

Impact Report

2021 - 2022



Transform
Trade

So everybody benefits.



Credit: Transform Trade/Sarah Waiswa



Credit: Transform Trade/GMB Akash

Welcome to Transform Trade!

It feels very exciting to finally share with you our new name and brand. While our name has changed, we remain incredibly proud of our heritage, and are still enthusiastically partnered with Traidcraft Plc.

Our new name, Transform Trade, was suggested by one of our amazing supporters – and it encapsulates our mission perfectly. We want to radically transform trade and make sure all trade, everywhere, benefits people and the planet. Standing together against an unjust and broken system, we will keep fighting for a better way of doing business.

So why a whole new name and look now? We are facing hugely challenging times. Between the ongoing effects of Covid-19, aid cuts, conflict in Ukraine disrupting global food supplies, and the continued devastation of the climate crisis, the need to transform trade has never been so urgent.

We need to be at the front and centre of people's minds when they think about justice in trade, and a new name and brand gives us

the power to do that. We need a name and a brand which works across the world – not just for supporters here in the UK, but for communities we work alongside. Fundraising will be more critical than ever before, and we need a name which will help us reach new audiences and make it easier for supporters to raise awareness and articulate our vision for a fairer future.

As part of this, we are changing how we work – and will be focusing our attention on three key sectors. You can learn more about this on pages 6-9.

I very much hope you'll be as excited as I am by our new look and approach. Without your support, our work would be impossible, and I thank you for your ongoing commitment to a world free from injustice in trade.

With warmest wishes,

Charlotte Timson
CEO, Transform Trade

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Front cover Credit: Transform Trade/GMB Akash

People Centred Trade

“The people sitting in these public offices need to work for all - rich or poor.”

Morjina Baski, a day labourer in Bangladesh, says it best. This is how the world should work – but not how it does work.

Instead, the rich and powerful protect their own interests at the expense of everyone else. A handful of people make billions while hundreds of millions live below the poverty line.

In the world of trade this happens so often that we forget things can be different. But there is another way to do business - and we call it **People Centred Trade**.

It all starts with people like Morjina who is the leader of a group of 52 women in Nachole, Bangladesh.

Against a backdrop of discrimination, unequal pay and limited opportunities, Morjina and the women in her collective are standing up for their rights and building new business opportunities in the toughest economic conditions.



