

*Constructing Fair Trade from the Bottom-Up:
An Examination of Notions of Fairness in the Conventional Cotton Trade of Burkina Faso*
By Emanuele Lapierre-Fortin

Abstract

Using a case study of non-certified cotton producers in Karangasso-Sambla, Burkina Faso, this article will argue that the most salient points of unfairness in the conventional cotton trade are the breaches of social contracts between the producers, their Union and SOFITEX and a lack of participation in decision-making. This oppression of producers by more powerful actors is seen as the cause of the precarious and worsening terms of trade for cotton, and the poor labour conditions in the fields. This unfair situation has the potential to be replicated in the FT cotton industry in Burkina Faso because the FT model is not adequately adapted to local context.

Introduction

Fair Trade (FT) networks and the Fairtrade Labelling Organization (FLO) are based on ideologically loaded views of trade justice. They represent an amalgam of various social movements and parties with diverging views of why conventional trade is unfair, and how it can be made fairer. These views are often simplified and trivialized in Alternative Trade Organization (ATO)'s literature, because of its primary purpose: selling FT-certified products. On the academic side, although previous efforts have been made to classify and criticize views of FT (Fridell, 2007), (Lemay, 2006), (Lyon, 2003), (McSween, 2007), none does it with non-certified producers.

Most FT initiatives are concerned with outcomes and results, and integrate elaborate monitoring & evaluation (M&E) systems assessing if objectives are reached. However, FT says it is "fair". But how is "fairness" measured? How "fair" can FT initiatives be when perpetuated by large corporations acting in a top-down fashion? Most importantly, what does FT mean for its main stakeholders? Does it mean making markets work better for the poor? Transforming these markets? Working around these markets? Or does it mean community economic development (CED)?

Maseland & De Vaal (2002: 256) sum up the issue of defining "fairness" in FT in the following way:

"As the fair trade movement opposes to the current practice of international trade because of its consequences, it does so on the basis of a rejection of efficiency as the main criterion. Fair traders propose another criterion to judge the consequences of international trade, which is called – rather vaguely - fairness. What is efficient, they argue, may not be fair for considerations of equality. The fair trade movement does not resist the market mechanism or inequality in principle, but objects to inequality in outcomes as a result of unjustified unequal starting positions. It argues that inequality caused by systems and institutions that reward people differently on basis of natural or social differences rather than by differences in effort, is not morally

defendable. The fact that the current international division of labour does result in such inequality makes it a problematic and unjustifiable system, according to fair trade advocates. The fair trade movement thus argues that international trade constitutes an improvement if it has beneficial consequences for the poorest groups in the world. This is the moral criterion fair trade uses to judge the consequences of trade.”

Research Objectives and Questions

This article aims at exploring whether and why cotton producers think their current socioeconomic situation is fair or unfair.

Using a case study of non-certified cotton producers in Karangasso-Sambla, Burkina Faso, it will argue that the most salient points of unfairness in the conventional cotton trade are the breaches of social contracts between the producers, their Union and SOFITEX and a lack of participation in decision-making. This oppression of producers by more powerful actors is seen as the cause of the precarious and worsening terms of trade for cotton, and the poor labour conditions in the fields.

This research is based on the following question: *Is the current (traditional) cotton trade “fair” according to the producers? Why?*

Methodology

The study with cotton producers took place in the village of Karangasso-Sambla (Province: Houet, Region: Hauts-Bassins), located in the Southwest of Burkina Faso in West Africa. The village of Karangasso-Sambla is the headquarters of the department of the same name, which comprises 11 other smaller villages.

For this article, the data is coming from semi-structured interviews with 19 cotton producers, the local union, the local SOFITEX workers as well as a small sample of representatives of the general public and authorities (village chief, teachers, health care workers, etc.)

Context

Of Burkina Faso’s 45 provinces, about 30 produce cotton. Cotton is the principal income-generating activity (IGA) for more than two million producers in Burkina and is an integral part of the daily life – work, socializing, and food – of most Burkinabè. There are up to 200 small cotton oil plants in Bobo-Dioulasso only, and many households recycle every part of the cotton plant, using the seed’s shell as cattle food or fuel and cotton ashes for cooking potash, a traditional dish.

