendered division of labour)
- Women's individual circumstances and choices.

Each type of influence may be positive (a driver) or negative (a barrier) for women's participation. There are complex interactions between the different types of influence, and no single factor can predict whether women participate or not. Furthermore, **these influences are linked to the wider context** in which women and SPOs are situated, including national laws and government policy, the nature of local institutions (eg justice system, religious bodies,⁶⁹ media and popular culture), and market dynamics (including sustainability standards such as Fairtrade). International conventions and institutions can also affect the context for women's participation (see figure 4).

Enhancing women's participation in SPOs requires taking all these influences into account and understanding the role of different actors in bringing about change. SPOs are central to the process and need to analyse the gender issues and barriers to women's participation in their context, and then design and implement gender policies and action plans to bring about change. But

they need support to do so, both technical and financial, as well as incentives – currently this support and incentives are largely absent.

Supply chain businesses, particularly brands and retailers, are relatively well placed to influence the rules and practices of SPOs. The same is true of Fairtrade and other such systems, through the content of standards and the support they provide to SPOs. The risk is that this is reduced to a punitive and narrow approach – requiring SPOs to reach targets for women's participation without acknowledging the complexity and risks involved. Businesses and standards systems therefore need to develop their own gender policies and action plans based on a thorough understanding of the issues.⁷⁰ To do this, they need to build internal capacity on gender and to have access to relevant information and toolkits.

Figure 4: Influences on women's participation in SPOs



Crucially, it must be recognised that there are limits to what SPOs, supply chain businesses and standards systems can achieve by themselves, particularly in terms of addressing deeply rooted sociocultural norms. Bringing about change **therefore requires partnership and collaboration at all levels.** At the local level SPOs will benefit from partnering with organisations already working on gender, including local women's organisations and networks. Nationally, collaboration between SPOs, women's organisations, government bodies and development agencies (among others) will be more effective for addressing barriers linked to the wider contextual environment, such as reforming legislation covering co-operatives or ensuring government support reaches women farmers. At a sector level, many forums for collaboration between businesses already exist and can greatly enhance their collective influence – ensuring gender issues in smallholder production are on the agenda of these initiatives should be a priority. Fairtrade and other standards systems should also work collaboratively with NGOs, donors and intergovernmental agencies (such as UN Women and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) which have strong commitments on gender, to influence policymakers and businesses to take action, as well as to implement their own programmes in support of women farmers and workers.

Inevitably, implementation of gender action plans **requires substantial resources to be invested** – by SPOs and businesses in their supply chains, by standards systems, and development agencies. For this investment to be forthcoming, the **business case for taking action needs to be articulated.** Some businesses are unlikely to act unless there is considerable consumer demand and/or high risks from not doing so, including risks to sustainability of supply or reputation. Other, values-driven businesses may be convinced by the moral and ethical grounds for action, but struggle to prioritise gender among many competing corporate responsibility and sustainability-related issues. The same is true for standards systems. There is therefore a need to develop and communicate the business case for action on gender, including how it relates to sustainability. There is also a need for engagement with businesses and standards systems to develop their understanding of the issues, alongside campaigns to create pressure on different actors to respond.⁷¹ The incorporation of appropriate gender indicators into sustainability reporting would also help drive action.

Finally, it is **imperative that all initiatives to enhance the participation of women take into account women's perspectives and choices.** They should be focused on creating opportunities for women to fulfil their potential and live their lives as they wish to, and avoid the assumption that active participation in producer organisations is the best way to do that. Bringing men on board with the process is also vital for mitigating risks and for achieving broad-based change.

4.2 Recommendations

Against the backdrop of a new wave of private sector development, making women's participation and inclusion a reality requires taking a series of complex steps together with partnership and collaboration at various levels of the supply chain. Below, we offer some suggestions on how these actors can work to sustainably improve women's participation in SPOs, including where relevant, existing examples of good practice from other Fairtrade certified SPOs and fair trade producer organisations⁷² which can be learnt from. It should be noted that while this report focused on SPOs, many recommendations are also applicable to hired labour situations.

Recommendations for supply chain businesses

1. Invest in gender analysis of supply chains to firstly establish where women are in their value chains and secondly, where barriers to women's participation exist, and the business case for addressing them. This can be done collaboratively with other businesses, or with other actors such as Fairtrade, to reduce costs and duplication.

This could include, for example, a gendered analysis of members' total work hours and work day to see where investments could be made to reduce difficult, arduous tasks, whether in production or care work, or to reduce limitations on mobility, such as by advocating for childcare services.

2. On the basis of this analysis, develop gender equality policies and action plans, and secure resources for implementation either internally or through co-funding arrangements (eg with other businesses in the supply chain or with donor funding).

3. Develop internal capacity and responsibility on gender, especially among staff involved in buying, producer support and corporate responsibility and sustainability.

- Share expertise and knowledge on gender and diversity already in the organisation (eg around company employees) to support this internal capacity building.
- Allocate overall responsibility for ensuring gender equity in supply chains to a senior manager or managers (depending on the size of the company).

4. Support SPOs to develop and implement their own gender equality action plans. Provide financial and technical support to SPOs, or facilitate access to third party support. Facilitate exchange visits and information sharing between SPO representatives (especially women) so they can learn from each other. Again, this can be done collaboratively with other businesses and third parties to reduce costs.

HELPING SPOs TO ADDRESS GENDER INEQUALITY

Various Fairtrade buyers have provided support to SPOs they trade with to implement gender-related work, including provision of technical advice, facilitation of third party support and direct financing of SPO-initiated activities. One example is Twin Trading, and its sister non-profit organisation Twin, which have for many years worked with coffee and cocoa co-operatives in Africa and Latin America to improve gender outcomes. Building on this work, Twin recently secured funding from Comic Relief to roll out the GALS methodology with co-operatives in Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Another recent innovation is the development of products which promote and reward women's involvement in Fairtrade production, such as the Grown by Women products marketed by Fairtrade brand Equal Exchange, and Café Femenino coffees developed by the US importer Organic Products Trading Company. These initiatives serve as examples of how supply chain businesses can engage constructively with SPOs on gender.⁷³

- 5. Develop appropriate indicators and processes for monitoring progress internally and explore how the business can support the UN Global Compact Women's Empowerment Principles⁷⁴ in the supply chain.** Businesses should seek support from organisations with relevant expertise to determine the most appropriate indicators to use (eg UN Women, NGOs and gender specialists).
- 6. Collaborate with other businesses, women's organisations and development agencies** to work collectively to address barriers to women's inclusion, access to wider benefits and participation in supply chains. This is particularly important for addressing barriers which exist at a national level or where businesses have limited influence over the practices of SPOs.
- 7. Seek opportunities to raise awareness of women's contribution to production,** such as through communications materials and marketing. Depending on the sector, it may be possible to market products produced by women which earn an additional Premium to be used according to the priorities of women. This will help increase awareness of the role of women in farming and create an enabling environment for gender-sensitive practices in supply chains.