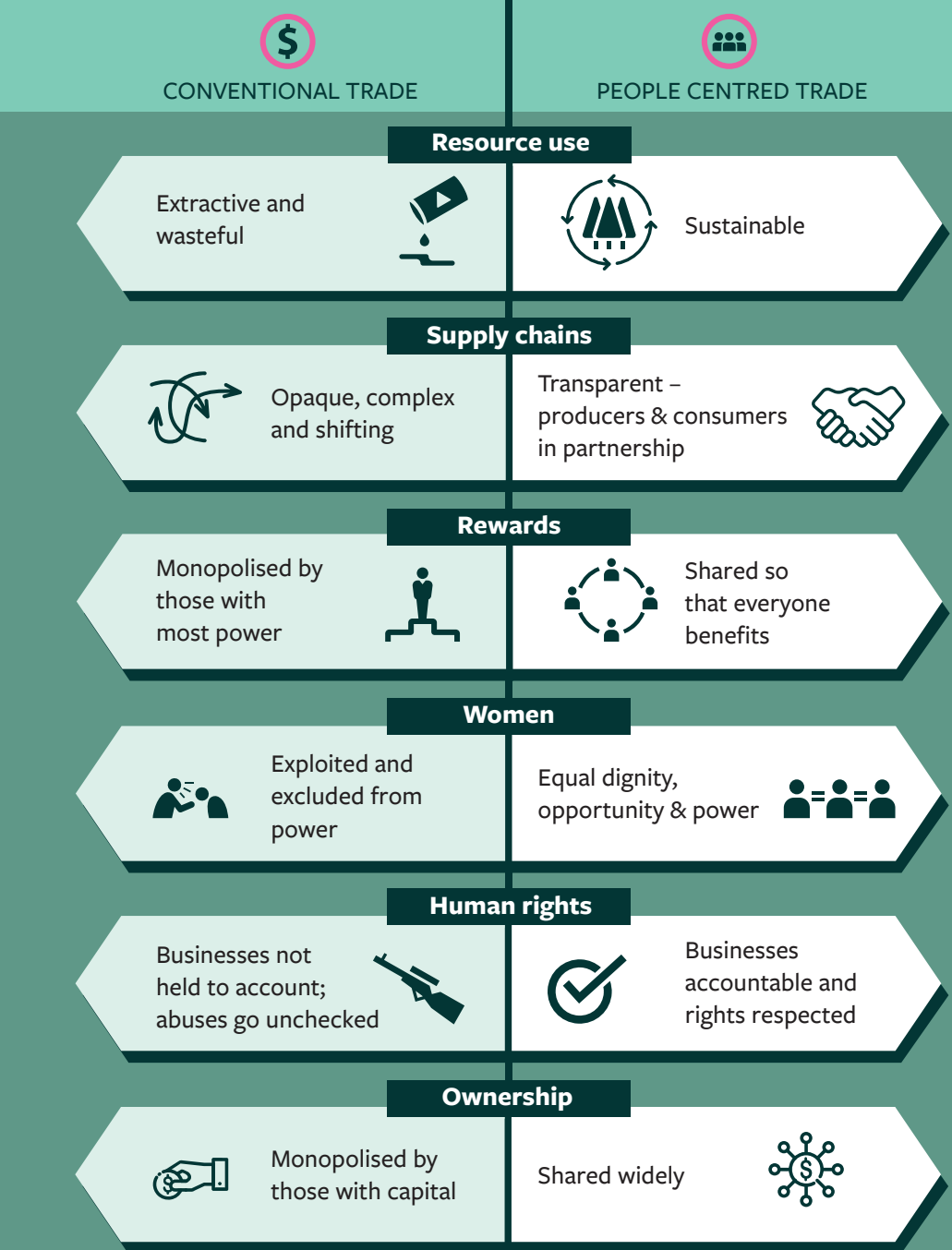
Credit: Transform Trade/ Tarik Rahman Emon

They’ve been so successful that the people sitting in public offices now come to Morjina - for her advice and for her connections with the community. She’s proving that a people-first approach is what is needed to solve real problems. She says,

“I am not educated. I didn’t have an education. All I have to offer is courage.”

The courage that Morjina shows is exactly what the world needs – the bravery to stand against injustice – and build a better system. Our role is to partner with people like Morjina, so that together, we can transform trade so that everybody benefits.

What is people centred trade?





Credit: Transform Trade/Sarah Waiswa

Our areas of work

 Fashion

 Tea

 Farming

These are the key areas we have worked on for decades, and where we can make the most difference to as many people as possible.

Cooperatives, unions and existing groups are already advocating for change and reform. Our aim is to amplify their voices, build their connections within supply chains, and provide them with technical skills and support. We seek out and support groups of workers, farmers and social entrepreneurs, often led by women, who are challenging how trade works.

Fashion

In a sector full of environmental damage and untold exploitation, people like Pinki Joshi are standing up for better, slower fashion.

It is estimated that 300 million people across the world work in the clothing industry. 80% of workers in the textiles industry are women, and exploitation, unsafe working conditions, low wages and sexual harassment are rife.

Just like Pinky Joshi says, there is so much potential in the garments sector for women to transform their lives and their communities through the power of trade. But there are many obstacles to overcome on that journey.

Very little of the huge profits in the fashion industry go into the hands of those making clothing. Fashion supply chains are complex and secretive, with many companies and middlemen outsourcing to smaller firms, subcontracted factories, and homeworkers employed in the informal economy.

An estimated 93% of brands fail to pay suppliers enough for the workers to earn a living wage.

On top of this, the garments industry is the second only to oil in terms of pollution. The industry is responsible for 10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, according to the United Nations.



Photo: Transform Trade/
Allison Joyce

“I want our village be one where women make money for themselves and understand what they are capable of.”

