FAIR TRADE IN WAR ZONES
FAIR TRADE IN WAR ZONES
The opinions expressed in this publication are those of its author and do not necessarily reflect those of BTC or of Belgian Development Cooperation.

Excerpts from this publication can be used for non-commercial purposes on condition that their source and author are identified.

© BTC, Belgian development agency
Brussels, May 2012
There have been about 125 armed conflicts around the world since the end of the Cold War. They have caused nearly 8 million victims and forced the displacement of some 30 million refugees. Although the number of conflicts has decreased steadily over the period, those that persist tend to be long and they take a very high toll in human life and in terms of environmental, economic and social damage.¹

These wars often impact the populations of authoritarian states or of those that are weakened or powerless. Economies are paralysed, infrastructure is ravaged and the leading forces of the country must flee… War is often followed by famine, military occupation and terrorism.

Millions of men, women and children face misery and suffering. They are the many faces, personal stories and families of war.

Resolution of these conflicts is the main challenge facing the international community. It has a wide array of tools at its disposal for this purpose ranging from military intervention to the financing of reconstruction and humanitarian aid.

In this brochure, we advocate that support for fair and sustainable trade must be included in the toolbox used by international organizations and democratic states to promote peace and the normalisation and reconstruction of countries and regions of the world damaged by war.

In these pages, we will highlight the specific contributions fair and sustainable trade can make to removing tensions, bringing communities together and promoting rapid social and economic development in these countries.

To convince you of this, we will present many examples of initiatives and projects implemented in regions at war in Africa, Asia and South America.
FAIR TRADE

THE ORIGINS OF FAIR TRADE

WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?

LABELLED AND INTEGRATED SUPPLY CHAINS

THE KEY FAIR TRADE PLAYERS
Fair trade is the result of a simple observation: The wealth gap between the populations of the richest and poorest countries has continued to grow despite the sums invested in development aid.

In less than a century, the gap between the incomes of the richest 20% and the poorest 20% of countries increased from 11 to 1 in 1913 to 75 to 1 today. Wars, natural disasters, faulty infrastructure, corruption...there are many reasons for this imbalance and structural economic problems must also be included among them.

Speculation in raw materials, the debt spiral and subsidised competition from producers in industrialised countries are all mechanisms that create additional obstacles and prevent the poorest countries, which lack control over their own development, from taking off.

Although these commercial inequities were already highlighted in the 19th century (notably by the publication in 1860 of a novel by the Dutchman Eduard Douwes Dekker, of which Max Havelaar was the hero), the first fair trade projects, led by American and British organisations (Ten Thousand Villages in the United States and Oxfam in the UK) only came about after the Second World War.

The concept of fair trade was first defined in 1964 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). “Trade, not Aid” was the founding principle.

The first fair trade shops opened in Europe at the end of the 1960s. Producer cooperatives and associations were set up in developing countries at the time to take advantage of fairer trade, first in handicrafts then in agriculture.
WHAT IS FAIR TRADE?

The major fair trade organisations (the World Fair Trade Organisation, the Fair Trade Labelling Organisations - FLO and the Network of European World Shops) agreed on a common definition in 1999:

“Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalised producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade organisations (backed by consumers) are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practices of conventional international trade.”

In concrete terms, fair trade guarantees the producers of the poorest countries purchase prices above world prices, relative price stability and favourable payment terms and conditions (and the possibility of pre-financing) to ensure that farmers and artisans do not under-price their products or rely on usurious loans.

The fair price paid must cover all product production costs, including environmental costs, and provide producers with a decent standard of living. In addition, fair trade buyers generally commit to paying premiums that are used by certified producers for productive investments and/or social programmes (literacy, access to educational and healthcare systems, etc.).

These organisations listed 10 main principles (and added an 11th one later) required to support implementation of this economic system:

THE 11 MAIN PRINCIPLES:

1. Create opportunities for economically disadvantaged producers.
2. Promote transparency and credibility.
3. Encourage individual capacity.
4. Promote fair trade.
5. Guarantee the payment of a fair price.
6. Promote gender equality.
7. Ensure decent working conditions.
8. Ban child labour.
9. Protect the environment.
10. Encourage trade relations based on trust and mutual respect.
11. Promote respect and dissemination of the cultural identity contained in the products and processes of the same (new criterion).
LABELLED AND INTEGRATED SUPPLY CHAINS

Since 1988 and the creation of IFAT, the International Fair Trade Association (which, in 2009, became WFTO, the World Fair Trade Organisation), and the launch of the Max Havelaar label, two major fair trade regulation chains have emerged and co-existed: The integrated supply chain (notably, WFTO and EFTA – the European Fair Trade Association) and the labelled supply chain (notably, FLO Max Havelaar).

The integrated supply chain is the traditional fair trade organisational form. Its primary characteristic is that all of the actors involved in the production and sale of products (producers, processors, importers and points-of-sale) are involved in fair trade and voluntarily (that is, actively) abide by its principles. The chain’s actors benefit from certification (generally associated with a logo) which reflects the rules and criteria that they have defined collectively.

The labelled supply chain is based on certification of the products sold. The companies that develop the products agree to comply with detailed specifications and to obtain supplies from producer organisations in developing countries (often cooperatives) that have been certified by the labelling organisation (an independent organisation that certifies that the criteria for granting the label have been implemented). Labelled products can be sold through any point-of-sale, including major retail outlets. The Fairtrade label (Max Havelaar) is the best-known of these labels.

The co-existence of the two supply chains illustrates the existence of different concepts of fair trade tied primarily to the type of relationship established with private economic players (multinationals, major retailers) and to differences between a vision of development (and of denunciation of international trade), on one hand, and a commercial outlook based on regulation, on the other.
THE KEY FAIR TRADE PLAYERS

THE PRODUCERS AND WORKERS ORGANISATIONS REPRESENT PRODUCERS, FARMERS AND PROCESSORS OF LOCAL RAW MATERIALS. THEY CAN ONLY PARTICIPATE TO FAIRTRADE PROGRAMMES IF THEY ARE MEMBERS OF A RECOGNIZED ORGANISATION. IN COUNTRIES IN THE SOUTH, THE FAIRTRADE LABEL IS USUALLY GRANTED BY FLO (FAIRTRADE LABELLING ORGANIZATIONS). BUT ALSO NEW LABELLING ORGANISATIONS APPEAR SUCH AS ECOCERT OR FAIR FOR LIFE.

IN ADDITION, THERE ARE SEVERAL MARKET PLAYERS FOR IMPORTING OR EXPORTING OR FOR PROCESSING PRODUCTS SUCH AS SOLIDAR’MONDE IN FRANCE AND OF COURSE OXFAM FAIR TRADE AND OXFAM–WERELDWINNELS OR OXFAM–MAGASINS DU MONDE IN BELGIUM. SOME TRADITIONAL TRADE BUSINESS PLAYERS ALSO IMPORT OR PROCESS FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED PRODUCTS.

FINALLY, RETAILERS DIRECTLY SELL THE PRODUCT TO CONSUMERS, EITHER IN SPECIALTY STORES SUCH AS WORLD SHOPS, OR – AND INCREASINGLY SO – THROUGH TRADITIONAL SUPERMARKET CHAINS.
ECONOMY, TRADE, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

Many economic theories emphasise the link between economic development, peace and stability.

The principles behind these theories are relatively straightforward: By increasing the wealth of economic actors in a given area through commercial exchange, they are encouraged to consider the fact that they have more to gain by cooperating than by fighting. These exchanges increase the wealth of both parties, enabling them to escape poverty and, therefore, to access minimum living conditions (water and food, in particular) and social services (health and education) thanks to which they can develop new, higher added value economic activities and reach higher levels on the development scale.

These theories have been proven to be true in many cases. In fact, they underpin the European construction project as it was defined by the founding fathers. Following the worst war in history, they believed that interconnecting the economies of the nations of former enemies would further remove the risk of renewed conflict between peoples who would have more to lose than to gain by going to war again.

FAIR TRADE AND WAR ZONES
CASES IN WHICH THIS DOES NOT WORK

As interesting as they may be, these theories (which are one of the pillars underpinning the actions of many international organisations, the UN and WTO first and foremost) are not universally applicable. There are many known cases in which the actions of economic players has led to conflict and tension which sometimes even feeds off of the chaos created by war.

The diamond wars in Central African countries in the 1990s provide a perfect example of a situation in which international buyers encouraged war crimes by financing the activities of rebels in exchange for access to mining resources. In Colombia, corporations preferred to back the paramilitary forces to guarantee their control of the country’s resources rather than work with local producers or representative authorities. There is also the case of multinational oil companies in African and Southeast Asian countries (Myanmar, etc.).

What do these examples (where the intervention of economic players interferes with the establishment of peace) have in common?

In what cases does traditional trade hold back development?

Are there certain conditions or prerequisites that enable trade to boost development?

First, the public good

By definition, trade is carried out in the interest of stakeholders (buyer and seller). If these stakeholders are corrupt elites that refuse to follow community rules to satisfy their own interests, transactions will be carried out to the detriment of the public good and for the benefit of the strongest. These people sell the fruits of the labour of local populations who are forced to produce. (This was the case of diamond miners who, for years, were often treated like slaves by militias and, at times, by national armies).

Gold, diamond, rare minerals, suffering...

These situations are all the more significant because the countries in question are rich in raw materials. The wealth of the countries in question is based on natural resources and is, therefore, not directly proportional to the development (and education) level of its population. National economic decision-makers who lack a sense of the public good will therefore see no real benefit in sharing the profits made from the sale of these resources to international buyers solely motivated by profit.

Because natural resources (particularly the most precious ones) often stoke the greed of unscrupulous foreign players and do not encourage elites to invest in education as the ultimate wealth of the country, they are often a curse for countries that need stability to emerge and develop.
System failure

So-called “traditional” economic theories maintain that trade promotes the development of populations and encourages the establishment of democracy through the emergence of educated elites that aspire to freedom and peace. This is often true, as proven by many examples, notably in Europe and Asia. However, it is important to note certain failures typical of the global economic system. By authorising and even encouraging excessive speculation, this system sometimes goes against the interests of local populations and of development policies that require medium-term planning (that is, the capacity to plan investments based on anticipated results).

Olivier De Schutter, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to food, emphasises this incompatibility: “If you follow free market rules, water and land will end up in the hands of a few capitalist powers. (...). We are still not learning enough from our mistakes. NGOs and farmer organisations have known for a long time that small-scale is the future.”

In addition, the systematic opening of markets encouraged by the major economic powers (which block entry of certain products to their national markets) can also be an obstacle to development in the most vulnerable countries (particularly those which are in, or have experienced, extended periods of conflict or violence). These countries are too often dependent on international aid and need to protect their emerging economic sectors before they can take on competition from more developed countries.

In this case, the blind application of given dogma isn’t carried out for the benefit of local populations who want to work and produce for the well-being of their families and the development of their communities.

Hatred, the last obstacle

These aspirations are the basis of any economy. Human beings seek to provide their families and communities (local, tribal, regional and national) with a degree of well-being and comfort. If trade enables them to reach these objectives more easily than pillaging and stealing, they will tend to work to produce, sell, enrich themselves, and improve the living conditions of those close to them. When framed by common rules this “minimal materialism” is one of the most fundamental mortars holding human societies together.

However, there are situations in which this human propensity is not sufficient and in which hatred of others is such that it trumps the desire to meet family needs. This is particularly true of ancestral conflicts in which the lives of one’s children are put at risk to honour the memory of previous generations that have fallen in combat.

These situations are often aggravated by religion. When it is involved, people deny their families and themselves any prospect of comfort, peace or well-being because of religious dogma that often holds out the hope of a better life after death in exchange for self-sacrifice or the sacrifice of one’s family members.
AS FOR FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE

In the most vulnerable countries, war, military occupation, assassination attempts and oppression destroy infrastructure, strain the country’s productive forces, damage generations, weaken moderate elites and result in identity retreat.

The traditional economic model doesn’t always create an ideal solution for mobilising populations around unifying and stabilising projects.

THE BENEFITS OF FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE TRADE IN COUNTRIES WEAKENED BY WAR

Compared to traditional trade, fair and/or sustainable trade offers economic, social and political benefits that justify the commitment of international actors to these types of projects.

Making local actors responsible

“However, while external actors, such as foreign governments, inter-governmental organisations and NGOs can play an important role in facilitating and assisting conflict-transformation processes more broadly, there is virtually unanimous agreement that the primary burden in building local peace lies with local actors. In fact, a strategic approach to peace-building promotes the primacy of local actors.”

This position is now widely held by players who support pacification and reconstruction processes. Yet, active participation by local populations implies that they must clearly understand the benefits to be gained from these processes.

We can give up our arms, but why should we?
To live off of the West’s pity? To submit to multinationals that will manage our future from offices in London, Paris, or New York?

By negotiating directly with local producers, by providing visible and attainable prospects, and by providing appropriate technical support, fair and sustainable trade can help make them accountable to ensure that they take control of their future.
Access to markets

In countries weakened by war and in areas of tension, the main obstacle for locals who want to sell their products is lack of access to markets.

Insecurity, army roadblocks, red tape, damaged infrastructure, confiscated means of transport, etc. are all obstacles to trade that could enable the development of economic projects, productive investments and the implementation of social programmes.

Fair trade provides valid and beneficial solutions to this problem, as pointed out by Harriet Lamb, Executive Director of Fairtrade International: “Farmers in conflict-affected countries like Palestine, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan face tremendous difficulties in first growing their produce and then finding a market for their goods, let alone at a fair price. That is why we are so keen to ensure these farmers are able to sell their goods with the Fairtrade label, opening more doors for them to earn more sustainable incomes and improve future prospects for their communities. (...) We establish vital supply lines and trading routes, which will allow producers in other regions to follow suit. We hope to provide the economic underpinnings for peace.”

The implementation of social and health projects

Productive and social infrastructure has often been damaged by war in these countries.

The fact that fair trade combines productive or social investments with every commercial transaction (special premiums added to purchase prices) guarantees that a significant portion of a transaction’s revenue will be dedicated to projects that will have a real and rapid impact on the well-being and comfort of local populations.

Speaking of fair trade projects in Iraq and Pakistan in particular, Harriet Lamb pointed out that “Fairtrade labelling guarantees farmers a fair price for their produce which is usually spent on day-to-day essentials such as clothing, food and keeping their children in education.”

Coffee producers in Timor-Leste have set up cooperatives to create a unified structure called Cooperativa Cafe Timor, which has built and implemented a network of health centres and mobile clinics. This organisation (which sells fair trade and organic certified coffee) has become the leading supplier of healthcare services in the rural areas of Timor-Leste.
Respect for women

Women are often directly or indirectly among the main victims of war.

In the harshest conflicts, their husbands and sons take up arms. They are often considered a resource to be robbed and are victims of rape and abuse. Even in situations of less intense brutality (military occupation or colonisation), identity tension leads to their removal from civil society or to a loss of rights. In Palestine and Israel, “Arab women who do not have access to education suffer from three handicaps: they are Arabs in a Jewish State, women in a patriarchal society and untrained workers.”

Fair and sustainable trade promotes the participation of women in economic activities and they contribute actively to the pacification of relations between former opponents. Specialised organisations increasingly recognise “the role that women can play by promoting peace and mediation at various levels of society. There are many reported cases of businesswomen behind significant initiatives, taking on the issue of gender in conflict in particular. These examples include a network of women working beyond ethnic divisions to regenerate sources of revenue, and an organisation of businesswomen that promotes reconciliation through joint business activities by small companies.”

