

Cash Crops and Local Development: The Case of Cotton in Kouh-Est in Southern Chad

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Summary

Cash crops, notwithstanding the environmental degradation they cause, constitute sources of income for producers and the main factor in structuring the rural world and local development in certain countries. It is this problem that this study highlights at the scale of the Kouh-Est Department. To do this, the article carried out bibliographic analysis and field work. 40 leaders of peasant organizations in Kouh-Est were randomly surveyed as well as the sub-sector head of ANADER in Bodo. The result is that cotton cultivation, although having accelerated deforestation due to the extensive nature of agricultural practices in Kouh-Est, contributed to the improvement of the living conditions of cotton farmers. This culture has favored the structuring of the rural world, in particular the emergence of peasant organizations whose role is to facilitate access to agricultural inputs and the dissemination of agricultural techniques. The rebates from the self-managed market system granted to these organizations and the substantial income obtained by cotton farmers make it possible to actively participate in local development actions, particularly in the construction of socio-economic infrastructure (drilling, school, health center, granary or store, ...). The new mentality born from the existence of these organizations facilitates the contribution in kind to the creation of these infrastructures. However, permanent access to agricultural credit and strengthening the intervention capacity of cotton growers would boost the dynamics of peasant organizations in Kouh-Est. Also, members of organizations must be careful to ensure sound management of their assets.

Keywords : Cash crops, local development, cotton, Kouh-East, Southern Chad.

Introduction

After the failure of the “welfare state” policy in the 1970s, which advocated development from the top, the international community changed its tune. In the 1980s, it turned towards grassroots development. The policy of the “welfare state” was a fiasco because it did not come from the beneficiaries who are the local populations. The top thought and acted in place of the base, without taking into account its real needs, its skills, capacities and traditional know-how. This is how

the policy of grassroots development makes rural populations responsible for their destiny. They must not only identify their needs, but also contribute to their resolution. This assumes that they have substantial income in order to actively participate in meeting their needs. For some, this income mainly comes from cash crops. The State and donors are content to support local development initiatives. To do this, the need for training and supervision of rural populations is

essential in order to accelerate the processes of effective management of rural development. This support can best be provided within organizations which constitute channels for reaching rural populations.

It is in this context that non-governmental organizations and peasant organizations will emerge with the aim of replacing the State and boosting local development. The climatic crises and especially the fluctuations in the world prices of agricultural raw materials in African countries will boost the emergence of peasant organizations in the 1980s. Jacques Berthomé (2000) recalled the causes of the effervescence of peasant organizations in these terms :

The growth of the peasant association movement is concomitant with structural adjustment and the disengagement of the State, which not only suspends its development operations, but also abandons basic social services. From then on, rural populations were led to develop economic and social activities, in order to resolve the crucial problems they were facing (J. Berthomé, 2000 :30).

In Chad, technical agricultural progress was favored by cotton cultivation. Pulled cultivation and chemical fertilizers were introduced in 1956 and 1964 respectively to reduce the effort of farmers and increase the yield and productivity of cotton cultivation first. Certainly, the cultivation of cotton has had negative repercussions on the soil, as evidenced by the titles of the works of Charière G. (1978, 1984) “The desert of the peasants ; the destruction of soil in Chad through the development of agriculture” and “Harness cultivation : dangerous progress”. In fact, cotton cultivation destroyed the soil because it was introduced in a context of extensive agriculture (Madidé, 2009). However, it ensures substantial income to acquire agricultural assets. This culture has also favored the structuring of the rural world in Chad. It is a factor in the structuring of the peasant environment in the agricultural zone in the south of Chad through peasant organization and the mastery of new farming techniques (Duprieg, 1977). In the recent past, cotton constituted the only source of income of farmers living far from cities

(Magrin, 2001). Today, despite the boom in cash crops (peanuts, sesame, rice, etc.), cotton occupies a significant position in farmers' income. Madidé and Morémbaye (2021) assessed for this purpose the impact of technical progress on the income of cotton farmers in Kouh-Est. They highlighted that the use of harness cultivation and chemicals significantly increases the income of the cotton farmer. Furthermore, this culture benefits from the fact that its money is received all at once, thus immediately promoting achievements. As a result, cotton farmers organize themselves within village groups and associations in order to benefit from agricultural credits made available by Coton Tchad. Moreover, in Chad, peasant organizations were born in the 1950s, in application of agricultural modernization policies through cotton cultivation. However, it was from 1990 onwards that non-governmental and peasant organizations abounded, in favor of the wind of democratization blowing across the African continent. It is now recognized that, in many countries, farmers' organizations occupy an increasing place in development processes. Local populations and their organizations thus become essential players in development. Also, Northern NGOs recognize peasant organizations as essential levers of cooperation, just like large aid agencies, confronted with the failures of the State and the market in the rural world. These NGOs and agencies boost them, believing that their anchoring in society, and therefore their better knowledge of local realities as well as the modesty or simplicity of their structures constitute incontestable assets in the accomplishment of the missions assigned to them. In fact, we cannot talk about sustainable development without direct and organized involvement of these peasant organizations in their environment. It is in this same vein that Jean-Pierre Prod'Homme (1987) affirmed that the current proliferation of local development initiatives is part of a social history, marked in particular by attempts and also by failures of structuring of the peasantry. The support of peasant organizations for development is so decisive that the United Nations has designated 2012 the “International Year of

