



Fair Trade and Racial Justice 101

Use these facts to educate yourself and others about racial justice issues and intersections with Fair Trade

Fast Facts

- Black men are **3 times** more likely to be killed by the police than white men.¹
- For every dollar white men earn, Black women earn **\$0.62**.

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FAIR TRADE CAMPAIGNS



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Black households have only 10 cents in wealth for every dollar held by white households
FAIR TRADE CAMPAIGNS



- According to PEW Research, Black households have only **10 cents** in wealth for every dollar held by white households.²
- **Environmental racism** is the phenomenon by which Black people are more likely than white people to live, work and play near environmental hazards.
- These statistics illustrate the impacts of long-standing, institutional and structural racism within society.

The Need for Fair Trade

¹ <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org>

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/02/22/5-facts-about-blacks-in-the-u-s/>

- In the typical model of global trade, farmers and workers are exploited for the sake of delivering profits to middlemen and larger companies.³
- Many of our global trade systems are built upon centuries of exploitation of Black labor and Black lives – for example, according to the Fair World Project, the ways in which we grow and trade our food are shaped by centuries of slavery and colonization.⁴
- Producers in the Global South are often exploited for their resources and labor; they are overworked, underpaid, and often exposed to harmful chemicals.⁵

Fair Trade and Racial Justice

- The Fair Trade Movement is an alternative to conventional trade that encourages sustainable development by empowering producers in the Global South to invest in their communities and maintain sustainable livelihoods through the minimum-pricing safety net and additional Community Development funds producers receive for selling their products on Fair Trade terms.⁶
- Fair Trade advocates for justice, equality, and non-discrimination for farmers and workers in the Global South, and the communities where products are produced and purchased by ensuring products are certified against rigorous standards including equal representation and non-discrimination.⁷
- The Fair Trade system exists to correct many of the inequalities and injustices that historically exist because of colonialism and the exploitation of small producers, often in the Global South – as such, Fair Trade is racial justice.⁸
- Considering that consumer spending accounts for 70% of the U.S. economy, Fair Trade can play a role in supporting social justice by directing some of this spending power towards Black-owned businesses. Check out [this blog post](#) by The Honest Consumer for a list of 50+ sustainable, black-owned business you can support.

A Path Forward

- Despite the positive impacts it has on farmers and workers around the world, Fair Trade still has work to be done in terms of addressing racial justice.
- Fair Trade exists within our capitalist system, which is inherently racist. This system was born out of slavery, genocide, and colonization, and because institutions are slow to change, these legacies still impact our economic system today.⁹

³ <http://fairtradeamerica.org/Media-Center/Blog/2020/June/Racial-Justice-and-Equity>

⁴ <https://fairworldproject.org/no-food-justice-without-racial-justice/>

⁵ <https://www.pjcv.org/fair-trade-and-racism/>

⁶ <https://www.pjcv.org/fair-trade-and-racism/>

⁷ <http://fairtradeamerica.org/Media-Center/Blog/2020/June/Racial-Justice-and-Equity>

⁸ <http://fairtradeamerica.org/Media-Center/Blog/2020/June/Racial-Justice-and-Equity>

⁹ Mobilizing for an Anti-Racist Economy (<https://vimeo.com/434253091>)

- Fair Trade was founded on the idea of the Global North supporting the Global South, and this set up reinforces existing power dynamics.¹⁰
- Fair Trade needs to place more emphasis on confronting racism and discrimination in the communities where products are consumed.

For more on how to advocate for racial justice with Fair Trade Campaigns:

<https://fairtradecampaigns.org/resources/racial-justice/>

¹⁰ Mobilizing for an Anti-Racist Economy (<https://vimeo.com/434253091>)