

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF FAIR TRADE TOWNS REPORT - 2015

SUMMARY

During 2015 the number of Fair Trade Towns increased from just over 1,600 to 1,764 (a 10% increase globally) in 26 countries. New Fair Trade Town campaigns were launched in India, Cameroon and Ecuador and Sweden launched its Fair Trade Nation campaign. A Fair Trade Towns Regional Committee was set up by WFTO LA and CLAC for Latin America and following a visit to the first Fair Trade Towns in Ghana and Africa by the International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador along with discussions held with WFTO Africa, Fairtrade India, WFTO Asia and members of the Pondicherry Fair Trade Town campaign moves are underway to set up Regional/National Committees for Asia/India and West Africa/Ghana.

The annual International Fair Trade Towns conference in Bristol saw the launch of the Bristol Resolution on the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2016 International Fair Trade Towns Conference will be held in Lebanon; the very first to be held in a 'Producer' country and Saarbrücken, the First Fair Trade Town in Germany will host the 2017 conference.

In 2015 the International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee (IFTTSC) revised the International Fair Trade Town Guidelines and released the Stakeholder Proposal setting out a road map to create an improved coordinated network of Fair Trade Towns that can be better utilized for advocacy on fair trade and trade justice. A process of dialogue was initiated with different stakeholders at national and international level e.g. WFTO and regional structures, FT USA, FTAO and CLAC, but the IFTTSC is experiencing challenges in gathering feedback from some major stakeholders and national campaigns. This process will be further developed in 2016 with a plenary discussion on the Proposal planned for the annual conference. A need for a Terms of Reference for the IFTTSC was recognized, but due to limited capacity work on this has been delayed until the early part of 2016.

The FIG Tree International Fair Trade Centre moved from Garstang, UK to nearby Lancaster in 2015 and still hosts the International Ambassador's role that serves to support the International FTTs movement and new emerging campaigns. Along with first Fair Trade Towns in France, Germany, Japan, USA, Brazil and Ebolowa, Cameroon (where a campaign has been launched) The FIG Tree hosted Fair Trade Live to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Live Aid. Mayors from four out of the seven Fair Trade Towns taking part attended the event and signed the Bristol Resolution. Despite problems with funding ([see Appendix II](#)) the Ambassador was still able to meet 100% of tasks, but the role continues to be under threat. The Ambassador intends to continue in this role however, until all promises of funding cease.

INTERNATIONAL FTT STEERING COMMITTEE

At the time of writing there are 1,764 Fair Trade Towns in 26 countries. In 2015 new campaigns were launched in India, Cameroon and Ecuador; Sweden launched its Fair Trade Nation campaign and saw the declaration of Västmanland as its first Fairtrade Region; the ten villages of Menjez, Baskinta, Ferzol, Abra, Saidoun, Mhaidthe, Bissariye, Kfar Tebnit, Qleyaa and Ain Ebel are set to become the first Fair Trade Villages in Lebanon and a Regional Committee was set up for Latin America by WFTO Latin America and CLAC.

The annual International Fair Trade Towns conference came back to the UK for the first time since the inaugural conference in London in 2006. The conference in Bristol saw the launch of the Bristol Resolution on the Sustainable Development Goals that was immediately signed by the city's Mayor and is available to sign by Mayors from other Fair Trade Towns until September 2016. The Bristol Resolution can be downloaded for use from the International Fair Trade Towns website at: <http://www.fairtradetowns.org/news/bristol-ifttc-resolution-take-action-in-your-ft-town/>

The 10th International Fair Trade Towns Conference will be held in Baskinta, Lebanon on 1 – 3 July 2016. This will be the very first conference to be held in a 'Producer' country and will help boost the emerging fair trade campaigns in the Middle East and Africa. The 2017 conference will be hosted by Saarbrücken, the First Fair Trade Town in Germany and highlight the QuattroPole Region campaign made up of for cross border Fair Trade Cities: Luxemburg (Luxemburg), Metz (France) and Saarbrücken and Trier (Germany).