Recommendations for governments in producer countries

- 1. Respond to the specific challenges that women farmers face through orienting spending and policy towards targeted programmes, including extension, finance, research and subsidy programmes.** This includes, for example, training more women to become agronomists who can deliver targeted extension training to women farmers.
- 2. Review existing policies and strategies** related to support for agriculture and agricultural producers and workers, to ensure they adequately take into account the gender issues and influences on women's participation in SPOs covered in this report.
- 3. Ensure laws and policies governing membership of co-operatives and farmer associations do not create barriers** to women's participation in SPOs. For example, co-operative laws should not require members of agricultural co-operatives to own land. Governments should also take action to reach out to rural women and inform them of their rights, including rights to land inheritance.
- 4. Allocate more land and facilitate low interest agricultural loans for women,** especially single mothers. Gender affirmative action in land reform and agriculture is called for to correct historical biases towards men.
- 5. Extend government support to farmers beyond technical land ownership.** Government support for farmers, such as loans, training and extension, tools and inputs, often only reaches farmers with land titles, which often excludes women, tenant farmers and sharecroppers. Government support should focus instead on people who spend most time on agricultural production, who are often not land owners.
- 6. Invest more resources in infrastructure and services which reduce hours required for care work.** Examples include piped water and concrete flooring in homes, gas cylinders for cooking (instead of wood-burning stoves), and village level childcare, healthcare and/or eldercare services.

Recommendations for governments, donors, intergovernmental agencies and NGOs

- 1. Develop/fund coordinated programmes involving multiple strategies** to address the barriers to women's participation in SPOs. Programmes should be based on thorough, contextualised gender analysis which identifies the most effective ways to address different types of barriers in a systematic way. This could involve a combination of working through intergovernmental forums to put pressure on national governments, influencing business agendas through campaigning on gender justice, providing co-funding to businesses and/or standards systems to implement gender strategies, and supporting women farmers to organise and connect with others in

national, regional and international platforms. Different actors can take on different roles, depending on their positioning, but coordinating action across different spheres will increase the likelihood of success.

- 2. Develop a business case for increasing women's participation** in producer organisations based on benefits such as those outlined in this report, and assessment of the risks associated with not taking action.
- 3. Ensure the UN Open Working Group-proposed Sustainable Development Goal (Goal 5) to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls is adopted, as well as gender mainstreaming across the other goals, targets and indicators.**
- 4. Ensure programme design takes into account the views and opinions of women and men farmers, and involves SPOs** as key agents of change in farming communities. This includes providing technical and financial support to producer organisations to develop and implement their own gender policies and action plans in a participatory way.

Recommendations for Fairtrade

- 1. Ensure clear and sustainable financing, complemented by third party finance, for implementation of Fairtrade International's gender strategy.** Bringing about widespread change will require significant resources to be invested over a period of time. This includes building internal capacity on gender, supporting certified SPOs to develop and implement gender action plans, and funding cross-country initiatives.
- 2. Engage the support of external partners to advise and inform implementation of the gender strategy.**
- 3. Actively seek gender disaggregated findings within Fairtrade's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning programme** and any external commissioning of impact assessment to support Fairtrade's work on gender equality.
- 4. Develop and communicate the business case for increasing women's participation** in SPOs based on benefits such as those outlined in this report, and assessment of the risks associated with not taking action. Work with business partners to identify how they might add value in their supply chains in relation to gender equity.
- 5. Support the formation of networks of women Fairtrade producers and workers** at national and regional levels. These networks will provide a platform for women to collectively agree priorities and advocate on behalf of all women producers and workers.
- 6. Build alliances with NGOs, donors and intergovernmental agencies** with a strong commitment to gender justice to identify areas where we can commonly influence the agendas of policymakers and businesses, in line with the findings of this report.

- 7. Introduce a gender bonus or annual awards** for SPOs which are systematically addressing gender issues. This would reward organisations which are spearheading work on gender justice and incentivise others to do the same. It would also facilitate sharing of good practice between Fairtrade certified SPOs (see below).
- 8. Develop knowledge sharing systems and processes** which will enable SPOs, supply chain businesses and Fairtrade staff to access relevant resources on gender and to learn from each other. This should include opportunities for face-to-face knowledge sharing which can be linked to other events in the Fairtrade system's calendar (eg AGMs of Fairtrade producer networks) to minimise costs and maximise women's participation in both events.
- 9. Ensure reviews of Fairtrade Standards include analysis through a gender lens** and invite stakeholder feedback on how gender perspectives might be strengthened.
- 10. Do more to encourage SPOs to use the Fairtrade Premium in ways which benefit women** and other disadvantaged groups. Possible actions include revising guidance materials and training to provide gendered examples, and introducing annual awards to recognise SPOs that have used the Premium in line with women's priorities.

USING THE FAIRTRADE PREMIUM TO SUPPORT WOMEN

There are many examples of the Fairtrade Premium being used in ways which benefit women (and girls). This includes the case study SPOs in Kenya and India in this report which have used Premium funds to help women develop new income earning activities. Use of the Premium to improve access to water, healthcare, childcare facilities and transport, and for communal food processing equipment (eg mills for grinding corn, maize and other staples) and household domestic goods (eg stoves, water storage and fridges) can all reduce the time women spend on unpaid care work, which frees up their time to focus on other activities such as paid work, education and training, and organisational life.⁷⁵ Positive gender impacts can also occur as unintended side effects of Fairtrade Premium investments. For example, electrification of a village in Malawi resulted in private owners installing hammer mills, which reduced the time women dedicate to getting maize milled as they previous had to walk 5 kilometres to do so.⁷⁶ If women see the Fairtrade Premium being used in ways such as these, bringing them both direct and indirect benefits, it should incentivise them to participate more actively in SPOs, particularly if they believe they will be able to influence decision-making around Premium use.

