

A photograph of a person with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a patterned shirt, holding a large bunch of bright yellow, star-shaped flowers. The person's face is partially visible, looking down at the flowers. The background is filled with green foliage. An orange curved shape covers the bottom half of the image, serving as a background for the text.

# FAIR FOR LIFE THEORY OF CHANGE

September 2025

# FAIR FOR LIFE'S MISSION



**Fair for Life (FFL) is a fair-trade certification system that promotes ethical, fair, and respectful partnerships in supply chains.** It is guided by a vision of a world where trade becomes a positive and sustainable force for change, benefiting both people and the environment.

**Fair for Life supports producers and workers - especially those at a disadvantage - in becoming actors of their own development through long-term partnerships and meaningful, locally adapted projects.**

Launched in 2006, Fair for Life is an **international standard applicable across several sectors.** It provides a **comprehensive framework** that enables all actors in a supply chain to translate fair trade principles into concrete, accountable, and context-sensitive actions.

## SECTORS

The Fair for Life Standard applies to the production, processing, and trade of goods made from:



**Natural raw materials** crops, wild plants, livestock, beekeeping fisheries and aquaculture, sea salt, etc.

**Materials used in handicraft** 

Fair for Life has **global applicability** and does not restrict certification based on location. It equally applies to producers in **both economically developed and less developed countries** who could benefit from improved conditions related to fair trade principles.





In accordance with its principles **some products cannot be Fair for Life certified** including but not limited to: products derived from mining; products made from endangered or threatened species; non-recycled metal materials; leather treated with harmful substances; parts of archaeological or historical monuments.



## CERTIFIED PRODUCT GROUPS



Food  
products



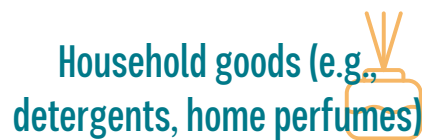
Cosmetic  
and beauty products



Textiles  
and leather goods



Artisanal  
products



Household goods (e.g.,  
detergents, home perfumes)



Certain high-risk sectors such as Aquaculture, Fisheries, Industrial textile and leather as well as Household goods require **compliance with additional environmental or consumer safety standards** (e.g., MSC, OEKO-TEX, GOTS).

## FAIR FOR LIFE ADDED VALUE

Fair for Life stands out through its **holistic approach**: it **certifies the entire value chain, from production to final product**, ensuring consistency and **traceability** throughout. Unlike many other standards that focus on specific segments or actors, Fair for Life is applicable across a wide range of sectors and commodities. Its **progressive and continuous improvement model** further enhances its relevance, encouraging certified operations to go beyond compliance and steadily raise their social and environmental performance.

# FRAMEWORK

Fair for Life's Theory of change articulates how fair prices and business practices, respect for human rights, transparency, and partnerships can generate short and medium-term outcomes that lead to systemic transformation. Anchored in the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), this framework reflects Fair for Life's commitment to ensuring that trade consistently contributes to dignified livelihoods, thriving communities and resilient ecosystems.

## FAIR FOR LIFE'S ECOSYSTEM

The Fair for Life standard is part of a **broader ecosystem of change drivers**. Our Theory of change is embedded within this context, recognizing and embracing the **need for multiple, complementary factors to enable meaningful transformation**. We have identified several key factors that influence how and to what extent change can happen.



### Contextual factors

political stability, legal frameworks, economic infrastructure, and social norms all play a role in shaping the environment in which fair trade practices are implemented.



### Endogenous dynamics of change

internal capacities and processes within the communities that drive transformation from within.

### Local realities

differences in access to resources, community organization, and levels of marginalization affect the way fair trade approaches are implemented.





Note that, the term '**workers**' used throughout our Theory of change is understood in an **inclusive sense, encompassing all individuals engaged at every stage of the supply chain**. This broad definition ensures that references to workers systematically acknowledge the **diversity of roles, contexts, and contributions** that together uphold the integrity of fair and sustainable practices.

## CHANGE HYPOTHESIS

The Theory of change underlying Fair for Life standard is built upon a series of **key hypotheses**:



**Fair prices and respect for human rights** serve as essential levers to improve living conditions in a sustainable way.

**Fair trade relationships** empower communities by fostering greater autonomy and social equity.



**Environmental practices** promoted by Fair for Life help reduce negative ecological impacts while enhancing the resilience of ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

The **inclusion of diverse stakeholders** improves the relevance and impact of the actions taken.



