



Department  
for International  
Development



# Press release

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24 October 2012

## UK helps farmers in Africa trade their way out of poverty

The Government and a range of businesses, including Sainsbury's and Taylors of Harrogate, are supporting farmers in Africa to help them bring more ethically traded products to international markets and reap the financial rewards, International Development Secretary Justine Greening announced today.

The Food Retail Industry Challenge Fund (FRICH) grants help African farmers by targeting some of the poorest communities and bringing them together with a range of businesses.

Sainsbury's and its project partners have been working with FRICH since 2009 to bring Congolese and Malawian coffee from smallholder farmer co-operatives to its shelves. The new funding will see activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo extended to even more farmers, helping them to improve coffee quality and gain access to more markets. In Kenya, flower farmers will also benefit from support to reduce water usage, develop new export crops for small farmers and improve women workers' health education.

Justine Greening said: "By helping African communities to support themselves in the long-term, they will be able to break their dependence on aid. I am delighted that successful British businesses, such as Sainsbury's, The Eden Project, and Taylors of Harrogate are helping African farmers and suppliers thrive – this scheme is good for businesses moving into new markets, and good for Africa."

Sainsbury's Group Commercial Director, Mike Coupe, said: "We are pleased to have already achieved so much for farmers in Africa, in collaboration with our project partners and the support of FRICH. We work closely with all our suppliers in the UK and overseas and these projects enable Sainsbury's to provide African farmers with support and training to help them build their capacity as well as a direct route to international markets. We also know that our customers value the range and quality of products we are able to offer from these farming communities.

"By working with our partners, Twin, Finlays and Superflora, to deliver these projects it's also enabling us to achieve one of our own targets as part of Sainsbury's 20 by 20 Sustainability Plan, to continue supporting producers in order to build sustainable businesses and secure futures for themselves and their families."

Before Sainsbury's and its partners started working with the SOPACDI coffee cooperative in the DRC, the coffee produced in this area could not be processed easily. Farmers often resorted to smuggling the coffee out of the country or sold it to middle men who paid as

little as 20% of the market price. With the help of the FRICH-sponsored project, farmer training has improved coffee production.

The Government has placed a priority on the role of the private sector in international development, both in terms of UK firms operating in the poorest nations and businesses already based in developing countries.

#### Notes to editors

1. FRICH is a £7.4m challenge fund which aims to get more African products onto UK and European supermarket shelves. It provides grants to UK and European retailers and businesses who want to develop and test new ways of growing and sustaining the market for African food exports, with the goal of reducing poverty by improving incomes of the rural poor in Africa.
2. This fourth round of competitive funding saw 40 bids for grants of which 15 were successful. All the companies involved will 'match' the funds they receive from DFID towards these projects.
3. The new projects will focus on a diverse range of products including tea, cocoa, peri-peri, beef, passion fruit, peanuts, sweet potato, baobab fruit, palm oil, melons, sweetcorn, flowers, coffee, salad onions and radish. You can find more information on all the new and previous products here:  
<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/work-with-us/funding-opportunities/business/frich/>
4. The successful bids that have received funding so far have demonstrated how their projects will bring commercial benefits as well as income and employment to thousands of farmers, labourers and their families in developing countries. Six products have made their way onto UK supermarket shelves, including tea from Rwanda and Kenya, tilapia fillets from Zimbabwe, coffee from DRC, vanilla from Uganda, cocoa from São Tomé and Príncipe and cut flowers from Ethiopia.
5. In order to be eligible for a FRICH grant, five criteria must be met:
  - Bids must be led by a private sector enterprise that is **either** a retailer or a retail brand with an established share of the UK market or other European market **or** is working with such an enterprise in partnership to implement the project;
  - The organisations in the bid must demonstrate their capacity and financial wherewithal and must also be able to contribute a **minimum** of 50% of project costs to share in the risks involved in the project;
  - Grant funding requested must be for a project to test an innovative concept or business model, or to turn a successful pilot into a larger scale project – not a general request for finance for a business or for an organization;
  - Bids must demonstrate potential for commercial sustainability; and
  - Bids must demonstrate how poor African farmers, farm workers and/or small scale entrepreneurs are likely to improve their livelihoods on a sustainable basis as a result of the success of the project.
6. Sainsbury's *20 by 20 Sustainability Plan* sets out 20 sustainability targets to be achieved by 2020. This plan aims to ensure the company remains at the forefront of sustainability to 2020 and beyond. To find out more, contact Sarah Dunne at Sainsbury's Press Office on 020 7695 7051/7295 or [press\\_office@sainsburys.co.uk](mailto:press_office@sainsburys.co.uk); <http://www.j-sainsbury.co.uk/responsibility/20-by-20-commitments/>

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