

Trade Matters

January 2023



| Transform
Trade _____

So everybody benefits.

Dear friends

Welcome to Trade Matters

My name is Alice Oyaró and I joined Transform Trade in August 2022 as Director of Programmes, Policy and Partnerships. I was given a clear mission...

To work with the team here to transform the global tea, fashion, and farming sectors so that everyone – especially the most disadvantaged – can benefit. What an important and, at times, overwhelming task!

Before you read this magazine, I wanted to share with you two things that keep hope alive for us a team.

The first is the power, energy, skill and determination of the communities we work with (see two examples of this on page 10 and 11). We are not alone in the mission to transform trade, far from it. We are partnering with people who are directly experiencing injustice in trade and creating solutions together.

The second thing is the willingness of people like you to take action for a better world. Even in my short time at Transform Trade I've been so encouraged to see how thousands of people in the UK will donate and campaign to support people thousands of miles away.

This for me is how I'm beginning to understand Transform Trade – a global community of people who care about justice in trade. People who believe that all trade can be fairer and things can get better.

We can make a difference not just for farmers, artisans and workers but WITH them.

That's the change you are part of, and I hope you see in this magazine just how important a role you are playing in this journey.

Best wishes,

Alice

Alice Oyaró
Director of Programmes, Policy and Partnerships



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Front cover Arifa Begum. Photo: Transform Trade/GMB Akash
Left: Secretary United Amani CBO B Roselyn Cheronó (2nd from left), together with other members taking record of money received during the table banking session in Ngarendare, Meru County. Transform Trade /Nashon Otieno



Transforming the fashion industry

Our new strategy focuses on three key areas – fashion, tea and farming. In this edition of Trade Matters, we're focusing on fashion, an industry which produces 10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, more than maritime shipping and aviation combined.

The industry is vast and rife with exploitation – low wages, poor working conditions, and unsafe practices are commonplace.

But there are many amazing groups of people working to change this – from women's collectives employing people from marginalised castes in India, to homeworking artisans demanding recognition by big fashion brands, and recycling textile projects giving garments new lives.

It's initiatives like these we want to support – so that together, we can show that a better way is possible. We can demand change across the sector, and reduce the fashion industry's terrible impact on the planet.

In a sector full of environmental damage and untold exploitation, our partners are standing up for better, slower fashion. We stand with the workers demanding reform. We are campaigning for legislative and policy change, and supporting collectives working for better conditions and fair pay.



Hold a

Fight back against the excesses of fast fashion by hosting a swish!

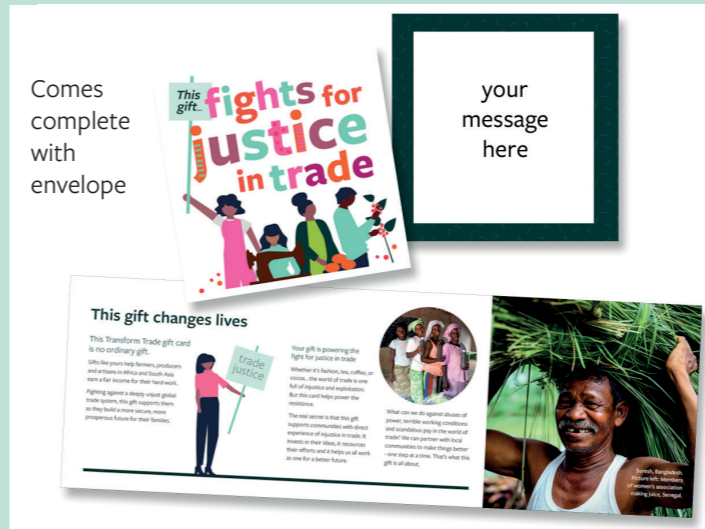
A swish is an event where people bring good quality clothing they no longer wear, and pay a small fee to swap items with others. It's eco friendly, budget friendly, and you get a whole new wardrobe – what's not to like? All you need to do is:

- 1 Pick a time, place and venue
- 2 Invite everyone to come along, and bring at least three items of pre-loved, quality clothing
- 3 Encourage your guests to make a small donation (say £3) for each new piece of clothing they go home with!
- 4 You could also boost your fundraising by selling refreshments.

transform-trade.org/swish

Gifts for Life

One of the easiest ways to support Transform Trade's work fighting against fast fashion is by buying from our new Gifts for Life range!

