



**EUROPE**

## Minutes WFTO-Europe Board meeting 22 October 2018, 9:00-17:00, Oxfam Intermon (Madrid)

Present: Juanjo Martinez (President), Gabriella D'Amico, Estelle Vanwambeke, Giorgio Dal Fiume (Secretary), Stephanie Brookes (Treasurer), and Francesca Giubilo (Coordinator).

Excused: Emilie Durochat (on maternity leave).

Chair of the meeting: Juanjo Martinez

Time	Issue
9:00-09:10	1. Approval Agenda and possible amendments 2. Approval minutes of previous Board meeting and follow up eventual action points
09.10-9.40	3. Update and news from the countries
9:40-10:00	4. Update from the office
10:00-10:30	5. Finances (updated budget 2018), fundraising
10:30-10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45-12:15	6. Update on the Action plan 2018/2019 – feedback on activities implemented so far and next 3 months priorities, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o update on the TFLF project</li> <li>o update on the Committee on Retailers and Worldshops</li> </ul>
12:15-13:00	7. AGM 2019 (virtual or physical meeting)
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00-15:30	8. WFTO Global – feedback from the Board meeting held in September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o International FT Charter</li> <li>o Northern producers and Fair payment policy</li> <li>o Governance structure – reflect on WFTO-Europe proposals</li> <li>o WFTO product label brand</li> <li>o Board elections in Lima</li> </ul>
15:30-16:30	9. FTAO – feedback from the Board meeting held in September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o International FT Forum</li> </ul>
16:30-17:00	10. Next board meeting and AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Possible Board candidates and assessment of the Board workload and responsibility</li> </ul>
17:00	<i>END OF THE MEETING</i>

### 1. Approval Agenda and possible amendments

One item was added in the agenda: the Northern producers concept and the role of the national platforms on this topic. The amended agenda was unanimously approved.

### 2. Approval minutes of previous Board meeting and follow up eventual action points

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved.

### 3. Update and news from the countries

UK:

- Traidcraft plc crisis: just ended a consultation phase and a public statement on the future of the organisation will be published soon. Shops are not affected by this situation due to their connection with BAFTS. However, the situation is more complicated for the 4000 supporters working in church, schools and universities that could might give up with the traidcraft plc crisis.

Italy

- Associazione botteghe del mondo: recently organised a Fair Trade Fair, including a new model and new format based on the good collaboration with social and solidarity economy actors and civil

society organisations. National FT law underway but the instability of the Italian political situation does not help the process to move forward. Officially launched the new Fair Trade Towns Campaign called "Territori Solidali".

- Equogarantito: CTM Altromercato was in a critical situation and it is now trying to get out from this crisis. From 2011-2016, FT sales has grown of 16% but the situation of worldshops is still very critical. Over the past years, big companies have decided to shift towards a fair trade sourcing policy for their key products, such as Ferrero, whose sugar is bought from CTM altromercato. Equogarantito is involved in the same campaign as Associazione botteghe del mondo.

Spain:

- From 2017 on, the total sales from FT actors have increased of 17% but the overall amount is still very low compared to other countries (45 mln Euro including shops and supermarkets). Shops for the first time in 8 years had a stable situation. Oxfam intermon had a small profit in FT in 2017 but mainly due to the sales in the supermarkets. Shops are in a critical situation. Oxfam Intermon also faces the effects of the Oxfam GB recent allegations. There might be soon another report from the charity commission that could create very bad consequences in the public opinion.

Belgium

- The Board of Oxfam Magasins du Monde (Omdm) recently approved the gender policy. Omdm can now count on an internal gender policy and practices such as a toolkit for inclusive writing and communication. Omdm is organising its annual Fair trade breakfast over Belgium in November as well as a FT Breakfast at the Belgian Federal Parliament on the 25th of October. Those are key moments for Omdm to put FT at the heart of the political agenda. Omdm together with Oxfam international is working on the campaign "behind the bar code", focused mainly on prices along the food value chain. In the occasion of the Belgian FT week, Omdm organised a "chocolate pot" action in the worldshops to sensibilize people to FT (1 nutella pot was exchanged for a FT chocopot for free).

#### **4. Update from the office**

The Coordinator briefly went through a document previously shared with the Board, pointing out key information on the different working areas, especially on membership and monitoring as well as past and upcoming activities, such as the Belgian Fair Trade week and the FT marathon.