Respecting and valuing cultures and identities

One of the major stakes of the normalisation process is the restoration of a feeling of dignity in communities hit by violence or oppression. A feeling of humiliation plays into a vicious circle of violence that pushes each new generation, conditioned by stories of prison, bullying and massacres to want to restore the community’s pride through revenge.

NGOs that work in these regions know that such collective psychology is among the most difficult to manage. Massive financial aid (regardless of its virtues in terms of reconstruction) does not particularly help to restore community pride with unifying projects.

Fair and/or sustainable trade provides a tremendous solution for dealing with this post-war issue and for helping communities to rebuild a positive cultural identity for the future.

Interviewed at the 2006 World Organic Trade Fair in Nuremberg about the political problems between Israel and Palestine and their impact on daily life and business, as well as about the negative reports about the region in the media, Nasser Abufarha, the founder of Canaan Fair Trade and of the Palestinian Fair Trade Association insisted that: “People are excited to see a positive presentation of Palestine through our high quality products. (…). Canaan Fair Trade is a presentation of what Palestine is and of what Palestinians would like to do. This conflict is not of our choosing. It was imposed on us. It is regrettable that most of the world only sees Palestine and the Palestinians in the context of conflict. We work to overcome this image by presenting our quality products that compare to that of Tuscany or Napa valley and the artisan farmers that produce these products. This is our contribution to addressing these issues. It is an alternative, true, and adequate presentation of Palestine.”

Invited to the United Kingdom a few months later, Nasser Abufarha confirmed this central concept:

“We have given farmers hope. An economic exchange that recognises Palestinian farmers’ rights and respects the value of their connection to their land, after marginalisation under Israeli occupation, is a major accomplishment.” – Nasser Abufarha

“Women are often a force for economic growth after a conflict.”

Maria Livanos Cattau, former Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce
Education for democracy

Fair and sustainable trade projects include a strong educational dimension for the benefit of local producers and their families.

These pedagogical aspects address mastery of production techniques and sales methods and training in the principles of local and participative democracy.

The passage to fair trade (which, in the end, means certification of products or of the supply chain by an external certification body) implies that producers organise themselves within a structured (often cooperative) body in which decision-making mechanisms must meet the principles of democracy and transparency (renewed elections, open candidacies, etc.)

This position is a clear requirement of the project initiators: “The strategic objectives of fair trade are to enable marginalised producers and workers to move from vulnerability to economic security, to have producers and workers participate in their organisation and to help producers and workers develop their commercial capabilities (…) Producers create democratic cooperatives and elect their own leaders. They choose the manager and staff together.”

Access to fair trade supply chains usually guarantees higher incomes but also requires that communities (which war has often forced to rely on themselves) to adopt collective modes of operation that are the cultural foundation of democracy.

Respect for and rapprochement of communities

Whether they are based on ethnic, religious or cultural grounds, identity tensions are often determining factors in the start or continuation of violence between communities. These spirals of violence radicalise positions and feed hatreds that end up becoming an integral part of identities and cultures. They create situations that can take generations to resolve.

Aid to development and traditional commercial prospects are generally insufficient in these conflict configurations. Fair and sustainable trade pushes local communities to cooperate on collective projects that provide value to their resources, know-how and/or environment and can contribute to reducing tensions and violence between neighbouring communities.

The case of Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee in Rwanda is particularly significant, as underscored by this testimonial: “The organisation is helping to change the lives of thousands, if not millions of Rwandan coffee growers. In the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 there were 800,000 people killed, and nearly half of them were coffee growers. Entire families were annihilated because of racial hate. The two warring tribes, the Hutu and Tutsi are now on a long road to reconciliation. Land of a Thousand Hills is assisting that process. In the communities where Land of a Thousand Hills purchases coffee Hutus and Tutsis must work side by side in order to make a living. This is bringing people who would otherwise be lifetime enemies together for the common goal of bettering their communities (…). This allows families to educate their children and have adequate health care. For every pound of coffee that is sold another dollar goes into a fund to offer micro-finance loans to widows of the genocide.”
Education in ecology and sustainable development

Preservation of the environment is rarely one of the major concerns of civil populations in regions hit by the scourge of war. They are generally preoccupied with their safety and meeting their basic needs. However, this is a crucial issue because ecosystems undergo major trauma during wars.

It is essential to include environmental challenges in stabilising, normalising and rebuilding activities and to make the issue part of the development programmes of these weakened countries.

Fair trade (and, a fortiori, sustainable trade) fully integrates the issue of respect for the environment, considered to be one of the pillars of global development.

There are many examples to support this: “Green Action Israel (an Israeli NGO and member of Fair Trade Judaica) actively promotes the protection and renewal of the Earth’s natural resources and the social sustainability of poor communities. Green Action works with Palestinian farmers in three small villages near Nablus on the West Bank to help them export the olive oil used to make Peace Oil in collaboration with Canaan Fair Trade, the commercial branch of the Palestinian Fair Trade Association.”

Work to raise producer awareness about preservation of the environment is a major undertaking intended to add value to a heritage and to make local actors accountable. This is expressed as follows by Sri Lankan producers:

“We are now working with the concept of setting up a prosperous and environmentally aware society. Training programmes have also been set up for everyone. They include computer and farming classes. Sessions are held to explain how to fight soil erosion, how to correctly maintain crops, how to make compost, etc. Producing without pesticides also has a positive effect on our health, as chemical products are very harsh on the eyes and skin! (...) We wanted to position ourselves as the most environmentally aware organic producer in South Asia.”

The civil war in Sri Lanka opposed the majority Buddhist Sinhalese government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a separatist movement fighting for the creation of an independent state in the east and north of the country. The conflict began in 1972 and led to more than 70,000 deaths.

Selling to survive

Many of the world’s conflicts originate in identity issues. They are not always resolved by the time the conflict ends. How can local populations haunted by an enduring sense of injustice be convinced to express themselves in other ways than through fighting? How can they (continue to) exist without setting off bombs or taking hostages?

Respect and appreciation for traditions and culture are essential components of fair and sustainable trade. Goods sold through fair and sustainable trade are not presented or perceived as products without a specific origin. On the contrary, the actors of fair trade work throughout the chain to add value to producers, their history, their identity and the product itself.

Fair and sustainable production becomes a way of life in the eyes of the world.

This positive militant aspect is underscored by many producers. In Tibet, for example, “Tibet Collection works directly with Tibetan, Indian and Nepalese artisans to create designs that respectfully celebrate the beauty and culture of Tibet. As a founding member of the Fair Trade Federation (FTF) we strive to create ethical relationships and promote better wages and working conditions for the artisans and people who produce our products… We also provide direct links to NGOs and other independent groups that seek to support or promote Tibetan culture such as the International Campaign for Tibet in Washington DC, and Tibet House in New York City.”

This specificity of fair and sustainable trade even provides an additional motivation for producers, as noted by Judeh Jamal, the former director of the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, a Palestinian NGO, “What is important is that each bottle sold tells the story of Palestinian farmers.”

Photo credit: Forest People
THE OBSTACLES TO BE OVERCOME

While fair and sustainable trade offers many advantages for stabilising and normalising countries weakened by war, it’s also true that implementing initiatives in these regions requires that a certain number of specific obstacles be overcome.

The “new frontiers” of fair and sustainable trade are not easily reached, but the stakes in play are truly worth the effort.

What specific obstacles must fair and sustainable trade operators include in their projects to benefit people living in conflict zones?

Satisfy minimum needs

A fact: Regardless of the resources and know-how of local producers in fragile territories, the implementation of productive projects requires a priority response to the basic needs of local inhabitants (water, food, clothing, etc.). This humanitarian aspect is taken into account by certain fair trade organisations which include management of this prerequisite in their approach.

Minimum safety

One of the main obstacles encountered from the operational standpoint is safety, notably that of the agents responsible for certifying and supervising products and production systems.

Kate Sebag, manager of Tropical Wholefoods, knows the problem very well. There are delays at control points, contested areas, risks for international personnel and consultants, etc. She is familiar with all of these issues. “We started off working in a country affected by conflict, Uganda in the 1980s,” she says. “It’s not deliberate, but we want to bring markets to farmers who would otherwise struggle to find them, so we do end up working in areas that are isolated and have political problems.”

Tropical Wholefoods currently imports fair trade products from two of the most reported-on conflict areas in the world, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Many of the external inspections the company’s Pakistani partner producers must undergo are carried out by a Sri Lankan expert who works throughout the Indian subcontinent. However, sending an inspector to Afghanistan to certify raisin producers in the Shomali plain north of Kabul is still thought to be too dangerous.
The cost of access to markets and delays

Implementation of local production chains in these fragile areas requires anticipating significant costs tied to product market access. These include both direct costs (vehicle renewal, corruption, etc.) and indirect costs (road blocks, military controls, etc.).

When questioned about this, Nasser Abufarha, one of the main founders of fair trade in Palestine, explained the strategy used to manage the issue: “Obviously, being under occupation increases the logistical cost of producing and trading. So our primary barrier ends up being high price. We offset this barrier by offering a superior quality product and added social value (fair trade) and environmental and health value (organic)”.

Teaching people to work together (mistrust)

As opposed to traditional commerce, fair trade (strongly) encourages local producers to organise and to create structures with elected decision-making bodies and management with clearly identified competences. This means that local producers must learn to cooperate and work together.

An essential pre-requisite is the re-establishment of trust between communities. This is one of the obstacles that must be managed in countries at war, particularly when violence is tied to disagreements between communities.

In southern Lebanon it took until May 2000, and the withdrawal of Israeli troops, for the idea of fair trade to emerge. A member of the Saint-Vincent de Paul charitable organisation, Philippe Adaime, travelled to the south of the country in 2003. He was appalled to find whole families living in misery, abandoned by the Lebanese government. “The inhabitants of this region were cut off from the rest of the country during the Israeli occupation. Many of them worked in Israel. After the Israeli withdrawal, the Lebanese State considered them to be collaborators and neglected the region,” he explains. Hezbollah took over from the State and aided the development of Shi’ite villages by creating social centres, hospitals, and schools... However, nobody took care of the 15,000 to 25,000 people living in Christian villages. “We felt that something had to be done to create a peaceful climate,” he recalls. “Christians saw their neighbours getting by thanks to Hezbollah, while they were not even able to sell their production. The law of mistrust that was preventing people from trading together had to be broken.”

Fair Trade Lebanon was created in 2004. The organisation is open to everyone and its goal is to bring the different communities together through fair trade.

“By making people work together, they are forced to meet and talk. It doesn’t lead to fantastic friendships, but it’s a start...” says Mr Adaime who makes a point of reminding his listeners that “diversity is the wealth of a country. Lebanon can only continue to exist if there is an on-going dialogue between communities. We’re making a contribution.”
Flexible Fair Trade models

The last obstacle faced by producers and distributors in these difficult areas are the certification systems themselves. They were not designed for these specific conditions.

Asked about this issue, Corinne Ingels, manager of Domaine Monts de la Lune, a company located in North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo that produces and sells vanilla and cocoa, highlighted the difficulties:

“Initially, we were interested in the FLO label. But with the background of violence in the country, it was impossible to carry out inspections. We turned to Fair for Life (IMO) which had already certified our organic farm and set up an aid programme for small organic growers. The label also accepts farmers who are under contract to us. In addition, it doesn’t set a purchase price for producers. In the final analysis, I would say that Fair for Life is more pragmatic and less dogmatic than FLO. (...) If you want to set up a sustainable trade sector, you must pay fair prices to producers. And there must be management transparency. But I regret the narrow-minded attitude and monopolistic position taken by FLO on the international fair trade scene. It was originally designed for Latin America and, as it stands, the model doesn’t lend itself to other locations. Given that it’s much more flexible, Fair for Life/IMO would do well to get itself better known throughout the world.” 23
Nevertheless, despite a certain degree of rigidity, current systems can be made more flexible, particularly for fair trade projects in high-risk areas.

Adam Brett and Richard Friend of Tropical Wholefoods have been working to implement a production chain for fair trade raisins in Afghanistan since 2006.

“Getting Fairtrade certification for the raisin farmers is another goal. It’s been a tricky one to manage because the insecurity in the region rules out any FLO inspectors going to Afghanistan. However, Adam has been working closely with the Fairtrade Foundation and Mercy Corps to try to develop a way in which FLO certification can be available to farmers’ groups in fragile and precarious states like Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Considerable progress has been made.”

Kate Sebag, an associate of Adam Brett and Richard Friend, is optimistic: “Until the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan was one of the world’s biggest raisin-exporting nations, and had a reputation for some of the highest quality. But getting fair trade certification will be critical to building volume sales and so is a key goal for us. Although inspectors have not been able to visit the producers that supply Tropical Wholefoods, we received an exemption from Fairtrade Foundation in February that will enable us to label the raisins with this very important logo.”

Not all fair trade projects in dangerous areas benefit from this type of exemption, says Michel Verwilghen, from the Belgian non-profit Commerce Equitable Grands Lacs (COMEQUI ASBL) which supports the SOPACDI cooperative in the Democratic Republic of Congo: “The main difficulty we face in getting SOPACDI in South Kivu certified is tied to the administrative requirements for obtaining certification. This is because Congolese cooperatives are not very developed. They are nearly totally unstructured and often without administrative management. There is also sometimes a lack of local leadership to successfully lead development projects and fair trade activities.” Since 2011, a lot has changed for SOPACDI as it sells its fairtrade Kivu coffee with the support of Oxfam-Wereldwinkels.
There are currently several hundred fair or sustainable trade projects around the world, primarily in Latin America, Africa and Asia, the continents on which conflicts have mostly taken place since the Cold War.

Reconstruction processes are all the more difficult to implement because these countries must be able to fit into the overall framework of globalisation quickly if they are to have any hope of achieving sustainable economic lift-off. This implies adapting production systems, resources and workers to the rules of the global economic system while protecting the strategic sectors of these vulnerable countries.

As we shall see through the projects presented below, fair and sustainable trade offers some dynamic and innovative solutions.
IN AFRICA

There have been many wars in Africa since the end of the Second World War.

Today, as new elites come to power, we are also witnessing the emergence of a responsible middle-class, part of which has committed to fair and sustainable trade.
These include diamonds, precious stones, rare metals, oil... The resources have sharpened the appetites of world powers and multinationals since independence. They have not hesitated to use violence (sometimes) and corruption (often) for the benefit of a regime that, for many years, seemed designed solely to serve the interests of its long-serving leader, Mobutu Sese Seko (overthrown by Laurent-Désiré Kabila in 1997 during the First Congo War).

In addition, given its huge size and its central position in the heart of Africa (it is surrounded by nine countries), Congo is forced to manage significant inflows of refugees fleeing the numerous conflicts that have inflamed surrounding countries (Uganda, Angola, Sudan, Rwanda, etc.). This has widely contributed to destabilising the fragile local ethnic equilibrium and creating multiple areas of tension.

The civil war, which led to more than four million deaths and the displacement of two million people, is officially over but the agony continues.

Every day in Congo brings its share of atrocities, famine, exodus, poverty and illness. This conflict is, without a doubt, one of the most under-reported wars of our generation. Yet, it has been one of the deadliest since the Second World War. Decades of unremitting violence have created what the United Nations now calls the greatest humanitarian challenge facing the world today.

