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Mohamed Rihan, 25, from Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh has worked as a wood carver at Sumitra Woodwork in Hapur, Uttar Pradesh, India for 4 years.

“I enjoy working on handicraft and fine carving—it’s proof of the quality we can produce here. I like the friendly atmosphere at the workplace. The tools and handling machines are all top-notch.”

(covers) Elu Valdez, 78, a life-long cacao grower, holds a cacao pod while sitting on her steps with her great-granddaughter Yaritza Berberan, 5. Fortaleza del Valle: Canuto, Chone, Manabi, Ecuador.
About Fair Trade USA

Fair trade is a movement that empowers farmers, workers, and fishers to fight poverty in ways that improve lives and protect the environment. Founded in 1998, Fair Trade USA is the leading 501(c) (3) nonprofit, third party certifier of fair trade products in North America. We are building an innovative model of responsible business, conscious consumerism, and shared value to eliminate poverty and enable sustainable development for farmers, workers, their families, and their communities around the world. We achieve our mission by empowering producers around the world with the business training, environmental knowledge, and capital investment necessary to create high-quality products that can compete in global markets, and by certifying and promoting fair trade products.

Impact Management System (IMS)

The IMS is Fair Trade USA’s approach to defining, measuring, and communicating the impact of our model. The foundation of the IMS is the organization’s Theory of Change. It also includes the indicators, processes, and technologies used to monitor and evaluate its programs and report on progress toward achieving its outcomes over time.

The objectives of the IMS are:

1. Define the outcomes and impact that Fair Trade USA aims to achieve and the methodology for measuring it
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of program strategies and activities (e.g. standards, market support, consumer activation programs) in realizing goals and desired outcomes
3. Use our internal and external evaluations to refine our programs and improve results
4. Communicate the change Fair Trade USA is enabling for producers, communities, businesses, and consumers
What is a Theory of Change?

The Fair Trade USA Theory of Change describes the vision of how the fair trade programs catalyze change in the lives of people around the globe. The Theory of Change is also the foundation of the IMS.

The Theory of Change is a visual and narrative representation of how the strategies and activities of Fair Trade USA impact the livelihoods of small farmers, fishermen, and hired workers on farms and in factories (collectively referred to as producers) over time.

In many global supply chains value is not shared equitably, and producers have limited ability to control whether they receive a fair exchange for their goods or services. Labor is still commoditized, and producers may not receive payment (wages or prices) that covers their basic needs or costs of production. Despite increasing awareness of these inequalities, global systems change is needed to create fair trading relationships.

To create a better model of trade, Fair Trade USA, with support from our strategic partners, advocates for and implements decent work in order to drive more equitable supply chains. This model empowers producers and enables businesses to more transparently support sustainable livelihoods.

Fair Trade USA’s Theory of Change frames a model in which people prosper in resilient and sustainable communities by building a market for responsible business and mutually beneficial trade that cultivates conscious consumption.
Who Are the Primary Stakeholders in the Theory of Change?

The Fair Trade USA vision manifests across four main groups of stakeholders: individual producers, the communities where producers work and live, the industries that buy and sell their goods, and the consumers who purchase products with the Fair Trade Certified™ seal.

Each stakeholder on the graphic is represented by a color; each color blends into the adjacent color, indicating that these stakeholders are not exclusive in how they contribute to and benefit from the model, but rather how they share the impact that is created.

There are two primary types of producer stakeholders at origin:
• Small producers (farmers and fishers)
• Hired workers (agricultural and factory)

Fair Trade USA consumers, and the industries that produce Fair Trade Certified products and goods, are also global actors in the model. These industries are comprised of:
• Brand and retail partners
• Farms, factories, fisheries, and cooperatives that hold a Fair Trade Certificate (also known collectively as Certificate Holders)

These business entities partner with Fair Trade USA to preserve human rights in their supply chains. Consumers are able to choose Fair Trade Certified products with the confidence that the individuals and communities behind the seal are treated equitably and empowered through the program.

The ability of Fair Trade USA to create value for producers is dependent on the value created by businesses and consumers. Growing consumer and business demand for fair trade products is a key component in the impact of the model.
How Does Fair Trade USA Create Change?

Fair Trade USA’s impact results from two primary mechanisms:
Certificate Holders’ adherence to rigorous standards and the investment of Community Development Funds, an output of the standard. To amplify the impact at origin, Fair Trade USA provides producer support services such as education and training on human rights, leadership, gender equity, and financial resilience.

Fair Trade USA implements fair trade standards that drive Certificate Holders to operate ethically and fairly. These standards are designed to protect the livelihoods of those who produce goods by requiring decent and safe working conditions, supporting economic well-being, advocating for gender equity, requiring fair prices*, and protecting human rights.

