



Home of Fair Trade
Enterprises

A Guide on Gender Justice

#BusinessRevolution Campaign 2024

Table of Contents

01 Introduction	03	07 Case study: Bebemoss	11
02 What is Gender Justice?	05	08 Case study: Made for a Woman	16
03 Fair Trade and Gender Justice	06	09 Case study: Creative Handicrafts	21
05 Gender justice is everyone's business	07	10 Case study: Cooperativa Alice	25
06 Business as a force for good	09	11 Case study: Union des Femmes Garango	30
06 Achieve Gender Equity in your business	10	12 Gender Justice Glossary	34

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a magnifying glass over a small, dark insect on a leaf. The background is a blurred natural setting with dry leaves and twigs. The text is overlaid on the magnifying glass area.

The World Fair Trade Organization is the global community and verifier of enterprises that fully practise Fair Trade.

We are an association of visionary Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that believes that a new economy is possible: together, we stand as a collective of entrepreneurial activists and changemakers who are at the forefront of advocating for an equitable and sustainable world.



Gender discrimination is a pervasive issue in the business world and society as a whole. It suppresses voices and obstructs opportunities, hindering progress toward sustainable development and a more equitable future.

This guide aims to serve as a compass for the various ways and tools in which businesses can promote gender justice.

What is Gender Justice?

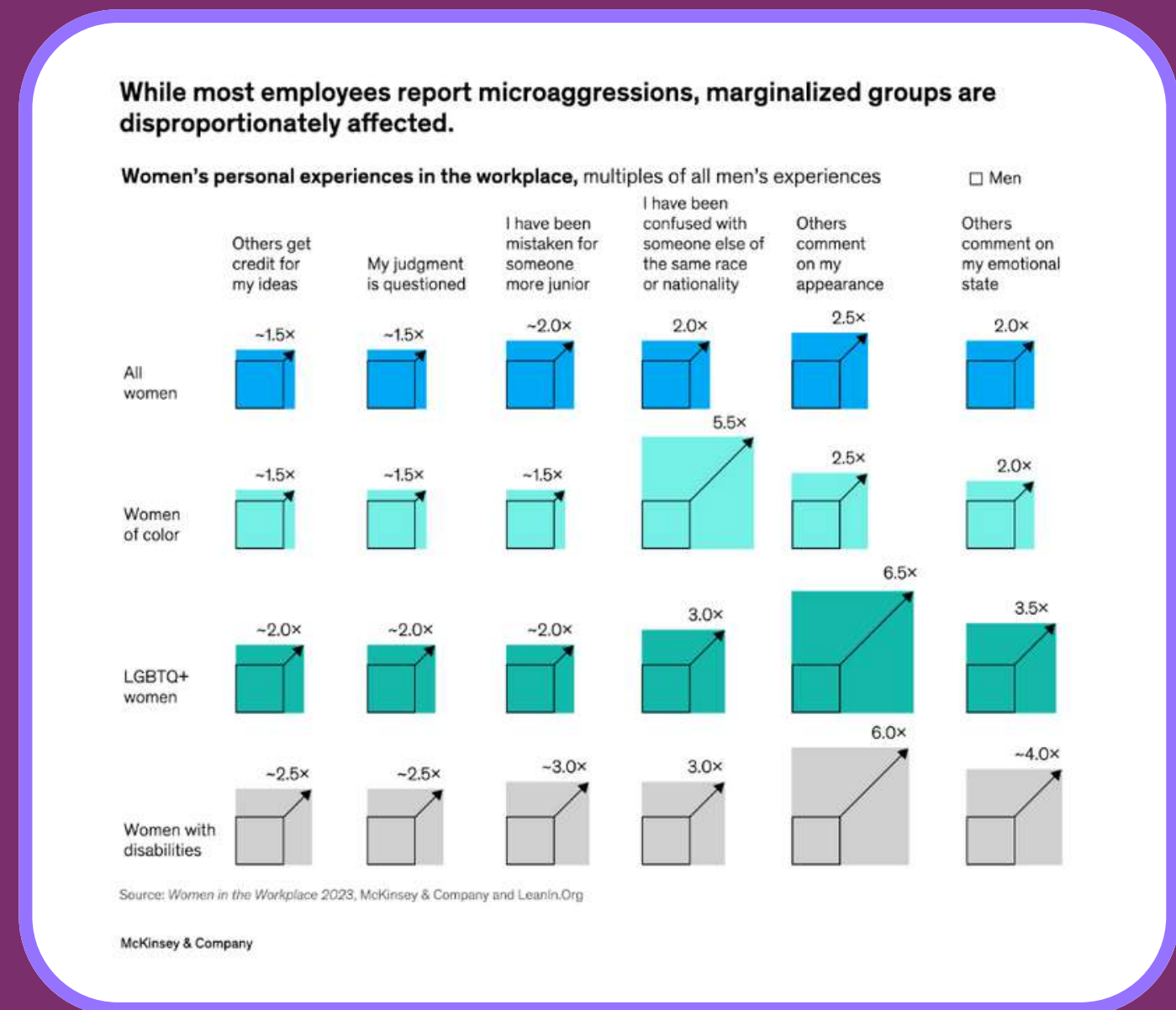
Gender justice refers to the idea of ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their gender, have equal rights, opportunities, and treatment within society. It encompasses the pursuit of fairness and equity between men and women in all spheres of life, as well as addressing the diverse needs and experiences of individuals of different gender identities.