Perhaps even more so than its neighbours, the Democratic Republic of Congo must strive to move from a situation of artificial colonial construction that mixed multiple ethnic groups with very different cultures to one of a nation-state held together by shared identity. And this must be done while managing the greed of unscrupulous organisations and states that do not necessarily have an interest in the country’s unification or pacification...

Given these conditions, fair and sustainable trade offers interesting prospects for bringing communities together, generating income for locals and qualifying and training producers. All of this in a country from which precious stones, rare metals, oil and coffee are exported with virtually no added value.

This is a great challenge for the heart of Africa.
SOPACDI / OXFAM-WERELDWINKELS
Getting past the violence

Fair and sustainable trade has not met with the same success in the Democratic Republic of Congo as it has in some neighbouring countries, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, for example.

Still, Congolese farmers badly need the advantages offered by fairtrade certification systems

Ethnic tension, faltering infrastructure, outdated equipment... small producers face huge problems in meeting their needs and those of their communities. Such difficulties are especially noticeable in the coffee sector, which the nation’s authorities recognize as a strategic one. In South Kivu, near the borders of Rwanda and Uganda, the insecurity is such that farmers are sometimes forced to flee their farms. They often return to find them sacked by looters and militias. Hundreds of farmers drown each year trying to cross Lake Kivu to reach Rwanda where they hope to be able to find buyers for their harvests.28

Thus, while fair trade initiatives are booming in neighbouring countries, fair trade actors (and in particular the certification agencies) consider DRC, one of the largest countries on the continent, too dangerous.
Today, the road to development runs through Kivu

Things are beginning to change. In South Kivu, a coffee cooperative called SOPACDI (Solidarité Paysanne pour la Promotion des Actions Café et Développement Intégral) has been committed to economic and social development based on the values of solidarity and sharing for years.

Created in 2003 at the initiative of Joachim Munganga and with the support of COOPAC (a Rwandan cooperative certified Fairtrade in 2003), SOPACDI was founded to stop the infernal spiral in which the small farmers of the region were trapped.

Between the repeated deterioration of their property, the inter-ethnic violence, the terrible volatility of coffee prices and the blackmail to which they were subjected by the few intermediaries that dared to come to the area, the farmers of South Kivu were often forced to leave their farms to swell the ranks of refugees and looters. To undo this fate, SOPACDI established itself as a cooperative to buy the harvests of its 3000 or so members, resell them at the best possible price and initiate collective development projects with the goal of improving the living conditions of these thousands of poor families.

A new deal

Thanks to its partnerships with COOPAC, the British NGO Twin Trading and COMEQUI, a Belgian non-profit, the Congolese cooperative has been able to develop much more profitable commercial contacts and significantly increase the incomes of its members. The organisation has also invested in washing stations, warehouses and equipment for its coffee growers. In the end, SOPACDI managers perfectly understood the need to improve the quality of the coffee beans and started up programmes to raise farmer awareness and train them in the best coffee production methods.

And now certification

Inspired by COOPAC’s example, the SOPACDI team (and its president, Joachim Munganga in particular) quickly became interested in the issue of fair trade certification, a logical step in the cooperative’s overall project. This goal ran up against the realities of South Kivu for years, despite on-going contacts with sector organisations.

When contacted, the certification agencies responded that they believed that the safety of their representatives could not be guaranteed. However, this is changing too. The international actors recognise the extent of the work done by SOPACDI, see the (relative) decrease in violence and assess the stakes of the initiatives undertaken in one of the most fragile regions of the world.

Photo credit: Tim Dirven / Oxfam Fairtrade

A new deal

Thanks to its partnerships with COOPAC, the British NGO Twin Trading and COMEQUI, a Belgian non-profit, the Congolese cooperative has been able to develop much more profitable commercial contacts and significantly increase the incomes of its members. The organisation has also invested in washing stations, warehouses and equipment for its coffee growers. In the end, SOPACDI managers perfectly understood the need to improve the quality of the coffee beans and started up programmes to raise farmer awareness and train them in the best coffee production methods.

And now certification

Inspired by COOPAC’s example, the SOPACDI team (and its president, Joachim Munganga in particular) quickly became interested in the issue of fair trade certification, a logical step in the cooperative’s overall project. This goal ran up against the realities of South Kivu for years, despite on-going contacts with sector organisations.

When contacted, the certification agencies responded that they believed that the safety of their representatives could not be guaranteed. However, this is changing too. The international actors recognise the extent of the work done by SOPACDI, see the (relative) decrease in violence and assess the stakes of the initiatives undertaken in one of the most fragile regions of the world.
New organisations are now mobilising to assist the Congolese cooperative. Thanks notably to the commercial and financial support of Oxfam Wereldwinkels and Alterfin in Belgium, SOPACDI has been involved in the process of fair trade certification since 2009. There have been many pitfalls to overcome though. But after a last series of corrective actions in the spring, SOPACDI received Fairtrade certification (issued by FLO-Cert) for a significant portion of its production in July 2011. The first containers of this coffee, which stands for solidarity and development, were delivered to Oxfam Wereldwinkels, which has been selling it since September 2011 under the Lake Kivu coffee brand.

**Contribution of the Trade for Development Centre of BTC**

The Fairtrade certification rewards the courage of SOPACDI managers who were able to transform a vision into reality. However, many obstacles remain. Although the number of members is constantly increasing, the cooperative must deal with the threat created by ageing coffee plants (which are from the colonial period) and soil deterioration (due to deforestation in particular) which is causing an on-going drop in farm productivity.

At Oxfam WereldWinkels’ request, the Trade for Development Centre of BTC, the Belgian development agency, has been helping SOPACDI deal with the situation since the beginning of 2011. After a field study, the Belgian agency committed €150,000 to an extensive project intended to improve the cooperative’s overall agricultural and production system, consolidate its organisation and develop its sales force.

Action has been implemented to renew the farms, train producers in the sustainable development of their operations, strengthen decision-making bodies, strengthen the role of women, represent the cooperative and its products at trade shows and fairs, etc... Progress is being made on all fronts.
SAVING LIVES AND TREES

In 2009, over two million displaced people were living in the Democratic Republic of Congo, notably, in the eastern parts of the country on the borders of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. The violence and poor sanitary conditions in the refugee camps are such that thousands of men, women and children have been forced to flee into the forest to escape the attacks of militias and warring factions that carry out raids to ransack humanitarian convoys or to forcibly recruit members. Small groups of refugees wander the forests of eastern Congo surviving as best they can from gathering.

Many eyewitness accounts have reported the rape of women and girls who leave the camps to collect wood for cooking.

Mercy Corps, an NGO that helps communities in danger, works in the forests in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It has set up a programme to train these threatened women and girls to build low-consumption ovens and to make biomass briquettes to reduce the amount of firewood they need and have to collect in dangerous areas. These high-energy yield ovens and biomass briquettes also help to reduce the massive deforestation occurring in the region.

To find out more: www.mercycorps.org.uk
IN RWANDA

Located in the heart of east Africa between Tanzania and Uganda, Rwanda experienced the quickest genocide in history. Over a million of its citizens were killed in 1994 because they were born Tutsi or were thought to oppose the dictatorship.

The Land of a Thousand Hills is now rebuilding with dignity. Its newfound security, relatively low corruption and good transportation (which runs on time) are assets for visitors and for the development of fair and/or sustainable trade.

With about 90% of its population working in agriculture, Rwanda has developed two main export crops (coffee and tea) and several subsistence crops (beans, bananas, peas, manioc, yams, etc.).

The Rwandan government’s Vision 2020 programme was launched in 2000. Its intent is to promote reconciliation between victims and executioners by encouraging the country’s economic development through major unifying projects and by promoting entrepreneurship, modernising agriculture and bringing in foreign investors, primarily Europeans and Americans.

The value of sustainable and fair trade initiatives is clear thanks to the contributions made to bringing communities together during this reconstruction period.31

Working together: THE ABAHUZAMUGAMBI BA KAWA COOPERATIVE

Rwandan coffee was among the best known in the world until the 1970s.

Rwandan coffee

Since then, its reputation has declined slowly but surely. The reason was a drop in coffee prices on international markets and the liberalisation of the sector carried out by the country. This, of course, led to a big drop in export income.32

In addition, during the civil war years, many people naturally abandoned their coffee crops or uprooted them to grow crops that were more essential to their survival. “Before the genocide, 52,000 hectares were covered with coffee plants. Four years later, in 1998, it was estimated that only 24,000 hectares of coffee plantations remained.”33

“When people are part of an association or a cooperative, they have a shared activity that generates income and makes it easier for them to reconcile”.

François Habimana, Executive Secretary of the Abahuzamugambi Ba Kawa cooperative35
In the early 2000s, the sector began to be slowly rebuilt. Rwanda has replanted four to six million coffee plants a year. It has also benefited from an increase in world coffee prices and from a drop in its currency exchange rate which has strengthened its competitiveness.

The arrival of the Internet also completely altered the situation by enabling consumers to choose their products based on quality. In the case of Rwandan coffee this means a preference for coffee of recognised quality from special growing areas. These new circumstances have led to a change in grower attitudes as they have had to gradually switch their focus from quantity to quality. It is against this backdrop that the first fair trade projects tentatively appeared in Rwanda.

“Producing quality coffee in one of the poorest regions of the country to give the nation courage”. Office of Rwandan Industrial Crops (OCIR), which reports directly to the Minister of Trade. Located in Butare province, the Maraba district is listed as one of the poorest in Rwanda. It was selected as the area for the implementation of a pilot coffee washing station as part of the PEARL project (Partnership for Enhancing Agriculture in Rwanda through Linkages).

The pilot project is a partnership between Michigan State University and Texas A&M University. Financing is provided by USAID (United States Agency for International Development). “It consists of improving the production and quality of coffee produced in this district through better management and organisation of producers, better farming practices and improvements in coffee processing in order to sell it in the speciality coffee market.”

One of the first organisations to benefit from this programme was the Abahuzamugambi Ba Kawa cooperative. Its name summarises its philosophy: “Those who have shared goals”.

Created after the genocide by 300 small producers who wanted to improve their living conditions, it now has 2,000 members and, admirably, allows both Tutsi and Hutu to work side by side in the green hills of Butare.

Etienne Bihogo, one of the cooperative’s managers, acknowledges this fact: “It’s true that this cooperative is contributing to reconciliation. For example, you can see people working together at the coffee washing stations. They are all now working for profit and are no longer thinking about their differences.”

Distributed by Union Hand-Roasted Coffee since October 2002, the cooperative’s coffee is sold in the United States and the United Kingdom (notably in the 350 stores of the Sainsbury’s supermarket chain). Its high quality enables the company to make a profit of €20,000 and to sell its coffee for three times more than other Rwandan producers. Two figures summarise the progress made by the cooperative: A pound of coffee sold for $0.14 (€0.09) in 2001 and for $1.36 (€0.90) in 2004.

Abahuzamugambi Ba Kawa employs many widows who use the money from coffee sales to buy cows and pay for their children’s education. According to them, “It is significant to see that the children of hundreds of producers in the Maraba region go to school, that medicines are now available in clinics and, especially, that many houses have been rebuilt or renovated. And this can continue.”

To find out more:
www.befair.be
Westerners called Uganda the “Pearl of Africa” in colonial times. The country was discovered during the search for the mythical sources of the Nile.

The country boasts magnificent scenery, diversity of fauna and flora, fertile land, thriving plantations and prosperous farms. With so much to offer, Uganda seemed ready to face the modern world at independence.

IN UGANDA

Decolonisation

Although there was a strong Catholic and Protestant missionary presence in Uganda, the country never had major British or European expatriate colonies. As in many countries under colonial control, the independence movement came to the forefront after the Second World War.

Negotiations to reach an independence treaty were long and difficult, but Uganda was officially recognised as an independent state on 9 October 1962. The new country soon faced political and territorial problems.

From post-colonial crises to the present

Tensions increased between the Nilotic populations of the north and the Bantu of the south. Idi Amin Dada took control of the country after a bloody coup in 1971. He increased the size of the military, had his political opponents killed, and instituted a reign of terror. The number of his victims is estimated at 200,000 men, women and children.

The Tanzanian army entered Uganda in support of the Ugandan rebellion in November 1978 and forced the dictator to flee to Saudi Arabia. However, the troubles continued despite the re-establishment of a civil regime and one dictatorship followed another. Inflation soared, a terrible famine decimated the population in the north of the country and the opposition was brutally repressed.

Yoweri Museveni, leader of the National Resistance Army, came to power in January 1986 and set about rebuilding the country. The new government undertook numerous reforms that set the country on the road to development (stable inflation rates, sustainable growth, etc.). Yet, the situation remains difficult. On-going rebellion in the north, led by the Lord’s Resistance Army with the support of Islamic Sudan, continues to terrorise local residents.

A multi-ethnic national unity government is now in power and is working to stabilise the balance of power between former kingdoms.
The story of the Mirembe Kawomera cooperative is quite amazing. Its roots are in the peculiar religious history of Uganda.

FAIR TRADE, ORGANIC, KOSHER AND HALAL COFFEE

The story goes that on reading the holy book, Kakungulu, who had worked alongside the British colonists since childhood in the hope of becoming Viceroy of the kingdom, eventually concluded that he agreed more with the teachings of the Old Testament than with those of the New Testament. "In that case," a missionary supposedly told him, "you are Jewish, not Christian."

Semei Kakungulu was increasingly left aside by the British colonisers who were beginning to find him troublesome. He decided to become Jewish and converted along with his three thousand subjects and their families. The new community strived to follow the dictates of the Torah for several years without any direct contact with the people of Israel. The first Jew Semei Kakungulu met, in 1926, was a merchant in Kampala. The latter taught him the rites and practices of modern Judaism.

The community took refuge in the Abayudaya region. It is the only instance of an endogenous Jewish religious community in history. Although it survived its historic leader, the people of the community experienced difficult times, particularly during the tyrannical regime of Idi Amin Dada, who persecuted its members and forced many to convert to Islam or Christianity. By 1979, only 300 were left, but the community was revived with the help of Israel (after some difficulty acknowledging this very atypical community) and of the international Jewish diaspora. It received religious recognition and the support of Israeli and American rabbis.

The creation of the Mirembe Kawomera cooperative is part of this extraordinary story.

A COOPERATIVE FOR PEACE

In the early 2000s, Joab Jonadav Keki, the leader of the Jewish community in the Mbale region and a farmer and musician, decided to go door-to-door to visit all of the area’s producers, regardless of their religious beliefs, to try to find a solution to the crisis the coffee industry had been suffering for years. “The most serious problem for us is religious prejudice,” says Joab Jonadav Keki who highlighted the tensions that exist between the communities, particularly since Amin Dada’s time when Jews were held in contempt, bullied and publicly denounced as “killers of Christ” by Christians and as “forgotten by God” by Muslims. Joab Jonadav Keki’s words of conciliation and tolerance bore fruit. He was elected to the Council of the Namanyonyi sub-county in 2002 with the support of all three religious communities who saw in him a credible leader.

After many group discussions, the Mirembe Kawomera cooperative (which means “Delicious Peace” in Luganda, one of Uganda’s languages) was created in 2004 with the goal of bringing the communities together and contributing to their development. “We had long discussions,” recounts Joab Jonadav Keki, “concentrating on what brought us together. We looked for all these common points in our holy books. For example, we recognised that we all greet each other with the word ‘peace’: shalom, salaam, mirembe.”
“I’m buying everything. I want the whole story.”