THE PRESENT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE:

- Adam Gardner, UK Fairtrade Towns Coordinator
- Billy Linstead Goldsmith, USA Fair Trade Towns Coordinator
- Bruce Crowther, Int. Fair Trade Towns Ambassador - The FIG Tree International Fair Trade Centre, UK
- Katharina Beelen, Belgium Sustainable Food Coordinator
- Tatsuya Watanabe, Japan Fair Trade Towns Coordinator
- Tadeusz Makulski, Poland Fair Trade Towns Coordinator
- Ulisses Ferreira de Oliveira, Poços de Caldas, Brazil

The IFTTSC revised the International Fair Trade Town Guidelines and released the Stakeholder Proposal in 2015. The Proposal sets out a timeline and road map to create an improved coordinated network of National Fair Trade Town campaigns that can be better utilized for advocacy on fair trade and trade justice. Feedback for the proposal is still being gathered from stakeholders and a plenary discussion on the Proposal will be held during the 2016 conference in Lebanon. The International Fair Trade Town Guidelines and the Stakeholder Proposal can be downloaded from the Resources page of the International Fair Trade Towns website at: <http://www.fairtradetowns.org/resources/> The goals, objectives and outcomes for the IFTTSC along with the outputs and outcomes for the International Ambassador's role are included in the Guidelines ([see Appendices III & IV](#)). A need for a Terms of Reference for the IFTTSC was recognized, but due to limited capacity work on this has been delayed until the early part of 2016.

INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS AMBASSADOR

The International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador role is undertaken by Bruce Crowther, the founder of Fair Trade Towns and hosted by The FIG Tree International Fair Trade Centre. Despite problems with funding ([see Budget](#)) the Ambassador was still able to meet 100% of tasks. The FIG Tree relocated from Garstang, UK (the world's first Fair Trade Town) to nearby Lancaster. Recent flooding however, has meant that The FIG Tree has been forced to leave its new premises in Lancaster so temporarily can no longer run the Fair Trade café and shop, host visits, run educational workshops or show its exhibitions and displays on Fair Trade Towns. Lack of funding means that the Ambassador's role continues to be threatened, but Bruce will continue to carry out the functions until all promises of funding cease.

TASKS DELIVERED

The tasks delivered by the International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador and the time allocated to each role are laid out in [Appendix I](#) and summarized under the following headings:

TO FACILITATE THE FAIR TRADE TOWN NETWORK BOTH FOR EXISTING NATIONAL COORDINATORS AND NEW NATIONAL INITIATIVES (21.5%)

Time spent on this was far less than that allocated despite an additional 15 hours assigned to writing reports that was not noted in the initial work plan. Reasons for this include the fact that the annual conference took place in the UK reducing time spent on travel and stay and work on developing the new website did not start until funding became available at the end of the year. As well as the Annual Report the Stakeholder Proposal was produced and circulated by the IFTTSC.

SUPPORT POLICIES FOR FAIR TRADE AND TRADE JUSTICE (6%)

It is still hoped and expected that more time can be allocated to this work as the Fair Trade Town movement grows, but it is still difficult to get participation from national campaigns at an international level. This was evident following the launch of the Bristol Resolution on the Sustainable Development Goals which has not yet been well circulated to Fair Trade Towns at the grassroots level. To celebrate the 30th anniversary of Live Aid in July 2015 the Fair Trade Live music festival was held at The FIG Tree in Lancaster, UK along with first Fair Trade Towns in France, Germany, Japan, USA and Brazil and Ebolowa, Cameroon where a campaign has been launched. Mayors from four out of the seven Fair Trade Towns participating attended the event and signed the Bristol Resolution.

