



Report of findings for the

Evaluative study on the contributions of Fairtrade towards driving change in the Mauritian sugar cane sector

Submitted to Fairtrade International
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The researchers conducted this commissioned study independently. All content reflects the opinion of the researchers and possible errors are the sole responsibility of the research team.

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Abbreviations and key terms

FLOCERT	The global Fairtrade certification body auditing upon the standards set by Fairtrade International
FSA	Farmers Services Agency
FTA	Fairtrade Africa – the regional producer network who support and strengthen producer organizations
FI	Fairtrade International – This is the scheme owner and they set the standards (amongst other tasks); refers to the office in Bonn/Germany as well as the Fairtrade system globally
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Ha	Hectare
MCIA	Mauritius Cane Industry Authority
MSIRI	Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute
MSS	Mauritius Sugar Syndicate
MUR	Mauritius Rupee
Planter	A farmer producing sugar cane and selling it to a miller on a commercial contract
SIFB	Sugar Insurance Fund Board
SPO	Small-Scale Producer Organisation – Into which all Fairtrade certified planters are organised
TCH	Tonne Cane per Hectare
ToC	Theory of Change
TSH	Tonne Sucrose per Hectare

Executive summary

The Mauritius cane sugar industry has established itself as a core contributor to the economic, social, and environmental landscape of the island nation. Mauritian sugar exports contribute approximately \$200M to GDP and sugar has been a vital contributor historically to the success of the country's economic growth (Seetanah et al., 2019; OEC, 2021). While no longer at peak production, sugar cane still constitutes 80% of total arable land. Furthermore, sugar cane plays a significant role in supporting the livelihood of rural communities throughout Mauritius. The industry has had to build resilience and adaptability over nearly 400 years of operation. Indeed, in the past 20 years, it has faced economic shocks in the wake of repeated loss of EU and UK trade protection mechanisms (Deepchand, 2010, 2019; LMC International, 2015). Additionally, changing climatic conditions and environmental shocks induced by climate change, dramatically increasing input costs, and labour shortages, have all led to the decline of sugar production, particularly among the small producers (Deepchand, 2019).

In the face of these numerous challenges, five small producer organisations (SPOs) successfully applied for Fairtrade accreditation, with funding and support from local government and industry stakeholders. The SPOs first achieved Fairtrade certification in 2009. Since then, the number of Fairtrade certified SPOs increased in Mauritius, and at its peak in 2015 it covered 38 different SPOs, producing a total of 36,808MT (Figure 4) (MSS, 2021). This number has since declined, but cumulatively, the injection of foreign capital due to the Fairtrade Premium of \$60 per ton of Fairtrade sugar sold remains significant, sitting at approximately 600M MUR (~\$15M) since the standard was first introduced.

FI has commissioned Agricane Consulting Ltd. to conduct a study to evaluate the extent to which the adoption of Fairtrade standards over the period of more than one decade, has influenced change in the sugar cane landscape of Mauritius.

The primary research questions put forward by FI were as follows:

- **Has Fairtrade been a useful tool in assuring the economic sustainability of small farmers growing cane, over the 10 years of certification?**
- **How has Fairtrade certification impacted the image of Mauritius as a sugar producing origin and seller of Fairtrade certified sugar?**

Based on the extensive list of sub-questions provided (as seen in Appendix A) the research findings have been thematically organised according to the following four questions:

1. **What has been the agricultural, environmental, and economic impact of Fairtrade¹ on certified producer organisations, the workers, and the wider community?**
2. **What has been the impact of Fairtrade on the institutional governance of certified SPOs and the sugar cane industry in Mauritius?**
3. **What has been the impact of the Fairtrade Premium on the operations and viability of certified SPOs?**
4. **What has been the impact of Fairtrade on the perception of Mauritian sugar cane products on the global market and changes to global market access?**

Methodology

The study draws from the Fairtrade theory of change (ToC) outlining the core interventions, and the targeted outputs, outcomes, and impacts (Figure 5). The study has therefore been designed to capture evidence at each of these stages, from intervention through to impacts. A mixed methodology has been utilised in the study, composed of the following four elements:

- Context interviews with key industry stakeholders (n=15)
- Focus group discussions with planters and other informants (n=6)
- A client survey to assess the perception and experience of MSS customers purchasing Fairtrade (n=11)
- A household survey targeted towards members of the SPOs, relative to a comparative group of non-certified SPOs (n=210)

All elements of the study were conducted between November 2021 and January 2022.

1 "Implementing Fairtrade" means applying Fairtrade standards, accredited with certification, and probably receiving support rendered by Fairtrade.

Results

The study findings suggest that the Fairtrade interventions have positively influenced SPOs from an economic, environmental, and social perspective. Hence, they support the resilience and sustainability of SPOs and their members. This has been seen both relative to the comparative group of non-certified SPOs, as well as the perceived changes by the certified SPO members and key industry stakeholders. These positive effects have increased the sense of optimism small planters have towards their sugar cane farming. Further, certified SPOs experienced reduced negative impacts of economic shocks. In addition, the evidence suggests that Fairtrade has played a positive role across the whole sector by fostering a more rapid adoption of GAPs, greater awareness of climate change and the need for better environmental and labour practices. At an industry level, the impacts of Fairtrade on the image of Mauritius as a sugar producing origin is more nuanced: Fairtrade products have strengthened the Mauritius Sugar Syndicate (MSS) value offering to its customers in line with the increasing interest in sustainably certified produce globally. However, the volatility of Fairtrade certification has negatively impacted MSS' ability to meet customer demands.

Key Insights

Impact of the Fairtrade Premium on SPO practices and sustainability

1. **The Fairtrade Premium of USD 60/MT of sugar sold under Fairtrade terms is the key attractor for SPOs and their members to become and remain Fairtrade certified.** The most popular and effective uses of the Premium, as seen by SPO members are:
 - a. **Agricultural:** Supplementary payment to small planters of between (US\$2-5) per ton of sugar cane produced, a subsidy for fertilisers, and provision of PPE for the planters and workers (particularly during COVID).
 - b. **Environmental:** Subsidy for bio-fertilisers & incentives for the safe disposal of agricultural chemicals.
 - c. **Social:** (in the context of the low-economic status of the communities surrounding the SPOs) Donations to the elderly and the disabled, women empowerment associations, and to local schools. The donations make the SPOs more welcome within the community and increase the sense of local community resilience.

- d. Where relevant, **investment in diversification of income and/or livelihood strategy** have helped to build the economic resilience of the SPOs. Examples include investing in premises which are then rented out as event space to the community, investing in food gardens, and property investment.
2. **The Fairtrade Premium helps to keep farmers in business in otherwise unsustainable market conditions. It is used to overcome price increases from inputs costs, high labour costs, and environmental shocks.** In the face of these, 22% of certified planters still reported an increase in income in the past 3 years, as opposed to just 2% of non-certified small planters. However, in line with the wider industry trend, many certified small planters (29%) still report income declines in the past 3 years. The income decline in recent years suggests that the combined effects of the Fairtrade Premium, and parallel productivity improving Fairtrade interventions, while beneficial, have not been sufficient to balance out the negative economic influence on the industry. **Without the Premium, even the planters whose sugar cane income is only supplementary (the case for the majority of small planters) are at risk of being unviable.**
3. **A perceived high risk of decertification among some SPOs creates uncertainty over the Premium budget available to them.** The lack of certainty regarding the additional income prohibits longer term or larger capital investments, which may be more beneficial to the SPOs.