Cooperatives” and 2014 the “International Year of Family Farming”.

This dynamic of the peasantry is today reinforced by the decentralization policy which gives greater responsibility to local authorities. The idea of decentralization arises from the fact that on a national territory, territorial divisions do not have the same problems due to their specificities. The central State seeks solutions to problems common to its divisions while the specific problems of each division are the concern of local authorities.

The disengagement of the State and the policy of decentralization mean that peasant organizations are proving enterprising on all fronts of holistic development actions. Indeed, through their activities, peasant groups flexibly combine the economic and the social, the individual and the collective, and demonstrate real creativity.

Buijsrogge, 1989). This peasant dynamic surprises and attracts the attention of more than one observer. After having long considered peasant populations as non-actors of development, passive poor who absolutely must be helped to escape their poverty (Lapeyre, 2006). And as a result, targets of development cooperation, in recent years we have witnessed the emergence of critical thinking, a renewed interest in these popular actors and the recognition of their capacities to mobilize and face the multifaceted crisis that is overwhelming them, by inventing other possibilities. What about Chad and in particular the Department of Kouh-Est ?

In Chad, poverty affects 46.7% of the total population, 52.5% of whom live in rural areas (ECOSIT3, 2011). These poor people experience socio-economic precariousness, and most of them depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their survival. Cotton production takes place in the Sudanese zone of Chad and concerns around 350,000 producers. For ITRAD, this culture plays a significant economic role. It is cultivated over an area of 130,060 km² in the Sudanian zone, or 10% of the national territory, and provides direct or indirect income to more than 2 million Chadians. This is how the income generated by cotton cultivation is used in part for the creation of socio-

economic infrastructure. Furthermore, this culture crystallizes the attention of peasant organizations in order to make agricultural resources profitable and ensure social well-being by improving living conditions. Indeed, the self-managed market system ensures rebates to these organizations, through surplus fees, handling fees and fees for the total value of cotton marketed. All of these costs come together to constitute a collective fund requesting to be paid into the fund of the village association concerned with a view to carrying out community actions. Thanks to this fund, certain village associations are able to carry out community development works such as storage stores, schools or health centers.

The Kouh-Est Department is faced with socio-economic and environmental challenges which require the all-out mobilization of the populations concerned. On the economic front, the increasingly severe deterioration of agricultural yields, under the combined effects of population growth and climate change, is lowering the purchasing power of a large portion of the population. On the social level, there is an insufficiency of basic social infrastructure services and a certain tendency towards individualism which is illustrated by the disappearance of certain forms of traditional solidarity.

From the above, the peasant organizations of Kouh-Est appear both as a framework for a new form of active solidarity and for solving socio-economic and environmental problems. This is how, like other peasant organizations, these organizations contribute to the development of infrastructure (school, health center or dispensary, water borehole, granary or community store, etc.) and then to the development of agricultural practices. news, factors for rational use of agricultural resources, improvement and increase in agricultural yields and therefore income. However, these organizations are confronted with the non-wavering attitude of certain members and sometimes with disastrous management of their assets.

This article provides the history and presents the objectives and structure of the peasant

organizations of Kouh-Est along with their economic and social achievements. It dwells on the self-managed market system, established for the purchase of cotton and the benefits of which stimulate local development actions. Finally, it suggests ways to boost the effectiveness of peasant organizations in Kouh-Est.

The choice of cotton cultivation is justified by the fact that it provides a direct or indirect income to more than 2 million Chadians and that today peasant organizations appear as a response to the ills which currently hinder the development of the rural world. . United within organizations, farmers unite their development efforts and make better use of natural resources and further improve their living conditions.