Recommendations for SPOs

- 1. Develop a gender policy and action plan.** A systematic approach needs to be taken, based on analysis of the reasons why women don't participate as much as men and including a range of actions to bring about change.⁷⁷ The policy and plan should be developed through a participatory process, involving men and women from producer communities. At minimum the policy and plan should include the elements listed below.

IMPLEMENTING GENDER POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS IN NICARAGUA

Formed in 1987, UCA SOPPEXCCA is a Fairtrade certified union of 18 co-operatives which serves around 650 farmers in Nicaragua – 32 percent are women. Its first gender policy was introduced in 2003 which mandated the formation of Gender Committees in the organisation itself and in each member co-operative, and outlined responsibilities for gender-related activities. The second gender policy was developed in 2011 through a process of reflection, analysis, discussion and negotiation across different parts of the organisation. It outlines five strategic areas for mainstreaming gender, including sensitisation at the level of primary societies, promotion of women's right to benefit economically from their productive work, and encouraging co-operative staff and members to act as role models of equal treatment in their communities. Activities include facilitating women to obtain land and capital for coffee production, supporting women's education and skills development, and marketing coffee grown by women under the Las Hermanas brand.⁷⁸

- 2. Assign an annual budget for implementation** of the gender action plan. This should be part of the organisational budget, but could be funded using the Fairtrade Premium, or the Premium could be used as seed money to attract further funding for agreed projects.
- 3. Extend government support for membership of producer organisations beyond land or crop ownership.** Wherever possible under law, producer organisation statutes or byelaws should decouple membership from land ownership, instead recognising 'operators' of land/crops. They should allow for family membership with wives automatically becoming members when their husbands join the organisation and vice versa.
- 4. Guarantee proportional representation of women on the board.** Seats should be reserved for women proportional to their contribution to production, rather than proportional to their involvement as members. A rotational system of leadership should be used for both men and women to build leadership skills and improve accountability.

- 5. Create a Women's Directorate or Gender Committee.** This will create a space for women to meet, collectively identify their priorities and promote their interests within the organisation. It will also develop women's leadership skills.

PROMOTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN GHANA

Kuapa Kokoo is a large Fairtrade certified cocoa co-operative in Ghana, representing around 1,300 village societies and more than 80,000 members. Recognising that women are heavily involved in cocoa production but were under-represented in leadership positions, Kuapa Kokoo has taken various steps to increase women's participation in decision-making. At the level of village societies, it is required that at least three of the seven elected representatives are women, and one male and one female delegate must be sent to attend the Annual Delegates Conference (the highest level of decision making in the co-operative). After implementing a leadership development programme,⁷⁹ and forming district level Gender Committees, the number of women delegates putting themselves forward as candidates for the NEC in 2014 increased by 75 percent on the previous election to 39 percent. As a result, 46 percent of Kuapa Kokoo's current NEC members, including the new President, are women.⁸⁰

- 6. Take action to employ and retain more women** at senior levels and in field-based positions. This may entail additional costs (salaries, training) that have to be planned for.
- 7. Build links with local women's organisations and networks** to learn from their experiences, gain access to gender expertise, and open up new spaces and opportunities for women to participate in the producer organisation.
- 8. Facilitate women's participation in meetings, training and decision-making.** The location and timing of meetings and other activities should be adapted to meet women's practical needs, eg hold board meetings on a rotational basis in villages where women board members live; time meetings for periods of the day/week/year when women have less work; make use of existing spaces where women meet such as self-help groups; solicit and document women's views separately from men.
- 9. Involve men in the process of building capacity and sensitisation on gender issues.** Gender training and sensitisation is needed at all levels, from senior management through to community members. This should include sensitising men to traditional roles and responsibilities and how they may be more equitably shared.

TRANSFORMING GENDER RELATIONS IN UGANDA

Bukonzo Joint Co-operative Union brings together around 5,500 coffee-growing households in the Rwenzori mountains of western Uganda. Over 83 percent of its members are women due to a policy of joint membership for married couples. Through using a GALS methodology,⁸¹ the members and leaders of Bukonzo Joint have engaged in a participatory process of analysing and addressing gender inequalities in their organisation and communities. This has involved men and women farmers committing to specific actions to overcome inequalities, such as more equitable allocation of work in their households and joint decision-making on how to use household income. They keep diaries to chart progress and report back to their community groups. At the same time co-operative staff and leaders have reflected on organisational policies and practices and taken steps to ensure women are able to participate actively in all aspects of co-operative life. To build on its success, Bukonzo Joint is now being funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and Oxfam Novib to share its experiences and the GALS methodology with co-operatives in Tanzania.⁸²

10. Explore how to alleviate the burden of other work to facilitate women's participation and inclusion (for example through a Gender Committee) and allocate a share of the Fairtrade Premium to be used according to women's priorities.

Examples include: support to develop new income generating activities; literacy and numeracy training; loans to buy land; investment in labour saving technology (including community infrastructure); and investment in childcare facilities.

11. Provide targeted training and sensitisation for women. Women should be provided with training on themes such as leadership, institutional structures and governance, business management and agricultural practices. Awareness-raising events should be held with members and non-members to increase women's understanding of the benefits of active participation.

12. Provide targeted support for single mothers, including loans, training, and employment.

WORKING FOR GENDER JUSTICE IN NICARAGUA

Some Fairtrade certified SPOs have demonstrated strong commitment and capacity in relation to the promotion of gender justice. One example is PRODECOOP (Promotora de Desarrollo Cooperativo de Las Segovias), a second tier coffee co-operative in Nicaragua which unites around 2,300 producers from 39 primary co-operatives. One of PRODECOOP's core objectives is 'to contribute to improvements in gender equality and equity and the socio-economic position of women.' In 2008 it introduced a comprehensive gender policy which mainstreamed gender across all levels and activities of the organisation. This includes a 40 percent quota for women in leadership positions, allocation of a percentage of the Fairtrade Premium for implementing the gender programme and training for field staff on working with women farmers. To create an enabling environment for change, PRODECOOP carries out awareness raising in coffee-growing communities on women's rights, including their right to participate actively in the co-operative, and encourages more equitable distribution of resources and work between men and women.⁸³

ANNEX 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Below is a summary of the research questions which guided the research.⁸⁴ Priority questions are marked with an asterisk *.