TO SUPPORT EXISTING CAMPAIGNS AND NEW NATIONAL INITIATIVES (48%)

The time spent travelling to support both existing and new initiatives was far greater than that allocated; 356 hours compared to 200 hours allocated. This was for the most part due to the ten days spent visiting the emerging Fair Trade Village campaigns in Lebanon in June ([see Appendix V](#) for feedback). Only 11 hours were allocated to visiting the Bolgatanga International Craft and Arts Fair and New Koforidua in Ghana as this took place as part of a self-funded trip to New Koforidua by the International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador in his capacity as sub-chief for the village. The visit to Ghana along with discussions held with WFTO Africa, Fairtrade India, WFTO Asia and members of the Pondicherry Fair Trade Town campaign led to the Commonwealth Foundation application for funding to support the emerging Fair Trade Town campaigns in Ghana and India and help set up National Steering Committees to recognize their declarations and support further campaigns.

SUPPORTING EXISTING AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND NETWORKS (8.5%)

The Ambassador's time continued to be spent raising awareness of Fair Trade Towns and the inclusive 'Big Tent' approach to potential partners. Representatives of the IFTTSC, including the Ambassador gave a presentation on Fair Trade Towns at the WFTO Conference in Milan. This presentation led to the initiation of a Fair Trade Town campaign in Pondicherry, India. Similarly the campaign to make Bolgatanga the 2nd Fair Trade Town in Africa and set up the annual Bolgatanga International Craft and Arts Fair was inspired following a presentation provided by the IFTTSC at the 2013 WFTO conference in Rio de Janeiro. In 2015 the WFTO Board nominated their representative to the IFTTSC. The Bristol conference and the WFTO conference in Milan provided the opportunity to start dialogue with WFTO Latin America and CLAC which then declared that they would take on the responsibility to develop the Fair Trade Town initiative on the continent.

FUNDRAISING (2%)

The Ambassador still continues to make funding requests to all National coordinators, Fairtrade International and WFTO. Thanks to this the income received from pledges in 2015 was able to cover 75% of the required budget ([see Appendix II](#)) with most expenses for the Ambassador covered. For the fourth consecutive year Fair Trade USA provided the greatest income at 10,000 Euro (30% of total income received) followed by Germany and Austria each providing 16%, UK at 8%, Belgium at 6%, Taiwan at 2% and Switzerland, Poland, Hong Kong and Japan providing a total of 5% income. WFTO Europe contributed 2% and Fairtrade International provided 3% specifically earmarked for the development of the new website. Because the Ambassador is based in The FIG Tree, office and communication costs were met by The FIG Tree at 5% of total income. The remaining 7% of income came through honoraria and expenses received from host countries receiving Ambassadorial visits. The Ambassador and IFTTSC will continue to make the necessary requests and apply for funding externally.

At the close of the year The FIG Tree made a funding bid on behalf of the IFTTSC to the Commonwealth Foundation in partnership with Fairtrade India, Fair Trade Forum India, WFTO Africa and TradeAid Integrated in Ghana. If successful the project will start in September 2016 and help fund the role of the International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador as well as support the emerging Fair Trade Town movements in India and Ghana

BUDGET

A budget ([see Appendix II](#)) was constructed to enable the IFTTSC and Ambassador to meet the necessary tasks ([see Appendix I](#)), deliver outcomes ([see Appendices III & IV](#)) and provide the minimum resources required to support the International Fair Trade Towns movement and new emerging initiatives. The estimated budget for 2015 was £31,514 of which £23,668 (75%) was received in total income. The activities of the IFTTSC were therefore limited, but all tasks and outcomes have been delivered above the basic level. All travel costs to support new and existing initiatives in 2015 were covered by the hosts and the International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador. As in 2014 accommodation costs for the annual conference were covered by the hosts in Bristol and all office and communication costs were fully met by The FIG Tree. The problem of sustainability for the budget remains a major challenge for the International coordination of Fair Trade Towns and if not improved there is a real danger that the role of the Ambassador and IFTTSC will cease or be forced to restrict their capacity solely to the coordination of the website and social media activities. At the end of 2015 there remains a deficit of -£521. So far pledges for 2016 have been received from Fair Trade USA, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, WFTO Europe and WFTO International totaling £14,753, just under 47% of the estimated amount required.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

