



27 March 2020

STATEMENT ON CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

Dear Partners,

As the current outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) continues to develop, Fairtrade Africa is committed to taking precautionary measures in response to COVID-19 to safeguard both staff and its producers from the risk of exposure, noting with great concern the nature of the outbreak, with many countries in Africa affected.

At Fairtrade Africa, the health of our employees and producers is our primary concern. In light of global precautions and building upon recommendations from health experts Fairtrade Africa, as of 17th March, took a decision to have all its employees work from home. As such, all planned activities including meetings, events, workshops and staff field visits have been postponed until further notice. Nonetheless, staff remain available to support remotely.

Our staff are in regular touch with producers albeit remotely, and are providing the necessary support, while also adhering to local Government authority requirements from within their respective countries. Producers on their part have also reached out to their members and have suspended some of their operations including all in-person meetings / trainings and workshops till further notice following the directives from their respective governments. Members are encouraged to adhere to the directives and advisories that have been put forward by the local health and government authorities.

“As Fairtrade, we, together with the rest of the world, stand in solidarity with our producers, and workers at this time, to ensure that we all take the necessary measures to keep safe and adhere to the safety precautions prescribed globally. Our vision to ensure a world where producers are empowered to earn their livelihoods and contribute to sustainable development in their communities, means a lot to us at this time, when sections of most vulnerable people are likely to be affected by the impact of the situation.” Said Dr. Nyagoy Nyong’o, Executive Director, Fairtrade Africa.

While it is too early to tell on the impact, we want to assure the general public that we will contribute our part as an organisation to ensure the safety and health of our employees, workers and producers. We continue to collaborate with civil society organisations and other NGOs to advocate for policies and interventions that will help to cushion farmers and workers at this stage.

As we continue to shine more light on the positive side of this unfolding situation, we are proud of our many workers and producers who are on the front line to ensuring food supply and have put in measures to protect their co- farmers and workers by adapting to new ways of working. For those farmers whose activities have been greatly impacted, we still stand with them to assure them of our support.

Together with the entire Fairtrade system, Fairtrade Africa cares and we show our solidarity to all those who have been affected by the pandemic so far. We wish to reiterate the need for hygiene and safety protocols to ensure we keep safe and healthy in this time.

We are still committed to our mission: “A world in which all producers can enjoy secure and sustainable livelihoods, fulfil their potential and decide on their future.”

We will continue to update you on any news, emerging issues, or changes in our regular operations.

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