Impact of Fairtrade Standards on SPO practices and sustainability

4. **The standards, Fairtrade financed sugar programmes, and on the ground accompanying training and support provided by local stakeholders, have led to widespread adoption of key GAPs.** Resultingly, there have been a suite of positive agricultural, environmental, and economic benefits for the certified SPOs. The benefits include:
 - a. Improved timing of agricultural operations
 - b. More effective use of fertilisers and bio-fertilisers
 - c. Reduced use of hazardous chemicals
 - d. Better handling, management, and disposal of waste chemicals
 - e. Better yields due to improved farm management practices

5. **The Fairtrade standards, and local trainings have effectively supported the increased use of GAPs, but there are some production practices, which require additional focus and resource to ensure a sufficiently resilient local ecosystem in the face of climate shocks.** For example, there is a need for increased focus on soil health and the recovery of abandoned land to a mixture of sugar cane and natural habitat, as part of a regenerative approach to agriculture. This could be a combined effort of FTA's/industry's training program, as well as input into future standards reviews as well as focused financed programs.
6. **Farm labour conditions have improved significantly, as a result of the Fairtrade standards and the FTA's training on Better Labour Practices both within SPOs and across the industry.** Millers report having improved labour practices in line with Fairtrade standards, which extends to all farm contractors they partner with to supply services to the SPOs, such as harvesting contractors who employ cane cutters to cut cane on behalf of the planters). At the level of SPOs, when compared to labour conditions experienced 10 years ago, 93% of certified small planters reported an improvement in the conditions as opposed to 40% of the non-certified planters. Furthermore, among certified planters, 63% reported wage increases since they became Fairtrade certified.
7. **However, there is still some confusion and ambiguity among SPOs on the interpretation of certain standards, particularly those relating to labour. The confusion is due to a reported disconnect between some of the labour standards and the specific labour contracting model widely adopted in Mauritius.** Therefore, the existing standards on labour need to be reviewed to ensure more direct clarity and applicability.
8. **Labour shortages pose a substantive risk to the sugar sector and certified SPOs are just as likely to report labour shortages as a key risk for their farm business.** This is despite the positive impact that Fairtrade certification has had on labour conditions.

Impact of Fairtrade on leadership, governance and representation

9. **The morale among certified SPOs is starkly improved relative to that of non-certified SPOs.** Certified SPOs demonstrate a sense of greater belonging and pride, alongside an optimism and sense of resilience in the face of climate change related challenges. **However,**

certified SPOs still show concern for the future of farming,

primarily due to threats from economic shocks, labour shortages, and limited youth interest to support effective farm succession.

10. **The leadership and governance practices within certified SPOs have improved significantly in the 10 years of Fairtrade.** Nearly all (98%) of certified small producers reported an improvement in SPO board leadership with improvements in:
 - a. Book-keeping
 - b. Support provision to the SPO members
 - c. Effectiveness of communication between SPO leadership and their members
11. **The size of the SPO with respect to membership and land area (and subsequently size of Premium) plays a role in the SPO's ability to access and leverage industry resources and to serve the needs of small planter members.** Larger SPOs can provide better services to their members compared to smaller SPOs due to greater access to financial and governance resources, both with respect to a larger Premium received and with greater leverage to access alternative financial support mechanisms available, such as those from government or Fairtrade.
12. **The Fairtrade focus on internalisation of capability within the SPO leadership is a key strength of the Fairtrade approach, but the reported limited additional on the ground support for 20+ individual SPOs creates a weakness in this methodology.** For example, it often leads to pressure on the SPO secretaries to deliver the necessary governance changes, which most secretaries do not have the capacity to manage effectively. The result is that inefficiencies and gaps in governance capabilities remain across the certified SPOs, particularly among the smaller SPOs (linked to insight 9). While the addition of a local FTA representative has been helpful, there is a strong desire from the SPOs for greater FTA resourcing to support the needs of the 20+ certified SPOs more fully.

13. **There is still limited representation of women and youth both within certified and non-certified SPOs and across the industry.** The relatively low engagement of women is tied strongly to historic cultural norms and systemic factors, while youth are put off by their perception of the sugar industry as a difficult and insufficiently lucrative source of income.

Impact of Fairtrade on the sustainability of the Mauritius sugar market

14. **By keeping otherwise unviable small scale production systems in operation, Fairtrade has helped to upholster the viability of the Mauritius sugar industry in the short to medium term.** However, the long-term ability of Fairtrade to continue to enable this is not guaranteed, and a more holistic approach to supporting small planter viability is required.
15. **Fairtrade had proven beneficial for MSS as an important additional offering for customers, but more can be done to increase understanding of the benefits of Fairtrade to the supplying SPOs among customers and to ensure their continued support of Fairtrade.** Combined with the wide range of speciality sugars, and ease of doing business, Mauritius has an advantage over other Fairtrade sugar producers. However, the customer interest in Fairtrade is still limited by the additional cost requirement and limited knowledge of the tangible benefits of Fairtrade to the SPOs. This report will help to increase that awareness.
16. **The volatility of Fairtrade certified sugar volumes, caused by frequent instances of SPO decertification in recent years, is a major limiting factor to the growth of the Fairtrade market for Mauritius.**
17. **Within Mauritius the awareness of Fairtrade and the benefits that it confers to small planters and the broader industry remains limited** beyond the key stakeholders who directly engage with Fairtrade. The finding extends both to non-certified sugar cane planters and to the broader citizen population of Mauritius.
18. **There are several barriers to entry for non-certified SPOs to become certified. The barriers can be categorised broadly as financial, governance, and knowledge related.** For example, SPOs perceive the cost for initial audit and entry process to be high, and many do not have the finances, resources, or knowhow to initiate the process. While the Mauritian government currently offer support for these costs, there is limited awareness of this or how to go about receiving it.

Recommendations

Recommendations for key stakeholders are as follows:

Fairtrade

- ▶ **Review and clarify the (primarily labour) standards internally to ensure they meet contextual considerations.** Clarification on the application of specific labour requirements of the SPO standards with the objective to understand the global intention of the standard requirement and the local interpretation of certain requirements in line with audits in other sugar producing countries.
 - In conjunction with this, and to ensure SPOs are not negatively impacted in the coming year's audits, Fairtrade can provide refresher training on the standards, and the SPOs can collaborate with Fairtrade to ensure all requirements are met.
- ▶ **Commission a review of the audit outcomes over the past 5 years and compare with audits in other countries.** The review will investigate alignment of the FLOCERT auditing process and outcomes in Mauritius relative to the Fairtrade global standards in other sugar regions², while potentially also addressing the need for additional support and/or interpretation notes to better align to the context and needs of SPOs. Key points include aligning to and clarifying the requirement on labour standards and adapting the local interpretation for meeting attendance during an audit.
 - The report should be used to guide key industry supporting partners, including FTA, MSS, and MSIRI to better resource themselves to support SPOs across Mauritius.
- ▶ **Increase the communication surrounding, and accessibility to Fairtrade standards to reduce future barriers for SPOs wishing to certify, and to reduce risk of future decertification.** This should be targeted toward existing and prospective certified SPOs and external partners.
 - Incentivise first time certification through increased awareness of the benefits to SPOs and provide access to additional resourcing support mechanisms in partnership with key stakeholders including MSS, donors, and government.