There are now almost 1,800 Fair Trade Towns in 26 countries across the globe with emerging campaigns in the global South. What started off as a consumer movement to promote the FAIRTRADE Mark in the UK has now evolved into an international movement with enormous potential to advocate for fair trade and trade justice. To harness this potential however, we need to structure the movement to enable better engagement and dialogue by all national and international stakeholders in order to shape Fair Trade Towns for the future. The existing structure does not allow coordinated campaigning and advocacy at a national and international level. There is also a need to create a new approach for Fair Trade Towns developing in the global south. There is a variety of existing grassroots and regional initiatives emerging and the challenge is in some cases to enable them to meet different goals and objectives to those already met in the established 'consumer' countries and still embrace them as a part of the International Fair Trade Towns movement.

The Stakeholder Proposal developed by the IFTTSC sets out a possible road map to enable this to happen. The Steering Committee has no desire to assert any authority or control over Fair Trade Towns, but prefers to act as a 'lighthouse' that guides, encourages and inspires the network. It should therefore be emphasized that the Stakeholder Proposal is not a final directive, but a working draft document that requires input from all stakeholders at all levels. The need for a Terms of Reference has been recognized by the IFTTSC and will be developed in 2016 with appropriate input from stakeholders. The IFTTSC welcomes and encourages input and will continue to listen and gather any feedback received with the intention of discussing the outcomes and possible ways forward during the annual Fair Trade Towns Conference to be held in Lebanon in July.

We should not forget that the greatest strength of Fair Trade Towns is that it is and always has been a grassroots movement and it should remain as such. We should not try to own it or mold it to fit in with any short term strategy, but instead facilitate it, nurture it and allow it to grow into an unstoppable force for change.

Bruce Crowther
International Fair Trade Towns Ambassador
January 2016

APPENDICES

I. TASKS DELIVERED BY INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS AMBASSADOR IN 2015 – TOTAL HOURS WORKING AT 3 DAYS/WEEK = 1050

Aim	Objective	Tasks delivered	Time allocated in hrs (%)	Estimated hours used (%)
To facilitate the Fair Trade Town network both for existing national coordinators and new national initiatives	Conference support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support preparations for 9th FTTs Conference in Bristol, UK Attend 9th FTTs Conference in Bristol, UK Invite & process applications for conferences beyond 2015 Support preparations for 10th FTTs Conference in Lebanon 2016 	150 (14%)	110 (10.5%)
	Writing IFTTSC Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing and circulating Stakeholder Proposal Writing Annual Report 	0 (0%)	15 (1.5%)
	Arranging/attending regular SC meetings & reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help arrange and attend 5 x SC meetings and several 1 to 1 Skype calls. 	40 (4%)	40 (4%)
	Arranging and attending regular Coordinators meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help arrange and attend FTTs Coordinators meeting in Bristol, UK. 	15 (1.5%)	16 (1.5%)
	Maintaining Website/NING Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to monitor and contribute to NING Forum but still not possible to respond to all membership requests. Website kept updated and written articles. Supported activity on new Int. FTT Coordinator's FaceBook page. Support development of a new Int. FTTs website. 	100 (9.5%)	44 (4%)
Support policies for fair trade and trade justice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the "European Capital Fair Trade Award" and other EU demands. Support Milan Urban Food Policy. Promoted signing of Bristol Resolution, including SDGs event at The FIG Tree. Held Fair Trade Live event involving FTTs in 7 countries. 	85 (8%)	65 (6%)
To support existing campaigns and new	Travel to support existing initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Fairtrade Sweden in Stockholm and attended Uppsala's FTT declaration. Attended FA!R&Friends Fair Dortmund, Germany. 	100 (9.5%)	126 (12%)