The cotton producing cycle is precise, time consuming and spans most of the year. SOFITEX often uses the national radio to communicate diverse phases of the cotton calendar (which also exists in print form). Sowing of seedlings occurs in May, while tilling and application of fertilizers start during the following 3-4 weeks. Cotton picking starts as early as September-October (early picking), and lasts until April. Chemical pesticides and fertilizers are also applied

during the picking season. After that period, cotton farmers have to clean the fields of left-over stems before starting the campaign again. SOFITEX's ginning plants stop most activities in early May. April, the month in which interviews were conducted, is the least busy month of the cycle for producers.

The cotton company in Burkina Faso is a redoubtable, mystic and powerful entity. The trucks, ginning plants, and research centres are plenty. Cotton, in all its forms, is by far the largest employer in the country.

SOFITEX is headquartered in downtown Bobo-Dioulasso and has control over the very productive and climate privileged South-Western production. It is still largely influenced by DAGRIS, a French brokerage and investing company, which possesses 34% of SOFITEX' shares and still controls the cotton oil company, SN-CITEC. After a privatisation in 1999, the state's share of SOFITEX went from 65 to 35% (Marsaud, 2005). An interesting feature though is that Union Nationale des Producteurs de Coton du Burkina (UNPCB) owns 30% of the SOFITEX shares, with private banks owning 1%. Some private national investors are also involved.

SOFITEX has a very complex price fixing mechanism (Goreux, 2003), which are based on selling forecasts and risk assessments as well as various stock exchange indicators such as the Cotlook index. Each year, a minimum price is announced before the seeding occurs (165 FCFA/kg in 2007, down to 150 FCFA/kg in 2008). If SOFITEX is able to make a profit out of it, it redistributes a prime, also known as *ristourne*, to the *Groupements de producteurs de coton* (GPC). In the past seven years, producers got a *ristourne* that averaged 15% of the minimum price (Goreux, 2003).

In the department of Karangasso-Sambla as in most others, there are 3 permanent SOFITEX representatives: one Correspondant Coton (CC) and two Agents Techniques du Coton (ATC). To prevent cotton from gaining a yellow colour that is hard to market, SOFITEX encourages farmers to do 6 phyto-sanitary chemical treatments during the season, at regular intervals. These inputs are generally bought on credit from the SOFITEX as producers are often cash-poor when they need to start seeding and treating their fields in August. Inputs are expensive; for example, a bag of fertilizer was bought for 12 500 FCFA in 2007, which, in total, who comes up to a significant sum, often 100 000 FCFA per producer.

Consultations are held to prepare a schedule for cotton pick-up in the department, which are nevertheless subject to a final decision in Bobo-Dioulasso. While as accommodating as possible, this schedule deals with the limited capacity of SOFITEX (especially their limited numbers of trucks working a very large territory with poor road conditions) and the need for SOFITEX to have a smooth supply of cotton throughout the season. The CC is responsible for sending requests for pick-up and payment to Bobo-Dioulasso on behalf of the GPC. He also handles the payments when they come back, in theory no more than 21 days maximum after they had been sent out.

Burkina Faso has an organized social economy structure, of which cotton is a good representative. Since 1995, each cotton producer was now to be part of a GPC, which typically has 20-50 self-selected members who must produce a minimum of 40 tons/year. Members of the same GPC are co-guarantors for each other's credits. The input credits come from a national

bank, but with SOFITEX as an intermediary, accounting for credits with the GPC as a group rather than with every individual farmer. In other words, it subtracts the total credit from the total payment for the GPC, which is then responsible for distributing it fairly depending on each member's production, quality and past credit.

GPC are run as small democratic committees with a Board of Directors comprised of President, Secretary and Treasurer, plus their respective assistants, advisors and information delegates. Starting in 1998, GPC started electing departmental unions, the Union Départementale (UD). The role of the UD is mostly administrative. The UD is a member of Union Provinciale (UP), which is part of the well-known UNPCB, the national union.