**Transparency and traceability** within the supply chain are fundamental to building and maintaining consumer confidence and trust.

Together, these hypotheses form the foundation of our approach to creating positive and lasting change.



# FAIR FOR LIFE'S INPUTS

Fair for Life's foundation is built on **three core pillars that drive change** processes.



## A UNIVERSAL, INCLUSIVE AND RIGOROUS STANDARD

1

Fair for Life is a **fair trade and social-environmental responsibility standard** that is both comprehensive and adaptable, **applying to all supply-chain actors** across a wide range of products. Its implementation supports **step-wise, context-sensitive implementation** enabling diverse supply chains to progressively meet requirements while a rigorous certification process and regular verification ensures alignment with fair trade values and active stakeholder engagement.

## TRUTHFUL COMMUNICATION

A clear and transparent communication framework ensures that **reliable information on the standard, certified entities, and their practices** reaches business partners, consumers, markets, public institutions, and civil society. This openness fosters credibility and informed choices by stakeholders.

2

## PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY

3

Collaborations with certified brands, producers, and community members enable **joint initiatives to strengthen the presence of fair trade values**. These partnerships promote deeper engagement, collective impact, and continuous development within communities and supply chains.



# FAIR FOR LIFE OUTCOMES

The inputs act as drivers of change, enabling stakeholders across the supply chain to **take concrete actions and make lasting commitments**. These actions generate **short-term** and **medium-term transformations** toward more responsible, fair, and sustainable practices. We have identified six key outcomes that reflect the direct and progressive impact of our interventions.

## FAIRER BUSINESS PRACTICES AND PRICES



### Short term

Producer operations gain **security and foresight** with regards to sales volumes and pricing. Workers and suppliers receive their payments on time, ensuring **financial stability**. Wages cover basic living needs, directly improving **household well-being** from the outset. Risks related to pricing fluctuations are reduced. Certified goods are sold at a premium price. Buyers build trusted relationships and gain **reliable supply** of quality goods. Terms are clear between actors reducing conflicts and lending clarity to payment, delivery, and quality expectations.

### Medium term

Producer operations understand well their cost of production and can consistently **sell certified goods at a profit**. This allows for **business investments** to improve efficiency, invest in new technologies.

The Fund is growing, and decision-making bodies are mature, allowing for **intentional and relevant investment in local projects** that benefit communities.





## IMPROVED HUMAN RIGHTS AND WORKING CONDITIONS

### Short term

Beyond the respect for human rights, we expect that the direct implementation of the standard immediately **safeguards human rights** and leads to **safer working conditions**. Workplace safety is ensured, reducing accidents and injuries related to relevant risks. Human rights are protected, related to child labour; forced labour; discrimination and inhumane treatment.



### Medium term

Workers report higher **job satisfaction** and **better health** outcomes due to improved working conditions. Marginalized and/or vulnerable individuals gain greater **opportunities and accessible employment**.



## EMPOWERMENT AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

### Short term

**Collective decision-making instances and structures** are implemented, and Funds are invested to **locally-relevant projects**. Workers across supply-chains are **free to form associations** and engage in collective bargaining, should they want to.

### Medium term

Beneficiaries **gain greater influence over decision-making processes** within their businesses and local communities. Their capacity and knowledge of sustainable and fair practices are strengthened, enabling them to innovate, adapt, and **respond effectively to evolving market needs**.





## SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

### Short term

The most **detrimental practices are immediately ceased and prohibited**. Tracking and assessments allow for **visibility on environmental impacts** across the supply-chain, effectively assuring a **shared responsibility** to mitigate climate change. Biodiversity to be conserved has been identified and its **protection promoted**.

### Medium term

Water is conserved more effectively, biodiversity particularly threatened flora and fauna is protected, energy and waste are managed responsibly, **enhancing the adaptive capacity of ecosystems** at production and processing sites.



## TRACEABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY FOR CONSUMERS

### Short term

All supply-chain actors, including consumers, receive **truthful and transparent information** to identify and understand the conditions under which certified goods were produced.

### Medium term

Informed **consumers increasingly choose ethically produced goods**, reinforcing the demand for fair and sustainable products and rewarding responsible businesses. Likewise, buyers with access to truthful and transparent information can make sourcing decisions that comply with national legislation, follow **voluntary disclosure practices**, and align with their brand values, further **strengthening responsible supply chains**.