Pinky Joshi, textile shop owner, India

Over 100 billion garments a year are manufactured, and three out of five fast fashion items end up in landfill.

The fashion industry is exploiting workers and destroying the planet we all rely on. Transform Trade is working to change this – by amplifying the voices of workers demanding change, campaigning for legislative and policy reform, and directly supporting collectives working for better conditions and fair pay.



Tea

In 2020, the UK drank more than 100 million cups of tea a day, practically all of it imported, often from Kenya and India.

Shifting temperatures and changing rainfall patterns in tea-growing regions in both Kenya and India are affecting the amount of tea it is possible to grow, as well as making it harder to grow good quality leaves.

In India, over 350 million people are employed in the tea industry – many of whom live and work on tea estates, where housing, food and education is supplied by tea companies who own the land in lieu of a living wage.

Tea estates control the lives of their labourers, with child labour, malnutrition, and appalling living conditions common among workers who are unable to leave the

“I spent around 15 years of my life working in the company tea gardens... but now I work for myself!”

Maleka, tea grower, Bangladesh

estates. Workers and their families are afraid to speak out for fear of repercussions.

Even those who grow tea independently as a cash crop don't get a fair deal. Smallholder tea growers in Kenya are often paid per kilo, and work long hours with inadequate food and no breaks. Many are forced to sell to brokers, who pay far less than the tea is worth.

Transform Trade works alongside communities exploited by tea estates, raising awareness of their rights, and helping them to demand change, as well as providing skills training so communities can develop other sources of income, outside the tea sector. We also support smallholder tea growers to adapt to climate change, sell their produce for a fair price, and improve their working conditions.

Farming

Ann is a smallholder farmer – one of millions of people who make a living from farming across the world. From Kenya to the UK, we all depend on people like Ann, and the ecosystems they protect, to provide the food we need to survive.

Global food supply chains are complex, precarious and designed to profit large corporations rather than ensure that people across the world have enough to eat. All too often, large-scale, profit-driven agriculture relies on pesticides and chemicals which kill off biodiversity and damage our planet.

Droughts, flooding, and increasingly erratic weather patterns are all making it harder for vulnerable communities to grow enough to eat throughout the year. Climate change is escalating poverty.

Transform Trade is working alongside farmers across some of the world's most vulnerable communities, supporting them to increase their yields, protect biodiversity, get a fair price for their produce, and become climate-resilient. Alongside working directly with farming communities, we are supporting communities to raise their voices, demand change in local markets and international laws, and ensure that they get a fair deal for their produce.



Photo:
Transform Trade/
Sarah Waiswa

“It's not about going to ask someone, ‘How much will you buy my potatoes for?’ No! It's about telling him, ‘I'm selling at Ksh.1,400. Now go your way.’”

Ann Ntinyari, Meru, Kenya

MUKTEE - Freedom from bonded labour

The Adivasi and Dalit communities in Bangladesh and India face discrimination, poverty, and landlessness.

Many people in this community are forced to sell their labour in advance, in a system known as ‘bonded labour’ - a form of modern slavery. Since 2019, TransformTrade has worked with local partners to help people break free of bondage and learn the skills they need to earn an independent income and leave slavery behind for good.

Participants trained in a range of new skills including homestead gardening, poultry rearing and fishing. With support, they have also found work in new areas beyond agriculture.

We could never have predicted the arrival of Covid-19, but our teams in Bangladesh and India quickly understood the increased risk for Adivasi and Dalit people of returning to



Rumali Tudu
Credit:
Transform
Trade
/Aminul
Islam

conditions of forced labour, as businesses closed and opportunities to earn money were scarce – making the chance to learn new skills even more important. Rumali Tudu took part in our skills training work and became an electrician and an inspiration to other girls in her community. But when the pandemic hit, factories closed, and she was forced to return home.

In 2020, she told us

“Because of the coronavirus pandemic, my factory was closed and I lost my job and all my hopes again...I became the biggest burden of my parents. Before this pandemic, my parents could eat twice a day. Now they have to share their meals with me.”

We are happy to share with you that things are looking much brighter for Rumali today.