Once these common values were acknowledged and accepted, it was time to set up a business project and find new markets. The cooperative received support, notably from Paul Katzeff, CEO of the Thanksgiving Coffee Company. He agreed to buy the cooperative’s production at a price about 30% higher than market price and to support it in the certification process. “I’m buying everything”, said Paul Katzeff, “All or nothing. I want the whole story. I want to bring this story to the world.”

The Mirembe Kawomera cooperative now numbers more than 1,000 small producers and their families and is part of the bigger Gumutindo cooperative. The three religious communities are represented on the Executive Board. The current chairman is Jewish, the vice-chairman is Christian and the treasurer is Muslim.

“Now we are hoping to make our cooperative a model for development projects between the communities. We also hope that other cooperatives will commit themselves to the principles of Mirembe and to peaceful coexistence. We get along much better. You cannot imagine the peace and harmony that this community has enjoyed since the creation of the cooperative.”

Joab Jonadav Keki, founder of Mirembe Kawomera

BTC’s Trade for Development Centre supports the activities of the Gumutindo fair trade coffee-growing organisation (to which Mirembe Kawomera belongs).

The programme was set up in cooperation with the British fair trade NGO Twin and is financed by the Trade for Development Centre. It is designed to develop a new range of high-quality products and to support the promotion and marketing of the new gourmet coffee.

The Fair Trade Centre supports the project in the amount of €26,250.

www.befair.be

The mild arabica variety grown by the farmers on the slopes of Mount Elgon is certified fair trade, organic, kosher and halal.

Although the Mirembe Kawomera cooperative’s production is relatively small in terms of quantity (about 50 tonnes), it is recognised for its quality, mildness and flavour. Thanks to its fair trade and organic certification, the cooperative’s coffee sales provide more reasonable remuneration for the producers. They also allow the cooperative to reinvest part of its revenue in social and economic development projects, grower training and the creation of sustainable projects. Fair trade certification also guarantees producers access to credit and advance payment for part of their crop before harvest.

Over the last few years, the cooperative’s members have established a dynamic community and implemented a whole range of practical initiatives to help the farmers and their families. These include the construction of schools, access to drinking water and electricity supply to the villages.

To find out more:
www.mirembe-kawomera.com
www.thanksgivingcoffee.com
BeadforLife's goals are to eradicate poverty and provide support for Ugandan women victimised by war. It provides training to the women to create jewellery and bags from painted or varnished beads made from recycled paper.

Once the women have acquired sufficient know-how, BeadforLife helps them set up their own business. It makes a long-term commitment to buying their products at prices that allow them to provide for their needs and those of their families. The organisation also offers the entrepreneurs business and design training and access to additional financing to start up and develop their micro-businesses.

Jennifer Rowell-Gastard, coordinator of BeadforLife in Europe, sums up the organisation’s philosophy like this: “BeadforLife works for the eradication of extreme poverty by creating bridges of understanding and trade between the poorest Africans and concerned citizens of the world. The Ugandan women convert coloured paper into pretty beads, and kind people open their hearts, their homes and their communities to buy and sell these beads.”

Besides buying the products made by the women and selling them, BeadforLife supports many local development projects in the areas of health care, vocational training for young people, education and housing. The projects are fully funded by bead and jewellery sales and they improve the everyday lives of both the craft workers and of other people living in poverty in Uganda. To achieve this, BeadforLife set up a subsidy programme to support other not-for-profit organisations working to eradicate poverty.

Jennifer Rowell-Gastard emphasises this point: “All of our profits are reinvested in our Community Development Projects. BeadforLife has its own programme to support other non-commercial organisations working to eradicate poverty. Through these partnerships, we can increase our capacity to counter extreme poverty. At the present time, we are financially supporting a dozen or so organisations.”

The objects created by the BeadforLife’s craft workers are truly magnificent. Beads of all sizes are handmade from coloured paper then painted or varnished using natural dyes and colouring agents before being assembled into necklaces, bags, bracelets and earrings. The fact that the beads are made exclusively from recycled paper contributes to preserving the environment.

The bead-makers cut out triangles from the pages of coloured magazines, old calendars, leaflets and cereal cartons. Next, they hand-roll and glue them to make beads that are decorated with an odourless environmentally-friendly acrylic varnish.
The story of Fatuma, one of the BeadforLife bead-makers, was reported by the journalist Teresa Morrow in the Seattle Times. It illustrates the harshness of daily life for many Ugandan women and the importance of organisations like BeadforLife which welcomes them when they are rejected by everyone else.

Fatuma was kidnapped at the age of 13 when the infamous Lord's Resistance Army rebel soldiers entered her village in northern Uganda while she and the other children were in school. “They came when we were in the classroom, at 10 in the morning. When the bell rang for the break, one of the teachers realised we were surrounded.” The rebels left the younger children behind, but they took the older ones including Fatuma (who speaks in a whisper, writes the journalist). “After that, you just die, you wither, you just surrender your life. Some, many, were killed. Those who resisted or tried to escape were killed in a horrible way.”

Fatuma was forced to stay with the rebels for two years. She finally managed to escape at age 15, pregnant by one of the many rebels who raped her. Her family threatened to kill the baby, so she fled again. She married later, but her husband died when she was pregnant, leaving her with four children.

Fatuma was taken in by BeadforLife where she learned to make beads and jewellery. She stayed in the “Friendship Village,” which is managed by BeadforLife and Habitat for Humanity, another NGO which specialises in building houses for the poorest people in developing countries. Thanks to this support, Fatuma was able to build her own house where she now lives with her family. Her four children attend school.

BeadforLife is a member of the Fair Trade Federation.

To find out more:
www.beadforlife.org
www.beadforlifestore.org

Return to life
Somalia has known virtually no stability since its independence in 1959.

Early attempts at democracy (1960–1969) were unsuccessful. Following a coup by Siad Barre in 1970, the country lived under dictatorship then fell into chaos and civil war.

Somalia has not had a central government since and warlords and militias hold power despite humanitarian interventions by the United Nations (United Nations Operation in Somalia – UNOSOM) in 1992 and the United States a year later (as part of the “Restore Hope” operation).

“Somalia is the perfect example of a failed state,” says Nicolas Vercken, head of the Horn of Africa mission of the CCFD (Catholic Committee against Hunger and for Development), summarising the situation in this East African country. It is a rudderless country that has been in civil war since the dictator Siad Barre was overthrown by tribal factions in 1991. It is a country in chaos which still lives under the control of warlords, “groups of bandits who are happy to control neighbourhoods or areas with no political plan,” points out Nicolas Vercken.

Abandoned by the international community, Somalia is listed among the eight countries most vulnerable to famine, with 71% of its population short of food.

Charles Kituku, an American journalist of Kenyan descent was able to go to the capital Mogadishu in June 2010. He witnessed the latest absurdities of the Muslim militiamen who control most of the city’s neighbourhoods. Men must grow a beard. Bells in schools, cinemas, folkloric dancing, music and soccer are all forbidden. The worst treatment is reserved for women. Any resistance to men is viewed as a political act. They must wear a hijab and have given up bras, among other prohibitions imposed by the Muslim militias.

The head of the Coalition of Grassroots Women’s Organisations (COGWO) recently stated via Amnesty International that “My colleagues and I were targeted and we were asked to publicly denounce our work for women as a criminal activity. We were threatened and several of my colleagues were killed.”

Fair or sustainable trade is not even an option under such circumstances. The state of dilapidation, insecurity, and violence is such that the basic needs of the population must be met and the few efforts made to improve safety in the country must be supported before any project of this kind can be launched.

Yet, even under these extreme conditions (which make Somalia one of the most dangerous regions in the world), a few rare projects have been set up to try to help communities escape their isolation by selling the fruits of their labour.
CERTIFIED ORGANIC SOMALI INCENSE

Away from the cities devastated by violence, in the extreme heat of the Somalian desert. It’s difficult to imagine that this arid and stifling environment could host any life at all. Yet, the Samburu people live in this desert. They are a group of semi-pastoral nomadic tribes that live from small herds of cattle, goats and camels. The women of these tribes collect the resin of thorny boswellia bushes. They use it to make gum arabic, which they distill with vapor to make essential incense oil.

S & D Aroma Ltd, a British company that sells fair trade and sustainable cosmetic products worked with these nomadic peoples to help them obtain organic certification for their essential incense oil as part of its support to the isolated rural communities that supply it. This was accomplished in 2009. The incense and essential oils made by the Samburu women of Somalia are now sold as is or as ingredients for cosmetics and beauty products by Neal’s Yard Remedies, among others.48

To find out more:
www.nealsyardremedies.com

FAIR TRADE TO THE RESCUE OF SOMALI REFUGEES

We are no longer in Somalia, but in the United States, in Springfield, Massachusetts.

A few dozen Somali refugees came here in 2009. They arrived after years of wandering on foot through eastern Africa, of staying in refugee camps and after crossing several countries. They eventually crossed the Mediterranean illegally then came to the United States to end a long nightmare.

However, the cultural and language barriers were such that integration appeared to be out of reach.

To get out of this situation, the Somali refugee women created an association called the Walaalo Sisters to represent them before the authorities. The management of Dean’s Beans, one of the best-known importers of fair trade and organic coffee in the United States, was moved by their situation. It decided to meet the women to “try to figure out a way we could help, just like we do with the coffee farmers in each of the countries we work in.”49

The meeting led to a project to make innovative grocery bags designed and sewn by the women using recycled jute.

“They meet weekly to have sewing sessions that also serve as opportunities for the women to share their personal stories and struggles,” explains Dean on his site. “My wife Annette has participated in some of these meetings, using her wonderful facilitator skills from her organization, MotherWoman, to help these women and teach them sewing in an old sewing workshop that we made available to them. Two of these women, Yasmin and Nasra, have also received MotherWoman facilitation training and are using their skills in their own women’s group. After a lot of experimentation and practice, the women have created beautiful grocery totes, lined with muslin fabric. They are strong, hold the right amount of groceries, are reusable and made from recycled coffee bags. And 100% of the proceeds go to the women so that they can support their families.”50

Fair and sustainable trade improves the lives of people living in conflict areas. Moreover, it provides opportunities to better take in and integrate the thousands of refugees who come to our countries to escape violence and war in their own countries.

This isn’t about charity, it’s about trade. People’s dignity is renewed.

www.deansbeans.com

43
Sierra Leone is a small country in West Africa that has virtually never been stable since its independence in 1961.

IN SIERRA LEONE

The country’s history was inseparable from its incredible diamond mining operations until the civil war in 1991. The mines often redirected political and business elites away from the structural reforms needed to institute democracy and implement a value-added economy to replace (or complement) income from the diamonds that only enriched a minute portion of the population.

Civil war bloodied the country from 1991 to 2002 and led to some of the worst atrocities in modern history. The main reason for the war was control of the diamond-producing areas. It resulted in the death of about 200,000 people and to the displacement of over two million others (about a third of the country’s population at the time). Many people were mutilated and there was massive use of child soldiers.

The country is currently at peace. The various measures implemented by the UN have gradually been reduced or eliminated. This includes removal of the embargo against blood diamond exports. However, for economic reasons, many children still work in mines in very dangerous conditions. The spread of Aids is also a significant problem. Over 16,000 children under 15 are HIV-positive.

Sierra Leone’s Human Development Index (HDI) was 0.275 in 2000, making it the least developed country in the world. Remarkable progress has been made since then, but Sierra Leone’s development level remains low. In 2011, it was 180th (out of 187) in the United Nations Development Programme ranking.51

SIERRA LEONE’S DIVINE CHOCOLATE

Divine Chocolate is both a pioneer and an example for the world of fair and sustainable trade producer communities.

In 1998, the Ghanaian cocoa production cooperative Kuapa Kokoo committed to an integrated commercial approach by creating the “Day Chocolate” brand in the United Kingdom and its own chocolate brand “Divine Chocolate” for direct distribution to the British market. This control of the entire product value chain, from production to distribution, was a major advance and an enormous opportunity for the Kuapa Kokoo cocoa producers of Ghana.

In early 2010, “Divine Chocolate” proudly announced that, after years of work with producers in Sierra Leone supported by Kuapa Kokoo and the Twin organisation, the first container of Fair Trade certified cocoa produced by the Kpeya Agricultural Enterprise (KAE) cooperative was being used in Divine Chocolate recipes.52
The Kpeya Agricultural Enterprise Cooperative

Kpeya Agricultural Enterprise is based in Kenema, nearly 300 kilometres from the capital Freetown. It has over 1,200 members organised into 50 village committees. The cooperative was created in 1996 during the civil war and it survived the violence and exactions as best it could. Its growth has been due in large part to the work of one man, Ibrahim Moseray, a cocoa grower and the Managing Director of the organisation. He was able to convince other producers of the advantages of belonging to a cooperative that cared about the well-being of its members.

With the help of TWIN, a fair trade support organisation (a partner of CaféDirect and Divine Chocolate), FAO and the German agency Agro Action, KAE taught farmers how to grow and sell better-quality cocoa and to organise themselves on a democratic multi-ethnic basis.

The challenges that had to be met to develop the growing cooperative were much more significant in Sierra Leone than they had been in Ghana when Kuapa Kokoo was created. The market was liberalised, there was increased competition and producers were dependent on operators who bought their cocoa before it was harvested (during the “lean season”) to impose extremely low prices.

As Ibrahim Moseray explains, this situation drove his project: “I’m a cocoa farmer and so were my parents before me. During the war, I saw my brothers fight and I saw how the buyers misled us. I wanted to do something so that we could have a better life.”

Aware of this situation, other farmers joined KAE to take advantage of higher prices and production aid. Until then, Sierra Leone’s cocoa exports were generally considered to be of mediocre quality. KAE members learned to make their cocoa better thanks to improvements in fermenting and drying techniques. This enabled them to take advantage of the fair trade premiums provided by Divine Chocolate.

Thanks to these new resources, the Kpeya Agricultural Enterprise cooperative was able to build a school and pay for a teacher who comes every day. The cocoa warehouses have been renovated and the cooperative has new offices and a shop in Kenema.
Civil war led to the displacement of over four million people and to two million deaths between 1983 and 1989.

**IN SUDAN**

The armed Animist and Christian groups of the tribal areas of the south of the country oppose the Muslim government in Khartoum. In 1983, the latter decided to extend Islamic sharia law to the entire country. The law uses stoning and amputation as forms of punishment. In addition to these deadly conflicts, the country also suffers from drought which has caused shortages and famine in its southern and western regions.

Some people fled to cities in the south and others trekked northward to Khartoum. From there they moved on to neighbouring countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Egypt. International humanitarian organisations refer to these victims of malnutrition and famine as a “lost generation”. They are poorly educated, have no access to basic medical care and little hope of finding productive employment in the south or in the north.

Another rebellion broke out in the western province of Darfur at the beginning of 2003. The government and the rebels, and particularly the Arab Janjaweed militias working for the Islamist government, have been accused of committing atrocities during this war.

It has resulted in 300,000 deaths and created over three million displaced persons and refugees.

Accused by the International Criminal Court (ICC) of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide during the civil war in Darfur, Omar El Bashir, the Sudanese head of state, has been under an international arrest warrant since 2010. The country’s split in 2011 has not come close to resolving its many problems. Significant border disputes (tied to the presence of petrol in particular) are the source of many abuses inflicted primarily on civilians.
Gum arabic is grown in Sudan, Somalia and Senegal. The resin is used as an ingredient in the confectionery, soft drink and pharmaceutical industries. Its production is an important source of income for thousands of African farmers living in the arid and semi-arid regions of the sub-Saharan “gum belt”. Sudan is the biggest producer of gum arabic in the world and, according to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the sector ensures the subsistence of over five million people in the country.