Through adherence to the Trade Standard, each industry and brand partner commits to pay an additional sum of money above the purchase price of the Fair Trade Certified product. These funds are then returned to the producer community in the form of Community Development Funds. Each producer community organizes into a committee that democratically votes on the administration of these funds, supporting empowerment and agency over the impact on their communities and livelihoods.

Ultimately, these stakeholder journeys culminate in shifting the global systems of inequity to create a model where producers, as well as their communities, thrive under strong social protections and fair trading relationships supported by a movement of conscious consumers. Businesses are in turn rewarded by consumers for responsible sourcing and supporting the people producing the products they buy and sell.

*in certain supply chains

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**Impact**

“Fair Trade Community Development Funds are a really good incentive for us; plus we feel like we are better supporting our community with this program. For example, this year we bought air conditioners for the local primary school. That was pretty special.”

—Gabriel Tiburcio García Inzunza, Cooperative Pescadores del Puerto de Altata, Sinaloa, Mexico

“Before the renovation women had to walk really far to get water. It was dirty and unsafe. Now, the water pump area is clean, efficient, and safer for our community to use.”

—Michel Yao Kouassi, Chief of Kpatabonou Village

(left) In 2018, the Kpatabonou Village, in the Oumé section of Côte d’Ivoire, completely renovated its water pump using Community Development Funds received through the local cooperatives’ partnerships with Fair Trade USA.
How to Read the Theory of Change

The Theory of Change is graphically intended to represent a dial that visualizes change across the four main stakeholders and their outcomes, which are intertwined, or overlapping, as each outcome affects the others.

This dial is meant to be read from the center outwards, beginning with “Inputs” in the center and progressing outward to “Outputs”, “Outcomes”, and finally to “System-Wide Impact Goals.”

The Center of the Dial (Inputs)
Fair Trade USA’s logo represents the inputs used to implement the model. Two critical inputs that drive impact are the Fair Trade USA standards, as well as the many strategic partnerships such as auditors, businesses, and philanthropic donors that support the implementation of the model.

Outputs
include the creation of the Fair Trade Committee, the administration of the Community Development Funds to invest in producer communities, and, in some supply chains such as coffee and cocoa, the governance of the Fair Trade Minimum Price.

Outcomes
As outputs develop over time, outcomes emerge. These include empowered individuals, resilient supply chains, responsible business production, ethical trade, and increased consumer demand for products supporting the health and well-being of all communities at origin.

System-Wide Impact Goals
The goals stated in the outside ring of the circle cross over several sections of the dial as the outputs and outcomes listed are not exclusive to one stakeholder, but rather drive impact for all. The colors of the dial fade into the adjacent section to represent that all stakeholders mutually benefit from different outcomes of the model; what positively impacts a farmer can also impact their community as well as the consumer of their product and the businesses who are partners in creating change.

The Color Legend at the bottom is to guide the reader through the Fair Trade USA model and the different Stakeholder Journeys that work together to drive system-wide impact.

Inputs
Tools, resources, activities, and strategies dedicated to the project

Outputs
The volume or quantity of work accomplished by the project

Outcomes
Short, interim, and long term benefits or changes for participants after project activities

Impact
System-wide long term fundamental change of the intervention

Detailed on pages 9, 10, and 11
Theory of Change

Fair Trade USA’s Theory of Change frames a model where people prosper in resilient and sustainable communities through building a market for responsible business & mutually beneficial trade that cultivates conscious consumption.

We support producer and worker COMMUNITIES through stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and participatory and equitable decision making, all of which lead to increased social capital and community resilience.

We protect our WORKERS, FARMERS, and FISHERS through certification, auditing, and compliance with our standards which grant access to safe environments, additional capital and resources, and education along their fair trade journey.

We change INDUSTRIES and empower communities by educating our farms, factories, fisheries, and brands on responsible business practices and developing ethical supply chains.

We engage CONSUMERS by celebrating brands that sell Fair Trade Certified products produced in the fair trade process, as well as educating consumers to advocate for sustainable supply chains.

*in certain supply chains
Diving into Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The next few pages of this document provide greater detail about the outcomes Fair Trade USA is driving and the KPIs we use to help us understand how those outcomes are being achieved.

A KPI is a quantifiable measure used to evaluate the success of meeting an objective for performance. In the case of Fair Trade USA, KPIs are used to better quantify and understand the progress made towards achieving impact outcomes. The outcomes are the objectives that need to be met in order to achieve impact goals as stated in the Theory of Change.