1. Methodological framework

The methodology adopted for this study was based on bibliographic analysis and field work. The documentary research focused on the history of the emergence of peasant organizations, their contribution to rural development and their dynamics. The fieldwork focused on direct observation and participant observation. The first observation made it possible to see the achievements of peasant organizations on the ground. This is qualitative data that was collected. To illustrate the findings and observations, photos

were taken. The second observation was made through surveys, using participatory diagnostic tools. The questionnaire and the interview guide initiated for this purpose are addressed respectively to the heads of peasant organizations and to those in management. These tools dealt, on the one hand, with the history, the structure of peasant organizations, and their objectives, the mechanisms of the self-managed market and the achievements of socio-economic infrastructures. We randomly surveyed 40 leaders of peasant organizations and the head of the ANADER sub-sector in Bodo.

The primary and secondary data received by this methodological approach were represented in the form of tables, graphs and photos. The analysis and interpretation of this data made it possible to trace the role of cotton in the structuring of the rural world and the contribution of Kouh-Est peasant organizations to local development.

2. Research results and discussion

The Kouh-Est Department is located between 80 and 90 degrees North, and 16o51’ and 18o East. It covers an area of 1,480 km2 and is home to 100,401 inhabitants in 2009, including 443 nomads for a density of approximately 67.53 inhabitants per km2. The figure below locates the Kouh-Est Department in the Logone Oriental Province, in the south of Chad.

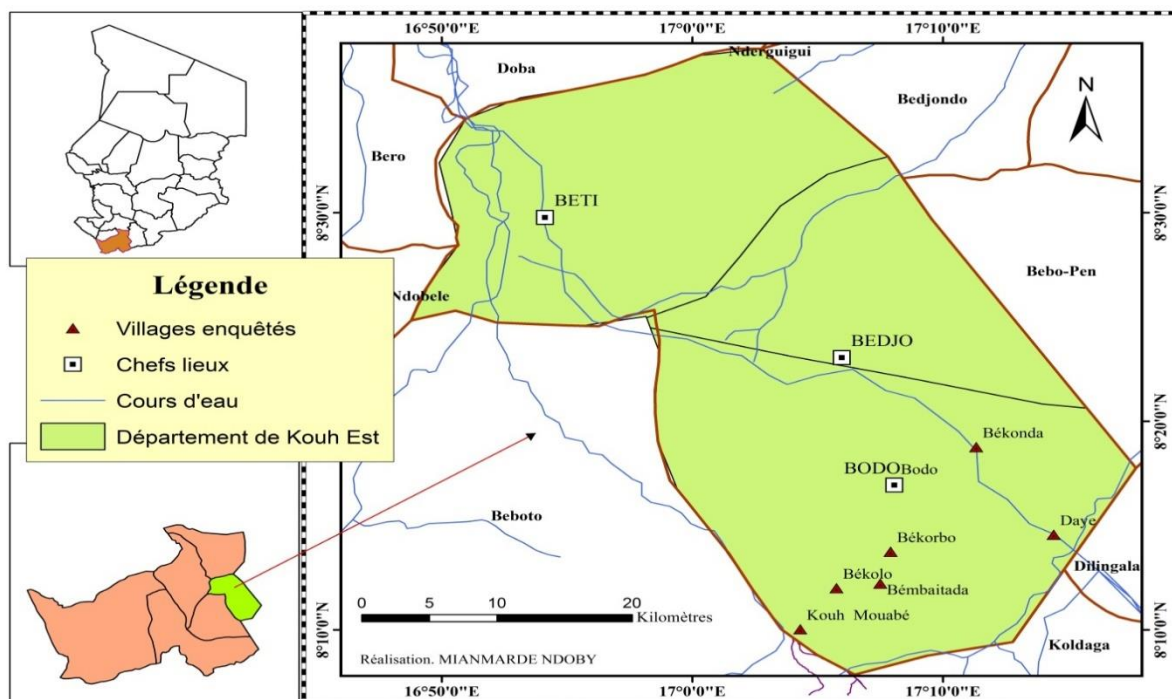


Figure n°1: Location of the Kouh-Est Department

2.1. History, objective and structure of peasant organizations

In this part of our work, we will present the history, structure, objective and then the role of peasant organizations in Kouh-Est.

2.1.1. Village groups

The notion of group has existed for a long time in traditional rural communities where investment is primarily social. But many rely on mutual aid through collective work for food or work for work. This term group designates a gathering of individuals with a common dynamic ensuring its cohesion, whether it has been formalized or not.

The concept “village group refers to any group of people living in a rural environment, who have come together following an internal or external initiative in order to achieve a common development objective and in interaction with the outside world” (Fabienne Berut, 1990). However, we retain several types of groups including groups created by a state company, groups created by a public service, groups of private initiative or due to an internal initiative. A group is therefore characterized by its origin, its activity, its objective and its partners. The origin here represents the different stages leading to the creation of a committee. These steps include making contact, raising awareness and electing a development committee. The essential goal of revitalizing a village community is to mobilize everyone to meet the fundamental needs of its members.