At the beginning of 2010, Traidcraft Exchange (a British NGO that supports fair trade), the European Euclid Network, and ASDF BV, a Dutch organisation, obtained financial support from the United Nations to implement an innovative poverty reduction programme in Sudan based on the creation of the first fair trade certification standard for gum arabic. The stakes are very high, in particular for Sudanese farmers who, according to a World Bank study, receive less than 15% of the end-price of the product.

Filippo Addarii, a member of the European Euclid Network, emphasises the importance of this project: “This is one of the most exciting projects that we have been involved with because we are working across the sector, using our skills, expertise and passion, to bring about real change and prosperity in one of the most troubled regions in the world. The financial model of the project has the potential to revolutionise what we understand as international development, as well as demonstrating that partnerships across the sector work.”

Geoff Bockett, International Director at Traidcraft Exchange, is equally enthusiastic: “This project will bring yet further innovation to Fair Trade, enabling gum arabic producers in Sudan to transform their lives through trade. Traidcraft endorses this project, which has compelling environmental, social, and commercial benefits. We welcome the opportunity to work with a range of influential partners to extend the impact of Fair Trade to this new sector.”

Giulio Franzinetti, Project Coordinator and Managing Director of ASDF, emphasises the impact of the project explaining that “market players are well aware of the great potential to affect the lives of millions of farmers in the sub-Saharan Sahel and it is an opportunity to bring about sustainable and long-term change in one of the most difficult regions in the world.”

To find out more:
www.gumarabic.org
www.EuclidNetwork.eu
www.traidcraft.co.uk
http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu
On 17 December 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a young street vendor in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, ended his life by setting himself on fire after his goods were confiscated by the police. The incident lit a powder keg and the Tunisian population, infuriated by bullying and corruption, rose up against the regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

From demonstration to riot, from riot to uprising, the popular revolt spread to the rest of the country and on 14 January 2011 the president fled after 23 years in power.

A wind of freedom is blowing across the Near and Middle East.

In Algeria, Yemen, Jordan, Oman, Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Bahrain, Libya etc. young Arabs at the forefront of these popular movements demanded more freedoms and better prospects for the future.
**FAIR TRADE, A JUST RESPONSE**

One model perfectly meets these social demands: fair trade. It combines an entrepreneurial dynamic, the accountability of local players and development prospects while opening broad opportunities for the expression of participatory democracy. They may be hotbeds of protest, an inspiration, stabilising elements, refuges for those most at risk...it is still too early to know what role the fair trade organisations of these countries will play in the events.

While waiting to find out what role the future has in store for them, let’s meet the fair trade organisations of Arab Spring countries.

**IN TUNISIA**

Tunisia is a special country in the Near East. With a well-educated population, it was long seen as exemplary by Westerners who appreciated its stability (despite its authoritarian character), its social equality (notably the status of women), its economic dynamism and its peaceful and open culture.

However, this image did not reflect the full reality of the country, which is split by significant cultural cleavages (notably between rich cities in the north and the rest of the country). Now an unprecedented economic crisis has been added to its political instability.

Foreign investors fled the country as social demands exploded. In 2011, direct foreign investment (DFI) saw an overall decrease of 30% with dizzying drops in some of the country’s most strategic sectors (-83% in tourism, -42% in manufacturing and -19% in energy industries). The economy is in recession and nearly a quarter of the population lives on less than two dollars a day.61
SUPPORTING TUNISIAN PRODUCERS

However, not all economic players abandoned Tunisia in the midst of the tempest.

In November 2011, Fairtrade Africa, the independent organisation representing all Fairtrade (Max Havelaar) certified producers in Africa, opened an office in Tunis (after those of Moshi in Tanzania, Accra in Ghana and Cape Town in South Africa). The office representing the fair trade organisation in North Africa was opened to provide certified producers in the continent’s Arab countries with overall support and a place where they can “work much more closely, exchange good practices, increase the visibility of fair trade in their countries, and create a date value chain.”

The sensitive political and economic situation currently experienced by the countries of the Maghreb has not curbed the enthusiasm of those involved with the fair trade organisation. They respect “the new government (which) has implemented a legal system that facilitates the process of registering new organisations” and they add that “Tunis has also proven itself to be the most profitable city.”

With thirteen Fairtrade certified organisations (six in Egypt, five in Tunisia and two in Morocco), the regional Fairtrade Africa office brings together about 9,300 producers of dates, fresh fruit and spices. Najah Labcheg of Hazoua Palm is among them. He emphasises the importance of this initiative: “Having a network in North Africa will strengthen our position and increase our commitment to the Fairtrade system. That way we will be able to identify our strengths and weaknesses and we will know how to better deal with them. In short, our recent adherence will help us in developing our region.”

BENI GHREB

We are in Hazoua, at the doorstep of the great desert, far from the beaches of Monastir and the tumult of the large cities of the country’s north. Beni Ghreb is located here, near the city of Tozeur, at the heart of rural and traditional Tunisia. It is a pioneer in the farming and production of organic fair trade dates.

Founded in 2002, Beni Ghreb created the Groupement de Développement de l’Agriculture Biodynamique, which brings together the settled Bedouin families of the Beni Ghreb tribe. The communities have been living near the Chott el Djerid salt lake for decades (although it hasn’t been a lake for decades, but rather a white expanse of sand and salt, the remains of the lake which has now disappeared). By supporting the creation of this group, Beni Ghreb wanted to enable the families of the region to have new and sustainable sources of income by providing them with the resources needed for the warehousing, processing, packaging and transporting of their harvests. In order to slow soil erosion and the advancing desert, Beni Ghreb also supports the revival of ancient farming practices, in particular, the use of environmentally-friendly farming techniques known as “three-level farming” which combines date palms, fruit trees (banana, lemon and fig trees) and vegetables and cereals at ground level.
The use of traditional agro-organic growing methods and the good working conditions the company provides to its employees (nearly exclusively women who have few opportunities to earn an income in this region) have enabled Beni Ghreb to be certified fair trade (Fairtrade) and organic (Demeter) for its date production.

As Said, the director of the producer group explains, the economic and social impact of Beni Ghreb is very important for the local population: “In this region far from urban centres, the only people who could work were plot owners. The others only had work during very short periods of the year, generally two months during the harvest. The region suffers a great deal from unemployment. We wanted our project to add value to our natural resources, and to water in particular. So we introduced new crops, especially market crops, including hot peppers, garlic, onions, carrots, and all sorts of fruits and vegetables. We made it possible for farmers to work for much longer periods during the year.”

Although it is far from the main urban centres, the Tozeur region was also shaken by the Tunisian revolution and its fallout. Some government officials fled, stores were ransacked, and a degree of concern still persists among the population, which doesn’t know what the future holds. Despite the uproar and instability, those involved in Tunisian fair trade continue to pursue the goals they set for themselves: to improve the living conditions of local populations by developing effective endogenous economic activities that are respectful of natural resources and traditional know-how.

To find out more:
www.ecohazoua.org
www.fairtradeconnection.org

Tunisie Equitable, an on-line boutique

Created in 2010, the Tunisieequitable.com project is the fruit of a broad partnership that brings together producer groups, public organisations, and the African NGO Enda. Set up to promote “quality and proximity initiatives in Tunisia”, the programme led to the creation of a web site for the on-line sale of Tunisian fair trade products and, in particular, of traditional handicrafts.

The products sold are designed by various groups committed to fair trade.

The Zazia Artisanat organisation is very involved in this approach. It brings together designers and artisans who specialise in making traditional Berber handicrafts from natural alfa fibres intended to “preserve, promote and renew local traditions while providing the region’s artisans with regular and decent incomes.”

Combining e-commerce and traditional creativity is the main characteristic of this project, which makes the richness of Tunisia’s heritage available to all while showing respect for its male and female producers.
Inspired by the courage of Tunisian protesters, Egyptians rose up against the regime of President Hosni Mubarak who had been in power since the assassination of Anwar El Sadat in October 1981

IN EGYPTE

By the end of January 2011, demonstrations were bringing tens of thousands of protesters into the streets of the country’s main cities.

Despite police and army repression, nearly two million people gathered in the capital on February 1st, mainly around Tahrir Square, which became the symbol of Arab protest. After several days of intense popular demonstrations and confrontation, Hosni Mubarak and his family fled Cairo then were arrested.

Egypt has waivered between hope and fear ever since.

Egypt is the traditional power of the Arab world. It has embarked on a journey on poorly marked roads. The choices facing Egyptian leaders and the general population will have an even greater impact on the future of the Middle East than those made in Tunisia.

FAIR TRADE IN EGYPT

Egypt is the North African country with the greatest number of Fairtrade certified organisations (primarily producers of fruits, dried fruit, spices and vegetables). However, it is in the handicrafts sector that fair trade has probably made its greatest mark.

Fair Trade in Egypt was created in 1998 at the initiative of an Egyptian and Italian NGO with American support. Its goal is to reduce poverty among the most marginalised sections of the country’s population (notably women) by supplying the artisans of local communities with commercial, technical, and financial support while adhering to the principles and values of fair trade.

A member of the WFTO and of COFTA (the African chapter of the WFTO), Fair Trade in Egypt provides its services to about forty local groups representing over 2,500 artisans who are able to perpetuate ancient weaving, ironwork, tapestry, and jewellery know-how and techniques in particular.

Nearly a thousand different products are sold either to international fair trade buyers or directly in boutiques managed by Fair Trade in Egypt. The fair trade organisation wants to promote this heritage among Egyptians and has bet heavily on the sale of handicraft creations in the country itself by opening several shops (until the beginning of 2011, about 65% of turnover came from retail sales in Egypt).68
However, the major economic crisis currently affecting the country is impacting foreign investors as well as domestic consumption and tourism, the primary sources of revenue for the Egyptian fair trade organisation and the artisans it federates. Retail sales have fallen significantly since the beginning of the revolution. According to the forecasts of Fair Trade in Egypt managers, sales will not recover for several months and there is a risk of lost income for artisans and their families.

However, Fair Trade in Egypt teams aren’t giving up hope. They are mobilising with even greater enthusiasm, turning to international fair trade importers and opening a new boutique in the Zamalek neighbourhood of Cairo in early 2012.

To find out more:
www.fairtradeegypt.org

---

**Fair trade oil in Libya?**

It took military intervention by the international community (led by France and Great Britain) to avoid bloody repression. After the fall of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the country could now witness the birth of one of the most innovative fair trade initiatives since the Fairtrade certification of Bolivian gold in early 2011.

The Open Oil agency, based in Berlin, campaigns for more transparency and better governance in the oil industry. Following contacts with Libyan leaders in Tripoli and Misrata at the end of 2011, the organisation’s leaders believe that the time has come to study the feasibility of fair trade certification of the country’s oil.

Johnny West, the founder of Open Oil, insists on the preliminary nature of this research. He explains that, “Following the revolution in Libya, conditions are now in place in this country to carry out this type of study. The highly integrated industrial structure of the production chain (from extraction to distribution) would enable us to get all of the industry’s players to the table. The Libyan state, which is present at every level of the value chain, is searching for solutions to better manage its oil resources and implement overall economic and social development. What is more, Libya wants to improve its international image, which was seriously tarnished following the violence and Gaddafi’s death.”

The project is only just getting under way, but the first exchanges (with the Libyan government and Fairtrade International in Bonn) have been very positive. Nevertheless, once the feasibility of this type of project has been validated, there will still be many obstacles to overcome.

In fact, the stakes of this initiative are extraordinarily high and the potential benefits for the populations and the environment of producing countries are enormous. Perhaps one day a few years from now, we will be able to select fair trade fuel at the pump and contribute to improving the living conditions of millions of people.

That would be a real revolution.
The Middle East, the cradle of the great monotheistic Mediterranean and European religions, is one of the world’s main areas of tension.

**IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

The Israeli-Arab wars, control of oil routes, the games played by the major powers during the Cold War and the negligence of certain Arab governments have made the region one of the most troubled in the world. The emergence of religious fundamentalists over the last 20 years has further complicated the situation as extremist movements have come to power and adopted far more radical positions than their predecessors.

From a strictly humanitarian point of view, the tensions in the Middle East (between Israelis and Palestinians, between Lebanese communities, and between neighbouring Arab countries) have never been as deadly as the conflicts in Africa (Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Sudan, etc.) or as the mass killings of South East Asia (Cambodia, Tibet, etc.) but their symbolic reach and their international impact has always been infinitely greater.

From Indonesia to the United States, the world listens for sounds of trouble in the region.

East against West, Soviet bloc against the United States and its allies, Islam against Christianity and Judaism, democracy against dictatorship... in terms of international relations the Middle East is, as a result, seen as one of the principal theatres for confrontation between the major blocs, to the great distress of those who work to bring communities together around concrete and unifying projects.

As we shall see, fair and sustainable trade offers some extremely interesting working approaches given that it provides coherent and credible frameworks for these projects. The initiatives contribute to mobilising populations and the resources of the territories by providing the prospect of development. They also provide positive identity recognition in the eyes of the world and hope for a future without soldiers and terrorists.
THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

The two Palestinian territories have very different profiles.

In the east, between Jordan and Israel, the West Bank is a fragmented entity split between areas managed by the Palestinian Authority or Jewish settlers and areas under the control of the Israeli army. Nevertheless, this part of Palestine has been relatively stable since 2009 and has seen increasing numbers of major economic projects supported by the government of Palestinian Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad. An IMF report from April 2010 estimated growth in the West Bank at 8.5% in 2009. These positive figures are the result of reforms carried out by the Palestinian Authority (notably improvements in security, public finances, the fight against corruption and good governance), which have strengthened private sector confidence.70

Salam Fayyad is clear about this. The goal is to quickly create a Palestinian State, which is credible in the eyes of the world through the development of a dynamic economy, transparent organisations and integrated infrastructure.

In the southwest, the Gaza Strip is following a completely different path. After Israel left the territory and dismantled the colonies it built there, fighting broke out in June 2007 between Fatah, the traditional Palestinian nationalist movement (with a majority in the Palestinian Authority) and Hamas, the fundamentalist Islamic party supported by Iran and Syria. Power changed hands in Gaza at the end of this internal struggle. Since then, Hamas fundamentalists have managed the tiny territory where over one million Palestinians live. Hamas leaders do not have the same priorities as leaders in the West Bank. They openly refuse peace with Israel and make every effort possible to maintain and develop their “industry of death”.71 The Gaza Strip is under an Israeli military blockade and led by religious fanatics and it doesn’t seem ready for economic development despite the efforts made by international organisations and humanitarian agencies.
FAIR TRADE
IN THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

The major obstacles facing Palestinian producers are tied to the military occupation and to the many hassles and injustices that it entails (roadblocks, check points, unequal water distribution, etc.). Many fair and sustainable trade projects have been launched in the West Bank over the past few years with the support of the sector’s main organisations (Oxfam, Ten Thousand Villages, Global Exchange, etc.) and with representatives of the religious communities in an attempt to overcome these difficulties. Handicrafts and agriculture are the two main sectors of activity in which the projects have been implemented.