Each key performance indicator is associated with one or more outcomes referenced in the Theory of Change in order to quantify the success of our programs in driving toward the outcome and overall impact goals for the individual, community, and industry partner.

Fair Trade USA works in many countries, commodities, and production systems, with smallholder farmers and fishers, as well as hired labor. The KPIs on the following pages often relate to producers and Fair Trade program participants. Depending on the context, the term producer may refer to farmers, fishers, workers, and/or Certificate Holders. While some KPIs are universal, not all KPIs are applicable to all situations.

The key performance indicators listed for each outcome are a sampled overview and not the comprehensive list of the indicators that will be collected to assess progress towards that outcome. In addition, certain outcomes are applicable across the different types of stakeholder’s and are repeated. Finally, some KPIs may also repeat given that they measure progress that is relevant to more than one outcome. Individual KPIs may be achieved prior to the theorized timeline for each outcome.
## Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators: COMMUNITIES

We support producer and worker COMMUNITIES through stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and participatory and equitable decision making, all of which lead to increased social capital and community resilience.

### OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term</th>
<th>Interim</th>
<th>Long Term</th>
<th>System Wide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Organization</td>
<td>Community Action or Infrastructure</td>
<td>Community Well-Being</td>
<td>Resilient Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of producers who report fair trade enables sense of community and organization</td>
<td>• % of producers who report they have access to potable drinking water</td>
<td>• % of Community Development Funds spent on community infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of producers who voted for Community Development Funds project plan</td>
<td>• % of Community Development Funds spent on community infrastructure</td>
<td>• % of producers who report they access health care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Trade Community Development Funds Project/Payout</td>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>• % of producers who report benefiting from trainings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of producers who voted for Community Development Funds project plan</td>
<td>• % of producers who perceive positive change in trust at the workplace since engaging in fair trade</td>
<td>• % of producers who report they are satisfied with Community Development Funds spending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Average amount of Community Development Funds invested per project</td>
<td>• % of producers who have served on a Fair Trade Committee, Social Engagement Team, Health &amp; Safety Committee</td>
<td>• % of producers who voted for Community Development Funds project plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Representation</td>
<td>Knowledge Transfer</td>
<td>Community Empowerment</td>
<td>• % of producers who have served on a Fair Trade committee, Social Engagement Team, Health &amp; Safety Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of Fair Trade USA Committees that are representative of producers’ gender</td>
<td>• % of Community Development Funds spent on trainings</td>
<td>Sustainable Livelihood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of producers who feel they can take a suggestion to Fair Trade USA Committee</td>
<td>• % of Certificate Holders who access digital and/or in person trainings developed with Fair Trade USA</td>
<td>• % of producers who report that fair trade earnings cover their household’s basic expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Education</td>
<td>Gender Equity</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>• % of producers who report the ability to address financial shock/emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of producers who have children enrolled in school</td>
<td>• % of women producers who feel they are compensated for their work equally to their male counterpart</td>
<td>• % of producers who have served on a Fair Trade USA Committee, Social Engagement Team, Health &amp; Safety Committee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % Fair Trade USA Committee members who report learning new skills as a result of serving on a committee</td>
<td>• % of Fair Trade USA Committees that are representative of producers’ gender</td>
<td>Workplace Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Awareness</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Individual Well-Being</td>
<td>• % of producers who plan to return to work on current farm/plant the following season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of women producers who identify as a co-farmer of the land they farm</td>
<td>• % of producers who have served on a Fair Trade USA Committee, Social Engagement Team, Health &amp; Safety Committee</td>
<td>(via Net Promoter Score)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• % of producer members who are women</td>
<td>• % of Fair Trade USA Committee members that report gaining leadership skills as a result of serving on a committee</td>
<td>Individual Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IMPACT GOAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 to 3 years</th>
<th>3 to 7 years</th>
<th>7 to 10+ years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilient Communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators: INDIVIDUALS

We protect our WORKERS, FARMERS, and FISHERS through certification, auditing, and compliance with our standards which grant access to safe environments, additional capital and resources, and education along their fair trade journey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term</th>
<th>Interim</th>
<th>Long Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fair Representation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Awareness</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Community Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally Required Wages &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>Income Diversification</td>
<td>Sustainable Livelihood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Access</td>
<td>Individual Empowerment</td>
<td>Workplace Well-Being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker Management Dialogue</td>
<td>Protected Environments</td>
<td>Ethical Supply Chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Management</td>
<td>Safe and Secure Workplace</td>
<td>Strong &amp; Successful Businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency in Sourcing/Sales Agreements</td>
<td>Resource Efficiency</td>
<td>Sustainable Resource Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency in Labor Agreements</td>
<td>Efficiencies in Production</td>
<td>Environmental Stewardship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Access &amp; Linkage</td>
<td>Income Stabilization</td>
<td>7 to 10+ years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 to 3 years

1 to 3 years

1 to 3 years
Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators: INDUSTRIES

We change INDUSTRIES and empower communities by educating our farms, factories, fisheries, and brands on responsible business practices and developing ethical supply chains.