Thanks to her hard work and determination, she is once again working as an electrician in a large electronics firm, earning a very good salary.

Thank you to our partners, Jan Sahas and ASSEDO.

This work would be impossible without the generous support of the Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust, Society of the Sacred Heart, Worshipful Company of World Trader Charitable Trust, Austin Bailey Foundation, the Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust, Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust, The Rothley Trust, and the Gateway Charitable Trust.



Seeds are our lifeline

In the Jharkhand region in India, the indigenous Pahadiya tribes cultivate crops on hill slopes, including maize, cowpea, rice bean, millet and pulses.

Their economic security depends on the safe preservation of seeds for the next growing season, a responsibility held by women within the household.

As Namita Paharin, a local farmer says:

“Seeds are our lifeline, we cannot think of farming if we do not save our seeds.”

However, during times of hardship, seeds are sold to local traders who later resell the seeds at inflated prices. This manipulation causes financial losses for the most disadvantaged households and takes control of the seeds from the people who hold traditional knowledge

of agricultural practices in the region, threatening local food security.

Transform Trade is combatting this loss by working closely with village groups to create community seed banks. Committees are formed to manage seed collection after harvest, store seeds properly, and lend seeds during the growing season.

There are currently 4 seedbanks serving more than 1300 households, and during the Covid-19 lockdowns they gave access to seeds, in time for the growing season, to those suffering the most.

Thanks to your support, these seedbanks are helping communities to avoid the exploitative practices of traders and protect their businesses and their families long into the future.

With thanks to the Be One Percent Foundation for their support of this work.



Impact at a glance:

At the beginning of the project, **2,033** households were living below the rural poverty line. Three years later, that number has almost halved

On average, project participants now depend on selling their labour for **36%** of their household incomes, down from a baseline of **100%**

The most recent survey found that **NO** participants had taken new loans from local money lenders.



Credit: Thomas Cristofolletti, Ruom Collective/ReFashion

A Fashion Watchdog

In 2020 as the pandemic hit, UK fashion brands responded by cancelling orders with their suppliers, refusing to pay even when the work had been completed or was in the process of being completed. As a result millions of workers lost their jobs and their income.

Rather than being a unique incident caused by a global pandemic, this is just one of the many examples of UK brands treating their suppliers, and in turn the workers, poorly.

Constant years of low pay and gruelling conditions meant workers had no savings to fall back on. Even before the pandemic workers were regularly taking out loans to be able to survive. The pandemic simply exacerbated a broken system.

At the end of May, the news broke that Misguided, the fast fashion retailer, was collapsing, owing millions of pounds to their supplier factories. The suppliers had to let their workers go because they didn't have any money to pay them with.

As always, it is the workers who suffer the most.

We've been calling for a new regulator, a fashion watchdog, to make sure that UK brands treat their suppliers fairly. This would put an end to the exploitation of suppliers and their workers by UK brands – and could improve the lives of millions of garments workers across the world.

We went public with our ask in summer 2021 and over 15,000 people signed our petition. In June 2022 we held an event for MPs in Parliament alongside academics from Royal Holloway, University of London, The University of Nottingham and University of Aberdeen.

At the event MPs spoke to researchers who have tracked the repercussions of Covid-19 on the lives of garment workers in Bangladesh and Cambodia and heard the results of the largest ever survey of garment manufacturers in Bangladesh, which uncovered the abusive and unfair demands of many UK fashion retailers.

Many of our trust funders kindly gave flexible support when we stepped in to deliver emergency food, safety kits, and medicine to some of the hidden homeworkers who were affected by the fashion crisis during covid – thank you.

Demanding an end to exploitation by UK businesses

Over the past few years we've been flooded with companies promoting their 'green' products, or 'sustainable and ethical' practices – they claim to be doing good in the world.

But these are just words.

Across the world, people and the environment are being harmed to get us the products we use daily, from our food and clothing to mobile phones, make up and so much more.

When we walk into a shop, we could unknowingly be buying a product that was partly made by forced labour, or deforestation, or that caused pollution which makes people sick.

