Mission report

Subject	Fairtrade Living Income & Living Wage Conference & IDH Partner Dialogue
Place and dates	Brussels, Belgium – 19 to 20 May 2025
ICO staff member	• Miguel Zamora, Coordinator of the Coffee Public-Private Task Force (CPPTF)
Purpose of travel	• Participate in a panel during the "Bridging Policy and Practice: Advancing Living Incomes & Living Wages in Agricultural Supply Chains" conference organized by Fairtrade International and the Fair-Trade Advocacy Office, in partnership with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). • Participate in the "IDH Strategic Partner Dialogue" to discuss IDH's new strategy for its work in agriculture (including coffee).
Five-Year Action Plan/Programme of Activities relevance	**Five-Year Action Plan** • **Strategic Goal II:** Using the Organization's convening power to provide a forum for dialogue between and within the public and private sectors • **Strategic Goal III**: Facilitating the development of projects and promotion programmes through public-private partnerships **Results and Deliverables from the PoA** • II.A.6 Engaging IGOs, IFIs and NGOs in ICO events and participation in external events • III.A.3 Advocacy for the promotion of cooperation with bilateral, regional & multilateral development agencies and donors with a focus on regulatory framework and sustainability and resilience of the coffee sector • III.A.4 Advocacy and advice for the establishment of partnerships and collaboration with the donor community/mobilization of resources for coffee development projects (Trust Fund) • III.A.5 Providing advisory services and cooperation with IGOs, private sector, civil society/academia

OVERVIEW

1. "Bridging Policy and Practice: Advancing Living Incomes & Living Wages in Agricultural Supply Chains" conference

   The conference brought together around 200 participants, including policymakers, academics and representatives from private companies and civil society, to explore how public policies

can support living incomes and living wages for farmworkers and smallholder farmers. Co-operative representatives, companies, NGOs and a few government officials took part in the panel discussions. Case studies from the cocoa, cotton and banana sectors were shared by various organizations.

2. "IDH Strategic Partner Dialogue"

The IDH event provided an opportunity to learn more about the strategy that IDH is developing for its work in agriculture (including coffee), while engaging with stakeholders on areas of mutual interest. The event was designed as a space for collaborative reflection, with the aim of strengthening partnerships and aligning around the next phase of said strategy. Several organizations (UNIDO, EU INTPA, Fairtrade, Rikolto, etc) and coffee companies such as JDE were present.

Mr Zamora opened the discussions, which took place in small groups, using examples of the work the CPPTF has done on living and prosperous income.

CONCLUSIONS/MAIN OUTCOMES

1. "Bridging Policy and Practice: Advancing Living Incomes & Living Wages in Agricultural Supply Chains" conference

(a) Mr Zamora highlighted the work of the ICO's CPPTF on living and prosperous income, explaining the sector-wide goal for half of the Organization's producing Members to achieve a living income in coffee-growing regions by 2030. He presented this as an opportunity for the entire coffee sector to work together towards an ambitious but worthwhile goal.

(b) Fairtrade presented its research on living income reference prices, which has already been implemented in several countries. This work could be showcased in future ICO webinars. Fairtrade also expressed interest in exploring how initiatives such as the Dutch Initiative for Sustainable Cocoa (DISCO) and the French Initiative for Sustainable Cocoa (FRISCO) – successfully applied in the cocoa sector – could be adapted to coffee to encourage private-sector engagement, particularly from retailers, in supporting living incomes for coffee farmers.

(c) The new Fairtrade Public Policy Roadmap on Living Income and Living Wage in Global Agricultural Supply Chains includes approaches that could be adopted by the public sector to advance living income initiatives in the agricultural sector. There are recommendations for the role of governments as regulators and standard-setters, governments as economic actors, and governments as partners in multi-stakeholder cooperation.

(d) The Ecuadorian Embassy and supermarket chain Lidl showcased the example of banana production in Ecuador, where most farmworkers now earn a living wage – an achievement made possible through strong public-private partnerships. Participants noted that while securing living wages for agricultural workers is attainable through

coordinated action, achieving living incomes for most smallholder farmers remains more complex than in banana production.

2. "IDH Strategic Partner Dialogue"

(a) There was a shared recognition that the global context has shifted significantly. The new geopolitical realities and a reduction in available funding mean that development actors must adapt and work differently moving forward.

(b) Participants stressed the need for stronger narratives and clearer evidence of the returns generated by funding initiatives. The European Union (EU) highlighted that large EU-funded projects must clearly articulate how they benefit EU citizens—for example, through positive effects on migration, nutrition, and food security. While there remains space for large-scale, impactful projects, their value and outcomes must be clearly demonstrated.

(c) IDH outlined its efforts to drive transformation across entire market systems. Its stated areas of work include transforming local and regional food systems and markets, reshaping global value chains, developing resilient sourcing regions, promoting deforestation-free value chains, supporting responsible business practices, and advancing agrifinance.

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