Gender justice **cannot only** be achieved through the betterment of the socio-economic conditions of a discriminated group by legal means, it also requires **corrective action** that targets different audiences, institutions, stakeholders and groups in order to ensure substantial systemic change.

What does Fair Trade have to do with gender justice?

We all know **gender discrimination** persists in workplaces globally, creating challenges that expand into society. The pay gap, the lack of representation in senior roles, mentorship opportunities, pregnancy discrimination, and harassment are only some of the ways gender discrimination manifests itself in the workplace.

Let's face it: conventional business models, fixated on profit and relentless growth, often turn a blind eye to gender discrimination or treat it as an isolated occurrence.



A diverse group of young women are gathered for a protest or rally. In the foreground, a young woman with dark hair pulled back looks intently towards the camera. To her left, another woman wearing a black hijab and glasses looks off to the side. In the background, several other women are visible, some holding up white signs and others with their hands raised in a gesture of solidarity. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

**defying gender stereotypes,
barriers and injustices**

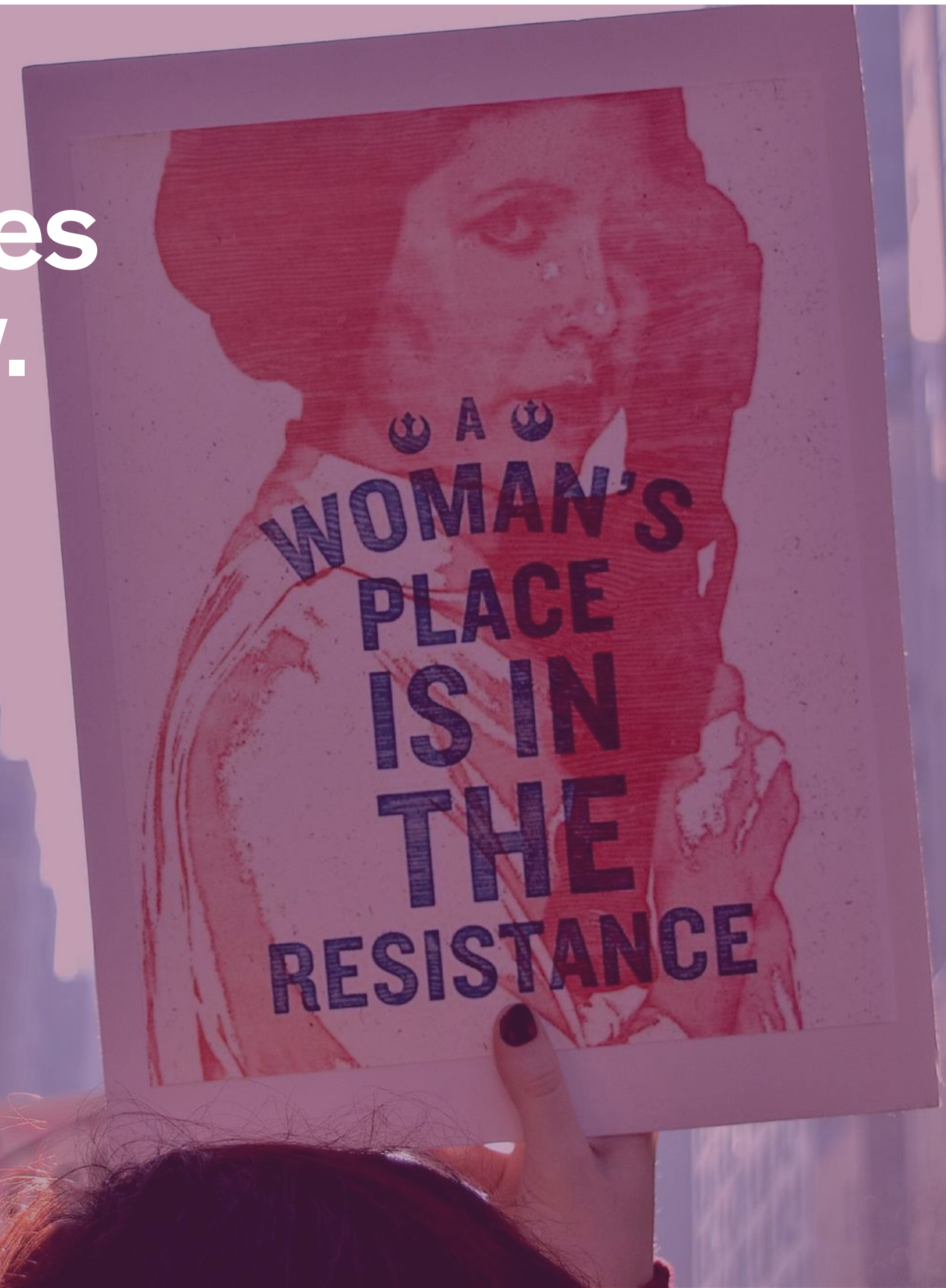
is everybody's business.

We believe that businesses have a crucial role to play.

Fair Trade Enterprises believe that workplaces can be a force for good, fostering a safe environment where all people can thrive. That's why at the core of their work lies Gender Equity - a principle fundamental to fairness and inclusion.

With their alternative business model, they are intentionally engineered to combat gender-based inequalities. They ensure that women and other discriminated groups aren't just participants in their supply chains but active contributors, decision-makers, and beneficiaries.

They bridge the gap by offering equal opportunities, breaking the shackles of traditional norms, and fostering environments where talent and skill know no gender boundaries.





Women in Fair Trade enterprises are 4 times more likely to achieve senior management positions than women working in conventional businesses.

Source: Business Models that Empower Women, February 2019, WFTO

photo: Dr Bronner's, WFTO Guaranteed Fair Trade Enterprise



Achieve gender equity in your business.