Frustratingly, UK laws aren't strong enough to stop businesses exploiting and even abusing people and the environment to produce goods for us overseas.

And so, together with other charities, trade unions, activists, businesses and investors in 2021 we launched our campaign for a new law: a Business, Human Rights and Environment Act.

We want this law to make it the companies' responsibility for avoiding causing harm to people or the environment. If they fail to do so the business would be held to account.

And the people who've been affected would be able to seek justice.

Over 25,000 people signed our petition. Adding together the petitions run by every organisation involved, over 125,000 people have joined our call for this law. As well as this, questions have been asked in Parliament and we're getting ready to launch a pledge for MPs to sign on to.

Our ultimate aim is to have this law written into every political party's manifesto for the 2024 general election so that whoever is in power puts it in place.

This campaign is a culmination of years of work by Transform Trade supporters. You might remember at the start of 2020 we launched our 'Our Land, Our Rights' campaign and report, exposing the horrific impacts of land grabbing in Liberia.

Going back further, between 2014 -2016 our Justice campaign first shone a light on the need for a law which would hold businesses responsible for abusive behaviour anywhere in their supply chains.

Some of this work has been funded by organisations who believe in trade justice. If you'd like to hear more contact amy.wilson@transform-trade.org



An update from our Hidden Entrepreneur Project...

Back in 2018 Transform Trade launched the Hidden Entrepreneur Appeal.

The appeal focused on Hidden Entrepreneurs - people with the talent and determination to succeed but who lacked the opportunities they needed to get started. With your investment, and the help of the UK government's Aid Match appeal, which doubled all donations made within the appeal timeframe, together, we raised over £1.1 million.

The project, known as SAWA, funded by this appeal officially ended this year, and we caught up with Gladys Gathoni a farming entrepreneur who took part in the project. She said...

"[This project] has trained us on many sound farming practices, but the time we were trained using the demonstration farms was the time they really helped us.

That is where we saw spacing, how to cover nursery beds. We knew nothing about nursery beds! Nothing about the right crop-protection products to use!"

Because they live and work so remotely, farmers like Gladys have always been dependent on middlemen to get their crops to market. These middlemen consistently undervalued their produce.

The Hidden Entrepreneurs project has helped to shift this imbalance by sending market price updates to farmers via SMS text messages,

putting the power to negotiate in the hands of farmers.

"You can negotiate as you know what the price in the market is. It really helps. You can tell him, no, in Isiolo it is at this price, in Meru it is this much,"

The project has not been smooth sailing all the way - Covid-19 made it impossible for farmers to meet for many months and caused vegetable prices to hit record lows. But through it all, farmers like Gladys have shown the drive and determination to meet these challenges head on - with your support they are working for a better future for their families and communities.

Despite the global pandemic, for Gladys, the impact has been huge:

"This project has really taken us far. My yields have gone up."



The future for our work in Meru County, Kenya

Right now, the global food crisis, caused by the war in Ukraine and worsened by the climate crisis and the ongoing impact of Covid-19, continues to hit the very poorest. As part of our commitment to locally-led development, we are now working with 10 innovative groups who were part of the Hidden Entrepreneur (or SAWA project) to pilot and test participatory grant-making. Building on their successes, groups are currently busy designing and business planning the next stage of their journey of change. Transform Trade will provide financial support to their ideas and accompany groups to implement them where we are required. This is a new way of working for Transform Trade and for communities alike - the approach is one which recognises and harnesses the power within communities and supports them to design their own process of change and achieve their goals. We will test whether the approach itself creates more sustainable change over time. If you'd like to hear more about this pilot or how you can support it, please contact Amy Wilson amy.wilson@transform-trade.org

We can't wait to share the next stage of this journey as it develops. As we look ahead, challenges in this region will remain, but thanks to your support there are thousands of farmers who are better equipped to fight back and build a brighter future.

