

**Prior Learning Assessment and the Coffee Industry:
Using PLAR tools to promote sustainable development**



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Overview



- What is Fair Trade?
- Fair Trade and the Coffee Industry
- Fair Trade Awareness Research
- Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Pangoa
- Farmers' informal learning opportunities
- Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning: benefits and challenges
- Further research

What is Fair Trade?

- A more ethical way of doing business with the developing world
- An alternative system to the conventional trade

**FAIR TRADE =
INTERNATIONAL TRADE + SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**



The Fair Trade Movement

- Emerged in the 1960s
- Free trade and developing countries
- Trade not Aid
- Direct network: producers, importers, processors
- ATOs and World Shops



Fair Trade Principles

- Higher prices paid to producers
- Safe working conditions
- No child labour
- Social & Environmental standards
- Direct trading relationships



Fair Trade Certification Bodies

Product Certification : Fair Trade
Labelling Organization International
(FLO) with TransFair Canada



Organization Certification : World
Fair Trade Organization (WFTO)



Common Fair Trade Products

➤ **Coffee**

➤ Cocoa

➤ Tea

➤ Fruit

➤ Rice

➤ Sugar

➤ Spices

➤ Cotton

➤ Crafts







The Coffee Industry



Markey Monopoly and Power Imbalance

4 buyers (Kraft, Nestle, P&G and Sarah Lee)

25 million farmers



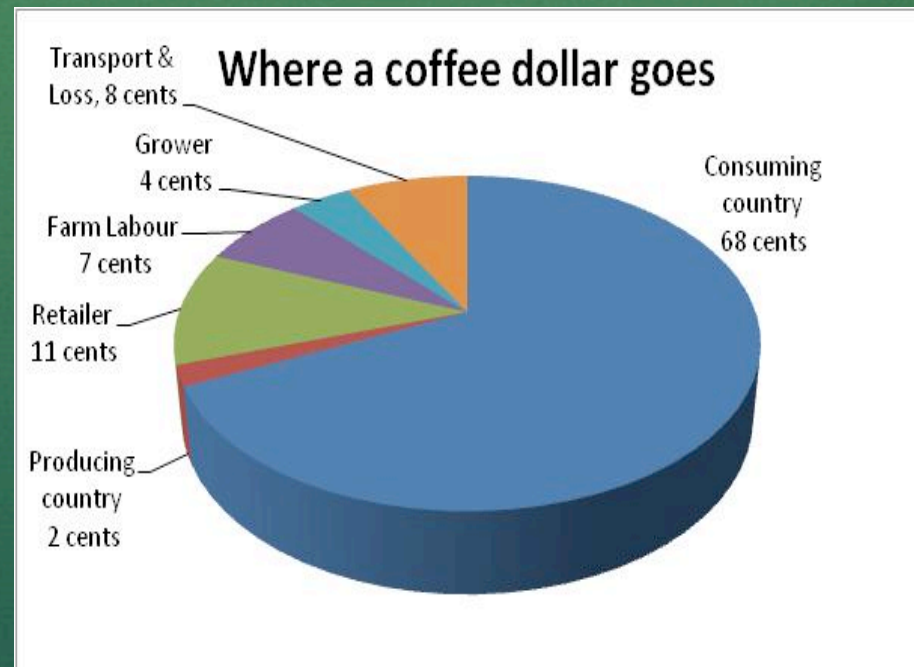
The Coffee Industry



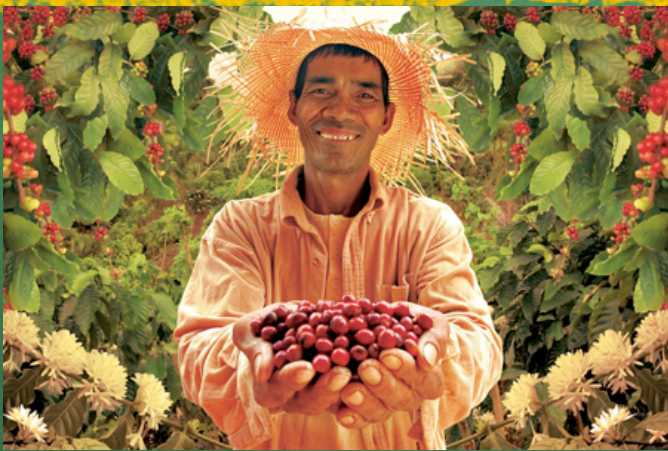
Where do the profits go?