national initiatives	Travel to support new initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten day visit to support FTTs in The Lebanon. Visited Bogatanga and New Koforidua, Ghana during personally funded trip. 	100 (9.5%)	230 (22%)
	Support via hosting visits to Garstang, emails and Skype/telephone calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported new initiatives in Ghana, Lebanon and India. Support rejuvenation of FTTs in Italy. Support recognition of FTTs in Ghana/Africa. Hosted visit by delegation from 8 countries following Bristol Conference. Hosted visits by ACO x 10 Korean/Japanese students. Recorded video messages for Ebolowa, Cameroon; Seoul, South Korea; Taipei, Taiwan; Nagoya, Japan and FTTs in India. Support (including letter) Fair Trade Workshops in Dubai. 	200 (19%)	145 (14%)
Supporting existing and potential partners and networks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend WFTO conference in Milan 2015 Support WFTO conference in Milan 2015 via working group. Co-write WFTO Conference Report with Tadeusz. 	80 (7.5%)	91 (8.5%)
Fundraising	Dialogue with existing stakeholders and seeking external opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding requests to all National coordinators, FT International and WFTO. Funding application made to Commonwealth Foundation to support Int. FTTs Ambassador's role and FTTs in India and Ghana 	40 (4%)	21 (2%)
Other (including 5 weeks annual leave + 5 days Bank Holidays)			105 + 35 = 140 (13.5%)	112 + 35 = 147 (14%)
TOTAL			1050 (100%)	1050 (100%)

II. INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS BUDGET 2015

Costs	Estimated budget/income				Real Expenses/Income			
	Unit	# of units	Unit rate (£)	Costs (£)	Unit	# of units	Unit rate (£)	Costs (£)
1. Human Resources								
FTT ambassador @ 3 days/week	Per month	12	1875	22500	Per month	12	1875	22500
Subtotal Human Resources Costs				22500				22500
2. Travel								
In Europe to support existing campaigns	Per travel	6	460	2760	Per travel	1	48	48
To support new FTT initiatives	Per travel	4	930	3720	Per travel	0	0	0
Subtotal Travel Costs				6480				48
3, Organisational cost (Accommodation + other expenses)								
WFTO Conference, Milan					Per event	1	213	213
International Fair Trade Towns Conference	Per event	1	450	450	Per event	1	54	54
Fair Trade Live					Per event	1	25	25
Expenses for attending FAIR&Friends Fair					Per event	1	65	65
Subtotal Organisational costs				450				357
4. Office costs and Communications								
10% of The FIG Tree annual running costs excl. café (£12,887)	Per month	12	107	1284	Per month	12	107	1284
Subtotal Office and Communication Costs				1284				1284
5. Other costs, services								
Website expenses				800				0
Subtotal Other Costs				800				0
Unforeseen costs (2%)								
TOTAL COST				31,514				24,189

Revenue sources	Unit	# of units	Unit rate (£)	Income forecast (£)	Unit	# of units	Unit rate (£)	Real Income (£)
Carried forward from 2014				226				226
Germany (5,000 Euro)		1	3794	3794		1	3794	3794
Austria (5,000 Euro)		1	3817	3817		1	3817	3817
Belgium 1st pledge (1,000 Euro)		2	350	700		2	350	699
Belgium 2nd pledge (1,000 Euro)						1	722	722
FT USA (10,000 Euro)		3	2100	6300		3	2351	7054
Switzerland		1	300	300		1	298	298
UK		1	2000	2000		1	2000	2000
Hong Kong		1	150	150		1	150	150
Taiwan		1	488	488		1	488	488
WFTO Europe		1	600	600		1	540	540
Poland						1	100	100
Fair Trade Forum Japan						1	54	54
Fairtrade International for website (1,000 Euro)						1	740	740
Honorarium & expenses for Round Table Discussion, Stockholm, Sweden		1	600	600		1	648	648
Honorarium for attending WFTO Conference, Milan (500 Euro)		1	380	380		1	348	348
Expenses for attending WFTO Conference, Milan						1	502	502
Honorarium/expenses for attending FA!R&Friends Fair, Dortmund		1	140	140		1	204	204
The FIG Tree (covering expenses)		12	107	1284		12	107	1284
TOTAL INCOME				20 779				23 668
TOTAL COSTS								24 189
BALANCE				-10 735				-521