Gladys Gathoni,
farming entrepreneur,
Meru County, Kenya
Credit: Transform Trade/Ian Gatere



Climate-smart farming in action



1 Water is collected in a pan, saving it for times of low rainfall



2 During dry periods, pipes are laid to connect the water pan to the onion field



3 At the right time, onion seedlings are watered using this stored water



4 Months later there is an onion harvest despite the volatile climate

Pictured: Chalagat Chematia
Credit: Transform Trade/Sarah Waiswa

Khamatayan - Incomes and confidence...

In Bangladesh, half of the population works in agriculture, and 80% of those are smallholders, farming small plots of land, often within one family.

Since January 2018 Khamatayan, a project funded by the EU and working in partnership with Christian Aid, Solidarities International, Rural Development Sangstha, Gana Unnayan and Shushilan, has been working to support smallholder community organisations. These represent over 20,000 farmers, and the project aims to help them to engage with local governments and learn new ways to earn more from their work.

“We are poor people. Even if we could understand the government officer or the chairman was depriving us – we could not say anything. We were afraid. We are not afraid anymore. Now we are a group – we have the mental strength to say what we think is right.”

Project participant, Bangladesh



Laily Khatun planting seedlings for trees, Bangladesh.
Credit: Transform Trade/GMB Akash

“Money matters. Previously, I worked hard, but did not have income, so I was not important to anyone, not even my family. After (joining the project) my income increased. Now I have become an important person. My family persons (Husband, in-laws) now value my opinions and consider discussing with me before taking any decisions.”

Project participant, Bangladesh

It's been incredibly successful - between 2018 and 2021 the average household income of smallholders involved in the project more than doubled.

The introduction of group savings schemes have made it easier and cheaper for farmers to make investments in otherwise unaffordable items, like machinery or livestock. Farmers have changed how they use their land – planting crops differently and growing year-round.

One of the most important aspects of our work is changing how community

groups interact with local governments. Often, their voices are unheard and they are unable to change the policies and laws which impact their daily lives. Women, people with disabilities and other marginalised groups are often silenced and unable to voice their opinions, affect policy and lead decision making. Often, farmers lack knowledge of their basic rights.

By improving relationships between farmers and local governments, farmers become more confident and able to assert their rights, Now 85% of women farmers say that their

smallholder community organisation can influence how government policies are practiced. And the impact has spread beyond the community organisations to homes and individuals. Female members of the community smallholder organisations report more involvement in business practices and greater influence when it comes to household decisions than is usually found in rural areas of Bangladesh.

With thanks to The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trusts and the Society of the Sacred Heart for their generous donations.

Thank you for supporting communities in 21/22

We'd like to thank all of our donors, supporters and partners who have helped the communities we work alongside to create tangible positive changes in their lives during 2021-22.

We are grateful to the individuals, trusts, foundations and statutory institutions who have supported the work including:

Tisbury Telegraph Trust

Wyatt-Spearman Charitable Trust

The Blunt Trust

Janelaw Trust

Dorema Charitable Trust

Harapan

Marsland Mcadoo Charitable Settlement

Waylan Trust

The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust

Scott Bader Commonwealth Ltd

Jane Williamson Trust

The Hedley Denton Charitable Trust

The Fulmer Charitable Trust

The Beatrice Laing Trust

World Day of Prayer

The Ann Jane Green Trust

Worshipful Company of World Traders Charitable Trust

Nelson New Forest Foundation

W F Southall Trust

Saxham Trust

Arimathea Charitable Trust

Halcrow Foundation

The Dulverton Trust

The Rothley Trust

The Souter Charitable Trust

The Squires Foundation

The Dorfred Charitable Trust

The Jusaca Charitable Trust

Lancaster Craft Aid Trust

The S M B Trust

The Paget Charitable Trust

The Oakdale Trust

Gateway Development Trust Ltd

The Benham Charitable Settlement

The Lizandy Trust

The Cumber Family Charitable Trust

Love is Kindness Charitable Trust

Peter Cowley Africa Trust (PCAT)

Ms C F Gibbs Trust

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust

Society of the Sacred Heart

Matrix Causes Fund

Be One Percent Foundation

Oak Foundation

European Commission

FCDO

National Lottery Community Fund

Laudes Foundation

Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust

We are grateful to individual supporters including Janet Wilson, C. Lawrie, Richard Cocks and Margaret and Bill Dykes.