Establish equal pay for work of equal value



Prevention and elimination of violence and harassment



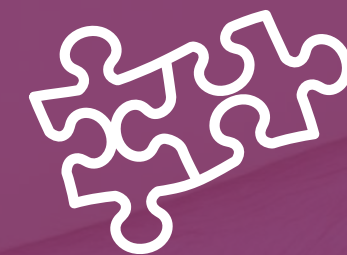
Creating a harmonious work-life balance for everyone



Long-term investment in a future of work that works for women



Equal representation of women in business and management roles



Make women part of the decisions processes



Bebemoss

📍 Turkey

The vision behind the enterprise

Bebemoss is a Fair Trade Enterprise based in Istanbul and founded by Izabela Ersahin, who considers herself an 'accidental social entrepreneur'.

Their concept is simple: craft safe, handmade toys for children while positively impacting the local community of women.

Bebemoss works with stay-at-home mothers otherwise excluded from the traditional job market, from local women to women who fled their country and experienced displacement from Syria, Iran and Afghanistan.

+120 women
artisans

400 children
positively impacted





Bebemoss gives employees the flexibility to work when and how it works best for them: this means that everyone sets their own schedule, but also chooses whether to work from home at the Bebemoss studio, where there's a dedicated play area for anyone who needs help with childcare.



Each toy is crocheted with premium 100% organic (GOTS-certified) cotton yarn that is locally sourced. They are stuffed to the ideal hugging weight with hypoallergenic polyester-filling OekoTex 1 certified and produced from recycled plastic bottles.

Each toy is made to the highest safety and quality standards to ensure that the toys are safe for children, without any harmful material.



A photograph of two women smiling and laughing. The woman on the left is wearing a white t-shirt and has her hair pulled back. The woman on the right is wearing a grey hijab and a grey top. They are surrounded by numerous crocheted toys, including a lion, a rabbit, and various other animals. The background is a wall covered in more crocheted items.

““

I've learned handcrafts, worked with it and earned money. And I've supported my daughter to finish her education. If any of my children or my husband needs help, I can support them.

Saymira, Bebemoss artisan from Syria



Made for a Woman

 Madagascar



Their vision

Founded in 2019, Made For a Woman is the first **woman-led** and **women-centered** fashion brand in Madagascar. With more than 350 artisans, 92% of whom are women, M4W is on a mission to improve women's resilience and quality of life. They also aim to disrupt the paradigms of the fashion industry through their commitment to radical transparency, authenticity, and genuine storytelling, leading by example and weaving a better, fair and sustainable future.

> 95%

of the employees
are women

88%

senior position
are by women



Working with local artisans and women is one of the most fascinating parts of this project.

Eileen Akbaraly, Made for a Woman CEO and Designer

Made For a Woman recognises the systemic barriers and gender inequalities that obstruct women's access to resources and opportunities. With 81% of Antananarivo's population living below \$2 a day, this Fair Trade Enterprise understands the importance of dismantling these barriers and enabling women to take control of their paths toward financial stability and livelihoods.



Understanding the **critical role** women play in effecting transformative change within their communities, Made For a Woman commits to ensuring fair wages, safe working conditions, and avenues for skill development and **personal growth.**



Impactful action



free access to medication, PPEs and hygiene products



entrepreneurship, leadership and personal development classes



free contraception and information regarding family planning and reproductive health

work alongside and advocate for the resilience of young survivors of gender-based violence and abuse



development of a Sexual Harassment Policy and a Social Care Network



Creative Handicrafts

📍 India

History and vision

Established in 1984, Creative Handicrafts started as a garment manufacturer and transformed into a Fair Trade Enterprise, with a mission to holistically empower the women of Mumbai and make a positive impact for the local community.

Initially founded by two women in a Mumbai slum sewing soft toys, it later expanded into the Women's Self-Employment Cooperative (WSEC) with a total of 7 women. Nowadays it generates employment for more than 700 women.

Despite encountering challenges, such as balancing social goals and market demands, this Fair Trade Enterprise has experienced substantial growth that is today reflected in the organisation's success in both the Fair Trade and mainstream markets.



How does the Creative Handicrafts business model work?

In Creative handicrafts **there's no single owner!** The artisan women fully manage it. These women are guided by a board of directors from different areas of expertise and by qualified professionals too.