² <https://www.flocert.net/solutions/fairtrade/how-it-works>

- ▶ **Review the financial support mechanisms available to SPOs including the Fairtrade Premium, to correct for higher inputs costs and economic shocks, and to enable planters to stay in business.** Fairtrade financial support mechanisms alone cannot be seen as the solution to low income, so any solutions should be considered in the context of multi-stakeholder arrangements which build the financial resilience of the planters at a more systemic level. Potential solutions include:
 - **Fairtrade (FI and/or FTA) could independently as well as jointly raise funds or invest available funds in areas agreed to be of need.**
 - **Fairtrade could explore fundraising opportunities and potential collaborations with other aligned international organisations and/or customers willing to invest in their suppliers, to mobilise additional funds and resources for SPOs and simultaneously minimise duplication of efforts.**
 - Leverage the additional funding for capital investment targeted toward specific projects, which build economic and environmental resilience. Funding of this nature could, amongst others, support irrigation repairs, and machinery purchase to overcome the decline in labour availability.
 - Additional support provision should be made to ensure the suitable physical and financial management of the assets to maximise value from any investment.
 - **Explore equitable sharing mechanisms for the value derived from existing and future income diversification efforts** e.g., from sales of Fairtrade rum and ethanol.
 - **Explore additional financial protection mechanisms to reduce risk and build resilience for the SPOs,** potentially in collaboration with development finance institutions or other partners. These may support existing or new industry instruments. One example is to 'fill in the gaps' in the current crop insurance system³ to provide an additional safety net, such as in the case where specific geographic regions may not qualify for insurance pay-outs but are still negatively affected by environmental shocks.
- ▶ **Develop policies and/or initiatives that help to overcome the risk of labour shortages for Fairtrade planters,** such as through providing additional financial incentive for labourers.

³ <https://www.sifb.mu/about-sifb>

- ▶ **Facilitate the consolidation of SPO efforts to achieve governance, financial, and efficiency gains and enable greater resilience for the SPOs in the face of increased economic and environmental shocks.**

Furthermore, encouraging certification of new SPOs with generally larger member numbers and collective land size could increase the sustainability for the Fairtrade market, as well as increase the collaboration between farmers who depend on farming as their sole source of income and smaller SPOs for whom farming alone is not sustainable (and often provides a supplementary income only).

- **Consolidation may be through formally combining existing SPO structures, or through more targeted collaboration efforts among the separate SPOs as they currently stand. The recommendation is paired with a need for caution and the use of exemplary participatory facilitation processes** to ensure that the existing socio-political dynamics within and between the SPOs, which have acted as a barrier to the consolidation of efforts to date, are appropriately incorporated. Hence, an inclusive, participatory approach will be critical to create a sense of ownership and willingness for the change among the SPOs.
- The potential benefits of the consolidation include the pooling of leadership capabilities, resources and buying power for the SPOs. FTA would be an ideal partner to facilitate a pilot project to trial such a transition.

Fairtrade Africa (FTA)

- ▶ **Support to increase 'on the ground' resources and presence** to better support the SPO leadership to implement the Fairtrade standards effectively and to support in the implementation of the above recommendations made to FI.
- ▶ **Facilitate more interactive and engaging refresher trainings on key governance, labour, and Fairtrade Premium usage processes to ensure all members within the certified SPOs have a clear understanding of the Fairtrade standards.** This will enable even further uptake in the good governance and GAPs already seen.
- ▶ **Facilitate more effective best practice sharing between SPOs on the adoption of GAPs and governance practices, and on effective uses of the Fairtrade Premium.** With respect to the latter, examples in which SPOs have leveraged the Premium (and other) funds to **invest in diversification of income and/or livelihood strategies.**
- ▶ **Increase the participation of women and youth in key positions**

and decision-making processes in SPOs. To do so, address barriers that currently hold women and youth back from participating.

- **Potential interventions for women inclusion:** more suitable timing of meetings to accommodate for women's typical schedules, create dedicated speaking times or spaces for women planters in the SPO, skilled facilitation to regulate the contribution of different members within a meeting or workshop.
- **Potential interventions for youth inclusion:** Create financial incentives for youth involvement in the industry, potentially through higher skilled and more engaging jobs, and create more global networking opportunities through Fairtrade.

FLOCERT

- ▶ **Review the exception made to the rotation of auditors** due to the high degree of dissatisfaction among SPOs with the local auditor most frequently used⁴.
- ▶ **Create a high-level annual report, which summarises the key challenges faced by the audited SPOs for FI, FTA, and MSS with respect to maintaining certification.** A national level FLOCERT report would keep SPO identity confidential, as is a necessary part of the existing audit process design. In the case that it is not in the normal portfolio of FLOCERT, it could be provided as an additional paid service.

SPO leadership

- ▶ **Increase efforts to collaborate among SPOs to pool existing resources and leverage both resources and knowledge for a more proactive approach to supporting SPO members.** For example, through direct access to funding and resources, exposure to beneficial projects, or knowledge sharing.
- ▶ **Invest in tools to maximise the efficiency of existing management and leadership responsibilities.** For example, explore more effective ways of communicating with SPO members, and increase rapid or instant access to farm business records and/or payments for SPO members.

⁴ FLOCERT works with a world-wide network of auditors. However, it is not viable to have several auditors in every possible location. Thus, FLOCERT uses a mix of local auditors and non-local auditors. In general, the selection of auditors follows a rotating scheme, but allows for exceptions.

MSS

- ▶ **Support the co-ordination of large-scale multi-stakeholder projects funded through Fairtrade and other external investment sources, as a trusted and unbiased partner.**
- ▶ **In collaboration with the Ministry of Cooperatives, coordinate the review of existing SPO structures, to facilitate consolidation of SPOs.** However, this process must be fully participatory and remain culturally sensitive for any future SPO governance system to be sustainable .
- ▶ **Increase communication and marketing efforts locally to raise awareness of the MSS and Fairtrade brands and build interest among Mauritian citizens in the local sugar industry.** This has the potential to increase the interest in the sugar cane industry among youth and to open a local market for Fairtrade products among the growing middle class.
- ▶ **Increase communication of the benefits of Fairtrade for SPOs with existing and potential new Fairtrade customers.** The findings of the report can be used to do this in the first instance, but frequent updates on the benefits to SPOs, with both regular stories and industry wide statistics of the benefits will also be beneficial.

Government

- ▶ **Develop an industry-wide small planter mechanisation and labour transition plan, differentiated for each region or community to account for the variety of opportunities and geographic constraints.** The plan should encompass locally relevant ways to overcome the labour shortages and support the development of higher skilled jobs to attract youth interest.
- ▶ **Improve the communication and accessibility of existing financial support mechanisms available to current and prospective certified SPOs to allow more SPOs to benefit from existing support mechanisms available.**

Customers

- ▶ **Explore collaborative partnerships and funding models in with Fairtrade and other international partners to provide additional support and financial assistance to the SPOs, in addition to the existing Premium.** This can be specifically designed and targeted to meet existing targets set by the customer for more sustainable sourcing, for example to support SPOs to become more 'climate smart' by reducing the GHG emissions and building climate resilience.
- ▶ **Explore the possibility of supporting SPOs to receive additional payment for the provision of ecosystem services within the customer's value chain , in line with the rapidly evolving market for carbon and other ecosystem provisions.**

These findings and recommendations provide detailed feedback to FI, FTA and MSS on the impacts of Fairtrade, and areas for potential improvements. The report is also designed to be shared with customers, consumers, as well as planters in Mauritius and around the world, to provide a more informed understanding of the benefits of Fairtrade within the sugar industry.