Research Findings

This section now turns to empirical results with the non-certified cotton producers. It argues that producers identify the “unfairness” in the cotton trade mainly at the local level; there is very little external blame mentioned by the producers. The principal issue is the current price level does not allow them to make a living given the inputs prices. However, the terminology used around SOFITEX and the UNPCB reveals that the lack of real partnerships (Tallontire, 2000) is the main cause of this unfairness, because it does not allow for meaningful participation by the producers.

A range of different reasons are given to explain the current socio-economic situation, which producers consider as unfair. However, this has not always been the case and the change is mostly due to trends in prices and partnership.

The current price for cotton, 165 FCFA/kg in 2007 falling to 150 FCFA/kg in 2008, is perceived as too low. This can be compared to input prices, 12,500 FCFA/bag of fertilizer in 2007 rising to 15,000 FCFA/bag in 2008, which are seen as too high. While producers were able to realize considerable economic growth in the village after cotton growing started, its extent is highly dependent on the price. The declining cotton price has been the most significant issue noted by producers. Cotton is said not to be as profitable as other crops or vegetables (especially potatoes) and not to be profitable for everybody. The downward price trend comes in with its range of uncertainty that makes it difficult for producers to plan. Producers often have to start sewing in April or May, before the price for cotton is announced, which results in them “living in a blur in which they don't know which basis to work upon”.

Another reason why the price issue is so important is that producers consistently identified cotton with positive factors when looking back at the 2002 season, where the price was 215 FCFA/kg. When asked about the benefits of cotton growing, producers identified the following benefits:

Table 1 : Benefits of cotton growing according to producers

Provides cash income to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• buy consumption goods such as mopeds and motorbikes, cars• invest in assets a better house with metal roof

- invest in work material, labour bulls, donkeys, mills, tractors
- invest in human capital through educating children
- afford getting married or taking up more wives

Brings a better quality of life (eat better, more meat in the soup, more leisure activities in the village, better familial climate because people are happier)

Allows more financial independence from the family member who has a better paid job

Stimulates the local economy, like the pharmacy, the Peuls who sell bulls, the moped/motorbike vendors, etc.

Cotton production also:

- keeps clothing prices down domestically
- provides fertilizers to use for corn and other cereals
- has environmental benefits (make the soils richer, allows maize to grow better, allows renewal of the fields)

In addition, the fact that the price of cotton is known in advance of harvesting (it is usually announced in April) was said to reduce the vulnerability of producers to arbitrage or local “coyotes”, who are infamous in the cereal trade for crunching the price during the high season. Also, the fact that the cotton money usually comes all at once results in a “lottery winner” phenomenon. Producers find it easier to save when they get paid in a lump sum than if they get a larger overall income but in small daily instalments as they would when they sell vegetables, for instance. This is mostly due to an historical lack of formal savings institutions in the village. Producers say this single large payment, on top of being encouraging and motivating, makes it easier to mobilize funds for health expenses; it is said that people die less because they have money to pay for transportation to the hospitals in Bobo.

It is important to note that all these positive aspects are much dependent on the going price. As put forwards by a participant: “cotton growing is like a bid; you put money aside and then at a certain point it accumulates and then it comes!” This is not the only instance in which producers seem to place bets on their own livelihoods with cotton; another participant mentioned that if they have their cotton weighed many times during the season, it gives them more chances to have their cotton rated first choice! These behaviours relating to risk indicate that farmers have grown to live with risk and consider it normal, although their use of such terms as “delay”, “late”, “unpredicted”, “bad surprise”, “bad consequence”, “vulnerability” indicate that they still see it as negative. This is especially true given the huge time commitment needed for cotton and the lack of flexibility of the IGA.