PALESTINE FAIR TRADE ASSOCIATION AND CANAAN FAIR TRADE

Nasser Abufarha decided to return to his native Palestine in 2003 following post-secondary studies in anthropology in the United States. When he became aware of the situation of Palestinian farmers what was supposed to be a study trip quickly turned into a historic adventure. He remembers, “From what I knew of Palestine, and the main challenge of being under Israeli occupation, it essentially was an issue of market access. I learned a lot from the US, especially how a modern economy works. However, I naturally have always had a deep connection with Palestinian people given it is where I grew up, so I always tried to think of ways as to how I can employ this knowledge to help people who are locked hostage in this conflict. Farms in Palestine are primarily owned by local families; this has been their means of survival throughout many centuries. I realised the concept of fair trade development could be a vehicle by which to overcome the difficult trading conditions of Palestinian farmers.”

A year later, Nasser Abufarha created the Palestine Fair Trade Association, which federates a network of cooperatives, and Canaan Fair Trade, which ensures commercialisation of their products. The PFTA manages organisational aspects by helping small producers create cooperatives and supports them in preliminary fair trade and organic certification processes. Canaan Fair Trade buys their products at the best prices during harvest time and sells them to importers.

The price of a kilo of oil has increased in four years from USD 2.00 to USD 5.50 thanks to the efforts of Canaan Fair Trade. As Nasser Abufarha explains, the system worked: “Small producers cannot guarantee such terms without being unified into a network of cooperatives or normally do not have the access to such a market. So, we consolidated their product, we helped them in fair trade certification and organic certification which increased the value of their product by added environmental and social values. Whereas the goal of the Israeli occupation is to increase the dependency of Palestinians, organic methods that use natural resources have helped them free themselves economically thanks to the principles of fair trade.”

Today, the Palestine Fair Trade Association has about 1,200 members, 49 cooperatives and 20 olive press owners who take part in the Canaan Fair Trade programme and benefit from a decent income.

BTC’s Trade for Development Centre and the Dutch agency EVD have given their support to the Canaan Fair Trade programme to develop an ISO 22000 quality control system.
PALESTINE’S FAIR TRADE OLIVE OIL

All of these efforts have paid off. In February 2009 the first Palestinian free trade certified olive oil was brought to market. It met with great success in western markets. Gordon Brown, the British Prime Minister at the time, was a guest at the Fairtrade Fortnight. He stated that he was delighted by the initiative: “Olive oil production provides an essential part of the West Bank economy. In buying this oil, British shoppers will be helping the farmers of Palestine to make a living.” Harriet Lamb, Chief Executive Officer of Fairtrade International, emphasised the exemplary nature of the project: “We hope this will be the first of many more fair trade products coming from the world’s conflict zones and least developed countries. If so, it will help to catalyse markets and make a real economic difference to the communities that need it most.”

TREES FOR LIFE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PALESTINE

Nasser Abufarha is also behind the Trees for Life project, which plants trees and rebuilds forests in areas ravaged by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This project is part of his vision for the sustainable development that must be integrated in the renewal of his country: “We have been able to bring economic and social development to the Palestinian territories in a positive way thanks to our innovative production methods. Palestinians are now part of a global sustainability movement with a voice that did not exist here before... You have to look at sustainability both from the environmental and social point of view. We have to bring the same attention to the health of the environment, to this earth that produces our food, that enables us to live and that must regenerate itself, as we do to the health of the communities in which our farmers live. They must also be able to regenerate themselves.”

Since its launch, the project has successfully replanted nearly 40,000 olive trees in Palestine.
The fair trade organisation Sindyanna of Galilee was founded in 1996 by two women: Hadas Lahav, a Jewish Israeli journalist, and Samia Nasser, a Palestinian teacher, with the support of the Hanitzotz publishing house that brings together pacifist militants from the two communities.

SINDYANNA OF GALILEE

Alongside producers

Sindyanna of Galilee develops support activities for producers and value for Palestinian products with economic actors and consumers in Israel and Palestine and in Europe and the United States. To do so, the association works with olive, soap and spice producers (small farmers, mainly Arabs, who do not receive state aid or any of the economic support provided to other farming sectors) to whom they offer the best prices for their products. It also organises training and finances various social projects. The organisation became a member of WFTO, the international network of fair trade organisations, in October 2003.

Militants for peace

Sindyanna of Galilee works alongside the Hanitzotz publishing house and the Palestinian Workers’ Advice Centre (WAC) to fight for the recognition of Arab rights in Israel and to search for alternative solutions to the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In parallel, Arabs, Jews and international volunteers work together through olive tree planting campaigns under the Sindyanna umbrella to stop land expropriations and the removal of trees.

The organisation also makes a significant effort to develop agricultural infrastructure and to help farmers improve the quality of their olive oil.
For women by women

By supporting the projects of women’s associations in Israel and the West Bank, Sindyanna of Galilee hopes to promote a necessary coming together of the communities and to denounce the difficult living conditions of Palestinians who suffer both from the Israeli occupation and the inflexibility of traditional Arab society.

“A minority of women work in farming. They must often go through intermediaries who take them to their place of work and who collect money from their salaries (they often take 40%),” explain Michal Schwartz and Asma Agbarieh-Zahalka, two WAC managers who work with Sindyanna of Galilee to promote women’s emancipation and support their professional projects.

Michal Schwartz goes even further. She believes that these women can play a part in change for the liberation of society and contribute to greater solidarity between Arab and Jewish workers.

Sindyanna of Galilee provides very concrete support. Arab women are able to take part in educational projects provided at cultural centres managed by both Jewish and Palestinian volunteers. A basket-making workshop was recently set up to provide women from poor communities with employment so they could stay in their villages, continue to work in the fields and take care of their families.81

To find out more:
www.sindyanna.com
www.oxfammagasinsdumonde.be
www.wac-maan.org.il
www.befair.be

With support from BTC’s Trade for Development Centre

Sindyanna of Galilee has hired a professional food engineer to set up a quality control system thanks to support from the Trade for Development Centre of BTC, the Belgian development agency. It has also contributed to improving the quality and hygiene manual for workers responsible for za’atar raw materials production and processing. Financial support provided by BTC’s Trade for Development Centre: €7,500.
**PEACE OIL**

The Peace Oil project is the fruit of a joint effort by the main Israeli and Palestinian fair trade organisations: Sindyanna of Galilee, Green Action and Canaan Fair Trade. These three organisations came together in 2005 to offer American and European consumers superior quality olive oil made jointly by Israeli and Palestinian producers. Sold by Olive Branch Enterprise, a Palestinian organisation located on the West Bank, Peace Oil partakes of a strong vision: "Build economic interdependence between peoples by creating mutually beneficial business partnerships providing a practical incentive for peace". 82

To find out more: www.peaceoil.org

---

**THE FAIR TRADE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BETHLEHEM**

Many obstacles

The Palestinian economy consists for about 99% of very small enterprises of less than 10 employees, which are mainly operating in agriculture (olives, fruits and vegetables) and crafts. Under the Israeli occupation these businesses have difficulties accessing markets where they could sell their products. These obstacles are of course related to the regional geopolitical situation, but also organisational and financial elements of a more internal nature play a part. Indeed, as economists of the Bethlehem University on the West Bank explain, many Palestinian producers do not have the structures, the business competencies, nor the networks to enable them to establish direct contacts with possible international buyers. Moreover, due to the long payment terms our businesses have cash problems, which strongly influence their business investment potential.

A business centre dedicated to fair trade

These findings are at the origin of the Fair Trade Development Centre (FTDC), which was established in 2006 by the Institute for Community Partnership of Bethlehem University with the support of the Swiss cooperation agency and of Oxfam Great-Britain.

As a specialised resource centre, the Fair Trade Development Centre aims to:

- Promote the principles and operations of fair trade with Palestinian producers;
- Support and enable Palestinian business groups to join the fairtrade organisation WFTO;
- Enable Palestinian producers to make a profit with the globally growing fairtrade sector and to develop a network between the Palestinian movement and international and regional fairtrade organisations;
- Provide strategic and operational support to Palestinian players in areas where the needs are biggest (management, strategic planning, marketing, etc.).
As a member of the WFTO, the Fair Trade Development Centre is a genuine centre for business support. It provides a performing framework for setting up collective actions and launching innovative projects.

The STEPS project of the Palestinian Fair Trade Development Centre

In 2008, the Fair Trade Development Centre of Bethlehem started an ambitious project, called STEPS (Strengthening Palestinian Farmers and Small Producers). STEPS aims to provide global support to a group of twelve cooperatives and producer groups that represent about 500 workers on the West Bank. The innovation of this project is that it is a really comprehensive initiative.

The selected organisations (three women’s producers organisation, among others) will benefit from a full and comprehensive package of support measures, such as:
- Training of commercial officers in business management, marketing and business English;
- Training of agricultural technicians in organic and sustainable farming practices;
- Organisation of workshops to inform the teams about fairtrade concepts and advantages;
- Grant subsidies and credit for the modernisation of the production infrastructure;
- Support with the introduction of procedures for fairtrade certification;
- Organisation of workshops in innovation management;
- Custom-made consultancy in marketing and international trade;
- Support in designing communication tools for cooperatives and participating organisations;
- Participation to the WFTO conference and fairtrade fairs.

International sector experts can be relied on for the general support to these Palestinian cooperatives and producers organisations. This support clearly aims at establishing a first group of model businesses that can very quickly respond to growing fairtrade markets in the world. But there is more than just the direct economic goals. The STEPS project also illustrates the possibilities of fair trade to strengthen, modernize and stimulate the social fabric in a region that suffers from international tensions.

With the support of the Trade for Development Centre

In 2009, the Trade for Development Centre decided to give the Fair Trade Development Centre a financial contribution of 208,420 euro (or 74% of total forecast costs) on the basis of its ambitious file. With this support it was possible to recruit a team of specialised consultants, to modernize the production infrastructure and to promote Palestinian products on the international markets.

To find out more: http://ftdc.bethlehem.edu
The first troubles broke out in 1975 with the massive arrival in the country of thousands of Palestinian refugees and PLO fighters fleeing Jordan. Importation of the exiled Palestinians’ political, military and cultural infrastructure severely disrupted the community balance in Lebanon. Lebanese Sunnis favourable to the Palestinians turned against Christians and Shi’ites who opposed their naturalisation. The Palestinians lived in about forty camps in very precarious conditions.

This difference in positions led to the Lebanese Civil War in which conservative Christian nationalists fought progressive Sunni Arab-Palestinian militias for 15 years.

The Israeli army invaded southern Lebanon in the early 1980s to end terrorist raids by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, which was using Lebanon as its base. Shi’ites, in the majority in the area, were the main victims of the conflict and occupation. The Lebanese state left them on the margins of development for a long time and didn’t try to protect them from the occupation. Power was primarily shared between Christians and Sunnis by virtue of the national pact of 1943.

The Lebanese state was manhandled, its sovereignty virtually eliminated, its borders violated, its territory invaded, its population divided. The country came out battered and lost about 10% of its territory until the Israeli withdrawal in 2000. Syria, which occupied the eastern part of the country, held significant power through its “political tutelage” and, in fact, placed Lebanon under its direct influence. The government made huge investments in reconstruction immediately after the end of the civil war. The country returned to a degree of stability. However, the Israeli-Lebanese war of 2006 caused significant damage and led to an economic slowdown.

In addition, the arming of Hezbollah, which is supported by Iran, unsettled many Lebanese (Sunnis, Druze and Christians) who were unhappy with the fact that the Shi’ite militia acted independently of the authority of the state.
It would take until the Israeli withdrawal in 2000 for the idea of fair trade to emerge in southern Lebanon. This was in response to the difficulties experienced by local, essentially Christian, populations who were considered to have collaborated with the Israeli occupation forces by the Lebanese state and its major communities. While the Shi’ites of southern Lebanon received assistance from Hezbollah and its networks, 15,000 to 25,000 people living in Christian villages saw their prospects for development worsen as a result of lack of support and markets for their products. Mistrust and hostility spread through the communities which did not receive the same level of support.  

Philippe Adaime, the representative of the Saint Vincent de Paul charitable religious organisation took part in the village meetings that led to the creation of Fair Trade Lebanon. He says that this new organisation was “born of the desire of a handful of Lebanese to change the lives of the poorest rural populations in Lebanon. Noting that the regions have under-utilised farming infrastructure as well as traditional know-how, they decided on fair trade as the way to create export outlets for small producers and processing cooperatives in these regions.”

The French importer SEL was contacted in 2005 and this led to the signing of a partnership agreement that would prove to be decisive for the new organisation. Fair Trade Lebanon was officially founded in March 2006, a few months before the July war, with the goal of “federating the country’s producer networks (cooperatives and small family operations) wanting to take part in the fair trade dynamic.”

From the outset, the Lebanese fair trade organisation was careful to perpetuate the traditional culinary and artisanal riches that many years of conflict had endangered: “Lebanese cooking has a reputation for excellence around the world. The Lebanese diaspora becomes part of and integrates in every country it moves to. They often miss the country’s sunshine and their grandmothers’ recipes. In addition, Lebanese villages are full of culinary treasures that run the risk of being forgotten. Recipes and culinary traditions are being lost because of the war and because of the rural exodus. Because of the economic situation, people, and young people especially, are leaving their villages and then the country.”

As in Palestine, olive oil is the flagship product of Lebanese fair trade (and the symbol of its existence and resistance to the occupiers), but Fair Trade Lebanon also sells many products with quasi-biblical names (Mount Hermon jams, Byblos soaps, Anfeh salt flower, etc.) that are made in the four corners of the Land of Cedars.

Sold under the “Saveurs équitables Terroirs du Liban” label, the products are currently available at several hundred points-of-sale in Europe and Canada. About 350 people now benefit directly from the trade. “Their living standards have improved significantly,” according to Benoît Berger, one of the managers, who adds that “the efforts made by Fair Trade Lebanon have been met with success thanks to its membership in the international fair trade network, the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO).”

The Lebanese organisation has become a full member of the internationally renowned network. It has also succeeded in selling its products within the country since the spring of 2010. Until then, all of its products produced by 14 Lebanese farming cooperatives, were solely intended for export.

Fair Trade Lebanon’s latest project is to support former hashish producers in the Bekaa valley. Many no longer have an income since the government decided to forbid the crop. To find an alternative, the Lebanese fair trade organisation joined a project which supports the conversion of these producers to wine production. This is intended to enable them to generate higher incomes than they received from the illegal crops.

To find out more:
www.fairtradelebanon.org
http://bloggingfairtradelebanon.blogspot.com
www.artisanatsel.com
Spanning the Mediterranean shores of Turkey to the islands of the Far East, Asia has a multitude of different faces inherited from very different traditions. Asia Minor, eastern Russia, the Arabian Peninsula, the Indian subcontinent, the hundreds of islands of Indonesia and the Philippines, China and Japan...all of these sub-regions have cultures built on powerful civilisations that are thousands of years old.

The Asian continent has been the theatre of many deadly conflicts tied to the Cold War (Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, etc.), to the jolts of decolonisation (India, Pakistan, etc.) and/or to the expansionist policies of major regional powers (Tibet, Afghanistan, etc.) since the end of the Second World War.

Several of the conflicts continue today. However, even when they do end, their consequences often remain a source of tension.

Asia has historically been home to some of the first fair trade projects. As we shall see, they were often implemented to lessen the suffering of people affected by these conflicts.
IN AFGHANISTAN

After a coup in 1973, the Soviet invasion of 1979 threw Afghanistan into chaos. Fighting between the Red Army and the Afghan national resistance forces (supported by the United States, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia) destroyed most of the country’s infrastructure. Despite the military resources mobilised by the Soviet Army, the resistance of the Mujahedeen was such that the Russian authorities decided to leave the country in 1989.