1. Introduction

The Mauritius sugar industry has established itself as a core contributor to the economic, social, and environmental landscape of the island nation. Sugar has been a vital contributor historically to the success of the country's economic growth (Seetanah et al., 2019) and Mauritian sugar exports contribute approximately \$200M to GDP (OEC, 2021). While no longer at peak production, sugar cane still constitutes 80% of total arable land (Statistics Mauritius, 2018). Furthermore, sugar cane plays a significant role in supporting the livelihood of rural communities throughout Mauritius. The industry has demonstrated its resilience and adaptability over nearly 400 years of operation, but not without casualties along the way. Indeed, in the past 20 years, the industry has seen no shortage of challenges, which it has had to overcome. For example, major economic shocks were experienced in the wake of EU and UK removal of trade protection mechanisms (Deepchand, 2010, 2019; Multi-Annual Adaptation Strategy 2006 - 2015; LMC International, 2015). Furthermore, changing climatic conditions, environmental shocks, increasing costs of agro-inputs and labour shortages, have dramatically increased the cost of sugar cane production. The result has been a decline of sugar profitability and production, particularly among the small producers (Deepchand, 2019).

The mounting pressure on the industry in the early 2000's was felt acutely by the small planter community. Resultingly, small producer leadership approached Fairtrade International (FI) for support. By leveraging funding and support from local government and industry stakeholders, five small-producer organisations (SPOs) successfully applied for Fairtrade accreditation, first achieving certification in 2009. Since then, Fairtrade has grown its presence in Mauritius, and at its peak in 2015 it covered 38 different SPOs, producing a total of 36,808MT (MSS, 2021). This number has since declined, but year on year, the injection of foreign capital due to the Fairtrade Premium of \$60/MT of Fairtrade sugar sold remains significant, sitting at some 600M MUR (~\$15M) since the standard was first introduced. Throughout this time, the Fairtrade standards and accompanying support interventions have undergone numerous iterations, all in the effort to increase the positive impact that it has on the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the sugar value chain for the SPOs.

Anecdotal evidence has highlighted the benefits of Fairtrade for the certified SPOs, and the broader positive influence that it has had on the Mauritian sugar industry. However, to date, the effects have yet to be systematically measured. Recognising the gap in knowledge, FI commissioned Agricane Consulting Ltd. to conduct a study which evaluates the extent to which the adoption of Fairtrade standards has influenced

positive change and improvements in the sugar cane landscape of Mauritius. Consequently, this study also provides additional knowledge which can be used to empower stakeholders to further improve the Fairtrade standard, and associated support mechanisms for planters within the Mauritius sugar industry. Furthermore, it contributes evidence to the broader narrative of the role of Fairtrade and other voluntary standards on the sustainability of global value chains.

The primary research questions put forward by FI were as follows:

- **Has Fairtrade been a useful tool in assuring the economic sustainability of small farmers growing cane, over the 10 years of certification?**
- **How has Fairtrade certification impacted the image of Mauritius as a sugar producing origin and seller of Fairtrade certified sugar?**

This report answers the above questions, drawing from primary data collected in November–December 2021. The report is outlined as follows. First, the important contextual history of sugar cane and Fairtrade in Mauritius is explored. This is followed by a detailed outline of the methodology used in the study, exploring the comparative approach used between certified and non-certified SPOs. Furthermore, it outlines the research design in detail, which draws on primary quantitative and qualitative data, collected via mixed methods, including key informant interviews, focus groups, and a household and client survey. The results of the data collection, which makes up the main body of the report then ensues. The results have been sub-divided into four thematic question areas, to ensure that the questions posed by FI are answered fully:

Question 1 (Q1): What has been the agricultural, environmental, and economic impact of Fairtrade⁵ on certified producer organisations, the workers, and the wider community?

Question 2 (Q2): What has been the impact of Fairtrade on the institutional governance of certified SPOs and the sugar cane industry in Mauritius?

Question 3 (Q3): What has been the impact of the Fairtrade Premium on the operations and viability of certified SPOs?

Question 4 (Q4): What has been the impact of Fairtrade on the perception of Mauritian cane sugar on the global market and changes to global market access?

⁵ "Implementing Fairtrade" means applying Fairtrade standards, accredited with certification, and probably receiving support rendered by Fairtrade.

The discussion and conclusion make up the final sections of the report, highlighting the key findings from the results and their implications. The study surfaces an extensive range of findings, due to the breadth of question scope, and it demonstrates the wide range of influences that Fairtrade has had on the Mauritius sugar industry to date.

2. Mauritius Fairtrade sugar cane context and background

2.1 Sugar cane in Mauritius

Sugar cane plays a key role in the economic, cultural, and environmental landscape of Mauritius. The Mauritian sugar exports make up 12% of Mauritius's foreign exchange earnings and have been a vital contributor to the success of the country's economic growth (FI,2012; Seetanah et al., 2019). In 2020 Mauritius became one of just a handful of countries to transition to 'high-income economic status according to the World Bank. In line with the country's rise in income, and increased reliance on the tourism and financial sectors, sugar cane has played a progressively smaller role in the national economy. However, at a local level, sugar cane remains a key contributor to rural livelihoods in Mauritius, and it maintains a key contribution to the culture and landscape of the country. For example, approximately 10,000 planters, 23% of whom are women (Jooseery, 2017), still contribute to the sector, producing approximately 50,000MT of sugar per year (MSS, 2022). As with other sugar producing nations, there is a division of proceeds from the sale of sugar, which is split between the planter (78%) and the miller (22%). Planters are also entitled to 100% of the molasses obtained from their canes and are financially remunerated for the bagasse that remains after these canes have been milled. The 10,000 small planters contribute approximately 20 percent of total sugar production, while 20 large planters or corporate farms produce the remaining 200,000MT (80%) (MSS, 2022). **The term 'planter' stems from the colonial plantation terminology, but here refers to any farmer, or grower, supplying sugar cane to local millers. In this respect, the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA) Act 2011 specifically defines a small planter as one who cultivates sugar cane over an area of less than 10 ha (Government of Mauritius, 2011).**

There is a robust institutional core to the Mauritius sugar sector, which heavily influences how SPOs experience the Fairtrade standards and tools. The industry has many institutional structures and initiatives which are aligned with the core purpose and values of Fairtrade. The Mauritian sugar sector, guided according to the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA) Act of 2011, is among the most institutionally robust sugar sectors in Africa and globally (Hess et al., 2016). The cane growers and millers were until recently grouped under the Mauritius Sugar Producers Association (MSPA) with an additional layer of representation for the small planters, mainly through the Mauritius Cooperative Agricultural Federation Ltd (MCAF). In addition to the planters and millers, the Mauritius Sugar

Syndicate (MSS) plays a key role, acting as the sole coordinator of sugar marketing, sales and exports, and distribution of the proceeds accruing from the industry's various revenue streams. The industry is further supported by the Mauritius Cane Industry Authority (MCIA), which aims to promote development of the industry. It is made up of six service providing institutions, including the Mauritius Sugar Cane Industry Research Institute (MSIRI) and the government funded Farmers Services Agency (FSA). The MSIRI and FSA are responsible for sugar cane research, and agronomic support and training services, respectively. The MCIA was designed with the intention to effectively channel resources to ensure the long-term viability of the industry.

Critical to the evolution of the Mauritius sugar industry has been support from the government, in the form of enabling policies and funding (Deepchand, 2019). More recently, the efforts have been to support a shift of focus from 'sugar' to 'sugar cane' products, allowing for alternative uses of the crop, most notably bio-energy production from the sugar cane bagasse. Sugar cane is also important for ethanol production from molasses and Mauritius' power generation, which uses bagasse. Sugar cane bagasse accounts for 14-16% of electricity generated, and over 50% of renewable energy produced locally (To et al., 2018). Furthermore, diversification into rum and cosmetics products has been explored (Cotterill, 2017) and after a quarter century of lobbying efforts from the sugar industry to government, the price received for bagasse was significantly increased, further supporting the economic sustainability of the industry. The Mauritian sugar sector is also unique in its production of a wide variety of speciality products, carving a niche for its products globally, despite contributing only a small fraction of total sugar production. It offers a unique array of 18 different sugar products, including a variety of speciality sugars such as demerara and muscovado (MSS, 2022). The collective diversification efforts by industry stakeholders position the sugar cane sector favourably for its future resilience and sustainability.