# FAIR FOR LIFE'S INTENDED IMPACTS

The Fair for Life outcomes drive systemic changes in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leading to **long-term impact in five core areas**.

## EQUITY IN SUPPLY CHAIN

Global trade operates on a foundation of entrenched **ethical business practices**, characterized by **transparency, accountability, and holistic responsibility** in both internal operations and relationships with suppliers. **Power and value are distributed fairly**, with producers and workers recognized as equal partners who receive a just share of the wealth generated along the supply chain. This **equitable system** ensures that business success is shared, sustainable, and aligned with the dignity and prosperity of all participants.



**Aims to address the following Sustainable Development Goals:**



## DIGNIFIED AND PROSPEROUS LIVELIHOODS

Workers enjoy healthy and respectful working conditions, free from hazards and discrimination. Labor practices are equitable and safe, guaranteeing **workers' rights and welfare**.



Producers and workers across the supply chain receive fair and consistent compensation, enabling them to achieve **financial security** and build **prosperous lives** for themselves and their families.

Business has become **genuinely profitable for the people at its heart**, the producers and employees whose work makes it possible.



### Aims to address the following Sustainable Development Goals:



## SELF-DETERMINATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Local communities are empowered** to shape their own sustainable development pathways, supported by **inclusive participation**, and **increased social capital**. Business interactions foster resilient and thriving communities at all stages across the production and trade processes thanks to **equal opportunities and benefits for all genders and marginalized groups**.

### Aims to address the following Sustainable Development Goals:





## SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS

Production and **processing systems stabilize or improve ecosystems' health**, and communities strengthen their capacity to **adapt** to environmental and climate-related challenges.

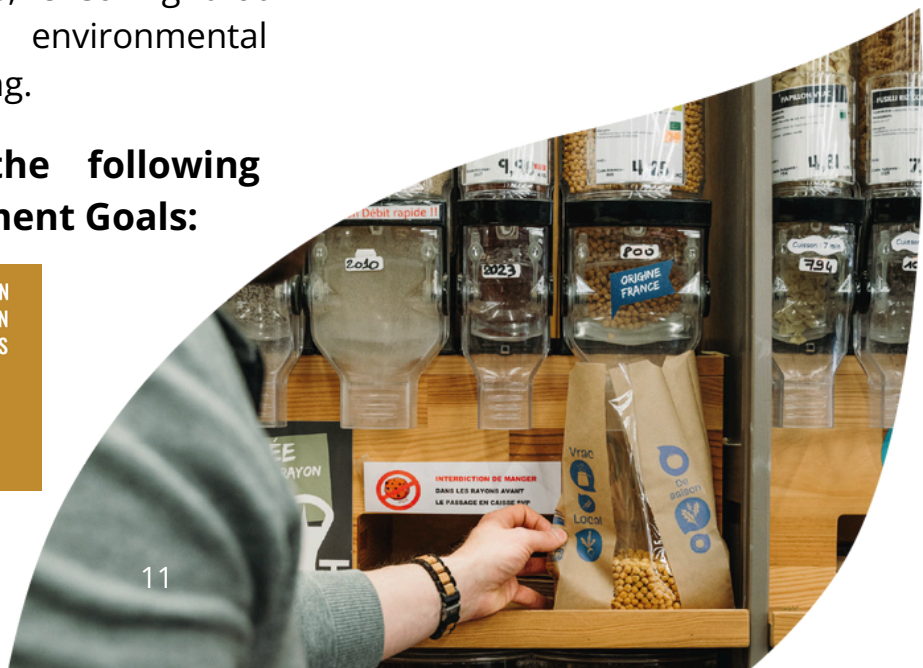
**Aims to address the following Sustainable Development Goals:**



## TRANSPARENT AND TRUST-BASED SUPPLY CHAINS

Trade relationships are grounded in transparency and accountability **fostering trust** between all actors, including consumers and brands, enabling **responsible choices** and **ethical oversight**. At the same time, **responsible sourcing becomes the norm** across supply chains, ensuring that trade consistently supports environmental integrity and community well-being.

**Aims to address the following Sustainable Development Goals:**





# Annex 1. Fair for Life's Theory of Change

Impacts