We'd also like to thank the people who generously remembered Transform Trade in their wills and their

friends and family. This year we received over £500k in unrestricted legacy income which allows us the flexibility to work with communities on the issues which matter most to them.

CALL TO ACTION

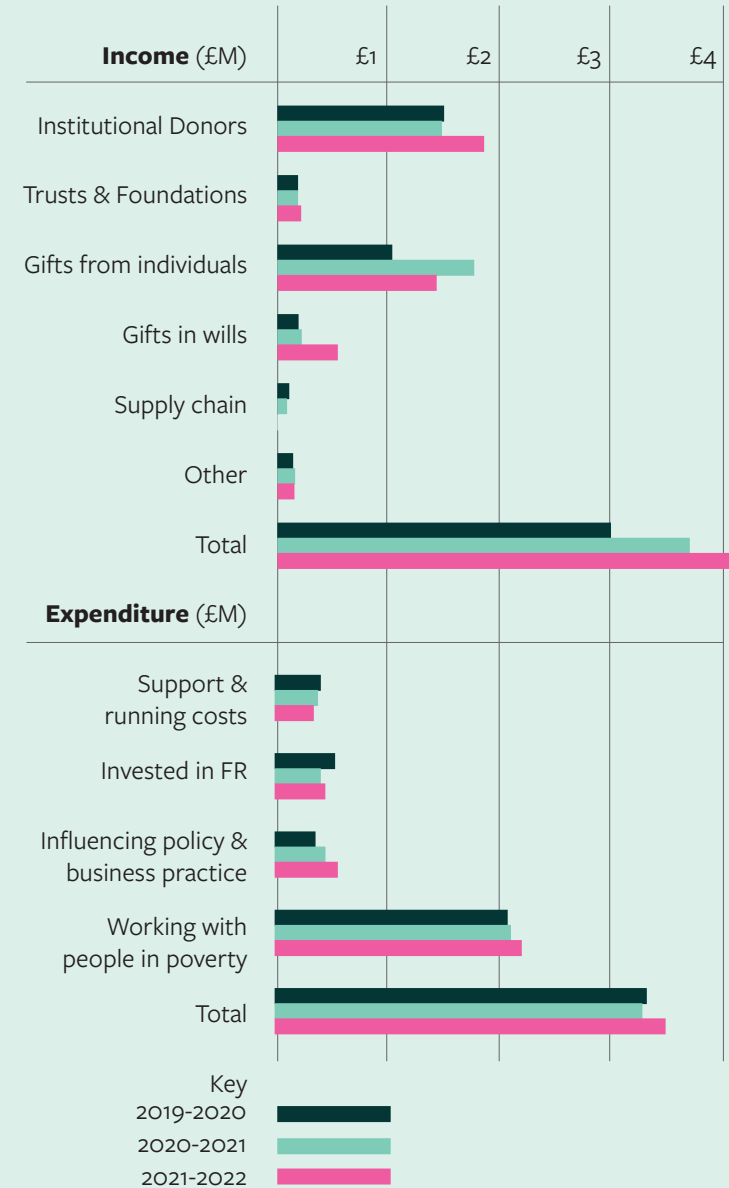
- can you provide flexible support to local leadership?

We hope you continue to support Transform Trade's work and vision by providing funding which is flexible enough to allow communities to lead their own process of change, creating sustainable impact for the long term.

If you're seeking to support locally-led initiatives and would like to talk through how you could fund more flexibly, please do connect with us. We'd love to hear from you and will meet you where you are on your own journey of change. Contact

amy.wilson@transform-trade.org

Financial summary



We are Transform Trade.

As a global community of farmers, workers, collectives, campaigners, donors and supporters we fight together for trade that values people over profit. Join us.

We used to be known as Traidcraft Exchange – we've been working together with Traidcraft since 1986.

transform-trade.org

Registered charity no. 1048752

Photos: Transform Trade/Tarik Rahman Emon

**Transform
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So everybody benefits.

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