2.2 Small producers in the sugar value chain

Of the approximately 10,000 medium and small planters, 6000 are in 145 coops (MSS, 2022). Most Mauritian small sugar cane producers (or planters, as they are known locally) own their land, which ranges, on average, from 0.5 to 3Ha in size (see section 3.2). Approximately three quarters are male, the majority are retired or pensioners, and 96.3% are educated to at least primary or high school level (Ramdharee, 2019). For most small planters, the income from sugar cane is supplementary to other incomes, which include jobs in business or the civil service, or a pension.

11 031 ha of sugar cane land is farmed by planters cultivating on less than 10 ha each. This accounts for about 22% of national production. The small planters of Mauritius have a long history in the sugar industry, demonstrating resilience throughout the numerous challenges within the last several decades. While the prevalence of small planters remains high throughout Mauritius, since 2006, there has been a 44% decrease in their cultivated area under sugar cane, as the number of small planters has effectively halved (Ramdharee, 2019). A lack of alternative land use options for the small scale sugar cane planters has led to widespread abandonment of land, which now sits unutilised and poses an environmental threat to the island due to the increased soil erosion (Gunesh, 2021; Nigel and Rughooputh, 2010).

A range of support measures have been introduced to boost the economic viability of the sugar cane for small planters, and in doing so, counter the decline in small sugar cane producers. MCIAs provide a 'pull-service' style of extension support for SPOs, and through the FSA acts as the key point of contact for small planters. **A longstanding measure in place is the legal requirement of registration with the Sugar Insurance Fund Board (SIFB) for all planters. This index-based fund has been in place since 1946 to support planters in case of events such as cyclones, droughts, or other environmental shocks.** More recent measures include the Government Financial Support for planters producing less than 60 tonnes of sugar, the government fertiliser subsidy scheme (delivered through the MCIAs), and the suspension of the sugar levy 'cess' in response to economic shocks. The Government of Mauritius also has ministerial bodies dedicated to the registering and financial support of small producer cooperatives. Government funding has been further funnelled through irrigation projects located throughout the island, including the Northern Plaine Irrigation Project and Small Planters Regrouping Project (SPRP). Some, but not all small planters have been included within such projects.

Beyond financial support, the small producers themselves set up their own, Fairtrade Farmers' Federation, which has been self-funded and managed since August 2011. It received seed funding from each of the member SPOs and has provided an additional layer of support, as well as a platform for collaboration among the SPOs. The Federation has also proved to be an effective vehicle for representing the interests and needs of the SPOs within Mauritius.

Fairtrade is not the only sustainability focused initiative which small producers in Mauritius have benefited from. A group of SPOs (none of which are Fairtrade certified) have taken part in the Altromercato sustainable development programme (SDP) programme which injected 30M MUR (~\$750,000) over a 5-year period, between 2016-2020 (Ferrero

Group, 2018). Through the SDP 25 non-Fairtrade certified SPOs were supported by the injection of funding accompanied by a suite of 'young professionals' as on the ground support officers.

2.3 The State of the Mauritius Sugar Industry

Despite the variety of institutional support mechanisms in place, the island's annual production of sugar has declined significantly in the past 5-10 years, to less than 300,000 MT (MSS, 2021). The decline has been caused disproportionately by the decline in both small producer and corporate sugar cane area under cane, (Figure 1 and 2) by reduced yields across the sector (Figure 3) and by conversion of land for property development. At the peak of production, sugar cane constituted nearly 80,000 Ha, and almost 50% of the total area of the island's land mass (Deepchand, 2019, 2010). In contrast, by 2021, the area under sugar cane had dropped to about 42,000 Ha, with an annual production of 2,671,709 tons of cane (Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture, 2021). There is estimated to be a decline of 1,000 Ha area under sugar cane per year (Figure 1), with a corresponding annual loss of 7,000-10,000 MT of sugar (SIFB, 2011). It is nonetheless worth underlining that sugar cane, despite large swathes of land moving out of the industry or left fallow, still occupies 25% of the island's total area.

Figure 1: Line graph showing the evolution of Area under Cane from 2010-2021 (MSS, 2022). The area under cane across Mauritius has declined by 1000-2000Ha year on year, reducing it from nearly 58,000 ha in 2010, to approximately 42,000 in 2021.

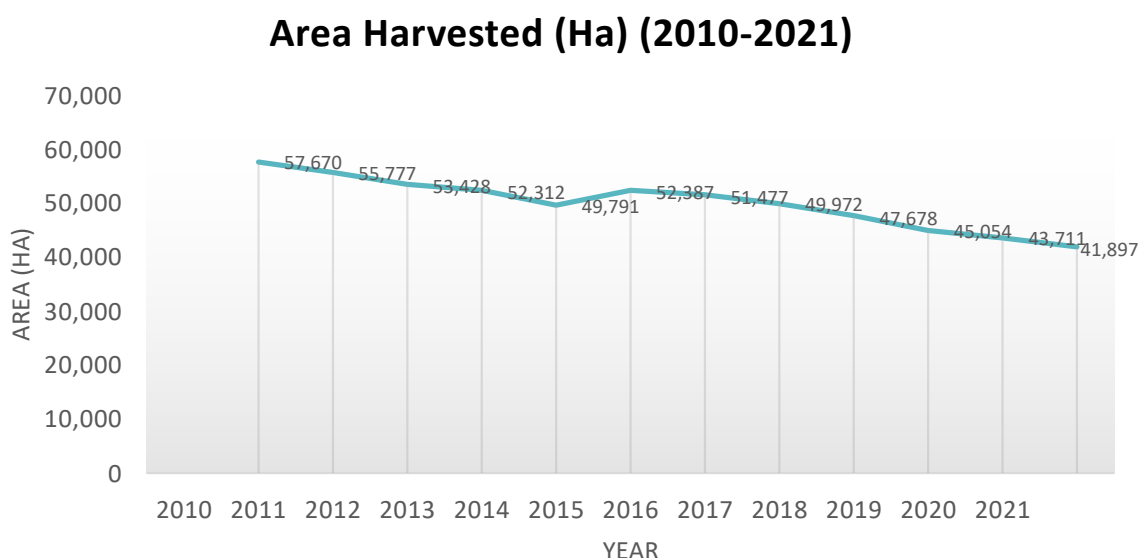


Figure 2: Line graph showing the trend in number of cane-supplying farmers 2008- 2021 (MSS, 2022) The number of cane-supplying farmers has reduced year on year, from nearly 23,000 in 2008 to less than 10,000 in 2021.