A number of other factors were identified to be “unfair” by producers. They are summarised in the following chart, in order of importance:

Table 2: Other unfair aspects of cotton growing according to producers

Credit-related	Indebtedness plays a lot on people's character (stress, tensions)
	Asset liquidation or seizure of assets by other GPC members, hence jeopardizing fulfillment of basic needs
	Vulnerability and precariousness: people live day by day and if the harvest is not good, you become indebted easily
Process-related	Picking cotton is difficult, it demands more physical effort than other crops
	Very labour intensive
	Takes up the entire year
	Transportation issues; sometimes producers have to carry their cotton for a week in the donkey cart from their field to town when it would have filled the entire truck by itself
	Hired labour is expensive; on top of paying them 500 FCFA per day "you have to use your wife's groundnuts, kill your chickens and prepare tô (local staple food) and sauce for everybody! Sometimes you have to sell your cow for that!"
	Filling SOFITEX trucks often takes entire nights and is very tiring
Nature of cotton	Cotton is not edible so when you don't have money, you starve or you have to steal. "cotton brought famine to Burkina"
	People have to sell their cereals to have money to hire labourers at 500 FCFA/day in cotton fields, then they have to buy cereals or they don't have anything to eat
	Cotton is the only cash crop so without it peasants have trouble getting money
	When cotton money comes the price of everything else goes up
	Cotton is a family crop so each family member has incentives to be a "free rider" and not engage in making cash-flow and profitability provisions
Market-structure; imperfect competition	There are barriers to entry and exit because you have to be part of a GPC to participate
	A lack of alternatives is an artificial barrier to exit, as also mentioned by (r29, free translation): "even though income per capita is low in cotton regions, they would be even lower without cotton because it's the only cash crop. In the USA, Australia and Brazil, farmers can easily grow corn or soy, but substitution alternatives are often much more limited in the Sahelian region, with <i>niébé</i> being the only alternative"
Social problems	Causes conflicts: "disagreements on who should get the cotton money when many people work together arise: it brings conflict and division within families, villages and disagreements amongst people, really, cotton growing brought lots of quarrels! Even within your family, your household, because work is very difficult, then when money comes and it's little, it sours everything around its management, it's difficult. When you sell your cotton, you're tired, there are no machines, it's all hand-picked, but we have no choice but we need to work anyways, so it brings people to speak badly"

	Alcoholism: "you should see the anarchy here, when money comes, people take 2-3-4-5 kegs of beer and it's due to cotton because the peasant would never sell his cereals or maize to drink like this"
	Sexual effects; polygamy shows status. "when you have money you do not limit yourself to only one wife", precarious marriages and pregnancies for school girls with whom cotton growers flirt because they are drunk
	Suicides: each year producers swallow chemicals intentionally
	People run-away and disappear to escape debt
	Ethnic tension: "the Peul's cows walk in your field and destroy your harvest!"
	Individualism : "cotton growing erodes this sense of solidarity that we know to be typically African"
Health-related	No adequate protection when doing chemical treatment, unlike SOFITEX's "commando intervention team", which wears "astronaut gear" when they come to spray fields
	Side effects of products : itchy eyes, headaches, stomach aches, hard to breathe, flu, fever
Ignorance	Local beer is sold in old bottles of cotton inputs, mainly pesticides
	Lack of money management skills
	Accounting and management training not applied in practice due to lack of documents and lack of resources to renew them, or intellectual or literacy limits of GPC leaders
Impact on education	Less study time: children busy in fields on the week-end instead of studying
	Impact on productivity : children tired on Mondays and do not assimilate material
	Some absenteeism, especially for students from out of town going home to work in cotton fields on week-ends
	Lack of monitoring and parental involvement in education because more emphasis is put on cotton
	School term starts late; from October 1st to November 10th, the school is open but no students come because they are in the cotton fields
	Peer pressure: drop-out children influence students to leave school to take up their responsibilities in cotton picking associations
Environment-related	Delicate precipitation balance; if too much, cotton rots, if too little, it flies off
	Many voracious cotton pests

However, the majority of the unfairness is said to originate from the working relations with SOFITEX and the Union. SOFITEX is represented using the following terminology:

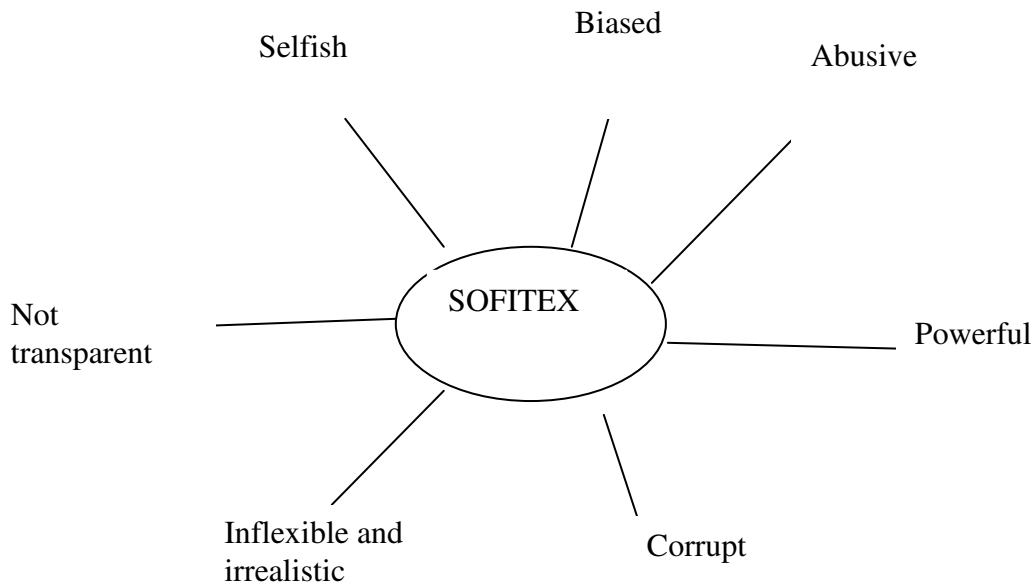


Fig. 1 : Producers' Representation of SOFITEX



Fig. 2 : Cotton Qualities

The SOFITEX practice that is most criticised and dreaded by producers is its field quality control. In fact, to determine whether a producer's cotton is 1st choice (and gets paid 165 FCFA/kg) or 2nd choice (and gets paid 135 FCFA/kg), a SOFITEX agent called a *conditionneur* grabs a handful of cotton and provides a diagnostic based on his appraisal of the fibre's colour and length. That decision has an enormous impact on the farmers because, over hundreds of tons, a few CFA per kg make a big difference.

The *conditionneurs* have incentives to declassify the cotton. As one participant reminds us, they are hired by contract and due to high rates of unemployment, the company can allow itself to dictate quotas to be met for each quality and only rehire those who fulfill them and saving the company money. Instances of the *conditionneur* asking for bribes to class one's cotton 1st choice have also been observed. These two things are denied by SOFITEX (Saré, personal communication, 01/05/07) which, instead, emphasises how the cotton fibre has to allow for a durable, elastic, long and regular thread in order to be competitive and to generate revenue on the international market.

Not only corruption and selfishness, but also a lack of transparency, are recurring themes here. Indeed, producers note the lack of formal outlet for voicing their complaints. On the one hand, a *Comité de Litige* exists to settle disputes, and producers can turn to it in case of disagreement with the company. In that case, their cotton, which is systematically tracked and identified from the field to the exporting port, will be subject to inspection by a team of professionals whose reputation is beyond question in West-Africa according to cotton experts like Goreux (2003). The quality control laboratories in the Bobo3 plant are equipped to perform up to 12 tests, ranging from color and humidity to fibre's length, impurities and refractivity, to satisfy international quality norms. While this can be considered alienating¹, it is said to be impartial by its director (Saré, personal communication, 01/05/07); however, that is definitely not the impression one gets from interacting with peasants in the field. The lack of trust is flagrant; doubt is at the centre of the day-to-day working relationship between these "partners".