III. GOALS, OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE

THE GOALS FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE ARE:

- To build an international community of Fair Trade Towns that will support policies for fair trade and trade justice using the establishment of direct communication lines between the Steering Committee and local groups e.g. Fair Trade Town Steering Groups, WFTO members etc. as a tool.
- To facilitate the development of Fair Trade Towns in the South in order to promote awareness of Fair Trade locally.
- To enable the 'Big Tent' approach to be used as an inclusive model for Fair Trade Towns and promote better understanding of the 'Big Tent' approach among Fair Trade campaigners.

THE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE ARE:

1. Facilitating the International Fair Trade Towns network both for organisers and campaigner groups.
2. Ensuring an annual Int. FTTs conference is held each year and assist in its organisation.
3. Arranging regular Steering Committee and coordinator meetings.
4. Maintain the international Fair Trade Towns website and corresponding NING Discussion Forum.
5. Establish direct communication lines between the Steering Committee and local groups e.g. Fair Trade Town Steering Groups, WFTO members etc. as a tool to create an international movement.
6. Further develop the existing international network of Fair Trade Towns and support all new national initiatives including but not solely Fair Trade Towns in the 'Global South'.
7. To develop and protect the concept of Fair Trade Towns while maintaining common ground and an identity based on the five founding goals.
8. To create and participate in dialogue with different stakeholders of the Fair Trade movement (Fairtrade International, Fair Trade USA, WFTO, FTAO etc.)
9. Fundraising.

IV. OUTPUTS & OUTCOMES FOR INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS AMBASSADOR

OUTPUTS FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S ROLE ARE:

1. Support and advise new or underdeveloped FTTs initiatives globally.
2. Develop and maintain International/regional Fair Trade Town guidelines to ensure a common identity across the international movement and to provide a reference source with support of International Steering Committee.
3. Gather, compile and share best practices and case studies with all national campaigns.
4. Guide the convening and support of the annual International Fair Trade Towns Conferences enabling grassroots campaigners to identify ways and means to further expand and strengthen the Fair Trade Towns Movement internationally. Ensure that themes and workshops build off of actions and needs identified in previous year's conferences
5. Convene regular International Fair Trade Towns Steering Committee meetings to deal with emerging issues and to make strategic decisions.
6. Regularly update and optimize the International Fair Trade Towns Website and the NING Forum in order to share and develop ideas to most efficiently and effectively promote Fair Trade and the Movement locally, nationally and internationally.
7. Lead the process of developing and staging policy campaigns through the conferences, the Steering Committee meetings, web-based discussions, and in partnership with FTAO throughout the global Fair Trade Towns network.
8. Fundraising - Dialogue with existing stakeholders and seeking further external opportunities.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES FROM THE AMBASSADOR'S ROLE ARE:

1. The Fair Trade Towns Movement expands further worldwide and is turned into a major force to promote Fair Trade and trade justice both in the global North and South.
2. Fair Trade Towns are formed in a growing number in the global South (in producer communities especially) accompanied by growing demand for Fair Trade products.
3. Recognition for Fair Trade is significantly increased in the countries and communities where the Fair Trade Towns Movement exists. (E.g. Recognition of Fair Trade in the first Fair Trade Town of Japan, Kumamoto, was significantly high at 32.0% compared to the regional and national averages of 20.2% and 25.7% respectively in 2012).
4. Market demand for and public procurement of labelled and other Fair Trade products is substantially increased where Fair Trade Towns are present.
5. Fair Trade is firmly embedded in local societies and obtains staying power during a global recession and against the 'fad.
6. The International Fair Trade Towns Movement retains harmony and unity while respecting diversity as a result of the guidelines provided by the Steering Committee.
7. Both existing and new Fair Trade Town initiatives are enhanced, upgraded and made ever more effective and efficient as a result of exchanging ideas and best practices that is facilitated by the Steering Committee.
8. The political will to make trade fair is built up from Fair Trade Towns to the national, regional and international level and world trade justice becomes ever closer to a reality.