**OUTCOMES**

**System Wide**

- Mutually Beneficial Trade

**Impact Goal**

- Ethical Supply Chain
  - % of workers who report their wages and/or benefits have improved since Fair Trade USA implementation
- Sustainable Resource Use
  - % of cooperatives that report a more resilient supply chain
  - % of Certificate Holders who report the ability to withstand supply chain fluctuations as part of fair trade
- Responsible Business Practices
  - % of Certificate Holders who perceive improved worker/manager dialogue or communication
  - % of Certificate Holders who feel they have fair terms of trade with their fair trade buyers
- Fair Pricing/True Costing
  - Amount of annual minimum price differential paid

**Short Term**

- Worker Management Dialogue
  - % of producers who think their suggestion would be taken seriously by management/cooperative leadership
- Environmental Management
  - % of Certificate Holders who report using Community Development Funds in their operations to protect the environment
  - % of Certificate Holders who ensure areas used or converted for production of fair trade crops comply with national legislation in regards to agricultural land use
- Transparency in Sourcing/Sales Agreements
  - % of Certificate Holders who are compliant with sourcing contracts
  - % of farmers reporting payment receipts are distributed by Certificate Holders
- Transparency in Labor Agreements
  - % of workers that understand their terms of employment
  - % of Certificate Holders who have written contracts with clear employment conditions
- Market Access & Linkage
  - % of Certificate Holders who report new relationships via Fair Trade USA Certification
- Supply Chain Investments
  - % of Certificate Holders who report that Fair Trade USA services helped them to understand where to invest in their business
  - % of Certificate Holders who report that Fair Trade USA services helped them understand where to invest
- Audit Compliance
  - % of Certificate Holders who pass audits with zero non-compliances
  - Number of partners/brands who participate in Fair Trade USA Campaigns events
- Brand Engagement
  - % of total production volume sold as fair trade

**Interim**

- Protected Environments
  - % of Certificate Holders who report maintaining buffer zones to protect waterways
- Safe and Secure Workplace
  - % of workers who feel physically safe working at current farm or facility
  - % of workers who are satisfied with their working conditions
- Resource Efficiency
  - % of Certificate Holders who dispose of waste properly
  - % of fishers who are aware of how to reduce by-catch
  - % of fishers who understand the effects of overfishing in their region
- Efficiencies in Production
  - % of Certificate Holders who report positive net income change
  - % of producers who report that Fair Trade USA services helped them to understand their market
- Income Stabilization
  - % of producers who report positive net income change
  - % of producers who report the ability to save each month
- Supply Chain Transparency
  - % of annual increase of traceability
  - % of partners who access the Producer Recognition Program for supply chain visibility
- Brand Advocacy
  - Number of brand partners/sponsors with product/contribution or donation (conference, universities etc.)

**Long Term**

- Ethical Supply Chain
  - % of workers who report their wages and/or benefits have improved since Fair Trade USA implementation
- Strong & Successful Businesses
  - % of Certificate Holders who report Fair Trade USA services have contributed to the strength of the organization
- Sustainable Resource Use
  - % of farmers/fishers who are aware of the waste management plan for their group
  - % of producers who implement technology and/or practices to improve efficiency of water use
- Environmental Stewardship
  - % of producers who understand the benefits of enhancing biodiversity
  - % of producers who actively practice procedures to protect endangered species
- Resilient Supply Chain
  - % of cooperatives that report a more resilient supply chain
- Responsible Business Practices
  - % of Certificate Holders who perceive improved worker/manager dialogue or communication
- Fair Pricing/True Costing
  - Amount of annual minimum price differential paid

**Version 2.0.0, November 2020**

**To Learn More About Fair Trade Visit FairTradeCertified.org**
Program Measurement Approach

Our approach to monitoring and evaluation includes a variety of methods and tools to collect data and to measure the outputs, outcomes, and impact of our programs. The Data Collection Pyramid below breaks down the IMS data sources into different collection levels and methods based on their content and frequency of collection.

Level 1 – Systematic Data
Data collected from all producer organizations.

Level 2 – Sampled Data
Data collected periodically across a selected group of producer organizations, preferably a representative sample. Where appropriate, these results can be extrapolated to draw conclusions at an organizational level.