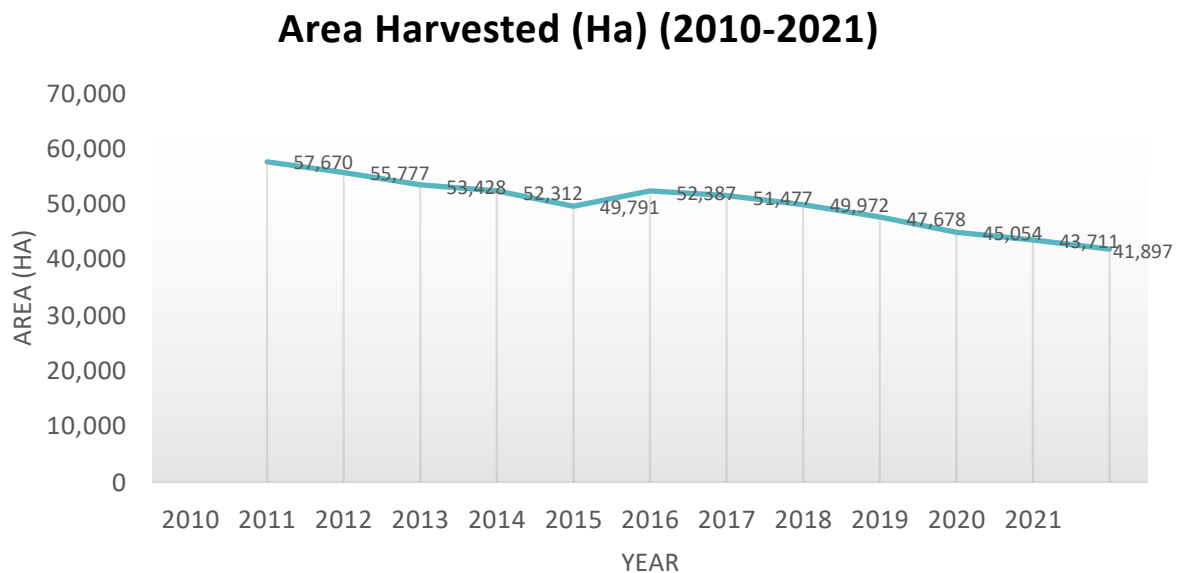
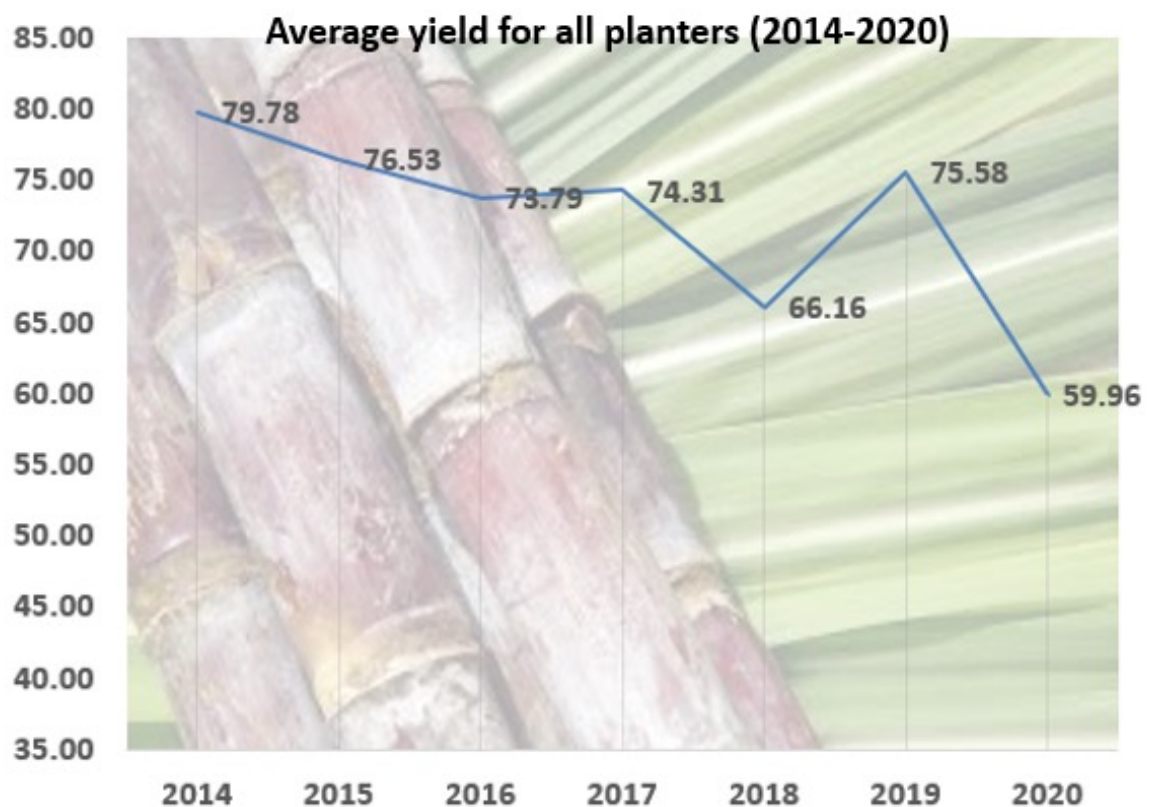


Figure 3: Line graph showing the trend in sugar cane yield for all sugar producers 2014-2020 (source: MSS, 2021). The sugar cane yield shows a declining trend from 2014 to 2020, with greater yield variability between 2018-2020. 2020 was the lowest yielding year on average, at less than 60 TCH, approximately 20 TCH lower than in 2014.



There are a range of challenges facing the industry, which together have led to this decline in both yield and area under cane, particularly among small producers. A primary challenge is the major increase in cost of production. The rise in costs is largely accounted for by the growing cost of labour and critical inputs such as fertiliser and pesticides. The cost of production has been met with problematic price fluctuations. The fluctuations are due to the loss of protection for the export sugar market, forcing Mauritius to compete with sugar sold on the world market, which maintain a much lower cost of production (Deepchand, 2019). In addition to the economic challenges, climate change has led to growing environmental disruptions, which threaten the current systems of farming. For example, changing patterns of rainfall mixed with increasing volatility of both rainfall and temperature have had a direct impact on the ability to farm within the existing harvesting and planting seasons. Finally, an ageing population of planters and workers and lack of interest among youth poses a threat to the succession of small planters. The above challenges together have contributed to the increase in land abandoned by small planters and towards growing questions over the future sustainability of small producers within the sugar industry.

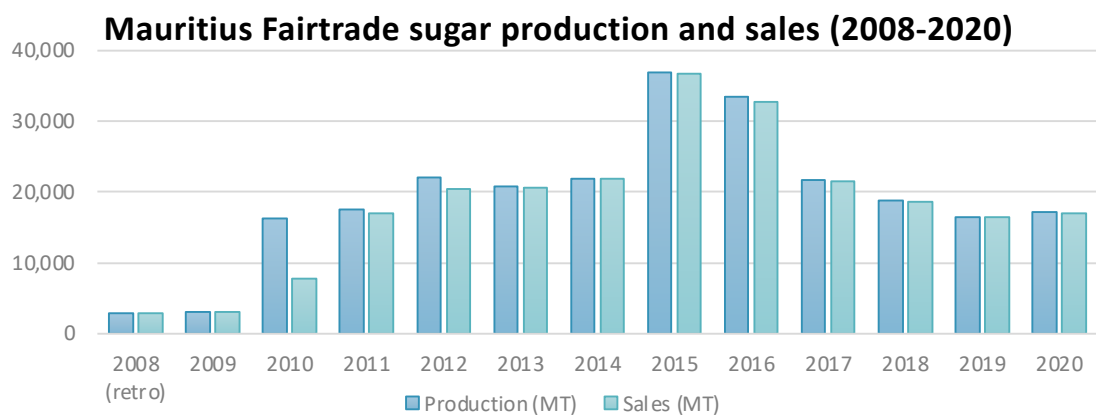
2.4 History of Fairtrade sugar in Mauritius

The first Fairtrade organisations in Mauritius were certified in 2009 (MSS, 2021), with 5 founding member organisations. There were two more phases of certification, with SPOs added in 2011 and 2014-16. Resultingly, in 2015 certified sugar production volumes were at a high of 36,808 MT, with contribution from 38 certified SPOs. However, from 2016 onward, the number of certified SPOs has declined (MSS, 2021). In the 2021/2022 season, there were just 21 Fairtrade certified SPOs in Mauritius with a significantly reduced output of 15,255 MT of sugar. The volume of Fairtrade sugar and membership has declined, in correlation with the major shock in global sugar price in 2016, after which many SPOs were decertified (Figure 4). Indeed, at present, only one of the founding members organisations remains certified. Furthermore, at the time of report publication, among those certified 2 SPOs are currently suspended and awaiting re-evaluation. A further SPO is under application for re-certification, while two SPOs have recently had their applications for re-certification rejected due to not meeting the required standards.