A. Division of labour in Fairtrade certified producer organisation member communities

- *A1. What is the current situation regarding women's involvement in Fairtrade production on farms owned or managed by their households?
- A2. What is the current situation regarding women's involvement in paid work on Fairtrade certified farms?
- A3. What other livelihood activities do women and men in the community engage in? To what extent does this vary between households in the community according to variables such as wealth, land ownership, sex of household head, etc?
- A4. What domestic tasks do women and men each carry out in their households? What other non-income generating work do women and men carry out? To what extent does this vary between households in the community according to variables such as wealth, land ownership, sex of household head, etc?
- A5. Who works the most hours in the household, including all forms of work?
- A6. What factors influence the livelihood activities men and women engage in, including Fairtrade production (eg profitability of activity, access to required productive resources, suitability of activity for men/women, etc)?
- *A7. [In situations where women participate less than men in Fairtrade production on household owned or managed farms, or in certain tasks] What are the reasons why women participate less in Fairtrade production than men? Which are the most important reasons?

B. Women's participation in, and benefits from, Fairtrade producer organisations

- *B1. What is the current situation regarding women's membership in the case study Fairtrade producer organisation?
- *B2. What is the current situation regarding women's leadership in the Fairtrade producer organisation?
- B3. What is the current situation regarding women's employment in the Fairtrade producer organisation?
- *B4. What is the current situation regarding women's access to the benefits associated with the Fairtrade producer organisation, as members and non-members?
- *B5. [Linked to previous responses: To be asked if women don't participate as much in the Fairtrade producer organisation, or don't derive as many benefits from it] What are the most important reasons why women don't participate in, or benefit from, the Fairtrade producer organisation as much as men?
- *B6. [Linked to previous responses: To be asked if the Fairtrade producer organisation has achieved good or improving rates of women's participation] What factors support women's participation in, and benefits from, the Fairtrade producer organisation? What specific measures (if any) has the producer organisation implemented to enable women to participate actively and share in the benefits? What support has the producer organisation received from third parties (eg government, NGOs, donors, etc) to implement these measures?

C. Positive and negative effects of increasing women's participation in Fairtrade production and producer organisations

- *C1. What positive effects have resulted/may result from increasing women's participation in Fairtrade production and producer organisations?
- *C2. What negative effects have resulted/may result from increasing women's participation in Fairtrade production and producer organisations?

ANNEX 2

D. Measures to increase women's participation in, and benefits from, Fairtrade producer organisations

- *D1. What measures could be taken by Fairtrade producer organisations to address women-specific barriers (eg time poverty, land, mobility, financial constraints) and increase women's participation in, and benefits from, Fairtrade producer organisations? Which measures are the most important and the most likely to have a significant positive effect? How easy or difficult would these measures be to implement?
- *D2. What measures could be taken at individual, household and community levels? Which are the most important, etc...
- *D3. What measures could be taken at the national level (by national governments, producer organisation alliances, sector bodies, etc)? Which are the most important, etc...
- *D4. What measures could be taken by Fairtrade (including Fairtrade producer networks)? Which are the most important, etc...
- *D5. What measures could be taken by other actors (eg co-operative movement/bodies, NGOs, buyers, retailers, governments in market countries, international development agencies, etc)? Which are the most important, etc...

E. Broader influences on women's access to the benefits of Fairtrade producer organisations

- E1. What is the policy context in the case study country?
- E2. Does the legislative framework support gender equality?
- E3. Is there an enabling institutional environment for gender equality?

SUMMARY OF FIELD RESEARCH INTERVIEWEES AND IN-COUNTRY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

For each producer organisation, field research was carried out in two locations. For practical reasons, the main criteria used for selecting locations was the number of male and female members in the area – in general, members of the case study SPOs are widely dispersed geographically, and given the research team had limited time for the field research, areas with higher numbers of members were selected.⁶⁵ In each location, single sex group interviews were held with different categories of men and women, plus some individual interviews with women on their own. The principal categories were:

- Women SPO members
- Men SPO members
- Female relatives of male SPO members (eg wives, adult daughters, mothers)
- Community members not directly associated with the SPOs.

The number of people involved in the field research is summarised in table 2. The community member interviews included some women who work for SPO members, but exploring gender issues related to waged work at farm level and in processing was not a focus of the research.

Efforts were made to include people with different socio-economic profiles according to locally relevant criteria such as age, marital status, caste, amount of land cultivated and type of land ownership.

Interviewees

Category	Number of people interviewed			
	Dominican Republic	India	Kenya	Total
Women producer organisation members	12	21	33	66
Men producer organisation members	24	27	21	72
Female relatives of male members	4	8	12	24
Women community members	28	36	14	78
Men managing farms for male members	3	–	–	3
Men community members	–	6	2	8
Total women	44	65	59	168
Total men	27	33	23	83

Workshop participants

In Kenya, workshops were held separately with each case study SPO.

Workshop participants

Country	Additional participants (other than case study SPO)	Total number of workshop participants
India	Second tier SPO representatives	17
Dominican Republic	CLAC (Fairtrade producer network) and Fairtrade International	17
Kenya – workshop 1	n/a	14
Kenya – workshop 2	n/a	11

ANNEX 3

LIST OF STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS, SEPTEMBER 2014

Suzanne Natelson, Twin

Maveen Pereira, Traidcraft

Kimberly Bowman, Oxfam

Jon Tugwell, Fyffes

Linda Griffiths, Ringtons

Jean-René Grailhe, Keith Spicer

Chris Mills, The Co-operative

Sally Smith, Independent Research Consultant

Kate Kilpatrick, Fairtrade International

Tim Aldred, Fairtrade Foundation

Vidya Rangan, Fairtrade Foundation

Shivani Reddy, Fairtrade Foundation

Henry Green, Fairtrade Foundation

Emma Sundt, Fairtrade Foundation

Subindu Garkhel, Fairtrade Foundation

ANNEX 4

PERSONAL STORIES

1. Kamla Devi Rana, Odisha state, India



Kamla Devi Rana, 41, is the lone woman in the Board of Directors of the case study co-operative. Her husband Kismat Rana, who was recently diagnosed with a brain tumour, has been the real support behind her work in the co-operative. Unlike most other men in his village, he takes Kamla on his bicycle as a pillion rider to Kutrabahal where the

co-operative board meetings take place. Kamla says that she never expected to be a Director – in the Annual General Body Meeting members nominated her to become the Director from their village. She says she has never failed to attend a meeting and participates as well as she can there. She is educated up to Class 5 (primary school education) and believes that her role in the board has been possible because of at least this much education. Both her children are studying in a government college outside the village and it is the couple who manage their two-acre organic farm, in addition to her husband's tailoring business.