Half of these directors are the same artisan women from different cooperative groups. With a **steward ownership** model, everyone has a say in how things are done.

“I am thankful to Creative Handicrafts for giving me the courage to face life when I had no one to lean on, for helping me overcome my problems and single-handedly raise my children”

Suvidha Therade
Member of Creative
Handicrafts Cooperative



Creative Handicrafts in numbers

91%

of the staff
are women

400

women employed in
part-time positions

1500

women benefitting from
Saving & Credit groups

60

women trained to
sew each year

95%

of managerial-level positions
are held by women.

Other Initiatives from CH:

Project Asli Food



The women offer fresh packed lunches and event catering and it was initiated to employ those women who came from financially disadvantaged situations but could not pick up sewing skills.

Cooperativa Alice

📍 Italy





Their vision

Born in 1992 in Italy out of the desire to bring positive change, Cooperativa Alice is a Fair Trade Enterprise with one simple goal: keeping the **Italian tailoring tradition** to the highest standards while bringing positive change. How? Cooperativa Alice facilitates rehabilitation for **incarcerated women**

by teaching them to sew so they can earn a wage as seamstresses while completing their sentences.

This gives them a chance to start fresh when it's time.

32 years
of impact

+450 women
artisans

Recidivism rates are way higher when people incarcerated do not have access to a job after they complete their sentence. That's what Cooperativa Alice is changing with its business model: by providing women with training opportunities to learn a new skill, and giving them the chance to continue working with them after they complete their sentence, they believe they are setting up a path where women can redesign a different future for themselves.

Focusing on the prisons of Monza, Bollate and Brescia (in the Milan area), Cooperativa Alice challenges the prevailing mindset that disregards these women as worthless. They are changing the narrative and bringing tangible, positive change.





Before talking about 'market', 'enterprise', 'supply chains', we are a society, citizens, people. If you change your perspective, in all of this you can see the common good.

Caterina Micolano,
President of Cooperativa Alice

Photo and Quote from La cruna dell'ago | Caterina Micolano | TEDxCittàdiSanMarino



Collaborations

Fashion houses, designers, influencers and brands all over the world saw the beauty of this business and decided to support it by working on collections and initiatives together with Cooperativa Alice's team.

Among them, we can't not mention Chloé, La DoubleJ, Leandra Medine Cohen, Emporio Armani, Vogue Italia, proud allies of this Fair Trade Enterprise.



A woman wearing a vibrant yellow dress with a red and black floral pattern is seated on the ground, spinning cotton. Her hands are positioned to twist the fibers into a long, continuous strand. The cotton is contained within a large, shallow white tub. In the background, other people are partially visible, suggesting a communal or traditional setting. The overall scene is captured in a warm, slightly dim light, emphasizing the textures of the cotton and the woman's dress.

Union de Femmes Garango

📍 Burkina Faso

Vision

Formed in the vibrant communities of the Province of Boulgou in Burkina Faso in 2013, Union de Femme Garango brought together 11 women groups with one shared goal: to strengthen their role economically and socially, fight against gender inequality and provide a just future for women in the region.

Today, this Fair Trade Enterprise has extended its impact to 53 groups of economically marginalised women, working to transform their situation at **the local and regional levels**, with a particular focus on education and professional training.

53 groups

of economically
marginalised women

+1k women

impacted



Why Burkina Faso?