Despite the negative trend in Fairtrade sales to MSS customers, Mauritius has the highest number of SPOs, which are Fairtrade certified of any country globally. This is largely due to the relatively small size of the cooperatives, which elsewhere can represent thousands of growers within one organisation. In the Mauritian context, however, SPOs range from 30 to 300+ members, producing between 90 and 3200 Tonnes of sugar cane per

SPO. Nonetheless, Mauritius collectively has among the highest volume of Fairtrade sugar of all producer nations and has played a critical role in the proliferation of Fairtrade sugar cane. It has also historically been a popular source of sugar for Fairtrade customers on account of the perceived high quality and ease of partnership with the MSS.

Figure 4: Bar graph showing the change in Fairtrade sugar production and sales 2008-2020 (Source: MSS annual report 2020-2021). Fairtrade sugar production in Mauritius was at its highest point in 2015, at 36,808 MT after two periods of major increases in volume in 2008, 2010, and 2015 with the addition of newly certified SPOs. From 2016, the volume of Fairtrade sugar produced and sold has declined, due essentially to decertification of numerous SPOs.



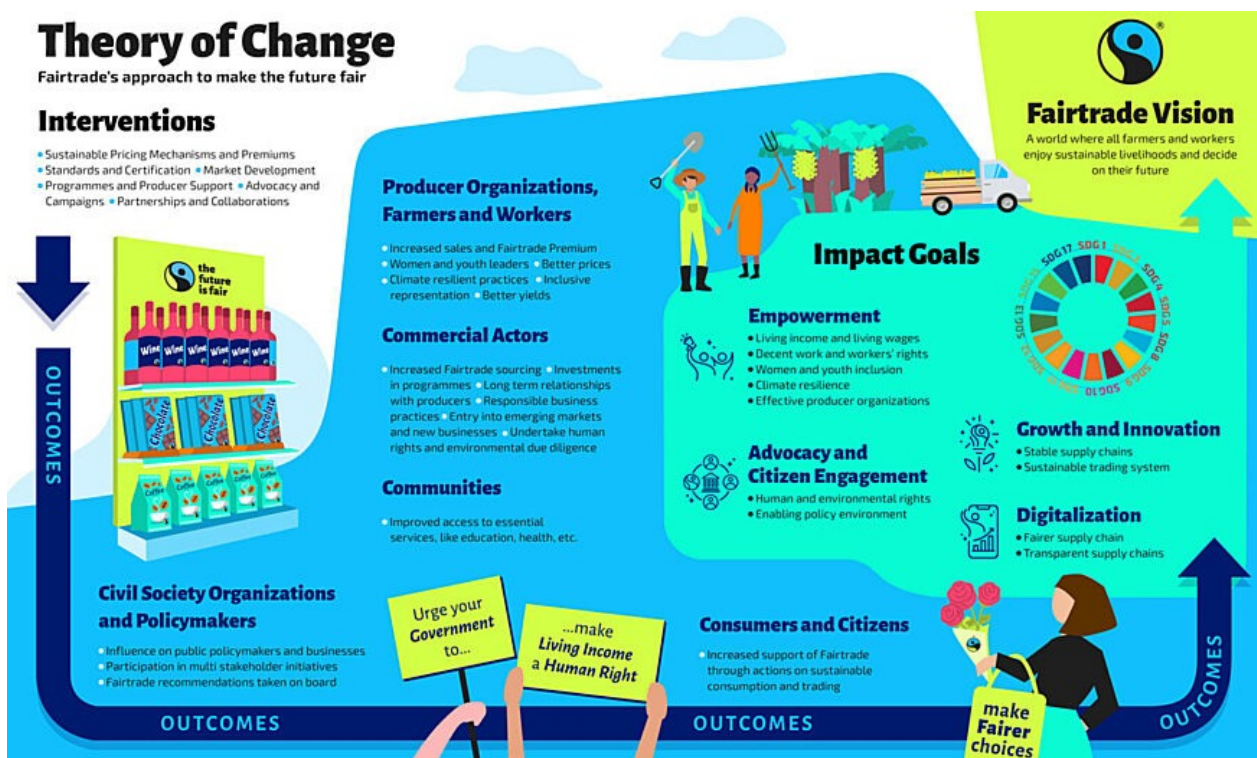
The SPOs are audited according to the Fairtrade standard for cane sugar, version 01.10.2015_v1.2 produced by FI (FI, 2015). While FI sets the global standards for Fairtrade, FLOCERT is the independent certification body which audits / inspects the value chain, including the SPOs. The aim of this institutional separation of responsibility is to promote fairness, transparency, and democracy. However, one observed trend in the auditing process is the volatility of certification seen among SPOs in Mauritius from one year to the next, due to the unusually high rate of decertification. The effects have rippled throughout the value chain, creating uncertainty of supply for customers, and uncertainty of income for the SPOs. The certification challenge highlights that while there are likely many positive impacts from Fairtrade, there may be room for further adaptation to ensure maximum possible benefits are achieved for the SPOs. Based on the contextual information outlined in this section, the study has been designed to measure both the benefits and opportunities for potential improvements to the Fairtrade tool, in the Mauritius sugar sector. The methods applied are explored further in the next section.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study design aligns with the Fairtrade theory of change (ToC) which outlines the core interventions, and the targeted outputs, outcomes, and impacts (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Fairtrade Theory of Change (TOC) introduced in October 2021 (FI, 2021)



The interventions which are assessed in the study are listed below. The impact study's question to which they most directly correspond (as seen on page 8) is indicated next to each intervention.

- The adoption of the Fairtrade standards for cane sugar & SPO standard by SPOs with respect to:
 - Adoption of good agricultural practices (Q1)
 - Adoption of good labour practices (Q1)
 - Adoption of good governance practices within the SPOs and throughout the value chain (Q2)

- The provision of training which accompanies the above standards (Q1 and Q2)
- The use of the Fairtrade Premium by the SPOs (Q3)
- Interventions targeted beyond individual SPOs, through to industry level, to encourage network building and collaborative efforts for innovation and service provision (Q1 and Q4)
- Accreditation and labelling efforts (Q1-4)

The outputs and/or outcomes from the above interventions are measured through a quantitative and qualitative exploration of the resulting upskilling of the SPO members, changes to their agricultural, business, and governance practices within and between the SPOs. At an industry level, the effect of the accreditation and labelling on market access and perception of the Mauritius sugar industry is also explored utilising qualitative methods.

Finally, the broader impacts of the above interventions are explored, with a particular focus of their effects on:

- Economic sustainability of the SPOs
- Environmental sustainability
- Social development

A mixed methodology has been utilised in the study, composed of the following four elements (see also table 1):

- context interviews with key informants (including representatives from the millers, government, all key sugar industry bodies, the Fairtrade Farmers federation, and SPO leaders)
- focus group discussions with planters and other informants (male small planters, female small planters, SPO leadership)
- a client survey to assess the perception and experience of Fairtrade customers (corporations which purchase fairtrade sugar directly from MSS)
- and a household survey targeted towards members of the SPOs (a cross section of small planters)

The full question sets are found in the appendix.