Nowadays, it is rare to have talked about sustainable development without direct and organized involvement of the peasant masses in their environment. In the same vein as, Jean-Pierre Prod'homme (1987) affirmed that the current proliferation of local development initiatives is part of a social history, marked in particular by attempts and also by failures to structure the peasantry. And Tchotsoua (2008) adds that there will be no sustainable development when the base of the rural population is not integrated into the project developed for this circumstance. Since the 1980s, the new policy has been in favor of the responsibility of rural populations. Here and above

all, it is about making grassroots community development possible through economically viable village structures, capable of managing the interests of the community. producer and the rural community thus underlined Philippe Sahuc (1987).

In Chad, village groups constituted the first peasant organization in the rural world. These groups were created in the Sudanian zone as part of the reorganization of the cotton sector by bringing together all agricultural producers. This organization started well with the support of rural development services, the ONDR (National Office for Rural Development) and the CFPA (Agricultural Professional Training Center) before being supported by national and international development NGOs such as the case of World Vision International, BELAC, SODEFIKA etc.

A village group aims to “develop” the village by improving living conditions by developing a better communication network (track) and drinking water supply, school, health and cultural infrastructure. As part of the reorganization of the cotton sector, village groups are being created to ensure credit management through the distribution of cotton program inputs between members, at the village level, and agricultural equipment as well as the collection of agricultural products for commercialization. It is a means by which agricultural producers may have enjoyed a number of benefits that can promote development. The groups advocate improving the living conditions of rural people through community work. During our field survey, a farmer from Dondotinous gave his impression that: "if you group together, together you will certainly benefit from priority in the distribution of factors. In Chad, village groups constituted the first peasant organization in the rural world. These groups were created in the Sudanian zone as part of the reorganization of the cotton sector by bringing together all agricultural producers. This organization started well with the support of rural development services, the ONDR (National Office for Rural Development) and the CFPA (Agricultural Professional Training Center) before being supported by national and international development NGOs such as the case

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- it is obvious that the group is the way to arouse the interest of rural people and NGOs in obtaining the essentials of their vital needs;
- a group can itself manage funds and intervene in the social field as a new organization defending new community interests.

For proper functioning in order to better carry out its actions, each village group must have a management committee, a control commission and a general assembly which is the supreme body. However, the nonchalance of certain members constitutes an obstacle to the development of groups. The members of a village group are made up of active people, heads of agricultural operations, whose number ranges from 15 to 25 people. The exact size is therefore not defined but according to estimates confirmed Ngaryandjim, head of the Bodo sub-sector. These village groups,

through their dynamism, can easily carry out a type of development activity.

2.1.2. Village associations

By association we mean the agreement by which several people permanently pool their knowledge or their activities with the aim of sharing benefits (RonelnguéToriraira, 1995). For an agreement to qualify as an association, it must respect the terms set out above: the members must have a common, lawful, permanent and non-profit goal. However, we note the existence of several types of associations: native or family associations, development associations, associations of a cultural or religious nature, etc.

In our case, we address here the question relating to associations of an economic and social nature. These are village associations. These village associations have now become fundamental players in the social, economic and cultural life of the local community. We can ask the question like this: how are these associative movements created in the local communities of the Sudanian zone of rural Chad?

In the Sudanian zone of Chad, Village Associations (AV) were created at the initiative of the agricultural services which are the ONDR and the CFPA. It is within the framework of recovery of the cotton sector that these services have redefined their policy towards the rural world by initiating the formation of these associative movements among the peasantry. All these interventions at whatever level have introduced the basis of a dynamic organization of the rural world in Kouh-Est. Supported by certain development and humanitarian NGOs, AVs are today becoming essential points of support for the State to establish its authority over society.

Indeed, we can thus identify the nuance between a grouping and an AV. A producer group is a professional structure of farmers while an AV is an organization which brings together all the inhabitants or farmers in a village. So what is the structure of an AV?

For a good organization, any association created must present a structure according to the following

organizational plan: an office, a board of directors, a general assembly and the members.

According to Paul Le Call (2005), the constitution of an association requires a certain number of formalities that must be carried out carefully.

These are mainly the drafting of the statutes and internal regulations. The statutes are often written when the association is established by the founding members. Its aim is to establish agreement on the characteristic features of the association to be formed and to establish the rules of organization and operation. The organization of an AV requires providing as much as possible for the status of the members and the functioning of a governing body and then a deliberative body (General Assembly) which takes decisions beyond the competence of the governing body (Executive Office). However, a formed association must always seek to achieve one or more very specific objectives.