Promoting gender equity and women's empowerment is an integral part of the development vision of the United Nations Development Program to promote sustainable human development. Burkina Faso faces many challenges in its fight for gender equity:

1. Burkinabe women and girls still benefit less than men from economic growth and poverty reduction
 2. Secure access to land remains a challenge for women; they constitute 55% of the agricultural labor force, but no more than 40% of land owners
 3. Access to justice also seems more complicated for Burkinabe women and the security crisis exacerbates cases of gender-based violence already widespread in conflict-affected regions.
3. Despite the quota law fixing at least 30% of women on the lists of legislative and municipal elections, introduced as an incentive in 2009 to promote their access to politics, they represent less than 10% of deputies since the legislative elections of 2015 (compared to 19% in 2012)

→ In 2021, the **UNDP gender inequality index** gives Burkina Faso a value of 0.621 and a gender development index of 0.903.



photo: Oxfam America

Impactful action

fighting **malnutrition** in women and children in Burkina Faso with focus on the role of women in changing eating habits



literacy for women in local languages and French, focusing especially on the rural areas.



social reforestation project powered by women, that involves planting tree species crucial to fight climate change providing shade, boost soil humidity, and counter desertification

support for female **income-generating** activities through self-management of microcredit (fish farming, horticulture, processing, breeding of small ruminants)



handmade cosmetics, crafted from underutilised tree seeds like desert dates, moringa, and neem



AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Policies or programs designed to increase representation of underrepresented groups, including women, in areas where they have historically been excluded.

BIAS

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, often in a way that's considered unfair.

CIS GENDER

Cisgender refers to individuals whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

DIVERSITY

The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organisation, or society. It includes but is not limited to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and more.

EQUITY

Fairness and justice in the distribution of resources and opportunities, ensuring everyone has what they need to succeed.

A to Z

Glossary on Gender Justice

FLEXIBILITY

Work arrangements that accommodate individual needs, such as flexible hours or remote work, to support work-life balance, particularly helpful for caregivers.

GENDER PAY GAP

The difference in earnings between men and women, often highlighting disparities even when they are in the same roles or positions.

HARRASMENT

Unwanted and unwelcome behavior that creates a hostile or uncomfortable work environment, often based on gender or other protected characteristics.

INCLUSION

The practice of creating an environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and supported, fostering a sense of belonging.

JOB SEGREGATION

The concentration of men and women in different occupations or industries, often leading to wage disparities.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Encouraging the open exchange of information and expertise among employees regardless of gender, enabling everyone to benefit from each other's insights.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Programs and initiatives aimed at providing equal opportunities for women to advance into leadership roles through training, mentorship, and support.

MATERNITY / PATERNITY LEAVE

Paid time off granted to parents, allowing them to care for a new child without risking their job security or financial stability.

NON BINARY

An umbrella term for genders that don't fit within the traditional male-female binary, acknowledging diverse gender identities beyond these categories.

A to Z

Glossary on Gender Justice

OPPORTUNITY GAP

Disparities in access to resources, opportunities, and career advancement based on gender.

PRONOUNS

Words used to refer to someone in the third person, representing their gender identity, such as she/her, he/him, they/them.

QUEER

An umbrella term for sexual orientations and gender identities that are not heterosexual or cisgender.

REPRESENTATION

The presence of diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and identities at all levels of an organization, ensuring everyone's voices are heard and considered.

STEREOTYPES

Widely held but oversimplified beliefs or ideas about certain groups of people, often leading to biases and discrimination.

TOKENISM

The practice of making only a symbolic effort to include members of underrepresented groups, without truly addressing systemic inequalities.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner, often favoring one group over another.

VALUE PROPOSITION

The benefits and advantages offered by a company to attract and retain diverse talent, showcasing their commitment to gender equity and inclusion.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal life, allowing individuals to effectively manage both aspects without one impeding the other.

A to Z

Glossary on Gender Justice

XENOGENDER

a term used to describe non-binary gender identities that don't fit within conventional definitions and may be unique to the individual experiencing them.

YIELD

The return on investment from implementing gender equity initiatives, including increased innovation, employee satisfaction, and improved financial performance.

ZERO TOLERANCE

Firm policies against discrimination, harassment, and any behavior that goes against gender equity, ensuring a safe and inclusive workplace for all.

Do you have questions?

Please contact us at info@wfto.com