In addition, the quality process is mostly unexplained to producers, who think there should be a plant for each quality of cotton (to avoid mixing), but who then doubt SOFITEX's claims when they realize the same ginning plant treats all the qualities. Despite SOFITEX's constant emphasis on ameliorating yields and quality, peasants do not verbally appreciate the reasons and importance of it. They do not seem to have an idea of how competitive and segmented the world competition in cotton is, and how West-Africa has to fight against entrenched prejudices due to the past presence of plastic chemicals leaking from the pick-up bags into the cotton (Saré, personal communication, 01/05/07).

For producers, SOFITEX's reputation is at best disputable. The company has been accused by a UNPCB member to be manipulating accounting data (Bassett, 2007). Farmers are aware of the company overinflating its costs in different ways. For example, the SOFITEX truck drivers are well-known for selling their extra gas in the village for their own benefit, because there is no control on the quantities used. Another thing is the embezzlement continued at the senior management level; management is accused by producer of making payments on their "five villas mortgages and three cars" by having their own cotton fields and benefiting from preferential rates. The producers know these practices affect the price they are getting paid, and it surely sours their relation to the company as a whole.

In addition, SOFITEX puts pressure on producers, forcing them to work at night to fill its trucks. In general, the company is not courteous and takes advantage of its monopsony power to threaten producers by reminding them of their lack of alternatives. As put by one producer: "as a poor person, if someone helps you, you have to accept everything that he does or says to you". Peasants are strictly subject to SOFITEX's timetables. Indeed, the company comes up with a calendar at the beginning of the year, which is unresponsive to natural conditions such as precipitation rates that can highly affect the crop.

Another cause of unfairness relates to how little the producers perceive themselves to be involved in decision making activities. While the sense of "local ownership" of the IGA is not present, there is a strong sense of SOFITEX acting unilaterally and not consulting producers and their representatives sufficiently. An example in Karangasso would be how SOFITEX invites 1-2 GPC

¹ Producers' acquired and precise practical knowledge of the quality of their crop is devalued because it is not taken into account by the SOFITEX. This has a negative psychological impact that ought not to be neglected.

representatives to sit on committees to plan and monitor marketing, but how ultimately it's the CC who writes the cotton evacuation orders. The resulting schedule is said by the CC to be based on data from the GPC (Toé, personal communication, 26/04/07), but it is also said by the producers to vary constantly. The scheduled pick-up days are often broken, and GPC leaders do not have any recourse.

A downward trend in SOFITEX-producers relations is identified by participants. Before the producers were organised in GPC, all credits were engaged directly with the company instead of under solidarity caution within the GPC. At that time, SOFITEX was said to be more forgiving and could wait an extra season before recovering their credit. It was also “naive” and gave inputs and seeds out for free, a practice which they stopped, apparently, because some producers were grinding the seeds to get flour and sell it. This is denied by producers.

Finally, the most recurring set of unfair aspects of cotton growing are directly SOFITEX-related. They all tell the same story: SOFITEX is unreliable, as demonstrated by the following chart:

Table 3 : SOFITEX-related unfair aspects of cotton growing according to producers

Input problems	Errors in order deliveries
	Delays in delivering inputs
	Favouring certain producers as not everybody gets their inputs on the same day
Consequence of payment delays (up to six months)	Other field work, e.g. cleaning the field for the following harvest, is delayed
	Some field work rendered impossible due to timing issue, e.g. no time to train new bulls because when the money comes it's already time to pick cotton again
	Necessary to sell cereals to cover certain expenses
	Necessary to take commercial loans with loan sharks
	No money for health care or other emergencies when it's needed
	Money comes too late to pay for tuition, and since student loans are unavailable, parents have to liquidate assets (like bulls) or not send their children to school
	Money comes when cotton cropping has started again so there is no idle period in which people could do other IGAs even if they wanted too

The Union, for its part, is talked about by the producers in the following terms:

