



The GMB International Solidarity Fund

GMB and Banana Link working together in solidarity

ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The GMB International Solidarity Fund enables branches and regions to directly support the organising, legal and education work of Latin American agricultural trade unions. These unions need our solidarity to defend the rights of plantation workers and empower representatives to collectively bargain for Decent Work.

'As trade unionists we are fighting a veritable war against a pernicious capitalist system that puts profits before people, makes a virtue out of greed and is exploiting people the world over. Nowhere is this more graphically illustrated than in the plantations of the Americas where our fellow trade unionists struggle against overwhelming odds to improve the lot of their members producing fruit for British supermarkets'. Bert Schouwenburg, GMB International Officer.

10 years of GMB solidarity delivering results in Costa Rica!

Unwavering support from GMB over the past decade has been crucial in supporting SITRAP to continue their drive to organise banana and pineapple workers, helping them to achieve recent successes...

- 400 new members joined the union last year, having increased confidence that union membership won't lead to instant dismissal
- the union is closer than ever to securing Collective Bargaining Agreements on a number of plantations



In 2014, GMB support helped to fund the SITRAP Annual Assembly which brought together hundreds of workers and union members to participate in what the General Secretary, Didier Leiton, called *'a historic meeting because for many years SITRAP has not had an assembly of that nature with workers so motivated and thirsty to fight for their human rights'.*

GMB's support has enabled SITRAP to join FENTRAG, the National Federation of Agribusiness and Related Workers. Members have participated in meetings with a focus to gain CBA's on Del Monte plantations and to propose a Fair Fruit Forum to include NGO's and unions within the banana and pineapple sectors.



Education and empowerment of women workers in the Ecuadorian banana and sugar industries

FENACLE's Women's Officer has been supported to continue her invaluable work which in 2014 included...

- the distribution of health and safety and basic labour rights information leaflets to women workers
- education workshops to enhance self esteem and build leadership skills
- raising awareness of women workers who receive social security support on how they can access small loans to open community shops
- ensuring women's issues are at the forefront of union work to reform national labour law
- the first comprehensive research into women's employment in the Ecuadorian banana industry where currently only 12% of workers are women. This will inform a global meeting of women's banana representatives later this year who will be creating a strategy to increase and improve women's employment.

Sign up and help us to achieve more Funds raised so far have provided crucial capacity building but more is needed to help our union brothers and sisters in their struggle. Please fill in and post the slip below. **For more info email info@bananalink.org.uk or visit <http://www.bananalink.org.uk/gmb-international-solidarity-fund>**

We would like to support the **GMB International Solidarity Fund** with the following amount (suggested minimum donation £8.25 per month or £100 per year).

£ Monthly donation Annual donation

Contact Name

Branch

Address

Email
(please write clearly)

I enclose a cheque payable to 'GMB International Solidarity Fund'

Please send me a standing order form

Post to Bert Schouwenburg, GMB Freepost (WC2268) London SW19 4YY

You can also donate by BACS transfer: bank Unity Trust Bank Plc, account name GMB International Solidarity Fund, account no 20271437, sort code 08-60-01