#### **5. Finances (updated budget 2018), fundraising**

The Coordinator together with the Treasurer presented the updated figures for the Accounts 2018. The financial situation of the organisation looks good with a positive balance of around 1000€. However, it was mentioned the possible scenario to have a minor deficit due to the outstanding membership fees from 4 members. Although the region is attracting more and more members from the beginning of the year, it keeps losing some existing members mainly due to financial challenges. This has an impact on the financial situation and regional stability of course. On the other side, the region is working hard on fundraising. 3 fundraising proposals were submitted in the last 3 months. However 2 got already a negative answer. The coordinator is working in a new fundraising plan with WFTO Global to try to join forces on this task and invest more in making the network more sustainable.

#### **6. Update on the Action plan 2018/2019 – feedback on activities implemented so far and next 3 months priorities**

The Coordinator presented the progress made so far in the Action plan 2018-2019. The implementation is underway and a real assessment of the plan will be done in January after 6 months from its approval. In the framework of the TFLF project, the coordinator mentioned the idea of supporting additional research on Fair Trade as an alternative business model. This would be a contribution to research under discussion with WFTO Global and Traidcraft exchange. The board welcomed the idea and asked the coordinator to keep them posted on it. In the meantime, Estelle also mentioned an interesting analysis she had just finalised at Omdm on gender and in particular on how Fair Trade can contribute to the feminist approach. She was kindly asked to share the analysis with the other Board members. The Coordinator also informed the Board that the research on Fair payment was postponed to April/May to get more insight from the members on the challenges they face when implementing the fair payment policy. Regarding the Committee on retailers, Gabriella reported the bilateral activities had so far with some members and the action plan mainly focused on 2 mainstreams: impact studies/indicators and common campaigns. The Coordinator mentioned the

international women Day and the EP elections campaigns/WFTDay as key campaigns that could be taken up by the worldshops. More information on both campaigns will be circulated by FTAO and WFTO Global by the end of the year. Regarding the impact studies it was suggested to circulate the data collected so far on worldshops and to come out with a report highlighting the trends of the worldshops across Europe in the last years. The fairshare platform was also suggested as a useful tool to host the meetings of the committee.

## **7. AGM 2019 (virtual or physical meeting)**

The Board had an interesting discussion regarding this important annual key moment and the possibility to have a physical meeting in June in the context of the TFLF project. While in 2017 WFTO-Europe decided to organise a virtual AGM in June to approve the legal documents, and a physical one in Delhi to proceed with the Board elections, the Board is now keen to organise a physical meeting in June 2018 for the members. If the figures from the project are confirmed by the Coordinator, members will have the opportunity to gather in Brussels for 2 days to have trainings on key topics, including the fair payment policy. The connection with the social economy, cooperatives, the future of Fair Trade enterprises, a parallel meeting for worldshops associations and importers are amongst the possible sessions envisaged. One afternoon will be dedicated to the AGM, to the approval of the accounts and the elections of 2 new Board members (one to replace Gabriella D'Amico and another one Stefan Nijsen, who resigned). This could happen without paying any fees for those attending and could help members to be prepared for the WFTO Global Fair Trade week in Lima in September 2019. As next step, the coordinator will look at the figures from the TFLF project and confirm to the Board the possibility to organise such a meeting without fees for members. Possible sponsors could also be explored to encourage the participation of more people in the meeting. A survey will also be circulated to the members to test their willingness in joining the meeting in June, the preferred date and topics to be discussed.

The board also had a conversation regarding the Board composition and the need to make some changes in the Bylaws. Everyone agreed that setting a minimum of 7 Board members is too high and should not be a compulsory requirement. An efficient and motivated team is the main requirement. It was also discussed the importance of introducing a gender policy criteria amongst the others. These points will be further discussed in the next board meeting.

## **8. WFTO Global – feedback from the Board meeting held in September**

The Coordinator reported the feedback got from Sophie Tack (WFTO-Europe representative in the WFTO Global Board) on the last WFTO Global Board meeting held in September 2018, focusing in particular on the following topics:

*International FT Charter*: Officially launched on the 25th of September. New website and a lot of activities organised by WFTO members across the world.

*Northern producers – the case of the Spanish Fair trade platform*

WFTO Global mainly focuses on the existing members and how they have to include their Northern fair Trade producers into their monitoring system from now on.