When staff members from the umbrella organisation first approached the village it was Kamla who motivated women around her to become members along with her. She had been inspired by an exposure visit to a self-help group organised by another NGO. She feels that being a part of the co-operative has been very useful since farmers in the village have learnt new agricultural practices which are sustainable. As far as women farmers are concerned, she believes that joining a producer organisation and taking advantages of opportunities to go out into the world, to take on new roles, is in itself empowering. 'There is so much to learn and we need to seize opportunities for the same', she says. Awareness is the means to attain self-reliance, according to Kamla.

2. Seema Biswal, Odisha state, India



Seema Biswal, at the young age of 31, is the Sarpanch or head of the elected council of her village, the Panchayat. She was elected in 2012 and people in the village reflect that she is capable and diligent. Prior to this, she was a member of the second tier of India's grassroots governance structures, called the Panchayat Samity. Her father-in-law, Bishambar

Biswal, is a member of the case study co-operative and it is the collective efforts of the entire family which take care of the family's agricultural activity. Unlike most other women in her village, Seema has the active support of her mother-in-law Parvati Biswal, who takes care of various household chores when Seema is busy fulfilling her responsibilities as the Sarpanch. Seema's husband, Sudhir Kumar Biswal, actively encourages her to take on more public representation roles and ensures that she participates in various meetings by taking her on his motorcycle. Eight to ten days each month go into roles to be performed as a Sarpanch. On all of the other days, Seema is packing in equal work along with the remaining family members on their organic farm. She says that there is hardly any leisure time for her, especially during peak agricultural seasons.

Seema says that she puts in special efforts to make sure that other women members in the political body in her village are also active, and encourages them to participate in meetings with their views and inputs. However, agriculture gives her the greatest satisfaction.

'Even though I am not educated much, I am in a position where I am respected. I feel good that as a woman, I have been able to become the Sarpanch for the village. There was much demand from the villagers here, for me to contest as the Sarpanch and I responded to that request, and got elected. I do not show any ego despite this elevation, however. I work along with others and put in hard physical work to demonstrate that this [hard work] is the foundation for any improvements in our lives. I also feel that it is important to have a sense of ownership over all the various works that we have initiated – we need to ensure that all activities succeed.'

When the tailoring centre opened in the village, Seema did not lose the opportunity to learn one more new skill in life. She learnt tailoring along with other women and tries to make use of her new skills at least for the needs of her family.

During the Focused Group Discussion with women who were relatives of male members in the co-operative, Seema offered serious inputs about how to increase women's participation

in the producer organisations. She felt that strengthening the women's self-help groups and building women's institutional capabilities should be the initial groundwork to be done before integrating them into mixed groups for effective participation.

3. Shakuntala Pradhan, Odisha state, India



Shakuntala Pradhan, 28 years old and a single woman, is not from this district. She is from Cuttack, along the coastline of Odisha. She moved to Sial Judin village in 2002, where her sister was married, when her brother-in-law fell ill. While helping her sister, she decided to stay on and also purchased 10 cents (400m²) of land there and leases about two acres

each year to farm with the help of waged workers. Shakuntala and her brother-in-law, a teacher, are not part of the case study co-operative, although she is a member of the women's self-help group. Shakuntala is also appreciative of organic farming approaches and seeks to adopt them in her leased land as much as possible.

Shakuntala is educated up to Class 7. This has not deterred her from teaching young children in the village. She is employed as the para teacher who supports the government-employed teacher in the school. She takes tuition classes for around 20 students, most of whom are girls.

Previously, recognising her ability to motivate other women, Shakuntala was employed by the United Nations Development Programme to create women's self-help groups in this village and five other neighbouring villages. Shakuntala cycled around to all these villages to ensure that the women's self-help groups, mainly centred around thrift and credit, were up and running. She travelled alone to do this job, since she felt that it was a very important responsibility, and that such collectivisation would certainly change the lives of poor households as well as the women in these households. After the project ended, there was no job left for her. However, she tries to stay in touch with the women leaders of active groups even now.

Shakuntala believes that women should acquire education and keep themselves informed about their various rights. It is also important for women to acquire multiple skills, to become self-reliant in life, she feels.

4. Patricia Mutangili, Kirinyaga County, Kenya



Patricia Mutangili was born in 1965 in Nyeri County as the fourth child in a family of nine. She completed primary school in 1978, attained her O-level qualification in 1982, and then joined Thuguma High school Nyeri for her A-levels. After completion she got married in Makueni and had two children, but in 1991 she separated from her husband. Her brother

welcomed her in Nyeri where he was running an electronics shop. She brought up her children single-handedly and worked in business until 2008 when her father allocated her 1,000 tea bushes.

As a tea owner, she registered with the case study producer organisation and in 2010 she was elected into the Fairtrade Premium Committee, rising to the position of Chair later that year.

Patricia is optimistic that women as leaders can make a difference in their communities. She reported that: 'During my tenure as the chair we initiated some beneficial projects for the farmers such as fitting the buying centres with concrete benches which was part of the ISO requirement. This was an expensive exercise, however Fairtrade stepped in and provided the funds and all that was required was for the Buying Centre Committees to develop proposals for funding of the project'. She was happy to note that 18 buying centres had electricity, two buying centres had piped water connection and toilets were constructed in two centres.

Patricia has been able to educate her children and currently owns a shop near the factory where, as a leader, she interacts with many women who are tea farmers and wives of tea farmers. She reported witnessing many family disputes that arise when tea bonuses are paid, as men misuse the resources that women have worked hard for and when women complain, men end up using violence to silence them.

Despite the fact that Patricia is an informed and articulate leader who has worked hard under difficult circumstances, and also attended good schools up to A-level qualification, she is barred from the KTDA policy that requires women to have a diploma in order to run for election to the board. Men with her qualification and even less are allowed to run for office. These barriers need to be removed to make women like her exploit their full potential.