The AVs have constituted a local structure which aims to organize and manage local development activities. Today, they have become privileged partners with whom activities are easily carried out.

For example, in the context of carrying out development activities, certain organizations and NGOs first require the training of AVs before any operational intervention. This is the case of World Vision and SECADEV which only encourages village associations in their area of intervention. Thus, AVs are considered today as the main actors in the social, economic and cultural life of a rural local community. According to Solange Passaris (1998), they constitute essential points of support for establishing the authority of the State for society. To achieve its objectives, AVs must carry

out specific local community development activities.

2.2. Achievements of peasant organizations (PO)

In recent decades, peasant organizations (POs) have become factors in revitalizing the rural environment through the qualitative and quantitative transformations they carry out. They contribute to the definition of agricultural and sustainable development policies, the provision of services to small farmers, job creation and social integration, as well as the reduction of poverty and the improvement of food security. They provide services to their members and defend their interests with other stakeholders, including authorities responsible for agricultural policy, commercial partners and development projects. Many grassroots POs create unions and local federations that affiliate with national umbrella organizations. This is the case in West Africa of: SYCOV, Union of cotton and food growers of Mali. UDP, Departmental Union of Producers. FUPRO, Federation of Producers’ Unions in Benin. FENOP, National Federation of Peasant Organizations in Burkina Faso. URECOSCI, Regional Union of Cooperative Enterprises in the Savanna Zone of Ivory Coast. COOPAGCI, Agricultural Cooperative of Ivory Coast and in Chad, there are only cotton farmers’ cooperatives.

Aware of the contribution of peasant organizations to development, the United Nations declared 2012 the “International Year of Cooperatives” and 2014 the “International Year of Family Farming”. What about Kouh-Est?

The table below breaks down peasant organizations by type in some villages in the department.

Table 1: Distribution of types of peasant organizations according to the villages surveyed

N°	Village	Type of Farmer Organization		
		Group	Village Association	Cooperative
01	Bodo	7	2	
02	Békorbo	5	2	1
03	Bémbaitada1	9	3	
04	Békolo2	6	2	
05	Kouh-Mouabé	9	2	
06	Békonda 1	11	1	1
07	Békonda2	8	1	
08	Daye	8	2	
Total		63	15	2

Source : Field surveys, 2022

According to the table, there are 80 peasant organizations, all types combined. By type, there are 2 cooperatives, 15 village associations and 63 village groups.

2.2.1. Activities of village groups and associations

Village groups are recognized today as an essential basis of peasant dynamics. These groups created must carry out various actions in the multivariate field (economic, social and technical). They can carry out purchases and sales of agricultural products on a cooperative basis.

The members of a group carry out mutual aid actions for agricultural work on the one hand and for community development on the other. The development actions concern more the manufacture of bricks for the construction of storage warehouses for agricultural products; construction of a school or a dispensary by providing materials. But in the context of managing inputs for cotton cultivation and agricultural equipment, the actions of groups are developing further.

The table below shows the number of groups and cotton farmers in each village surveyed.

Table 2: Number of groups by sub-prefecture in the Kouh-est Department

N°	Sub-prefecture	Cantons	Village	Group
01	Bodo	5	115	332
02	Bédjo	1	26	107
03	Béti	1	103	208
Total	3	7	244	647

Source : Field survey, Madidé N. Silas, June 2022.

In the village of Maissa in the sub-prefecture of Bodo for example, thanks to their group called “Djasra” which means we are capable, farmers benefited from credit for agricultural equipment. This equipment is made up of 7 plows, 3 carts and 4 hullers for the 2005-2006 campaign, declared the president of this group during our investigation in June 2010. In a village of Maibo in the sub-prefecture of Bodo , a women's group called “Groupement Lydie” manages a purchased millet mill. An ONDR agent, Laomadji declared that: “to have an acidic taste, you have to put sorrel leaves together”. “Together, ants can carry a leg of an ox.” In other words, with village groups, farmers are able to easily carry out a planned community project. It is in this context that Claude Ardit (1991) affirmed in his activity report that: “the establishment of village groups and so-called

community actions presuppose a collective mentality which would be expressed in permanent production structures”. For a good revitalization to be undertaken, sustainable rural development activities, several groups can come together leading to the creation of a village association abbreviated AV. Created to help farmers undertake development actions in their communities, AVs carry out development activities in several areas. But the main one is the marketing of cotton. Then, they undertake the drilling of pump wells, build dispensaries, community stores, schools, etc. They also facilitate training in farming techniques through the practice of market gardening, environmental protection and irrigated farming. The table below shows the activities of the AVs per village surveyed.