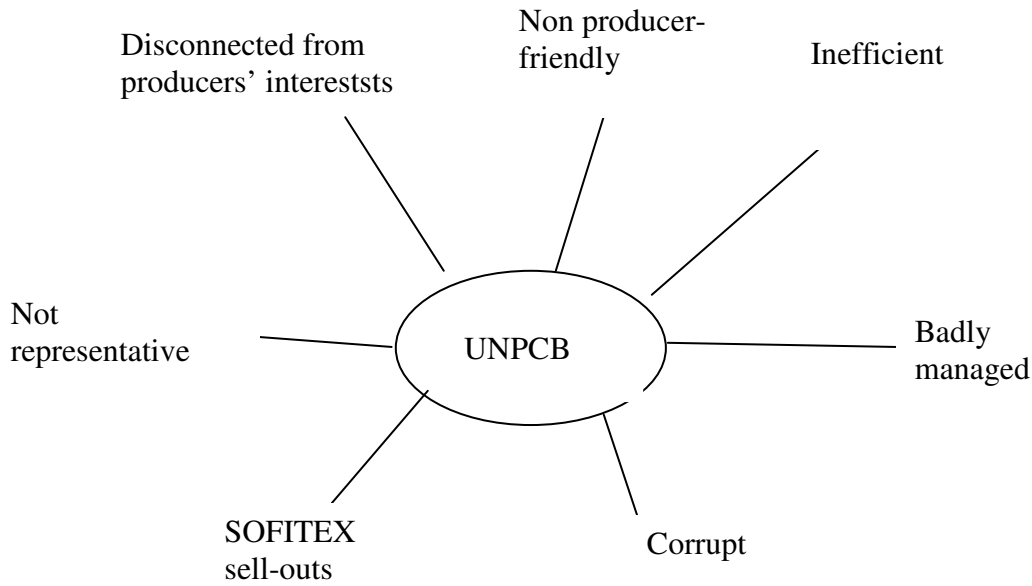


Fig. 3 : Producers' Representation of UNPCB

Producers' are not content with the UNPCB, which is said to not be working hard enough towards concretizing gains for those it represents. Through noticing how UNPCB does not fight to get a better price for the producers' cotton and how it is progressively charging higher prices for the cereal seeds it is supposed to sell to producers at heavily discounted rates, producers increasingly feel that the UNPCB is a SOFITEX sell-out. Its charismatic leader, François Traoré, however popular he may be in the West for its forefront role in loudly denouncing US subsidies at the 2003 WTO meeting in Cancun, is considered corrupt by the producers in Karangasso-Sambla. He is often designated as a 'government official', which alludes to the bureaucratisation of the UNPCB and its new distance and disconnection from the interests of its intended beneficiaries. UNPCB is largely viewed as a puppet of SOFITEX.

The UNPCB is not the real syndicate it should be in the eyes of the producers. Some people are of the opinion that while the organisational structure is good *a priori*, but it is badly managed; the leaders live on the money of the producers and do not give enough in return. As someone put it in a focus group discussion: "UNPCB is like a machete we paid to give to SOFITEX so that it cuts our throats with it. Before, UNPCB members were cotton growers like us, but now I don't see the importance of it because it doesn't do anything for us. They have to come remind us again why they created such a structure".

The UNPCB' role as a representative of the farmers is to find solutions to problems arising between partners and in the industry in general. It would then act according to its role if it made a genuine effort to address the negative aspects of cotton growing brought forwards by the farmers. The farmers are unhappy with the UD of Karangasso-Sambla, as demonstrated by many of them walking out of the annual assembly meeting. Some of the issues raised in that meeting were corruption – theft – by the former president of the UD. The entire session carried a general sentiment of resentment, because most farmers had not been paid by SOFITEX yet at the time of the meeting.

Conclusion

In this article, it has been argued that the most important cause of “unfairness” according to the producers is the state of the current relationships with their trade partner and union, which are dominated by unilateralism. They do not fulfill Tallontire’s (2000) five criteria for a healthy partnership, because SOFITEX, UNPCB and the producers interviewed do not share a common understanding of the problems and issues, are not mutually committed in the same respect, have conflicting interests and lack mutual trust. As a result, SOFITEX does not offer producers a “fair price”. This pattern has the potential to be replicated within FT networks.