Level 3 – In-depth Studies
Deeper research studies on a specific topic or for a carefully chosen subset of producer organizations. The goal is depth over breadth. They can also include a “control” group of similar, non-certified entities to enable comparison.

Data Collection Pyramid

1. SYSTEMATIC DATA
   - Member Information
   - Transaction data
   - Audit Data
   - Digital Platform*

2. SAMPLED DATA
   - Household Baseline & Progress Surveys
   - Premium Questionnaires
   - Digital Platform*

3. IN-DEPTH STUDIES
   - Topical studies / Internal Evaluations
   - Partnered / Academic Research
   - External Evaluations

*Not applicable for all supply chains
Collection Methods

Level 1: Systematic Data Collection Methods

Fair Trade USA collects certain datasets systematically across all programs and producer groups via audits, transactions, and the newly developed Digital Platform.

In order to gain and maintain fair trade certification, producer organizations are audited by third-party Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) against fair trade standards. These audits evaluate adherence to the requirements of the fair trade standard, and they also provide compliance data which support insights into the supply chain. Once they pass the audit and become certified, these producer organizations are considered Certificate Holders.

Certificate Holders also share information such as demographics, production volume data, and information about the use of Fair Trade Community Development Funds through audits and questionnaires.

Business partners are required to report on fair trade purchases, sales, and payments on a periodic basis. These transaction reports are analyzed to assess business partners’ compliance with the Trade Standard. Transaction reporting also enables insights on volume sold and Fair Trade Premium* paid.

Fair Trade USA standards require Certificate Holders to form a Fair Trade Committee, which consists of democratically-elected representatives of the workforce, to assess their workers’ and community’s needs holistically and decide how to invest the Fair Trade Community Development Funds. These Needs Assessments provide data to inform how Community Development Funds are being utilized to drive impact goals.

* Fair Trade Premium: For every Fair Trade Certified product sold, the business or importer pays a premium that goes into a worker/farmer/fisher-controlled Community Development Fund at origin. From there, a Fair Trade Committee decides together how to spend the funds.
Level 2: Sampled Data Collection Methods

Fair Trade USA collects survey data from Fair Trade Premium Participants (fishers, workers, and farmers) and Certificate Holders.

Surveys of Fair Trade Premium Participants in a subset of supply chains are an important component of Fair Trade USA’s approach to monitoring and evaluation. Our Impact, Research, and Learning team designs and implements the surveys in collaboration with the Producer Services team and the Field team.

Depending on the context, surveys may be conducted in-person or remotely. In-person interviews are led by trained enumerators (interviewers) equipped with tablets who conduct the surveys in the local language. Remote surveys are conducted through LaborLink, a phone-based Interactive Voice Response (IVR) survey system. In these surveys, producers and workers receive instructions and submit their answers anonymously.

Surveys collect individual- and household-level data that is evaluated to monitor and measure progress toward Fair Trade USA’s impact goals as stated in our Theory of Change. Surveys are performed with a sample of stakeholders. The rigor of statistical and representative sampling of Premium Participants allows inferences to be made about the populations as a whole.

In addition to individual- and household-level surveys, Fair Trade USA also surveys a sample of Certificate Holders to collect information about Community Development Fund spending. Fair Trade USA is developing new capabilities and technologies to better reach Certificate Holders and will leverage those to develop future surveys to gain additional supply chain insights. Fair Trade USA will also develop a survey to collect information from a sample of business partners and measure progress for the industry, as stated in the Theory of Change.

Level 3: In-Depth Studies

Fair Trade USA utilizes topical studies, internal evaluations, partnered/academic studies, and external evaluations to assess outcomes and evaluate programs in connection with our Theory of Change. In-depth studies can consist of large-scale program evaluations or smaller, more focused, topical studies. These evaluations can be executed internally or externally. Internal evaluations are conducted by our Impact, Research, and Learning team. External evaluations are managed by Fair Trade USA and conducted in partnership with academic institutions, grantors, expert consultants from the field, other NGOs, or business partners.

Communication of Fair Trade USA’s Impact

At Fair Trade USA, we are committed to sharing the results of our work. We utilize multiple channels to communicate the outcomes of our programs, including internal and external evaluations, brand impact reports, academic studies, and various monitoring reports. As we evolve our IMS, we will continue to build out our reporting mechanisms, including supporting our producers and Certificate Holders with survey insights and data sharing. Additionally, we remain committed to working with our partners on opportunities to support their Corporate Social Responsibility commitments.

For any additional inquiries, please contact impact@fairtradeusa.org.