

On 1 February 2017, CAFOD published a paper, *International Trade for the Common Good*, which says that the International Trade Secretary should ensure trade deals negotiated after Brexit strengthen democracy, support small business, consider benefits and costs for all affected groups, uphold the dignity of work and care for Creation.

This lesson encourages KS4/5 pupils to learn more and write to their MP about trade policy.

[cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Trade-report](http://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Trade-report)



## Lesson plan

### Starter:

Scatter the quotations. Pupils circulate and choose one that resonates. Ask a few to say what they liked about the quote. Next, each pupil rewords their quote to emphasize the most important point it makes, in their opinion. Ask pupils to read out reworded versions. What surprised you? Why are Cardinals and Popes talking about economics? How does trade affect people? What has trade to do with Christianity?

### Activity 1:

Explain to pupils that they are Members of Parliament. In advance of a parliamentary debate, they must decide priorities for how the UK conducts its trade with other countries, now that Brexit has happened. Give five minutes to brainstorm ideas, then share.

### Activity 2:

Explain that CAFOD has produced a report on trade. It names five principles that it believes the UK government should follow to ensure that the poorest people around the world are at the heart of trade policies being negotiated post-Brexit. Ask pupils to work in pairs to rank the five principles. Which did they consider most important and why?

If pupils have questions around these principles, you will find background information in the report. Please note, this report was written for adults.

### Activity 3:

Invite pupils to compose letters to the local MP. Suggested content points can be projected onto the whiteboard.

### Plenary:

Each pupil tweet @CAFOD one way he or she thinks trade should be made fairer.



Ruth Stanley,  
CAFOD Political  
Adviser

Being able to trade is a critical tool for people to pull themselves out of poverty – whether flower sellers in Kenya, or coffee producers in Guatemala. This means we must enable businesses both here and abroad to trade in a way that benefits everyone...

As Pope Francis says, the poorest and most vulnerable people must not be an 'afterthought' in political and economic discussions. This means that we need to think of the impact on both people and our common home when we negotiate our trade deals.

Put simply, no one should ever find themselves in poverty as a result of UK trade policy decisions.



Picture credit: Simon Rawles

**Quotations** cited in *International Trade for the Common Good*, CAFOD, 2017:

“The goal of economics and politics is to serve humanity, beginning with the poorest and most vulnerable.”

Pope Francis, 2013

“Every economic decision has a moral consequence.”

Pope Benedict XVI,  
*Caritas in Veritate*, #37

“Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment.”

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #128

“The earth’s resources are being plundered because of short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production.”

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #32

“Business is a noble vocation, directed to producing wealth and improving our world. It can be a fruitful source of prosperity for the areas in which it operates, especially if it sees the creation of jobs as an essential part of its service to the common good.”

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, #129

“Integrated policies will require persistence and generosity, with quite different voices being heard: banking, finance, commerce, business, politics... as well as workers, the unemployed and migrants, youth and the old, and indeed the natural environment.”

Cardinal Turkson at launch of 2016 UNCTAD  
Trade and Development Report

“The ‘old normal’... will not meet the challenges. Trade and development must aim at the fullest human flourishing.”

Cardinal Turkson, President of the Pontifical  
Council for Justice and Peace

“The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly... an ethics which is people-centred.”

Pope Benedict XVI,  
*Caritas in Veritate*, #45

# Principles

The CAFOD report names five principles that the UK government must consider in every trade deal, if it is to put the world's poorest people at the heart of UK trade policy. Place these principles in order of priority:

## **Strengthen democracy**

Commit to transparent and open consultation on all trade agreements. They should be fully examined by Parliament and fully accountable. All agreements should support both the UK and developing countries in meeting international commitments.

## **Uphold dignity of work**

Conduct economics and business in a way that respects human dignity, protects workers' rights and supports family and community life. All trade deals should strengthen existing standards in environmental, labour and human rights.

## **Support small business**

There are many rules and regulations that currently make it difficult for poorer countries to sell their products to the UK – the UK should create a simpler system and make it easier for products from poor countries to reach the UK market.

## **Promote mutual benefit**

The UK should ensure that no trade deal damages the environment, the economy or the society of developing countries.

## **Care for Creation**

Make sure that social and environmental sustainability are part of all economic policies and practices, in line with the internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement. All trade deals should be bound by these commitments.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

[Say, in your own words, why you care about trade. The more personal you make your email, the more it will stand out to your MP. You may also wish to include some of the points listed below.]

Please remind the Secretary of State for International Trade, of the importance of a values-based trade policy that promotes our own interests but also reduces poverty in a sustainable way, respects human rights, protects the environment and dramatically improves the lives of millions of people.

Yours sincerely,

## Things to think about when writing to your MP

Trade and development policy are inseparably linked; now is the time to strengthen that link. Let's make trade work for the common good!

The UK has an opportunity to ensure trade is a tool for development and to create a new trading framework that stimulates fair and sustainable economic growth both here and overseas.

As we make trade deals with other developed countries, care must be taken to avoid knock-on effects on Least Developed Countries, which are the most vulnerable to changes in the global economy.

The UK's Climate Change Act and our global commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, should be at the heart of our trade policy.

Our country is rooted in the values of democracy, rule of law, and human rights. These values must remain central to our trade policy.

The UK should be leading the way in shaping an approach to trade that benefits all people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

Now is the time to define principles and values that will ensure that the world's poorest people are at the very heart of UK trade policy:

**Strengthen democracy** Make sure that UK citizens are consulted and all trade agreements are properly scrutinised by Parliament and fully accountable.

**Support small business** The UK should create a simpler trade system and make it easier for products from poor countries to reach the UK market.

**Promote mutual benefit** The UK should ensure that no trade deal has negative impacts on the environment, economy or society of developing countries.

**Uphold dignity of work** The UK should conduct its economy and business in a way that centres on human dignity, protecting workers' rights, and supporting family and community life. The UK should support companies to ensure that trade deals strengthen existing standards in environmental, labour and human rights.

**Care for creation** The UK's economic policies and practices should be socially and environmentally sustainable, in line with national and international commitments.