The various factions of the Afghan resistance movement were unable to agree on the composition of a national unity government and the country, freed of Soviet presence, suffered a terrible civil war that opposed the forces led by Commander Massoud and the Taliban (“students of theology”), the followers of a form of radical fundamentalist Sunni Islam born in the madrassas (religious schools) of Pakistan’s tribal areas.

The Taliban took control of the country in 1997. They brought relative peace after years of war thanks to the strict application of sharia and the desire to create “the purest Islamic state in the world.”

The United States accused Osama Ben Laden, the head of Al-Qaeda who had taken refuge with the Taliban, of being the mastermind behind the attacks of September 11, 2001 and set off another war in Afghanistan. They overthrew the Taliban regime within a few months. Hamid Karzai became the country’s new president.

NATO, which took command of the International Security Assistance Force in August 2003, worked to extend the authority of the central government to facilitate reconstruction of the country. However, rebel activities continued and, beginning in 2005, the situation worsened as the Taliban infiltrated several areas.

The situation has not changed much since that time.
The violence that has ravaged the country since then virtually put an end to this activity until now.

Tropical Wholefoods, a company that markets fair trade fruit, was founded in Uganda in 1980 by Kate Sebag and Adam Brett. It launched a fair trade project to sell Afghan raisins in collaboration with Mercy Corps, a Scottish NGO specialised in assisting the people hardest hit by violence and natural catastrophes.

Tropical Wholefoods’ Afghan adventure began in 2005 as the Taliban were beginning to regain territory following the NATO campaigns. Richard Friend is the manager of Fullwell Mill, the fair trade and organic labelled company that packages Tropical Wholefoods’ products. He is a friend of Adam Brett. He talks about his first visits to Kandahar, in the south of the country, where he went to study the feasibility of buying raisins: “On my first visits, in 2006, we actually identified groups of farmers to work with and two or three processing sites. We even got as far as experimentally processing ten tonnes of raisins from Kandahar. Even then the security situation was tense: we weren’t allowed to do things that locals didn’t do – like wear sunglasses or use seat belts in the car. There were no big NGO 4x4 vehicles, and there was a sandbagged basement in the Mercy Corps compound we stayed in.”

As promising as they were, these first contacts mostly highlighted the obstacles that had to be overcome. As Richard Friend points out: “We hadn’t made promises, but we had met with the farmers and even made contingency plans like finding places where we could process outside the area if the security situation got too bad. But it got even worse than expected, so we couldn’t even do that. And Kandahar is a poppy-growing area... So yes, it was frustrating, because it could have been a real move away from opium production.”
Kate Sebag, Adam Brett and their friends did not give up and decided to develop their project in less exposed areas of Afghanistan, in the Shomali plain north of Kabul. With the help of Mercy Corps, they spent several years improving farming techniques in the villages and renovating a site to dry the fresh fruit. It wasn’t easy going, according to Richard Friend: “The owner of the drying plant first had to get it back from a local warlord. There were still old mortars and shells all around.”

The production chain was gradually set up in line with free trade principles and the first batches of fruit were delivered to the UK where they were sold by Tropical Wholefoods. “We’re bringing maybe 70 tonnes of raisins to Britain this spring,” says Adam Brett, “but if we can find a way to get them properly Fairtrade labelled then that could be a thousand tonnes a year. The market for raisins is very large. The UK alone currently uses more than 100,000 tonnes of raisins annually and the EU more than 600,000 tonnes annually (...) With the volumes that Afghanistan could produce, we could see whole communities self-sufficient in terms of building schools and rebuilding infrastructure”.

The stakes are very important for the country’s development and for the improvement of Afghan living conditions. However, once again, the main problem for these projects is the certification process itself.

A solution may finally have been found. Although the people responsible for inspections have not always been able to get on site because the country is too dangerous, the Fair Trade Foundation has granted Tropical Wholefoods an exemption, which allows it to use the precious logo on its delicious Afghan raisins.

To find out more:
www.tropicalwholefoods.co.uk
www.mercycorps.org
Despite remarkable diplomatic efforts, its relations with its big neighbour, India, remain tense, particularly because of the bloody incursions made by tiny Pakistani Muslim extremist groups into Indian Kashmir. The situation is so bad that many experts consider the Indo-Pakistani border to be the most sensitive area in the world (all the more so because both countries have nuclear weapons).

Faced with Afghan Taliban incursions in the Northwest Frontier tribal areas since the end of the 1990s, the Pakistani army has committed significant military resources to preventing Islamic combatants from using the country as a rear base to stage attacks on NATO forces and the regular Afghan army. In response to these offensives, many terrorist attacks, often claimed by the Pakistani Taliban, are carried out in the north of the country, primarily in Peshawar, Lahore and Rawalpindi.

Caught between the United States, which is demanding a much greater military investment to secure the border with Afghanistan, populist nationalist fever that often expresses a profound hatred for the West, complex and touchy relations with India, secret services that do not always seem to follow government policy (to the extent of being accused of supporting certain Taliban groups), etc. the Pakistani state is under enormous and contradictory pressures. To make things worse, the country was hit by very serious floods in August 2010. The toll was high: 20 million affected, 1600 dead, six million homeless.

With about 180 million inhabitants, and the second largest Muslim majority in the world, Pakistan plays an important role in the geopolitical equilibrium of the Middle East and South East Asia. Its inhabitants are often victims of the diverging interests of the military and extremists. Given these conditions, fair and sustainable trade provides development options that must be explored and supported.

**MOUNTAIN FRUITS LTD, TROPICAL WHOLEFOODS (AGAIN) AND THE FAIR TRADE FRUIT OF PAKISTAN**

Lost in the mountains
Surrounded by the mountains of Tajikistan in the north, by the Himalayas to the east and by the Afghan Hindu Kush to the west, the Chitral and Karakoram region is located under some of the world's highest peaks in the extreme north of Pakistan. The area is very sparsely populated and remained isolated from the rest of the world until the Karakoram Highway between Beijing and Karachi opened in 1972. Prior to this time, there was no way to bring food to the area. Locals lived solely from their crops. This region has been part of the contested territory of Kashmir since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1948. In the absence of an international agreement, it does not have an official status or a representative in the central government. Its inhabitants do not enjoy the same civil and political rights as other Pakistani citizens. There is practically no industry and people live in small villages spread along glacier valleys where they live on subsistence farming with no access to basic social services. Running water is practically non-existent and the majority of the population has no electricity. Political instability, restrictions imposed on foreigners, and lack of public investment have combined to isolate these people who live in one of the most beautiful regions of the world.

*“This catastrophe is worse than the tsunami of 2004, the 2005 Pakistan earthquake and the 2010 Haiti earthquake.”*

Maurizio Giulano
spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.
The best fruit in the world
Orchards on these distant heights are irrigated by glacier melt from the Himalayas. Apricots, apples, cherries, blackberries, walnuts, almonds, pine nuts...the farmers of the northern areas of Pakistan produce a wide variety of fruits including the Hunza apricot which is known around the world for its flavour and its pit, which is like a hazelnut treasure.

Yet, as a result of seasonal production peaks, the terrible state of roads and the dangers resulting from fighting between the army and rebels, a large part of the production cannot be transported and rots before being eaten or sold.99

In the beginning ...
Sher Ghazi was born in the Hunza valley in the Karakoram Mountains. After graduating in food technology, he joined the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, a foundation that works to improve living conditions for the inhabitants of the Karakoram Mountains. As Sher Ghazi owns an orchard and is a fruit grower himself, he wanted to find a way to improve the livelihoods of poor farming communities in the mountains.

... Tropical Wholefoods
Tropical Wholefoods, the fair trade fruit distribution company founded by Kate Sebag and Adam Brett, gave its support to Sher Ghazi in 1997 as part of the Dry Fruit Project financed by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme. The first years were spent improving traditional solar drying methods and training farmers in fruit washing techniques in order to make the processing method compatible with international standards.

The first processing factory was built in 2002 to process, wash, grade and pack the fruit collected from villages within a 300-kilometre radius. The factory can process 100 tonnes of dried fruit per season.

Mountain Fruits Ltd
The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme Dry Fruit Project was registered as a dried fruit exporting company in 2004. It was named Mountain Fruits Ltd. The company trains farmers in fruit drying techniques. The fruit is purchased and sold by Tropical Wholefoods and other importers. Unlike traditional drying methods, modern techniques have enabled the creation of a saleable product that fully meets international standards.

Mountain Fruits now works with over 2,000 farming families. Nearly a hundred women work in the factory, which is the only place in the region where they can get paid work. This is a unique opportunity for them to contribute to the income of their families and free themselves somewhat from the weight of tradition. They are engaged in fruit and nut processing and packing and are paid in line with salary legislation.

After this first success, Mountain Fruits launched a new project to train farmers in organic farming and invested in the acquisition of new nut cracking machines, which provide a substantial timesaving.

In addition, with the support of Tropical Wholefoods, Mountain Foods Ltd has innovated by developing a portable solar energy electrical dryer that can be installed in many villages. It is a simple oven-like device with rows of enclosed shelving that dries the fruit while protecting it from insects, dust and rain.

These developments have enabled growers to increase production significantly and to make viable preservation and distribution processes that are now being tested for new products (honey, morel mushrooms).100

Fair trade certification
To ensure that Pakistani farmers fully benefit from the advantages of fair trade, Mountain Fruits has supported the creation of the Mountain Areas Fruit Farmers’ Association, which meets the democratic criteria required for Fairtrade certification.

The association received its first fair trade premiums in 2005 and used them to implement a number of projects in the villages: purchase of an electricity generator for one village; purchase of a computer for the new library; construction of a community school; payment of school fees for the poorest children; construction of a playground; purchase of sewing machines and cloth for vocational centres for women, etc.101

To find out more:
www.tropicalwholefoods.co.uk
www.fairtrade-dryfruits.com
www.fairtrade.org.uk
The Chinese army invaded Tibet in 1950. Despite the efforts of the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual and political leader, to ensure preservation of the country’s heritage and culture, troubles erupted and the Dalai Lama was forced to flee to India in 1959. About 100,000 Tibetans followed him. The rebellion was crushed by the Chinese government, which launched a series of “reforms” that led to bloody repression.

Thousands of monasteries and temples were ransacked and destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976). Tens of thousands of Tibetans were sent to labour camps. The closing of roads and traditional commercial routes and the authoritarian agricultural policies imposed by the Chinese authorities led to massive famine.\textsuperscript{102}

The number of Tibetan victims of the conflict (a major point of contention between China and the Tibetan government in exile) is generally estimated in the tens of thousands.\textsuperscript{103}
The Tibetan government in exile carried out a study in 1987 on the development potential of refugee communities in Nepal and India. Two years later, the Planning Commission, set up to coordinate economic initiatives, launched the Tibetan Handicraft Development Project with the goal of promoting the sale of the creations of Tibetan artisans in the United States while also raising awareness about the political struggle led in defence of Tibetan culture.

A company called Tibet Collection was founded in Washington three years later to serve as the link between artisans and buyers in the American market. In the following months, the company received support from the Ford Foundation, from the Aid to Artisans organisation and from Market Place of India to organise training in design, marketing and management for refugee artisans in India and Nepal.

Beginning in 1997, dZi-Tibet Collection began to sell a new generation of works and creations by Tibetan artisans made primarily in Kathmandu in Nepal. They included handmade paper, decorated boxes, incense boxes, traditional jewellery, etc. The collections met with great success at trade fairs in New York, Los Angeles and Boston.

Today, Tibet Collection is primarily a wholesale company that employs about ten people and sells its products to retailers.

dZi-Tibet Collection is a founding member of the Fair Trade Federation. It works directly with Tibetan, Indian and Nepalese artisans to create and sell items that celebrate the beauty and culture of Tibet. Its close relations with its suppliers fit the fair trade model.

The commitments taken are as concrete as possible:
- Long-terms relationships with artisans to which dZi-Tibet Collection commits to guarantee a regular flow of orders and income;
- Fair prices that guarantee sufficient margins and income;
- Promotion of health and safety for artisans through the financing of better working conditions;
- Technical support and design assistance (regular training sessions);
- Promotion of the use of sustainable and recycled materials (natural dyes, etc.);
- Support for business opportunities for special producer groups;
- Promotion of local communities and support for humanitarian organisations;
- Promotion of Tibetan culture (International Campaign for Tibet, Tibet House in New York, etc).

Supporting the cause
In addition to its fair trade activities, dZi-Tibet Collection also participates in several projects to support Tibetans:
The GuChuSum Movement: The goal of this community project is to raise public awareness about the prison conditions of Tibetan political detainees in China and to denounce the multiple human rights violations of which they are the victims. The GuChuSum Movement also provides medical assistance, housing, and access to education and employment for former Tibetan political prisoners.
The Tibetan Nuns Project: The aim of this programme is to care for nuns who flee Tibet to India and Nepal. It provides clothing, food, housing and basic health care.

To find out more:
www.dzi.com
IN TIMOR

Originally a Portuguese colony, Timor Leste (East Timor, the eastern half of the island of Timor with a majority Christian population) was annexed by Indonesia in 1975. Timor Leste unilaterally declared its independence in November of the same year. In the days that followed, the Indonesian army invaded the country and ferociously repressed its people with the stated objective of assimilating the new province.

An “extermination” policy was implemented. The army used napalm on Timorese villages suspected of helping the independence rebels. This led to over 200,000 mainly civilian deaths out of a population of less than a million, between 1975 and the end of the 1980s.

It would take until 1999, following years of oppression, for the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs to accept the principle of a self-determination plebiscite. On 30 August 1999, the Timorese chose independence in a referendum organised by the United Nations. Pro-Indonesian militias immediately took over the capital Dili, ransacked the province, and launched a bloody hunt for independence fighters.

After several days of killings, deportations and pillaging, the UN finally decided to send in a multinational force under Australian command to impose peace and set up a provisional government. This eventually led to the country’s formal independence on 20 May 2002. By this time, most of the country’s infrastructure had been destroyed and the economy was paralysed.

CAFÉ TIMOR

The atrocities committed by the pro-Indonesian militias after the self-determination referendum also impacted Timor Leste’s coffee industry. Farmers and their families were killed or deported; crops were destroyed as were roads, warehouses and most of the infrastructure required by the sector, crucial to the country’s economy. The coffee trade is the country’s most important source of foreign currency and the main source of income for about a quarter of its population.

Originally created in 1994 by about 20,000 small producers organised in 16 cooperatives and 493 associations, the national body of the Timor Cooperativa Café cooperative works to provide support to battered families by helping them rebuild their farms and sell their first harvests. The rebuilding of the supply chain was made more difficult by on-going violence and vandalism, by a lack of qualified government officials and by the exodus of a part of the country’s elite.

Timor Cooperativa Café was able to get a fairly significant portion of its production certified fair trade and organic thanks to support from fair trade organisations, NGOs, and several aid development agencies. The efforts made to improve quality were quickly rewarded and Timor Leste coffee (Café Timor) entered the market ranked among the best in the world.
The national Timorese cooperative signed an agreement with the American company Starbucks for the sale of its fair trade and organic coffee in September 2003. The fair trade premiums received at that time enabled the construction of eight fully operational clinics and of 24 mobile care centres. This made Timor Cooperativa Café the main healthcare provider in the country’s rural areas. The healthcare network set up by Timor Cooperativa Café treats 18,000 patients a month on average. Care is provided free to the families of cooperative members.