V. FEEDBACK FOLLOWING VISITS BY INTERNATIONAL FAIR TRADE TOWNS AMBASSADOR

A. SWEDEN – May 2015

Sweden starting the path to becoming a Fair Trade Nation

As part of the campaign for the election to parliament the Swedish Green Party launched the idea of making Sweden the first Fair Trade Nation in the world within its sovereignty. As the Green Party came into the government they took contact with Fairtrade Sweden to inquire what the criteria might be for declaring Sweden a Fair Trade Nation. Fairtrade Sweden invited development CSOs to a round table-discussion about the content of the criteria. For this discussion the founder of the Fairtrade Towns movement, Bruce Crowther, was also invited and gave a starting presentation about the history of the movement and the ambition to take it to the next level. The process has since moved on and the Swedish government has now put together a task force of representatives from different sectors that are now working on suggestions for different criteria.

Johannes Hartvigson, Fairtrade Sweden

Bruce Crowther gave a very appreciated speech in Uppsala, when Sweden's fourth largest city got their Fairtrade City-diploma as number 68. In good company of Sweden's Secretary General, Bruce inspired the audience about how the situation looks for the more than 1,700 Fairtrade City diploma municipalities in the world. This framed the day in a wonderful way and gave weight to the Fairtrade City is an important and global movement to change the conditions for the farmers and employees within the Fairtrade system.

Catja Kaloudis, National Fair Trade Towns Coordinator, Fairtrade Sweden

B. LEBANON – June 2015

Bruce Crowther visited Lebanon during the second week of June 2015 in order to aid the burgeoning Fair Trade Town campaigns there. The Visit has helped the project in Lebanon with the following:

Consultancy: Since our visitor had both personal experiences in Fair Trade advocacy, being the founder of the first Fair Trade Town in the world, and had visited and followed the experiences of other fair trade town advocates all around the world, he had immense knowledge to share with us. When we brought our field insights and his experience together, we were able to view the bigger picture and thus address the problems more critically. This aided in the proceeding progress in the project. He also provided us with information, which enabled us to understand the dynamics of Fair Trade Towns and revisit the countless challenges that one might face in his work within Fair Trade Towns. A lot of what he had said and what we discussed together are now guidelines that we follow while conducting our various activities in the towns.

Reassurance: While undertaking any project, especially in the development sector, the implementers will most definitely encounter a series of ups and downs caused by questions, doubts and uncertainties that can unfortunately lead to frustration. These feelings were accentuated by the fact that Fair Trade is a little known concept in Lebanon and there was not a single Fair Trade Town in the country. While implementing the project, our concerns stemmed from the resistance of the towns' residents who found this concept very alien to them, as if created only for western wealthy societies.

Having a visitor from a different side of the world, who has toured so many other Fair Trade Towns telling you that your problems are not exclusive to the region and also exist in wealthy societies is very reassuring. It shows that problems are just another step forward towards the success of the project. Bruce's visit has contributed to eradicating both our fears and the fears of the residents of the villages, all because he was able to share with us an experience of so many towns that had our problems and challenges but still succeeded beautifully.

Motivation: The biggest contribution of Bruce's visit is the hardest to put into words: the motivation he provided. His stories of producers in other sides of the world drew parallels with the challenges faced by local producers. His stories of fair trade advocates in other sides of the world drew parallels with our own work. Being the passionate speaker he is, he was able to communicate everything clearly to make everyone not only understand the concept but also become excited enough to work hard for it. His visit acted as a dynamo to the project as a whole. We visited the villages with him, sat down with the steering committees, discussed the aspects of the project, and addressed the problems that are happening here and there. This follow-up and interest to the work of the Steering Committees acted as a motivation factor that doubled their efforts, which were easily documented during the second part of the project.

Tala El Kadi, Fair Trade Towns Project field officer, Mouvement Social and **Lory Boutchakdjian**, Fair Trade Towns Project field officer, Fair Trade Lebanon