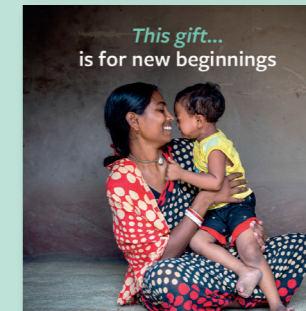


You can purchase our Gifts for Life cards, available as both physical and e-cards at transform-trade.org/charity-gifts



This gift...is not socks (it's better)

Let's be honest, those novelty socks we give as gifts are rarely ever worn. Why not give a more meaningful and practical gift, with this card which fights against fast fashion. **£7**



This gift...is for new beginnings

This gift card features Bithi Rani, whose new beginning working in tailoring and sewing has helped her earn and save money and provide for her children. **£20**



This gift... fights for justice in trade

We need to transform not only the fashion industry, but all trade, and the donation from this gift card will bring us one step closer. **£50**

1000 dogs... for fairer fashion

This plan is a bit barking, but all the best plans are. With your help, it could be huge.



MPs are starting to wake up to the need for greater regulation in the UK fashion sector, but not quickly enough. Your skills can help them take notice.

We would like you to join us in handcrafting a 'dog wearing some clothes'. Then you send that dog to your MP with a letter urging them to **support a fashion watchdog**.

The principle is to show how seriously you take exploitation in the fashion sector by spending time crafting something unique. It's the sort of plan that MPs will take notice of - because it has never happened before.

Follow this three-step plan, and your crafting could be the thing that swings your MP to stand up for fairer fashion.

● Step 1 – Get creative

Make a fashionable dog, small enough to post, for your MP – something fun and memorable. You could knit it, stitch it, sculpt it, cut out and colour it... even make it from a sock! Your skills can help them take notice.

● Step 2 – The letter

Download our letter template for your MP and add a short personal message. The template and instructions are right here: transform-trade.org/1000-dogs

● Step 3 – Send it

Get your brilliant creation in the post and email us at campaign@transform-trade.org to add your contribution (ideally with a little photo!) to the 1000 dogs target.

The full details, along with a tracker of which MPs already support the watchdog, are on transform-trade.org/1000-dogs

Campaigning to transform the fashion industry

We all know the fashion industry is broken. It's environmentally destructive, pays low wages, and exploits workers. But who's to blame, and how do we change things? The picture is complicated.

Supply chains in the garment industry are kept deliberately obscure by the brands and retailers whose names are all over the clothes we wear. It's not hard for brands to trace where they buy things from – but all too often, they choose not to, turning a blind eye to subcontracting, or simply not acknowledging exploitation in their supply chain. They change orders at the last minute, fueling the need for overtime (often unpaid), and encouraging a system of abuse from supervisors. Inconsistent orders mean factories struggle to provide permanent work. Last moment cancellations, like those we saw during the pandemic, leave factories out of pocket and workers unpaid.

Right now, UK brands can get away with this behaviour because there's no regulation to keep them in check. That's why we are calling for a Fashion Watchdog, to put an end to unfair buying practices and demand greater transparency in supply chains.

At transform-trade.org/fashion-watchdog you can find out if your MP supports a fashion watchdog to sort out the bad buying practices and if not, what you can do to convince them.



Photo: Transform Trade, Priyanka Chharia

Hidden Homeworkers

Even here in the post pandemic UK, not everyone is keen on the idea of homeworking - but it is now an acknowledged part of the way many of us work.

For homeworkers in fashion supply chains, there's no formal acknowledgement of their work. Instead, factories contracted by brands subcontract to women working from their homes, enabling brands to refuse to recognize their existence. Without formal recognition, it's not possible to claim social security, healthcare entitlements, or demand basic working rights, like decent pay or a limit on the number of hours worked.

The answer isn't to ban homeworking - it provides employment for around 50 million women in South Asia. Research shows that when brands recognise these workers in their supply chains their pay increases and they're able to access social protection. Their children are more likely to be in school, and they are better able to negotiate their hours.

Transform Trade is working alongside partners to support homeworkers in their quest for recognition and put an end to their status as 'invisible workers.' We'll be sharing more about this work over the next few months.

Big Brew is back for 2023



Lutfa and Bablu

Nothing beats a cup of coffee, a slice of cake... and supporting the fight for trade justice. That's Big Brew in a nutshell – we want people to come together with their communities, have fun, laugh and fundraise.

We need as many of you as possible to join us this year, so if there is a Big Brew in your community get stuck in, or if you are interested in hosting please reach out! You can host a Big Brew whenever best suits you.