Table 3: Distribution of AVs by village and by activities carried out

Sub-prefecture	VA number	Types of activities carried out
Bodo	95	Self-managed cotton market, distribution of inputs, management and distribution of agricultural equipment, mutual assistance in field work, training of members on farming techniques; construction of a school and drilling of a pump well
	22	Self-managed cotton market, distribution of inputs, management and distribution of agricultural equipment, mutual assistance in field work, training of members on farming techniques, construction of a school and drilling of a pump well
Bédjo		
Béti	88	Self-managed cotton market, distribution of inputs, management and distribution of agricultural equipment, mutual assistance in field work, training of members on farming techniques, construction of a school and drilling of a pump well
Béti	88	Self-managed cotton market, distribution of inputs, management and distribution of agricultural equipment, mutual assistance in field work, training of members on farming techniques, construction of a school and drilling of a pump well
Total	205	

Source: Field survey, Madidé N Silas, June 2021. This table indicates the types of activities carried out by Village Associations (AV) in the villages surveyed.

According to the field results, out of 291 producers surveyed, everyone declared being a member of an AV in their village. The main activities carried out by the AVs in their respective villages consist of a self-managed market in the marketing of cotton, the management of agricultural inputs and equipment and the recovery of credit granted to members.

We can remember that the farmer organization based on AV is therefore closely linked to cotton cultivation, because only the cotton market makes it possible to easily recover agricultural credit granted to producers. One of the farmers surveyed in Dondoti confirmed to us during our field trip that: “thanks to cotton cultivation, we farmers have the opportunity to organize ourselves easily. This is why the AV which constitutes our base has allowed us to easily obtain agricultural equipment in the form of agricultural credit. For example, in 2006 I obtained a huller easily thanks to our AV and his

cousin received a cart from him. However, without this training of peasant movements, it takes a lot of gymnastics before succeeding in obtaining the agricultural equipment in demand. But with AVs and groups, it’s easy to get a loan requested.”

Furthermore, cotton has been a real driving force in the process of distributing agricultural credit and a better factor in peasant organization in the Kouh-Est department. This peasant organization made it possible to better manage the self-managed cotton market system, a source of discounts and participation in local development.

2.2.2. Cotton, a factor of participation in local development in Kouh-Est

In the Sudanian zone in general and in the Kouh-Est Department in particular, cotton cultivation generates income for both individuals and farmer organizations. Part of this income is used in the construction of socio-economic infrastructure.

Farmers' organizations organize their members to benefit from agricultural inputs and appropriate cotton farming practices. This provides these members with income allowing them to contribute to the implementation of local development actions. Furthermore, the self-managed market system (SMAG) collects rebates which are injected into local development. This system is firstly linked to self-management. By self-management we mean a particular method of decision-making applicable to an activity. In the case of a company for example, employer power disappears to leave management carried out by the employees themselves: it is a desire which consists of applying economic democracy in this system. We note here a transfer of decision-making power from employers to those who actually produce the work. In this practice, there is the delegation of power as in the case of political democracy (MandiObed, 1999).

But in the present case, self-management consists of taking charge of the production and marketing of agricultural products, particularly cotton, by the farmers themselves, through functional literacy. Article 1 of the SMAG charter stipulated that: "The self-managed market is an activity managed by an AV to market grain cotton produced by the groups, members of this association" (ONDR/DSN; 1993). When we talk about SMAG, we think directly of autonomous management of the sale of cotton by the farmers themselves with the help of the CFPA and ONDR service in order to carry it out. In this case, it is interesting to understand the evolution of SMAG in the cotton-growing zone of Chad.

The idea of establishing SMAG originated during the 1974-1975 agricultural campaign, in the CFPAs of Moyen-Chari and particularly in the Mandoul sub-directorate. Self-management was therefore not done in a single day but gradually, several tests were experimented first with the trainees of the CFPA of Monkara (DjimasngarTonoulaye, 1977). Noting the encouraging results, the experience was gradually extended to other surrounding villages. The objective of this system was to help farmers resolve their problems related to the organization,

training and sale or marketing of their agricultural products, especially cotton.

Following appropriate animation, motivated farmers present their grievances expressed as needs. And then, a lucid explanation of how SMAG works, its advantages and disadvantages, is provided to agricultural producers during a training session. This explanatory training provided assumed a dual role:

- it aims to dispel mistrust of SMAG in the mentalities of farmers;
- it also gave the chance to possibly extend this system to other agricultural products other than cotton (peanuts, market gardeners). Consequently, we see that this system made it possible to reduce commercial margins in order to promote the possible creation of a peasant cooperative with collective savings. To better organize its activities, the SMAG must present a well-hierarchical structure.