5. Tecla Chepkoi, Nandi County, Kenya



Tecla is a widowed 50-year-old mother of four children, living with disability. She is a beneficiary of a housing project initiated by the case study producer organisation using the Fairtrade Premium. Her late husband was the sole breadwinner of the family and when he passed on in 2010 she was devastated. He was deaf and dumb but was very

hard working and provided for her and her family. She recalls that after the death of her husband life was difficult and unbearable. She was living in a shanty near a river – when the rains were heavy her house would be flooded. Her younger daughter is a beneficiary of the producer organisation's bursary scheme and is due to sit her primary examinations at the end of 2014. She is optimistic that her daughter will perform well and is also hopeful that once she clears primary school she will join secondary school.

Even though Tecla is not a member of the producer organisation, she has benefited from the construction of a brick house by the organisation which was due to be completed in August 2014. She is excited to move into her new house and is so grateful to the organisation for constructing the house for her in a small plot of land that her late husband left her. The organisation also intends to purchase a hand operated sewing machine for Tecla which will enable her to earn some income by sewing clothes.

6. Roxanna Wanda Perez Aneliz, Dominican Republic



Roxanna is a 38-year-old single mother, with one son aged 17. She was born in Mao to a farming family and moved to Laguna Salada five years ago. After finishing high school she worked in her father's agricultural supplies shop for ten years, then used her savings to study marketing at university as her father refused to let her take over the

business. When her father died in 2007 her mother had to sell their land to pay off debts, but Roxanna took over running the family's banana farm which was on 5 hectares of rented land. She didn't know anything about banana farming and had to borrow money to cover her costs but, with the help of technical advisors from a producer organisation and an export company, in the space of six months she managed to increase production from just two pallets to eight or nine pallets a week.

Over time she saved enough money from selling Fairtrade bananas to buy her own house, and then in 2011 bought two hectares of land to expand her banana production. Her son is now helping her with the farm and has plans to study agronomy at university. She hopes to buy more land over time, as she feels investing in rented land is too high risk.

Roxanna has become so skilled at banana farming that she undertakes consultancy work for other producers. In 2012 she was elected onto the Disciplinary Committee of the case study producer organisation, first as Secretary and then as Coordinator. She was also elected to be the Coordinator of the Dominican Republic's arm of CLAC (the fair trade producer network for Latin America and the Caribbean), and through that position has had opportunities to meet and learn from producers from elsewhere in the Dominican Republic and from other countries. She says she has learned what fair trade is and wants to incentivise other producers to work for a fairer trading system, not only in their own organisations. For her this is about improving quality and getting a fair price, taking care of the environment, treating workers well and sharing the Fairtrade Premium with communities.

Roxanna believes that it's important for women be to active members of producer organisations and to be involved in decision-making at all levels. To achieve this, she thinks it's important to reach out to women and motivate them, and also to form a Women's Directorate within organisations with representatives on the board.

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- ⁵ O'Sullivan, Michael; Rao, Arathi; Banerjee, Raka; Gulati, Kajal; Vinez, Margaux. 2014. *Levelling the field: improving opportunities for women farmers in Africa*. Washington DC; World Bank Group – Foreword by Siphon Moyo, Africa Director – ONE Campaign.
- ⁶ Fairtrade International has begun this process, with a gender strategy developed through a multi-stakeholder process and signed off by the Board. Implementation of the strategy began in late 2014.
- ⁷ See Glossary for the distinction between Fairtrade and Fair Trade.
- ⁸ https://www.unglobalcompact.org/issues/human_rights/equality_means_business.html
- ⁹ For more information: <http://www.twin.org.uk/projects/women-farmers-and-gender-justice/>; <http://www.equalexchange.co.uk/grown-by-women/>; http://www.optco.com/cafe_femenino.htm
- ¹⁰ Studies which have documented use of the Premium in areas such as these include: CEval 2012 (http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/resources/2012_Fairtrade_Impact_Study.pdf); Nelson and Smith 2011 http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/resources/2011_Fairtrade_Cotton_Assessing_Impact_in_Mali_Senegal_Cameroon_and_India_main_report.pdf; Pound and Phiri 2011 (http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/resources/2011_Taking_Root_Fairtrade_in_Malawi.pdf)
- ¹¹ See: Pound and Phiri 2011, Op. Cit.
- ¹² This is in line with requirements in the Fairtrade Standards, as set out in section 2.2, box 1.
- ¹³ For more information: <http://www.soppexcca.org/en/participation.html>
- ¹⁴ This training programme is being coordinated by the network WIEGO (Women in the Informal Economy: Globalising and Organising), with funding from the Dutch government. See: <http://wiego.org/wee/fair-trade>. Kuapa Kokoo has also benefited from support on gender from the Fairtrade buyer Twin as part of its Producer Support and Development programme, which is in turn funded by the Fairtrade chocolate brand 'Divine' which is part-owned by Kuapa Kokoo.
- ¹⁵ For more information: http://www.kuapakokoo.com/subcatselect.cfm?article_maincatid=96&article_subcatid=144; <http://wiego.org/wee/about-kuapa-kokoo>
- ¹⁶ The Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology was developed by Bukonzo Joint and other organisations in Uganda, Sudan, India, Pakistan and the US, with support from Oxfam Novib. For more information on the GALS methodology and tools, see: http://www.wemanglobal.org/2_GenderActionLearning.asp.
- ¹⁷ For more information: <http://bukonzojointcoffee.com/what-we-do/womens-empowerment-and-gender-justice/>; http://www.wemanglobal.org/2_GenderActionLearning.asp
- ¹⁸ For more information: <http://www.prodecoop.com/>; TWIN 2013 (<http://www.twin.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/Empowering%20Women%20Farmers%20in%20Agricultural%20Value%20Chains.pdf>); Jones, Smith and Wills, 2011 (http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Jones_Trading_Our_Way_Up_English.pdf)
- ¹⁹ A theory of change describes the change that an initiative (organisation, network, project, etc.) wishes to see in the world and its understanding of how it will contribute to that change. Fairtrade's theory of change is available on Fairtrade International's website, see: <http://www.fairtrade.net/impact-and-research.html>
- ²⁰ Examples of commitments to invest in women in agricultural supply chains <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do/Global-Development/Agricultural-Development/Creating-Gender-Responsive-Agricultural-Development-Programs> / <http://uk.loccitane.com/fp/Shea-Butter-A-Sustainable-Partnership-with-the-Women-of-Burkina-Faso,83,1,a850.htm> / <http://news.walmart.com/news-archive/2011/09/14/walmart-launches-global-womens-economic-empowerment-initiative/>
- ²¹ Joint hand-in with The Co-operative.
- ²² 2013 Lough Erne G8 Leaders' Communique at p.13: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/207771/Lough_Erne_2013_G8_Leaders_Communique.pdf
- ²³ Women made up 22 percent of all members of Fairtrade-certified Small Producer Organisations in 2013. Fairtrade International, Monitoring the Scope and Benefits of Fairtrade: Sixth Edition (publication forthcoming).
- ²⁴ Smith, S. (2013). Assessing the gender impacts of Fairtrade. *Social Enterprise Journal*, Vol. 9 (1), 102-122.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ *Trading Our Way Up; Women organising for Fair Trade*, WIEGO, December 2011. http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Jones_Trading_Our_Way_UpEnglish.pdf
- ²⁷ It should be noted that the Fairtrade producer networks did not have complete data on certified SPO according to these criteria, which meant the selection did not provide as much contrast as hoped, as outlined in section 1.3.