The heart of Big Brew is the knowledge that even something as simple as brewing a pot of tea can make a difference to trade justice, in more ways than one. Transform Trade has

worked to reform the tea sector for years, through campaigning for regulation and promoting workers' rights. This Big Brew you will be able to read about Lutfa Begum, and how starting a tea garden and farming it with her family has changed their lives for the better.

The money you raise during Big Brew will support our work to change trade across the fashion, tea and farming sectors, putting people before profit. In our Big Brew pack

you will also meet Arifa Begum (no relation), and hear about the tailoring shop she opened which now helps support her family. Lutfa and Arifa are now reaping the benefits of their hard work, thanks to the power of trade.

You can find plenty of digital resources to help run a Big Brew at transform-trade.org/big-brew or if you would like to order a physical pack please contact fundraising@transform-trade.org



Our Big Brew pack 2023!



“Everyone shares their wisdom and helps each other with information.”

Mostofa, tea grower, Bangladesh



Photo: Transform Trade/GMB Akash

Tea

How many cups of tea do we drink each year in the UK?

We consume 36 billion cups of tea every year. Even if you aren't an avid tea drinker yourself, it's undeniably a staple of everyday life in the UK, yet few of us know what really goes into our tea.

You might remember our 'Who picked my tea?' campaign in 2018, which successfully convinced the UK's 6 biggest tea brands to name their suppliers and foster transparency in their supply chains.

Transparency isn't the only way the tea industry needs to transform. Tea is often

grown on vast estates and harvested by low-paid seasonal workers who have few other options, but there are better models for tea farming.

We are working with smallholders in northern Bangladesh starting their own tea gardens, people like Mostofa Kamal. Back in 2013, Mostofa used to run a cosmetics store and struggled to earn a living, but now he runs a tea garden, which has been more profitable.

Mostofa's collective works together to manage the challenges they face as tea growers, and help each other find solutions:

“How do we get a fair price for our tea? We exchange views on various issues, we also talk about our family problems, we talk about the future of our children, we talk about any new technology related to tea cultivation.

Every meeting we talk about different issues and consult how to improve our financial situation. Because of this team, we hold a meeting every month and in that meeting we talk about our various facilities, pros and cons of our tea garden and try to solve them all together. Everyone shares their wisdom and helps each other with information.”

Farming

“I am working on a plan that I love.”

In Kenya, we're piloting a new approach that is becoming more and more central to the whole of our work. Rather than bringing top-down solutions, we're asking farmers who are experiencing injustice in trade to create solutions with us.

Edith, a farmer in Meru County, recently explained to us what difference this approach makes...

“It was my first time ever to write a business plan and it was very hard but I'm proud I came up with it. I believe in what we put together.

Doing it has helped us understand the business better. I sat for three hours before I even started writing to think about what I wanted to put down so the business can be profitable. It's a plan that will take a long time.

Previously people brought things to me and I wasn't involved in the thinking process. The



Photo: Transform Trade/Nashon Otieno

things they brought could be easily mis-used. I'm now spending my time using my mind to come up with a plan I love.

This way of doing things costs me something, I got no money or gifts for the time I spent working on it but I prefer to work this way. They're my ideas and I want them to work.”

You can see that working in partnership with communities from the very start leads to a better tailored solution. But crucially, it grows local leadership and builds local skills.

Together we can carve out a path to truly sustainable change.

Thank you for your support

In January, we look at the 12 months ahead with fresh eyes and a renewed hope. This year, we can embrace the new year together with a determined optimism, because of the wonderful generosity of supporters like you during our Christmas Appeal.

You donated to help people like Jononi Rani Das fighting to escape modern slavery. She told us how “Many families are in dire straits. They are becoming more indebted as they had to repay the loan every month.” Jononi is planning to start work in tailoring, and started rearing after receiving training as well. She explained that “I am getting a lot of ideas and training which is making me self-confident.”

Modern slavery is a symptom of a broken trade system. Farm labourers are being exploited, underpaid and forced into a cycle of debt, and



“I want to earn a lot of money to secure my daughter’s future. My daughter dream is becoming a police officer. I want to fulfil her dream. Fulfilling my daughter’s dream is success for me.”

Jononi Rani Das

are at even greater risk as the global cost of living crisis worsens. That’s why your support during our Christmas appeal and beyond has been so vital.



Jononi and her daughter

Photo: Transform Trade/GMB Akash

Women-run businesses

As part of a broader focus on supporting women to demand higher wages, and get a fair deal from trade, we’ve been funding the setting up of ‘convenience stores’ in rural Bangladesh.