\$ 1 billion sales

\$2 a day



Conventional Coffee Market



Importers,
Exporters,
International
Traders, etc



Fair Trade Coffee Market



Fewer Middle
Men



Fair trade Certification Requirements



Producers

- Small - scale producers using primarily family labour
- **Organized in democratically run cooperatives**
- Basic standards for use of agro-chemical and environmental protection

Buyers/Roasters

- **Deal directly with producer organizations** (co-ops)
- Sign longer term contracts
- Pay minimum price (\$1.21/ lb plus \$0.10/ pound social premium) or the world market price, whichever is higher
- Offer pre-harvest credit (up to 60% of the value of the contract)

Fair Trade Awareness Research



Research problem: Low awareness of fair trade principles, markets and customers

Why is Fair Trade awareness important?

- Improved knowledge and confidence in dealing with clients (fair trade and non fair trade)
- Increased participation in Fair Trade governance and greater decision making power
- Greater commitment to the coop and the Fair Trade movement

Case Study of *Cooperativa Agraria Cafetalera Pangoa, Peru*



Qualitative research

Data collection

December 2009

Instruments

Semi-structured interviews

Observation

Document Analysis



Fair Trade Awareness Research



Research Questions

1. *What do farmers at CAC Pangoa know about Fair Trade?*
2. *What should farmers at CAC Pangoa know about Fair Trade?*
3. *How does the cooperative view Fair Trade awareness?*
4. *What role does the cooperative play in creating and promoting Fair Trade Awareness?*



CAC Pangoa Farmers

Pangoa region:

- 29,673 people
- 15% native population
- 70% rural areas
- High poverty rates
- Lack of basic medical services
- Lack of education, water, drainage
- Substandard living conditions
- Agriculture-main industry



CAC Pangoa Farmers

Pangoa farmers (164 out of 500)
Education levels:

- Illiterate: 2% men and 20% women
- Some primary education: 64% men, 57% women (more than 1/2 incomplete)
- Post secondary education: 3% men and 4% women



Farmers' informal learning opportunities

Growing Coffee: soil, water, pests, weather, composting, etc



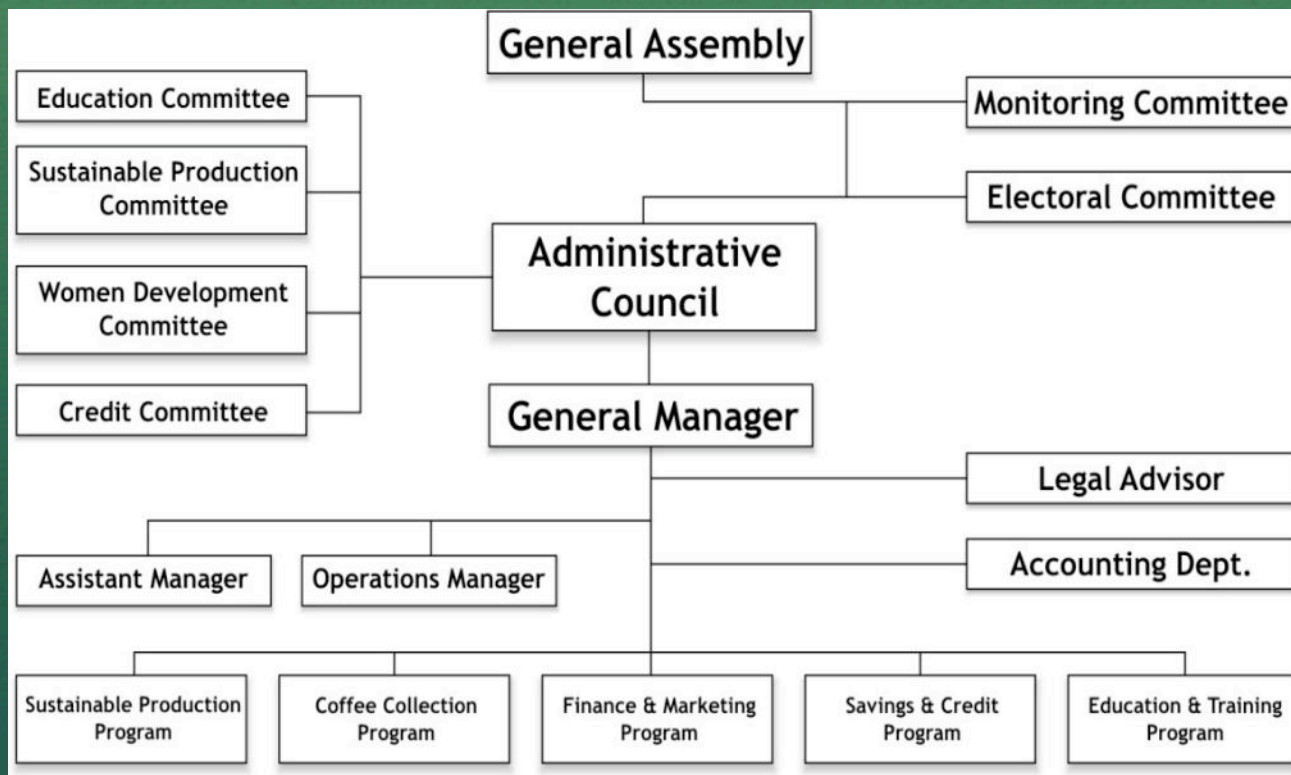
Farmers' informal learning opportunities