When market day approaches, the farmers meet to choose the terms and location of the purchasing center (CA). As soon as this is done, a team called the commission is set up and is made up of 12 people committing to making their contribution in order to carry out this operation. It is a voluntary service that these designated people have decided to carry out for the development of their locality. Thus the members of this commission are divided according to specific tasks: 2 people take care of the calculation operations; 2 people are designated to weigh the scale; 2 pointers; 2 reporters of individual sales sheets; 2 total village sales file holders and 2 people at the take scale. Everything is assisted by an agent from CFPA or ONDR as advisor to the commission. This commission ensures the operation of SMAG.

The operation of SMAG is simple and clear-sighted because of the involvement of all farmers, members of the AV, in the management system. It is then subject to various administrative controls, but its organization is the entire responsibility of the producers themselves. The photo below shows the atmosphere of the self-managed market.



Photo 1: Photo Madidé N. Silas, 06/17/2010.

This photo shows the cotton market in Mogol. The members of the market management committee are on break. The photo also shows the Roman scale, on which is attached a metal mass which regulates the weights, suspended from a post to which the scale is attached with a chain. The covered cotton is thus hung on a hook to obtain a balance for reading the weighed weight.

The self-managed market has disadvantages such as late payment, downgrading and various hassles. First, at the opening of the market in a CA, the Cotton Market Director and the “interface” agent require presents from the AVs before providing them with the service of distributing the tarpaulins and dropping off the boxes. Then, at the factory level, the conveyors or delegates are castigated by the sorting agents who carry out the checks in order to ensure the best quality cotton. They often demand bribes otherwise the cotton in the transported boxes must be seen to be downgraded and to have been qualified as 2nd quality cotton. From the board of directors to the factory, we see that a veritable “mafia” network is organized with the aim of defrauding cotton producers. Indeed, to better reassure themselves, the conveyors designated to accompany the boxes to the factory sometimes wait more than 10 days until the boxes are unloaded for ginning before returning to the village. If no crate is downgraded, this is the satisfaction of the producers. But otherwise, they are obliged to bear the cost of the downgrading by the joint guarantee. However, the advantages acquired by producers lead them to minimize these difficulties recorded here and there.

However, in the cotton marketing system, a number of advantages make it possible to meet the challenge of developing the rural area. The commission responsible for managing the SMAG has full responsibility for marketing the product, the cotton having to benefit from profits such as: transaction or handling fees, excess fees and the total value of the cotton marketed.

In the SMAG management mechanism, Coton Tchad has an obligation to commit to paying excess fees. These costs are obtained by a mechanism by which each cotton tarpaulin weighed at the CA, the producers voluntarily recommend putting into practice a taring system. This system sets itself the objective of avoiding the possible deficit that the purchasing center will experience. In applying this rating, it is assumed that the covered cotton must, for example, weigh 147 kg. We declare for conviviality 145 kg. Which will subsequently make it possible to obtain, after weighing the weighbridge, a weight greater than that of the CA concerned. Alongside these costs, there are the handling fees that CA AVs must receive.

Handling costs represent the corvee costs that the farmers paid to the Chad cotton company. But the rate of payment of these costs varies depending on the campaigns. For example, in 2019 and 2020, this rebate payment rate was 3,500 CFA francs per tonne under normal loading conditions without penalty. If we take the example of a CA which had a tonnage of 90 t, then its rebate must be evaluated at: $3500 \text{ F} \times 90 = 315,000 \text{ F CFA}$. This amount must be added to the other costs to be paid such as the case of the difference which is calculated on the basis of 500 kg per truck. However, it remains to determine the costs of the total value of the cotton marketed.

These latter costs are obtained based on total tonnage by the purchase price per kilogram of the current campaign. As with weighing, there is the weight of the covered product which has not reached the kilogram, unit of measurement. The sum of these submultiples of the kg is added to make a weight greater than unity, sometimes exceeding more than a hundred. This made it possible to find the excess weight of the CA. All of

these costs come together to constitute a collective fund requesting to be paid into the fund of the AV concerned with a view to carrying out actions of a community nature. Thanks to this fund, some AVs

are able to carry out community development works such as storage stores, schools or health centers. The photographic plate below shows a store in Bèssakonyan and a borehole in Békonda.



The photo on the right shows the Bèssakonyan store, built with financial support from SODEFIKA (Support for the shea and peanut sectors) and the photo on the left shows a human-powered drilling operation in Békonda.