Producers argue things are unfair because they are determined outside of their control. Even though they point out their poverty to appeal for external support, this is warranted by the feeling of a breach of a social contract between them and SOFITEX. The unfairness arises locally through interactions with such actors as SOFITEX and the UNPCB, and it is mostly seen as resulting from partnership issues and lack of positive reciprocity. The CC in Karangasso-Sambla insists that since they have good intentions there is no unfairness, just human mistakes and misunderstandings. There is no recognition on the part of SOFITEX as to how the process of the cotton trade itself can be unfair.

FT cotton in Burkina Faso has to be conceptualized within an endogenous CED framework, re-emphasizing participation and equal partnerships fulfilling Tallontire’s criteria. Observers ought not get caught in the “trade” versus “development” debate; for producers interviewed in this research, it is clear that the former relates to the latter and that reforms to “make trade fair” ought to have significant impacts on CED. As Quigley & Opal (2006) note, “Workers do not need ‘aid’ or social premiums, but they do need fair wages”. Although these are not all justified by “fairness”, they are a necessary component for FT networks to get approved funding from bilateral donors. Moreover, for non-certified producers in Burkina Faso, FT is mostly justified by the higher price and to correct the consequences resulting from skewed partnerships with SOFITEX and the Union.

Finally, more research should also be done on FT and human rights. This exploratory article sought to identify what producers thought their rights were and how and when they felt their rights to be jeopardised by other actors. A small part of the field work was devoted to that question, and it was meant mostly to assess the health and reciprocity of partnerships in the conventional trade. It would be interesting to compare the terminology and founding texts of the FT and the human rights movements to see how they overlap and how the former uses the latter as a framework to frame itself as justice.

Bibliography

BASSETT Thomas J. (2007). *Slim Pickings: Fair-Trade Cotton in West Africa*, Paper presented at the Conference : “Democracy and Transparency in Certified and Ethical Commodity Networks”, University of Kentucky, 12-13 October 2007, 36 p.

FRIDELL Gavin (2007). *Fair Trade Coffee: The prospects and pitfalls of market-driven social justice*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 347 p.

GOREUX Louis (2003). *Réformes des industries cotonnières en Afrique subsaharienne*. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, 41 p.

LEMAY Jean-Frédéric (2006). *Commerce équitable : vers des chantiers de recherche ancrés dans la pratique. Une revue transversale de la littérature*. Chaire de recherche du Canada en développement des collectivités, Université du Québec en Outaouais, Série Recherche, numéro 38, 74 p.

LYON Sarah (2003). *Fantasies of Social Justice and Equality: Market relations and the future of Fair Trade*, Emory University, Paper presented at the meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Dallas, Texas, March 27-29, 2003.

MARSAUD Olivia (2005). *Le Burkina est le premier producteur africain de coton*, Accessed at <http://www.afrik.com/article8916.html> on 15/02/08.

MASELAND R. & A. DE VAAL (2002), ‘How Fair is Fair Trade?’, *De Economist*, 150, 251–272.

MCSWEEN Nathalie (2007). *La contribution du commerce équitable au Développement Local au Burkina Faso : Les cas de l'Union fruitière et maraîchère du Burkina Faso et du Cercle des Sécheurs*, Série : Mémoires, numéro 11, Chaire de recherche du Canada en développement des collectivités, Université du Québec en Outaouais, 173 p.

QUIGLEY Maureen & Charlotte OPAL (2006). *Fair Trade Garments Standards: Feasibility Study*. TransFair USA. 76 p.

TALLONTIRE Anne (2000). “Partnerships in Fair Trade: Reflections From a Case Study of Cafédirect.” *Development in Practice*, 10:166-177.

Personal Communications

Fauré Marc-Henri	Founder, FibrEthik	01-nov-07
Lyon Sarah	Fair Trade Scholar, Economic Anthropologist, University of Kentucky	07-dec-07
Mutersbaugh Tad	Fair Trade Scholar, Geographer, University of Kentucky	06-dec-07
Saré Jean Désiré	Quality control agent, SOFITEX, Bobo-Dioulasso	01-may-07