

GMB and FAWU (Fako Agricultural Workers Union) working together in solidarity in **CAMEROON**

In Cameroon, most banana workers do not earn enough money to meet their basic household needs, many work over the legal maximum of 48 hours per week, and only a small percentage of workers have appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) replaced frequently enough to keep them safe, particularly from exposure to toxic agro chemicals. More than half of workers experience pain and stress on the job every day.

Banana Link, in partnership with FAWU, coordinates a project, **'Securing Decent Work in tropical fruit export production'** which educates and empowers workers and their representatives to improve livelihoods and working conditions in Ghana and Cameroon.

Recent achievements:

- 650 new members have joined FAWU
- Shorter working days have been negotiated by the union for 1420 workers
- FAWU participated in negotiations of the National Collective Agreement in Agriculture directly increasing plantation wages
- More than 4500 workers have received education which has already doubled awareness of rights in the workplace



Journey of Change: training empowers workers!



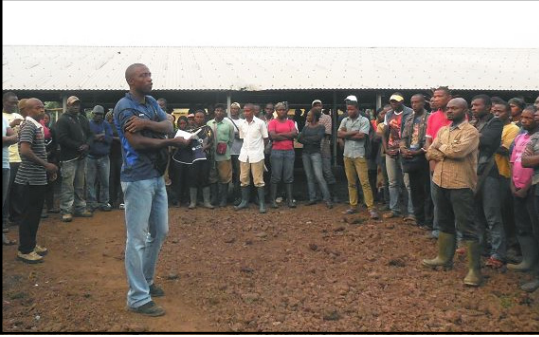
Banana Link sent Jenny Webber, a retired GMB tutor, to Cameroon three times this past year to facilitate a training programme for workplace union representatives. At the outset, many of the core group of 65 trainees were shy and unconfident. In the months since participation in their first training session...

- More than half identified as informed and confident, able to negotiate improvements in the workplace
- 25% felt ready to take on a leadership role and are now delivering education to hundreds of fellow workers!

Union representatives are now better skilled to handle workplace grievances, and improved social dialogue has led to a decrease in deductions being taken from wages. More confident representatives have secured office space on some farms, enabling them to respond to and document significantly more grievances effectively.

"With education, support and encouragement, representatives are able to build a strong and effective union" *Jenny Webber, retired GMB tutor*

GMB working in solidarity with FAWU Branches and regions have given generously to support the development of the union and its members.



Union representatives empowered by their training have established a cooperative farm (with 535 members) to provide more affordable food for workers and their families. An appeal led by the GMB Lowestoft branch has supported the purchase of tools and seeds directly contributing to the success of the farm, which last December provided 2325 chickens for traditional Christmas dinner!

The branch “is proud to support our sisters and brothers in FAWU in Cameroon...”

Ann Skipper, Lowestoft L43 Branch Secretary

Empathetic to the challenges faced by the plantation workers in Cameroon, and proud of the accomplishments of the union representative trainees, the Lowestoft Branch bought shoulder bags printed with the GMB and FAWU logos as a symbol of their support. They were presented to the union representatives along with a handbook and their certificate of achievement!

In a powerful and generous act, the GMB London Region gave towards the purchase of a 4X4 truck which is essential for union officials and educators to access plantations.



Donate to support the continued work of FAWU in Cameroon.

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