- ²⁸ This selection process was appropriate to the aims and scope of the study. There was no attempt made to seek a representative sample from which generalisations could be drawn across all Fairtrade-certified SPOs (or all SPOs in a given country or sector), given the aims and exploratory nature of the research.
- ²⁹ Other Fairtrade cotton producers in India are certified under the Contact Production standard and so are not part of independent producer organisations.
- ³⁰ The names of participating producer organisations have not been used in this report, as some preferred to remain anonymous.
- ³¹ See annex 3 for a list of participants.
- ³² See: Smith (2013), Op. Cit; Oxfam International (2013), *Women's collective action: Unlocking the potential of agricultural markets*, Oxfam International: Oxford, UK; Jones, E., Smith, S. and Wills, C. (2011), *Trading our way up: Women organizing for fair trade*, WIEGO: Cambridge, MA, USA; Majurin, E. (2012), *How women fare in East African co-operatives: the case of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda*, International Labour Organization: Geneva.
- ³³ See Glossary for the distinction between Fairtrade and fair trade.
- ³⁴ This group of workers was included in the scope of the research in order to get a sense of how gender-inclusive the case study SPOs are, and because having women involved in running SPOs and providing services to producers can facilitate greater participation of women farmers.
- ³⁵ Per capita Gross National Income (GNI) based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is average income per person using purchasing power parity rates, such that income levels are more comparable across countries. For more details, see: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.PP.CD>.
- ³⁶ This statistic comes from the Government of India's Economic Survey 2013-14, Govt of India. <http://indiabudget.nic.in/>, Chapter 1: State of the Economy. It differs from the World Bank estimate of 18 percent.
- ³⁷ Ratio of female to male secondary enrolment is the percentage of girls to boys enrolled at secondary level in public and private schools, see: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ENR.SECO.FM.ZS>.
- ³⁸ The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education- and health-based criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups, and over time. A rank of 1 signifies the lowest level of gender inequality relative to all other countries. See: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/>
- ³⁹ Olinto, P. et al. (2013). *The state of the poor: Where are the poor, where is extreme poverty harder to end, and what is the current profile of the world's poor?*, World Bank: Washington, D.C.
- ⁴⁰ According to data provided in the Global Gender Gap Index: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/>
- ⁴¹ FAOSTAT, see: <http://faostat.fao.org/site/666/default.aspx>;
- ⁴² Díaz, O., 2013, *Evaluación Final: Programa Conjunto FODM 'Fortalecimiento de la Cadena de Valor del Banano mediante el crecimiento de mercados inclusivos'*. MDG Achievement Fund. <http://erc.undp.org/evaluationadmin/reports/viewreport.html?docid=7292>
- ⁴³ Plan estratégico para la Promoción del Trabajo Decente y la Competitividad del Sector Banano de las provincias de Azua, Valverde y Montecristi (2011). Programa Conjunto Fortalecimiento de la Cadena de Valor del Banano mediante el Crecimiento de Mercados Inclusivos (OIT, FIODM, Consejo Nacional de Competitividad, Ministerio de Trabajo), See: http://www.ilo.org/sanjose/programas-y-proyectos/WCMS_179073/lang-es/index.htm
- ⁴⁴ Statistics on Area, Production and Productivity of Cotton in India, The Cotton Corporation of India, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. <http://cotcorp.gov.in/statistics.aspx#area> Accessed on July 6, 2014.
- ⁴⁵ FAOSTAT, see: <http://faostat.fao.org/desktopdefault.aspx?pageid=342&lang=en&country=100>
- ⁴⁶ Emeka Osakwe (2009). *Cotton Fact Sheet India*. International Cotton Advisory Committee. https://www.icac.org/econ_stats/country_facts/e_india.pdf. Accessed on July 6, 2014.
- ⁴⁷ FAOSTAT, see: <http://faostat.fao.org/desktopdefault.aspx?pageid=342&lang=en&country=100>
- ⁴⁸ Kenya Tea Board figures, with number of producers cited at http://www.teaboard.or.ke/industry/growing_production.html (accessed 28 July 2014), and number of people employed cited in KHRC (2008), *A comparative study of the tea sector in Kenya: A case study of large scale tea estates*, Kenya Human Rights Commission: Nairobi (p. 4).
- ⁴⁹ Fairtrade International data for the 2012-2013 reporting period: Fairtrade International, *Monitoring the scope and benefits of Fairtrade: Sixth edition* (publication forthcoming)
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ All Fairtrade Standards are publicly available at: <http://www.fairtrade.net/our-standards.html>
- ⁵² Membership of this producer organisation is based on ownership of shares, and does not equate to the number of registered tea producers selling to the processing company as in some cases men buy shares for wives who are not registered tea producers. The percentage of registered tea producers who are women is estimated to be around 10 percent, as for the other case study producer organisation in Kenya.
- ⁵³ This includes board members and other elected committee members.
- ⁵⁴ Data on numbers of professional staff in the two Kenyan SPOs was incomplete and therefore excluded.
- ⁵⁵ See Smith (2013), Op.Cit., for a discussion of different pathways through which women may benefit from Fairtrade-certified SPOs.