The healthcare network set up by Timor Cooperativa Café treats 18,000 patients a month on average. Care is provided free to the families of cooperative members.

In the special case of Timor Leste, the coffee sector (particularly fair trade and organic coffee) played a significant role in the reconstruction of the country and its economy.

The Timor Cooperativa Café organisation has been involved at many levels: by improving production, renovating farms and training farmers, but also more broadly, by financing economic development projects, building schools and training centres, and by contributing to the adoption of a new currency and ensuring access to health care for rural residents.

To find out more:
www.transfairusa.org
www.justuscoffee.com

“I know that part of the fair trade income my colleagues and I generate is used to buy medicine for Cooperativa Café Timor’s clinics.

For that I am very grateful, as clinic staff saved my wife’s life.”

Alfonso Sarmento, producer-member of the Timor Cooperativa Café.
IN SOUTH AMERICA

The independence of South American countries during the first half of the 19th century resulted in the dislocation of structures and balances of power inherited from the Spanish crown, which had ruled over these countries as colonies. Justice and power became monopolised in the hands of the new “owners” who subjugated the poorest and made them “landless”.

Imprecise borders led to many wars between countries. Their interiors were often roiled by struggles between federalists and centralists. This eventually led to the militarisation of Latin American society. Political life was monopolised by conservatives and liberals who had no social policies. When popular insurrections occurred, they were often exploited or repressed.

The first half of the 20th century was marked by a dual phenomenon. While the United States engaged in interventionist policies throughout the continent, revolutionary and/or democratic movements sprung up in several Latin American countries and ran headlong into the interests of the great power to the north.

The Cold War contributed to increasing tensions. Fearing that progressive governments and popular movements in Latin America could be infiltrated by Communist cells working for the Soviet Union, the United States supported right-wing parties and major landowners even though this meant supporting violent military dictatorships and totalitarian regimes. This dichotomy between the United States, perceived as reactionary and imperialist, on one hand, and the progressive popular groups who were victims of state violence, on the other, created a basis of sympathy for the latter on the part of the younger generations in Western Europe and the United States during the 1960s and 1970s. This historical reality, which early militants sometimes refer to with nostalgia, is one of the reasons why Latin America became one of the first continents to welcome fair trade projects initiated by progressive and/or religious European and American organisations (Oxfam, etc.).
Colombia has lived in a state of violence since the 1960s that involves the army, Marxist guerrillas such as the FARC, and extreme-right paramilitary groups working for major landowners. Although Colombia is now known for its high-quality coffee, it is also known for its decades-long armed conflicts and its drug cartels, which are thought to be among the most powerful criminal organisations in the world.

IN COLOMBIA

War, the cocaine industry, and economic inequality combined to make Colombia the theatre of the “worst humanitarian crisis” in the western hemisphere according to the United Nations.113

COSURCA “MAKE COFFEE NOT WAR”

Cauca province, in the south of Colombia, is one of the poorest in the country. Pushed by poverty, many farmers gave up their subsistence crops to grow coca, which they sold to drug traffickers or rebels, thereby running the risk of seriously endangering the region’s food security.

This area of Colombia is also one of the major battlegrounds where government forces, the paramilitaries and the FARC (which earn a portion of their income from drug trafficking) confront each other.

In addition, coca growing has disastrous consequences for the environment. It degrades the soil, pollutes rivers and encourages deforestation (a hectare of coca requires the clearing of 4 ha of forest, according to the Colombian Ministry for the Environment).

The eradication of illegal crops is therefore considered a priority by the Colombian government, all the more so because by enriching the rebels and drug traffickers the crops help to maintain a state of permanent conflict that weakens the region and prevents its development.

Aware of this situation, the United Nations and the United States supported the creation of the COSURCA cooperative (Empresa Cooperativa del Sur del Cauca) in 1993. It brought together the families of farmers, local associations and local authorities to produce and sell high-quality fair trade and organic coffee.

Farmers who wanted to join committed to giving up coca growing in exchange for an initial micro-loan of about €300 to eradicate the illegal plants from their land and to plant other crops (coffee or fruit, for example).114

The COSURCA Cooperative provides technical assistance to its members as well as access to seed banks, training, micro-loans and special support to take advantage of certification provided by the independent Swiss agency Imo Control.

The Colombian cooperative has benefited from fair trade certification through FairTrade since 2000. This has helped to increase farmers’ incomes by about 40%.

COSURCA’s work to encourage farmers to give up illegal crops in the province has been successful. Approximately 2,000 families have joined the cooperative since 1993 and the number of members increases every year (by about 9%). In addition, it is estimated that the campaign taken to farmers by the cooperative has resulted in the eradication of hundreds of hectares of coca plantations.

However, the positive consequences of the project go beyond changing crops.

Observers have noted that the recovery of healthy economic relationships is leading to a new social and cultural fabric. Farmers are regaining the confidence needed to stand up to the guerrillas and to the poverty which had led them into drug trafficking. They are getting trained, thinking and deciding, and are again taking control of their lives and finding a political and civic voice that had been lost in the conflict.

COSURCA, is the leading exporter of Colombian coffee entirely owned and managed by the farmers themselves. The UN called it the best approach for getting beyond the Colombian conflict.115

“With fair trade income, members can improve their lives and sustain themselves. A very important issue for us is our ability to produce our own food in times of war. If we produce a lot of grain, fruit and vegetables that can be stored, we prevent our people from having to abandon the land. It is this chance at life that allows us to live through a war that has lasted 40 years.”

René Ausecha Chaux, COSURCA

To find out more:
www.cafedecolombia.com
www.fairtradecolombia.com
www.lwr.org/colombia
www.imo.ch
Fair and sustainable trade projects are being thought up and implemented by courageous and creative women and men in war zones from the heights of the Andes to the jungles of South East Asia.

This is often dangerous and there are many obstacles (including some caused by rigidities in the certification systems). However, when these different initiatives are reviewed, their very real impact on local populations is evident.

The benefits are both economic and social. They ensure that communities can meet their needs and take ownership of productive activities that enable them to rebuild their homes and their lands.

But there is also more. The purpose of fair and sustainable trade is not solely to create wealth. By promoting democratic forms of organisation, by supporting social and educational projects and by encouraging cooperation between communities, fair and sustainable trade contributes to renewing the confidence and self-respect that many victims of war had lost in the violence.

Fair and sustainable trade is definitely a formidable tool for peace.
States, international institutions, development aid agencies, NGOs, foundations, etc. are among the many players contributing to peace and to the reconstruction of regions in the world impacted by war. They have many resources at their disposal and most of them are effective.

THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

For all of the reasons we have highlighted, support for fair and sustainable trade initiatives must be integrated in global policies to reduce tensions in war zones and to mobilise people around unifying projects.

What can international actors do to support fair and sustainable trade in these sensitive areas?

Protection from tumultuous markets

First, it should be pointed out that fair and sustainable trade initiatives are often launched to support the development of fragile economic supply chains (even when they employ large numbers of people). These budding strategic sectors require time to become organised and consolidate. During their emergence, it is often necessary to protect them from international competition and, particularly, from that of industrialised countries which can rely on much lower costs.

Could priority protection systems be granted to fragile countries to protect sectors developing within the free and sustainable trade framework? The competent international organisations should give some thought to this question.

Opening doors to virtuous initiatives

The major international markets are located primarily in the northern hemisphere and, in particular, in the United States and Europe. These countries have often adopted defensive positions to protect their domestic markets by setting up various barriers to keep out producers from other parts of the world and, primarily, agricultural products.
At the same time, these countries provide considerable amounts of money for development aid, notably as part of the reconstruction process for countries devastated by war. These resources, although significant, do not always have the intended effect on the living standard of local populations. This may be due to a mismatch between expenditures and needs (certain American investments made in Iraq after the war have recently been proven to be useless), to corrupt intermediaries or to resistance on the part of the beneficiary populations.

To the extent that fair or sustainable trade is tied to an independent certification process (which can hardly be doubted), we believe that it would be of interest to design a system that would promote certified goods by granting them easier access to the domestic markets of the richest countries.

Could this type of exception system be discussed by the international trade institutions?

Protecting operators

Security issues are one of the main difficulties facing those who wish to initiate or support fair and sustainable trade projects in countries weakened by war.

In some cases, the inability of outsiders (in particular, inspectors responsible for certification) to travel on site is the last obstacle to certification of a production chain even when the distribution channel is ready to sell the products (for the benefit of locals who will receive the income and premiums). Many international actors have security competences.

One way to support fair and sustainable trade could be to strengthen the security provided to these operators when they travel. This could be done via specific methods or, potentially, by granting them a special status.

Setting an example

Given that they often enjoy high visibility (sometimes significant media coverage compared to their actual size) international organisations have a responsibility with respect to their image with the general public and the members of their networks.

In order to support fair and sustainable trade, shouldn't these organisations be serving the products of cooperatives at their own tables?

Several organisations deliver fair trade products in Brussels and act as an interface for producers. Organisations that are interested can get whatever they need from these companies. They will be able to show their employees and their partners their real commitment to the development of local communities, particularly to those in the most fragile areas of the world.

It's not very complicated, it's effective, it's exemplary, and it adds value. So why not do it?
THE ROLE OF CITIZEN-CONSUMERS

States and international organisations hold some of the keys to enable considerable development of fair and sustainable trade, in general, and in countries impacted by war, in particular, notably through reconstruction programmes.

That is one of their responsibilities.

Our responsibilities are tied to our status as “citizen-consumers”. We don’t have much power given that none of us, individually, can change the system. However, we do have a lot of power in the sense that our economic model provides each one of us with the opportunity to choose what we consume. The market economy is similar to democracy in that 360 million Europeans can change the face of the world by adding up all of their individual choices and commitments.

The question is, how?
THROUGH CONSUMPTION

Regardless of the extent of our goodwill, we cannot get involved individually to resolve a given conflict at the other end of the world. What do we know about territorial disputes in the Indonesian islands? About the ethnic problems between Nilotic and Bantu peoples in East Africa? Usually, not very much. And unless we decide to leave everything behind to make a humanitarian commitment over there, we feel that we can’t do very much at all.

But, we do know how to consume.
We are probably the world’s leading experts in the matter.

This is essentially where the magic of fair and sustainable trade can be found.
By choosing products with “fair trade” labels in the supermarket, we are doing something very concrete to help people in difficulty. We know that part of the price we are paying for the product goes to remunerate small producers at a higher level than if we bought the standard product right next to it. And we also know that part of what we pay for the product will be reinvested in social and development projects.

By selecting these fruits or this coffee we are financing the construction of a school, the building of toilets or a literacy programme for war widows.

That is our choice and our responsibility.

SUPPORT

Like all public and para-public organisations, international institutions are sensitive to manifestations of public opinion and to commitments that receive media coverage.

As citizen-consumers our power is expressed through our purchases and through our democratic rights. The latter can take several shapes. First of all, we can vote. Generations struggled to obtain this right. We can make a contribution to this necessary evolution by supporting candidates who are more open to development issues and those who defend the adaptation of the rules of international trade for the benefit of small producers in the most vulnerable countries.

However, we must also recognise that candidates who defend these positions are rare, have too little visibility, or believe that these issues can’t be managed by nationally elected officials.
This too is a matter of stimulus/response. If we can bring sufficient collective pressure to bear on decision-makers they will respond, first by becoming aware, then by debating, then, hopefully, by taking decisions.

We too can take action as citizens by calling on our elected officials and candidates, by writing to them, by demonstrating and by using all new forms of media.
By making a commitment. Together.
CONCLUSION

Not all conflicts are the same. The measures that need to be taken to end them depend on a multitude of geo-strategic, military, cultural, social, religious and other parameters. The international organisations and governments responsible for them have significant and varied resources at their disposal to take action and, in the end, to protect many human lives and enable entire populations to take advantage of the real benefits of globalisation.

For all of the reasons we have mentioned, fair and sustainable trade must be integrated into the peace and development programmes of regions that have been ravaged by war. It is, without a doubt, an effective tool that the international community must learn to use (along with others) so that battered civilians can be the first to benefit from aid programmes for countries at war.

Historically, Belgium has been an important actor in development aid to the weakest countries. The Trade for Development Centre, set up by BTC in 2005, offers its resources, means and networks to all who wish to invest in peace and development by supporting fair and sustainable trade.

Please contact us.

www.befair.be
BTC’s Trade for Development Centre portal provides documentation on producers, labels, distributors, etc.
A must.
Sources and References

2. For more information about these fairtrade guarantee systems, please consult the free-of-charge brochure "Fair and sustainable trade: so many labels and guarantee systems... What should I choose for my products?". <http://www.befair.be/fr/content/le-commerce-%C3%A9quitable-et-durable-au-rwanda>.
4. Interview with Olivier De Schutter, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, in "Switchen vers l'équitable – Fair Trade Week 29 September – 9 October 2010" – Published by Max Havelaar Belgium.
34. PEARL has other partners besides these two bodies. It brings together the National University of Rwanda (UNR), the Rwanda Agricultural Research Institute (ISAR), the Agricultural Cooperative Development International / Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), the Rwanda Crop Development Authority (CCIR), the Kigali Institute of Sciences and Technology (KIST) en the IWACU centre.

Idem.


Idem.


Idem.


The European network Euclid is the first European network of tertiary sector officers. It supports these actors around the world and brings them into contact with each other. The network was created in 2007 as a joint venture of British ACEVO, France’s CJEDES and Sweden’s Ideell Arena. Read more: http://www.euclidenetwork.eu.


Idem.

Idem.

Idem.


Idem.


Idem.


Idem.


Idem.


Idem.


97 AFP (2010). Pakistan - La crise liée aux inondations pire que le tsunami de 2004, d'après l’ONU, Le Point

98 Fairtrade Foundation (2007). Mountain Fruits (Pvt.) Ltd

99 Fairtrade International (2007). Sher Gazi, General Manager, Mountain Fruits (Pvt) Ltd, Pakistan

100 Hunzatimes (2008). Mountain Fruits and Role of Fairtrade
<http://hunzatimes.wordpress.com/2008/10/30/mountain-fruits-and-role-of-fairtrade/>. At the time of publication this blog is not online anymore.

101 Fairtrade Foundation (2007). Mountain Fruits (Pvt.) Ltd


104 For more information on these 2 organisations: <http://www.aidtoartisans.org> en <http://www.marketplaceindia.org>.


111 Transfair USA changed names at the end of 2010 and is now called Fair Trade USA. Find out more: http://www.fairtradeusa.org.


113 Chicago Fair Trade (s.d.). Fair Trade in Colombia: Justice in a time of war

114 Louis, B., & Mouton, G. (2009). Le café équitable et biologique aide à nettoyer le conflit colombien


116 Chicago Fair Trade (s.d). Fair Trade in Colombia: Justice in a time of war

117 Interview with Olivier De Schutter, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, in ”Switchez vers l’équitable – Fair Trade Week 29 September – 9 October 2010” – Published by Max Havelaar Belgium. (All translations of quotations are ours.)

118 A complete list can be found on the website of the Trade for Development Centre (www.befair.be).

119 Interview with Olivier De Schutter, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, in ”Switchez vers l’équitable – Fair Trade Week 29 September – 9 October 2010” – Published by Max Havelaar Belgium.