

BASELINE STUDY OF FAIRTRADE

COTTON IN WEST AFRICA

MALI, BURKINA FASO AND SENEGAL

2015

INTRODUCTION

Independent consultants from Aidenvironment in the Netherlands collected data from farmers and producer organizations in Mali, Burkino Faso and Senegal to measure the impact of Fairtrade on the cotton industry in West Africa. The researchers surveyed certified and non-certified farmers and interviewed producer organizations and experts.

Fairtrade intends to follow this baseline study with an impact evaluation within the next few years to measure the progress made by the introduction of the Fairtrade Cotton Program.

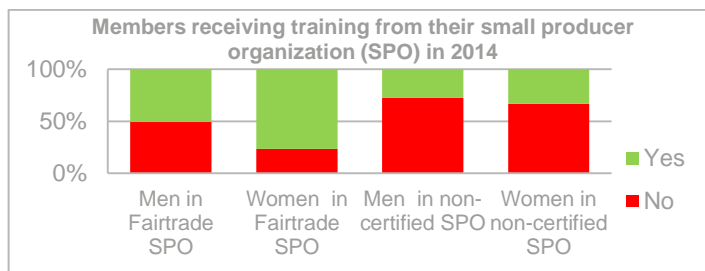
aidenvironment

KEY FINDINGS



Better access to services

Fairtrade certified farmers – especially women – had more and better access to services than non-certified farmers:



Training

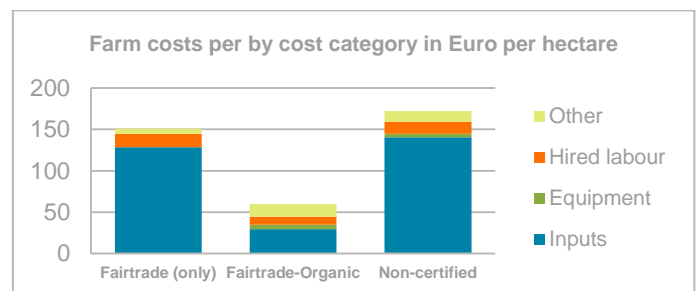
Training in certified organizations focused on good agricultural practices and water management:

Training topic	Fairtrade	Non-certified
Land preparation	30%	7%
Planting	26%	3%
Weed management	26%	6%
Pest and disease	28%	7%
Soil management (fertility,	35%	6%
Water management	24%	5%
Harvesting	35%	5%
Post-harvest	30%	5%
Organic farming practices	35%	5%



Lower costs and higher prices

Farmers selling their product as Fairtrade received a price differential between eight to 18 percent above the conventional price. Farmers selling under Fairtrade-Organic conditions received between 27 percent and 60 percent more.



Social and environmental

Fairtrade organizations scored better on gender and climate change. They also more frequently had children's right policies in place and Internal Control Systems for pesticide use.

Gender policy and strategy	Fairtrade	Non-certified
(1) Quotas for committees or board members	43%	18%
(2) Trainings specifically targeting women	27%	12%
(3) Trainings addressing gender issues	23%	6%
(4) Loans targeting women	7%	12%
(5) Gender quota for meetings	3%	0%

RESEARCH METHODS

Data for this study was collected at Fairtrade certified and non-Fairtrade certified Small Producer Organizations (SPOs) in Senegal, Mali and Burkina Faso. It included farmer surveys of members of Fairtrade and non-certified SPOs. Of the 177 Fairtrade certified farmers, 104 were also organic certified, the remainder are referred to as Fairtrade (only). Surveys were also conducted with SPOs, eight Fairtrade certificate holders, 22 certified first-degree member organizations of these certificate holders, and 17 non-certified producer organizations. The sampling strategy was based on a two-stage procedure.

The full population for this study was 21,713 certified farmers in the countries under study, derived from a list provided by Fairtrade International. The sampling size was based on a 7.5 percent margin of error and 95 percent confidence level. The sample size was set at 177 Fairtrade certified farmers, distributed proportionally among the countries studied. In the second stage of the sampling design we adopted a clustered, stratified and random sampling approach based on four filters. The counterfactual group of non-certified farmers was chosen from the vicinity of the villages containing the sampled certified farmers.

LESSONS LEARNED



Need to improve market access

Producers would like to sell more of their cotton under Fairtrade conditions and require sustained access to Fairtrade markets. The Fairtrade Cotton Program could potentially help solve this, but in the end it's up to all of us to purchase more textiles made out of Fairtrade cotton.



More support for SPOs in service delivery to members

Although certified SPOs performed better than non-certified SPOs on training and the delivery of other services, the number of farmers with adequate access to training on important topics was relatively low in 2014. Under the FCP program, Fairtrade plans to develop better technical and organizational support to producers. Thanks to the study we have a clearer overview of the topics to target.



Use alternative methods to collect indicators

The researchers included a large number of indicators, some of which were tested for the first time in cotton. If Fairtrade wishes to continue collecting detailed data on a large scale, more support will be needed at SPO and farms to ensure useful data is available.



Use of Personal Protective Equipment

While Fairtrade (only) farmers reported having considerably better access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) via their SPO than non-certified farmers, non-certified SPOs reported more rigorous awareness programs on PPE use in the year of study. Fairtrade will discuss PPE awareness in the learning workshops to better understand to what extent this is because Fairtrade farmers use less dangerous chemicals and where there is room to improve.

FAIRTRADE RESPONSE

Fairtrade has implemented the Fairtrade Cotton Program to increase demand so that farmers can sell a larger proportion of their cotton under Fairtrade conditions. The Fairtrade Cotton Program also goes with intensified support to producers, for which the study provides

valuable insight into which points to focus on. Fairtrade is also embracing the lessons from this study by organizing workshops with staff and producers to discuss how we can further improve the benefits of our system so that we keep increasing the positive difference we make on smallholder farmers.

About Fairtrade: Fairtrade is an alternative approach to conventional trade and is based on a partnership between producers and consumers. When farmers can sell on Fairtrade terms, it provides them with a better deal and improved terms of trade.

For more information: Please visit our website: www.fairtrade.net



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