Run, owned, and managed by women, these shops are groundbreaking in rural patriarchal communities, providing not only a place to buy necessities (many communities have to travel miles to buy basics like soap or sanitary products), or a chance to earn money, but also a safe communal space for women to gather and meet.

Transform Trade is supporting the creation of 100 of these shops.



24 ways to make the world a better place, 5 minutes at a time...

Sometimes the challenges the world faces can seem daunting and insurmountable, but the Injustice Advent Calendar shows how powerful it can be to take even just one small positive action each day.

We’re proud of the success of the calendar in 2022 – 22 organisations collaborated and thousands of people took part across the month. If you would like to get involved, you can join our email list for the calendar this December (with plenty of time to spare!).

Join in at transform-trade.org/injustice-advent-calendar

Our community

Talking about Transform Trade

Over the past 36 years supporters like you have formed an incredible community, and your advocacy is vital – we need everyone shouting from the rooftops about trade justice. If you ever need any help explaining who Transform Trade is, maybe for an event you are hosting, or when you send in a story to a local newspaper about a fundraiser you held, there are resources available at transform-trade.org/community

Recycle your old jewellery & banknotes

Having a good clear out and spring clean this new year? You can turn old banknotes and unused jewellery into a donation to Transform Trade via our partner Recycling for Good Causes. You'll find a handy freepost envelope enclosed to send in your items for recycling.



Keep turning the page with Transform Trade

Tucked into the envelope alongside this magazine is a lovely little bookmark for you. We hope you can put it to good use! If you would like extras to hand out to events, fairtrade stalls etc. email us at fundraising@transform-trade.org

Join our Facebook community

We have created a Transform Trade Community group on Facebook, and everyone is welcome! This group is friendly space for chatting, sharing updates of events, fundraising and much more – join at transform-trade.org/facebook-group



Changing circumstances: it's (not just) the thought that counts...

Leaving a gift in your will to help others is an act of tremendous love, which we at Transform Trade always find moving. When receiving news of a legacy gift, we feel grateful, proud and humbled that the deceased has entrusted us to carry out their wishes through our work.

But there are times when our sorrow at the passing of a supporter is tinged with additional sadness that their intended gift cannot be realised, because of changes in circumstances since they wrote their will.

This can be for many reasons, but most often we hear a supporter has left Transform Trade a gift in their will of company shares; shares which have lost such value over time as to be worthless.

It is important therefore to review and update your will periodically to ensure it still benefits all those you intend, in the face of changed circumstances.

Sincere thanks to all who have left gifts in their wills to Transform Trade, or who have pledged to do so. For further information on gifts in wills or gifts in memory of a loved one, please contact Heather at heather.thompson@transform-trade.org

Donate Your Birthday

If you want to celebrate a birthday a little differently - and swerve the clutter that comes with gifts that you don't need, we have a super-simple solution...

With just a few clicks, you can set up a Transform Trade fundraiser and mark your birthday by standing for people centred trade. All you'll need is a Facebook account and a few generous friends, and we take care of the rest!

It's simple:

1. Create your fundraiser
2. Customise it with a personal message
3. Share with friends and family and receive donations!

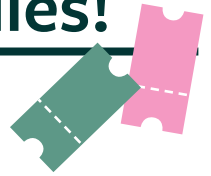
www.transform-trade.org/donate-your-birthday





Your chance to WIN ethical goodies!

The Ethical Raffle is in full swing this year with prizes from UK-based businesses specialising in ethically produced products such as:



Cruelty-free skincare set worth £111 from Green People



A year's supply of chocolate from Divine Chocolate



Beautiful, bespoke artwork by Cherrie Mansfield



An eco-glamping mini break! Check out last year's winner Lindsay Mills & her daughter



A classy bundle from VENT for Change

£100

A £100 voucher to spend as you like at Shared Earth

This raffle is 100% digital to protect trees and make it even easier for you to purchase tickets. Get yours for only **£1** each from **transform-trade.org/raffle**

Give ethical raffle tickets as a gift

Sometimes a little out-of-the-box thinking does wonders for giving great gifts, so why not buy some Ethical Raffle tickets as a present?

Tickets are paperless and will be delivered by email to the recipient on a date of your choosing – an exciting, sustainable gift with the chance to win fabulous prizes.

Buy tickets at store-transform-trade.org

Transform Trade

So everybody benefits.

We used to be called Traidcraft Exchange

transform-trade.org

Registered charity no. 1048752