The board had an in-depth discussion on this topic. The President reported the unpleasant situation the Spanish FT platform is internally facing with one member, which is also a WFTO member. The main problems raised were:

- What is the role of the national platform when new Northern producers apply for WFTO membership?
- How to deal with those organisations that claim to be Fair Trade at national level or create new labels to certify Northern producers without having any sort of certifications scheme behind? What if these organisations are WFTO members?

Some questions got directly answered, others need to be better explored and analysed. The Coordinator explained the membership and monitoring process as well as the different role of WFTO Global and Europe when dealing with a new application. She also mentioned the in-country comments and the role that national platforms, as members of WFTO, play in this process. However, it was clear the need to draft a specific document where the responsibility of WFTO Global and Europe as well as the benefits for members are well specified. Members need to have better clarity of the governance structure of the network and where responsibility are in order to understand better the role of the national platforms, where those exist. This document was already in the action plan and will be realised by March 2019. Regarding the second

question, the use of the Fair trade accountability watch looks to be the most concrete and existing tool for everyone, including WFTO members, to make a complain regarding the unfair trading practises of one of the WFTO members. However, the European Board did not exclude the possibiity of taking an additional action and asking WFTO Global for a stronger role in supporting members at national level. As next step, the president will report the discussion to the Spanish FT platform and will keep the Board updated on the evolution of the discussion.

#### Fair payment policy

The Global Board got the initial recommendations by WFTO-Europe consultant Peter Williams and agreed to let the Working Group on Fair payment follow up on these.

#### Governance structure

The Coordinator reported the discussions ongoing on the governance structure. From the 5th to the 9th of November she will be in Culemborg for the annual regional meeting and this item is on top of the agenda. WFTO Global plans to centralise the membership and monitoring tasks and asked each region to provide figures on the financial contribution that Global should still give to the Regions for the following 2 years if these tasks are not managed by the region anymore. A further commuication on it will be officially sent from the Global Board to the European Board in the next months. The discussion on the governance does not concern only these tasks but also all other areas in which several overlaps have been identified: communication and fundraising in primis. Regarding these two, it will be discussed in the meeting in Culemborg the idea of having one website and regional pages, one newsletter with regional updates as well as a more coordinated work on social media. The board agreed in the overall conversation regarding the overlaps, but also suggested looking at the overall communication strategy and not just at these specific communication channels. Moreover, it suggested having a look at the statistics coming from our channels in order to see whether they are efficient or not. Regarding fundraising everyone agreed that a joint task should be created on this topic.

#### WFTO product label brand

The Global Board circulated a survey to all the members and based on it, it finally agreed to allow members to use 2 versions of the labels, one featuring the name of the organisation (max 10 letters) and another one without the name.

#### Board elections in Lima

Several WFTO Global Board members will end their first or second mandate in Lima. Sophie Tack shared her willingness to run for a second mandate and the European Board expressed its general support to this candidature. An official vote will take place during the next WFTO-Europe AGM. Concerning the Lima conference, this will take place from the 16 to the 19 of September 2019. The first day will be focused on food importers.

The next physical WFTO Global Board meeting will take place from the 6th to the 9th of March 2019.

### **9. FTAO – feedback from the Board meeting held in September**

The Coordinator reported about the FTAO Board meeting had on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September. Main points in the agenda were:

- Collaboration with researchers (with the participation of Bob Doherty) as a follow up of the international Fair Trade Symposium and as a strategical point for fundraising opportunities.
- International Fair Trade Forum. The Coordinator thanked the Board for the feedback received on this point and informed the members that this issue will be more deeply discussed in the next FTAO Board meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> of November. More information regarding the aim, the methodology and the governance of this possible forum will be shared at that time.

### **10. Next board meeting and AOB**

The Board made a quick evaluation of the Board working methodology and the relationship with the Coordinator. Everyone showed satisfaction on the working process and the new calendar plan for the physical and virtual meetings. Some useful suggestions were to try to include more space for strategical discussions or blue-sky thinking sessions within the agenda of the Board.

The coordinator will work on it and try to come out with some new ideas for the next physical Board meeting. Bilateral conversations or sub-groups will be created on specific and more operational topics, such as on Human resources, WFTO Global and FTAO.

The Board agreed to have a Skype meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December from 2 to 3.30pm and a physical Board meeting in Rome end of January. The meeting in Rome will be hosted by Associazione botteghe del Mondo. Gabriella will get back to the Board with a specific date in the following days.

#### **11. AOB**

None

END.