The participation of POs in development actions is in kind and in cash. In nature, the groups manufacture fired lighters for example, they provide materials available in their environment such as fine or coarse sand, gravel and take turns working on the site as a laborer or worker. In cash, the money from cotton rebates and the sale of other agricultural products previously stored by the POs is used to supplement the community's contribution in the realization of collective works.

Individually, cotton farmers contribute to development actions in their environment thanks to cotton revenues. Madidé noted the different destinations that cotton money takes, according to the farmer: “It should be said that with cotton, the farmer claims to have access to basic necessities (soap, sugar, clothing, alcohol, etc.), pay contributions and taxes, the wife's dowry as well as acquire agricultural equipment and team oxen. Cotton allows producers to pay credits, buy means of transportation (bicycles or motorcycles), as well as house construction materials” (Madidé, 2009:105). Contributions are most often organized

within the framework community investment actions, whether social or economic.

2.3. Discussion of results

Since the 1930s, agriculture in colonized countries had relied on export crops. This is the case of cotton in Chad, which constitutes one of the pillars of the structuring of the rural world and the source of direct or indirect income for 2 million Chadians. This culture has gradually become integrated into the habits of the agricultural farming system of farmers in the Sudanian zone of Chad. As a result, cotton cultivation gave rise to several projects. Magrin G. (2001) emphasized that cotton cultivation was imposed at its beginnings (1928); it was accepted in the 70s and; claimed in the 1980s because it contributed to satisfying the irreversible needs of farmers and even though it constitutes the only source of income for farmers located far from cities. In the same vein, Macra (1988) emphasized that cotton was maintained in Chad after independence to increase agricultural production and most investments. Ngargos (1980) presented cotton cultivation as the main factor in the

monetary income that the sector brings to farmers. Leynaud (1986) showed the importance of modernization in the process of agricultural productivity and yields. Just as Madidé and Morémbaye (2021) showed that: the use of harness cultivation triples the income obtained in traditional manual cultivation while this income is increased by two-thirds by the use of chemical fertilizers. The simultaneous use of harness cultivation and chemical fertilizers at least quintuples the income from cotton obtained in traditional manual cultivation, with a saving in working time of 15%, which can be used to carry out other activities. In other words, used in compliance with their prophylaxis, these agricultural equipment would ensure substantial income for farmers while limiting the destruction of plant cover, linked to the expansion of cultivated areas. In the same vein, Karim and Al noted the contribution of cotton cultivation to the community development of Chadian villages in the cotton zone and the fear of farmers regarding the reforms in these terms: “For the villages in the cotton zone, cotton revenues constitute the main source of income for community development to meet basic needs and improve the quality of life. Community development is based on investments in village collective resources: schools, dispensaries, credit groups, warehouses, water pumps, etc. Farmers fear that this financing will disappear with the ongoing reform of the cotton sub-sector. If this were to be the case, revenues or resources allocated to the maintenance or replacement of local equipment and local infrastructure would be reduced” (Karim et Al., 2005:11). The same authors showed the importance of cotton in the national economy: “In West Africa, the contribution of cotton to GDP varies from one country to another. Thus, it represents 3 to 10% of GDP in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad and Togo, and less than 2% in other cotton-producing countries. However, cotton exports generate significant revenue for the national economies of many West African countries; thus, in 2001, Burkina Faso's export earnings represented 51.4%, 37.6% in Benin and 36.2% in Chad. In Mali, this

figure was 25%, and in Togo, 11.2%” (Karim et Al., 2005:33).

Conclusion

This article is devoted to the role of cotton cultivation in the structuring of the rural world and in participation in local development in Kouh-Est. To do this, the article carried out a bibliographic analysis and field surveys. The results show that cotton cultivation favored the formation of peasant organizations. Cotton cultivation allows village groups and associations to manage and recover agricultural credits in purchasing centers. These latter constitute today an essence in the dynamism of development in Kouh-Est. Based on village groups and associations, community development actions are often best carried out. The self-managed market system, established to market cotton grain, collects rebates which are injected into the construction of socio-economic infrastructure. Furthermore, peasant organizations constitute the fundamental driving force to support the implementation of activities initiated and launched by the public authorities. To this end, by their objectives and the actions carried out, they are better placed to support certain rural development programs established by the rural sector service. However, the non-wavering attitudes of certain members of peasant organizations and the ignorance of management techniques must be broken in order to further energize the actions of Kouh-Est organizations. Make these members aware of being attentive and equipping the executive office with urgent managements techniques. But with the multi-dimensional crisis facing cotton cultivation in the Kouh-Est peasantry, what type of exploitation should farmers undertake to meet the challenge of the sustainable rural development process ?

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