- ⁵⁶ For example, in Kenya women and youth are being trained in the production of tissue culture bananas and bee-keeping. In India, a tailoring centre has been established in one of the villages visited, providing new skills and livelihood opportunities to women.
- ⁵⁷ Two male SPO members said that both they and their wives were SPO members under one código, but these appeared to be exceptional cases.
- ⁵⁸ This trend is not without its challenges though, as men sometimes dictate how women's income is used or reduce their own contribution to cover household costs.
- ⁵⁹ A similar situation can be found in the coffee sector in Kenya where despite contributing most of the labour required to grow coffee, some women farmers do not have any rights to what they grow. The Fairtrade Foundation has received a grant from the Big Lottery Fund to deliver a project with Fairtrade Africa which will pilot a new approach to empowering women farmers in Kenya, including encouraging transfer of ownership of coffee bushes to women farmers.
- ⁶⁰ See Doss, et al. (2013), Gender inequalities in ownership and control of land in Africa: Myths versus reality, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI): USA. Available at: <http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifripd01308.pdf>. Note that in practice it is useful to distinguish between land ownership and land use rights, not least because promoting private ownership can be detrimental to the interests of land users.
- ⁶¹ World Bank data, see: <http://wbi.worldbank.org/data>
- ⁶² Men in the villages travel using privately-owned bicycles, motorcycles and occasionally tractors, while women are dependent on men to ferrying them around.
- ⁶³ Both Kenya and India have a long tradition of women-only self-help groups at the grassroots level. In both countries they are seen as useful vehicles for facilitating greater participation of women in producer organisations in future.
- ⁶⁴ As around 90 percent of registered tea producers are men, this means that only about 2 percent of all registered tea producers are women who are eligible for election.
- ⁶⁵ See Goetz, A. (2003), Political cleaners: How women are the new anti-corruption force. Does the evidence wash? Institute of Development Studies: Sussex. Available at: <http://www.u4.no/recommended-reading/political-cleaners-how-women-are-the-new-anti-corruption-force-does-the-evidence-wash/>
- ⁶⁶ Insufficient formal education was also cited in both countries as another reason why women do not have the requisite skills, but on interrogation this appears to be something of a red herring as men with levels of education that women have are in leadership positions.
- ⁶⁷ According to the case study researcher, this is often the case in India.
- ⁶⁸ For example, tea is a cash crop which brings income to households year round, and enabling women to earn more cash income may have a greater positive impact on food security than increasing the production of food crops for domestic consumption. But whether this is true will depend on various factors, including prices of both tea and food in markets, and vulnerability to crop failure as a result of climate change.
- ⁶⁹ The influence of religious norms and practices did not emerge strongly in the case studies, but it is likely that they would be influential at the local level, as well as at a wider contextual level.
- ⁷⁰ Fairtrade International has already completed this process, with a gender strategy approved by the board in 2012 and implementation beginning in late 2014.
- ⁷¹ Oxfam's Behind the Brands campaign (www.behindthebrands.org), which targets the world's 10 largest food and beverage companies and scores their commitment to ethical sourcing practices, is a good example of how this can be done in way which both challenges and engages with businesses to influence practices.
- ⁷² See Glossary for the distinction between Fairtrade and fair trade.
- ⁷³ For more information: <http://www.twin.org.uk/projects/women-farmers-and-gender-justice>; <http://www.equalexchange.co.uk/grown-by-women/>; http://www.optco.com/cafe_femenino.htm
- ⁷⁴ https://www.unglobalcompact.org/issues/human_rights/equality_means_business.html
- ⁷⁵ Studies which have documented use of the Premium in areas such as these include: CEval 2012 (http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/resources/2012_Fairtrade_Impact_Study.pdf); Nelson and Smith 2011 (http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/resources/2011_Fairtrade_Cotton_Assessing_Impact_in_Mali_Senegal_Cameroon_and_India_main_report.pdf); Pound and Phiri 2011 (http://www.fairtrade.net/fileadmin/user_upload/content/2009/resources/2011_Taking_Root_Fairtrade_in_Malawi.pdf)
- ⁷⁶ See: Pound and Phiri 2011, Op. Cit.
- ⁷⁷ This is in line with requirements in the Fairtrade standards, as set out in section 2.2, box 1.
- ⁷⁸ For more information: <http://www.soppexcca.org/en/participation.html>
- ⁷⁹ This training programme is being coordinated by the network WIEGO (Women in the Informal Economy: Globalising and Organising), with funding from the Dutch government. See: <http://wiego.org/wee/fair-trade>. Kuapa Kokoo has also benefitted from support on gender from the Fairtrade buyer TWIN as part of its Producer Support and Development programme, which is in turn funded by the Fairtrade chocolate brand 'Divine' which is part-owned by Kuapa Kokoo.
- ⁸⁰ For more information: http://www.kuapakokoo.com/subcatselect.cfm?article_maincatid=96&article_subcatid=144; <http://wiego.org/wee/about-kuapa-kokoo>

- ⁸¹ The Gender Action Learning Systems (GALS) methodology was developed by Bukonzo Joint and other organisations in Uganda, Sudan, India, Pakistan and the US, with support from Oxfam Novib. For more information on the GALS methodology and tools, see: http://www.wemanglobal.org/2_GenderActionLearning.asp.
- ⁸² For more information: <http://bukonzojointcoffee.com/what-we-do/womens-empowerment-and-gender-justice/>; http://www.wemanglobal.org/2_GenderActionLearning.asp
- ⁸³ For more information: <http://www.prodecoop.com/>; TWIN 2013 (<http://www.twin.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/Empowering%20Women%20Farmers%20in%20Agricultural%20Value%20Chains.pdf>); Jones, Smith and Wills, 2011 (http://wiego.org/sites/wiego.org/files/publications/files/Jones_Trading_Our_Way_Up_English.pdf)
- ⁸⁴ Thanks go to Claudia Canepa, Sloane Hamilton, Thalia Kidder and Hugo Sintes of Oxfam International, who provided valuable inputs during development of the conceptual framework and research questions.
- ⁸⁵ Also relevant to this decision was a desire to avoid people having to travel long distances and give up a lot of time to participate in the research.



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