Fair Trade Education: fair trade standards, international markets, buyers, customers



Farmers' informal learning opportunities

Participation in cooperative activities and committees:
communication skills, leadership, problem solving, critical thinking





Farmers' informal learning opportunities

Interactions with buyers, certification bodies, other Fair Trade supporters: communication skills, business skills, etc



Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

HOW?

Competency based portfolio

| CRITICAL COMPETENCIES | |
|---|--|
| 1. COMMUNICATION ABILITIES | 5. CRITICAL THINKING ABILITIES |
| 2. INFORMATION ORGANIZATION ABILITIES | 6. INTELECTUAL MATURITY SKILLS |
| 3. PROBLEM SOLVING/DECISION MAKING ABILITIES | 7. INDEPENDENT STUDY SKILLS |
| 4. NUMERACY SKILLS | 8. APPLIED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS |

Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

HOW?

Competency based portfolio

COMMUNICATION ABILITIES

Criteria for Lower-Level Credit

- * Writes at a basic or intermediate level
- * Writes effective sentences and paragraphs
- * Has good command of the English language
- * Expresses ideas clearly in a spoken form.

Criteria for Upper-Level Credit

- * Writes or speaks at an advanced level
- * Conveys complex information or results of analysis in a clear and convincing manner
- * Uses verbal skills to influence people or organizations in creating change.

Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

WHY?

Farmer benefits

Cooperative benefits

Wider social benefits



Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

Farmer Benefits

- Self Esteem and Confidence
- External validation of worth
"I know nothing and can do nothing". (Werquin, 2010)
- Engagement in running of coop
- Identifying gaps in skills



Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

Coop Benefits

- Asses human capital
- Identify potential leaders
- Match skills with positions
- Fill gaps and upgrade skills
- Customize education programs



Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

Wider Social Benefits

- Improved equity for disadvantaged groups
- Stronger families and communities
- Increased Fair Trade Awareness
- Sustainability of Fair Trade markets



Assessing and Recognizing Informal Learning

Challenges

- Convince coop and farmers of the benefits
- Motivate farmers to participate
- Find resources to develop portfolio guidelines
- Find staff to coach farmers with portfolio development
- Identify qualified assessors
- Assist farmers and coop with interpretation of results

Concluding remarks

Learning activities within the cooperatives are mostly informal.... Members learn through observation and participation. By participating in planning and execution of projects, members of cooperatives develop planning, production, marketing, leadership, public relations and community development skills.

Cooperatives have been around for centuries. Their use in development is obvious but their contribution to non formal education has not been well documented

(Ukaga Okechukwu, 1992)

Further research

Literacy and Fair Trade

Whether good literacy gives easier access to Fair Trade
AND if access to Fair Trade makes people more literate

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYkot66GG3k>

Thank you

