

SECURING ECONOMIC RIGHTS FOR INFORMAL WOMEN WORKERS

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP AND BUSINESS SKILLS FOR INFORMAL WOMEN WORKERS IN FAIR TRADE

Women in Africa are estimated to provide over 80 per cent of the labour in agriculture, yet often women do not see any income from the sale of products they grow. Many engage in craft production to generate additional income to provide for basic needs. Fair Trade actively targets poor producers and offers an alternative means of livelihood, serving as a vehicle for poverty reduction and women's economic empowerment.

A previous MDG3-funded project on Fair Trade demonstrated that when women organize in groups for market access, they are more effective in achieving positive change in their economic and social situation. It also revealed a need to help women develop the skills to assume leadership positions – positions through which they can ensure organizations remain accountable to their members and are effective production and trading entities.

This project seeks to address findings that women producers remain unaware of their rights, are largely unrepresented in consultations and policy forums, and are under-represented in governance structures. Many still lack information on market opportunities and knowledge of marketing and market requirements. There is a need for increased recognition of women as skilled workers who make a significant contribution to their household and national economies.

Past contextual analyses found that laws and policies aimed at promoting women's equality and securing access to assets such as land and credit are rarely implemented. This project will improve women's ability to negotiate for their rights.

OBJECTIVES

- to increase women's participation as members and leaders of producer cooperatives, which will translate into increased equality

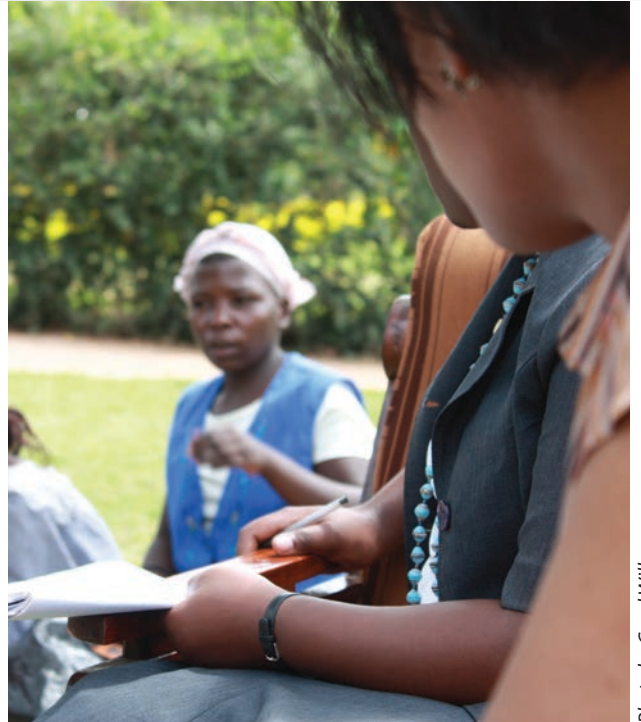


Photo by Carol Willis

Launched in 2012, *Securing Economic Rights for Informal Women Workers* seeks to strengthen the organizing and leadership capacity of women working in informal employment so that they gain economic self-reliance and increase their participation in politics, governance and management.

As part of this project, WIEGO's Global Trade Programme, in partnership with leading Fair Trade organizations in Africa, initiated *Developing Leadership and Business Skills for Informal Women Workers in Fair Trade*. The focus is on developing both leadership and business skills for informal women workers involved in fair trade activities in Ghana, Kenya and Uganda.

This project has received support from Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW), Government of the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



- to foster increased realization of rights and access to assets
- to help women achieve an increase in income through improved design, quality and production techniques, leading to an increase in market readiness and improved global, regional and domestic sales
- to improve institutional capacity for more effective market access and women's economic empowerment
- to strengthen networks/leadership training to ensure results can be sustained and replicated

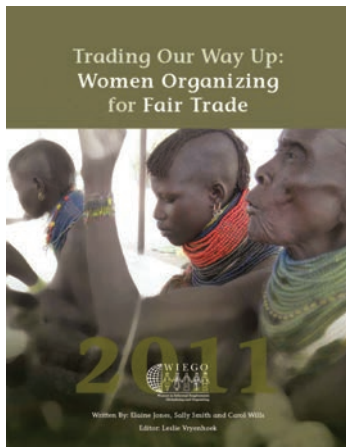
PARTNERS

- KEFAT¹ (Kenya Federation for Alternative Trade)
- UGAFAT² (Ugandan Federation for Alternative Trade)
- GUMUTINDO³ Coffee Cooperative (Uganda)
- Kuapa Kokoo⁴ Cooperative (Ghana)
- COFTA⁵ (Cooperation for Fair Trade in Africa)



Photo by Carol Wills

Women involved in Fair Trade must develop the skills to assume leadership positions – positions through which they can ensure organizations remain accountable to their members and are effective production and trading entities.



Trading Our Way Up:
Women Organizing for
Fair Trade



¹ country-level network of the World Fair Trade Organization
² country-level network of the World Fair Trade Organization
³ Fairtrade certified cooperative
⁴ Fairtrade certified cooperative
⁵ Africa-wide network of the WFTO

For more information, please visit:
<http://wiego.org/wee/fair-trade>