The key informant interviews extend to a wide range of stakeholders who possess first and second-hand experience of the Fairtrade cane sugar and SPO standards in Mauritius. Key informants include representatives from MSS, MSIRI, FSA, the Government of Mauritius,

millers representatives (from Terra, Alteo, and Omnicane), and grower leaders. Collectively the interviews provide a wealth of qualitative data, which provides informed perspectives on the changes to the industry, and the role of Fairtrade in this, as witnessed over the past 10 years.

The focus groups have been designed with a similar purpose to the key informant interviews. The stakeholder groups interviewed include grower leadership (the Federation), male and female farmers (in separate groups), and extension team members from within the FSC. The interviews and focus groups helped to refine the two household surveys used in the study as well as to triangulate findings from the surveys. Both the key informant interviews and focus groups were conducted by the lead researcher, in a mixture of English and French, with translation support from the SPO secretary where necessary.

Table 1: Table showing the details of the four main study components

Study component	Quantity	Participants	Format
Key informant interviews	15	Representatives from the millers, government, all key sugar industry bodies, the Fairtrade Farmers federation, and SPO leaders	Semi-structured interviews: In-person and remote
Client surveys	11	Anonymously surveyed corporations which purchase Fairtrade sugar directly from MSS	Online survey: Multiple choice and open-ended
Focus groups	6	Male small planters, female small planters, SPO leadership	Semi-structure group interview: In person 4-10 individuals per group
Household survey	210	A cross section of small planters from 9 certified, and 5 non-certified SPOs	Multiple choice questions captured using the Agri-Sense data capture application (Agri-Sense, 2022)

The household survey, which provides the core statistical output of the study, utilised a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions, extracting key insights on the perspectives and experience of SPO members. The survey was designed to enable a counterfactual comparison against individuals from non-certified SPOs, which do not benefit from Fairtrade. Therefore, participants from both certified and non-certified SPOs were included, as well as a third category of participants, who have previously

been certified, and which are in the process of applying for recertification. Some survey sections were intended to enable a comparison between the two groups, and therefore were targeted to all participants. Conversely, other sections were designed specifically for either the certified or non-certified participant. The latter sections were constructed to capture the perception and experience associated with Fairtrade interventions. The research team, composed of the lead researcher and five individuals from the University of Mauritius conducted a total 210 valid household surveys. The surveys were mostly conducted in person and in the language of choice of the participant (including French, French Creole, and Bhojpuri) (Image 1). All elements of the study were conducted between November 2021 and January 2022. At the time, the COVID-19 case rates were relatively high, so additional precaution was taken to ensure the health and safety of the team and all participants (see section 3.2 and 3.3 for further details).

Image 1: Participants and research assistant conducting the household survey



The client survey forms the final element of the primary data collection. The client survey was delivered as an online survey, with a mixture of multiple choice and open-ended questions for the MSS customers who purchase Fairtrade sugar. The client survey was designed to capture the perception of Fairtrade customers towards Fairtrade in Mauritius.

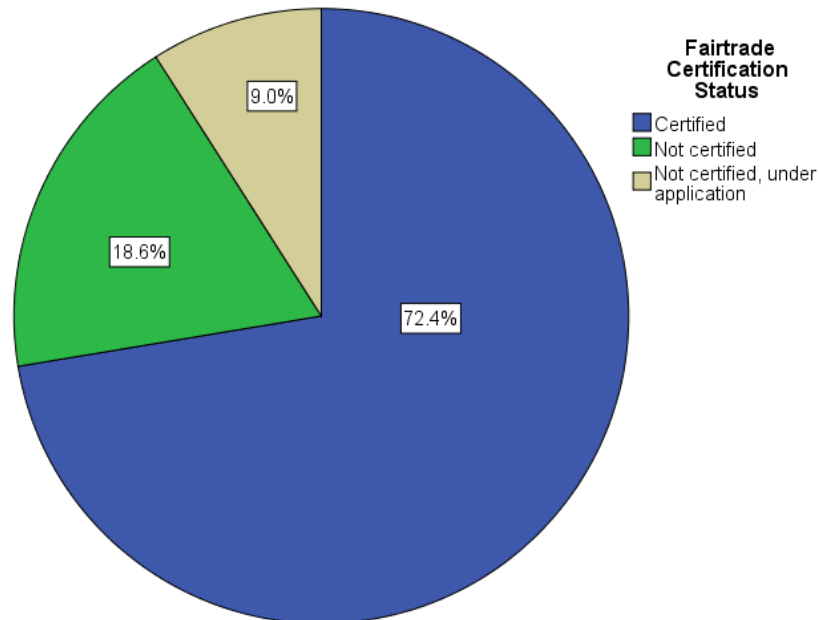
3.2. Sample selection for the household survey

The scope of the study extended to all SPOs throughout Mauritius. Therefore, the data collection was designed to incorporate a representative sample of SPOs from all three cane growing regions (the North, Centre/Centre-East, and South) of the island. The initial design included six certified SPOs, with two organisations from each of the regions, two non-certified SPOs and one or more applicant SPOs. Fairtrade Africa and MSS supported in the initial selection of participating SPOs to ensure all of the geographic regions were represented, as well as to capture the input of SPOs which span a range of sizes, representative of the broader population of SPOs (based on number of members and tonnage of sugar cane). The design stipulated for 25 surveys per SPO, and a total of 200 interviews, but due to the increasing severity of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout Mauritius at the time of data collection, adaptations were required. To attain the required survey volume, the sample selection was expanded to a wider number of SPOs, but with fewer respondents per SPO. Resultingly, a total of 15 SPOs were included in the study, 10 certified, 1 applicant, and 4 non-certified (Table 2).

Table 2: Table showing the household survey sample by SPO

SPO	No. of surveys	Location	Years certified
Certified	TOTAL 152		
Bon Air CCS	4	North	2016-present
Century CCS	21	North	2016-present
L'Escalier CCS	28	South	2011-present
Mont Ida CCS	15	Centre-East	2011-present
Petit Paquet MCS	25	Centre-East	2011-present
Petite Savanne CCS	10	South	2011-2020 and 2021-present
Providence MCS	19	Centre-East	2011-2016 and 2017-present
St.Pierre CCS	21	Centre-East	2011-present
Valton CCS	9	North	2016-present
Applicant	TOTAL 19		
L'Esperance MCS	19	North	2009-2016, 2017-2018 & 2022
Non-certified	TOTAL 39		
L'Amitié CCS	9	North	2009-2018
Bel Air CCS	18	Centre-East	Never certified
Morc St André CCS	8	North	Never certified
Piton CCS	4	North	Never certified

Figure 6: Pie Chart showing the Fairtrade Certification Status of the household survey respondents



The 15 SPOs in the study are distributed throughout the island. The greatest proportion represented (47%) are in the centre and centre-east, where most small planters are concentrated (Figure 7). Resultingly, the highest proportion of respondents deliver to the Alteo mill, (Figure 8) which is also located centrally. Nearly one third (32%) farm sugar cane at higher elevation, and 34% are on gradual or steep sloping land (Figure 9) (Image 2). The planters farm mostly small plots of sugar cane, between 0.5-2.5Ha (Figure 10). Additionally, 76% of respondents have been farming sugar cane for over 20 years, most of whom (84%) have inherited land, while a smaller proportion of the land is either purchased, leased, or rented (Figure 11). The variety of different farming conditions included, ensure that the study captures the full range of experience from small planters. The respondents themselves are also representative of the full demographic of small planters throughout Mauritius. Of the respondents 15% are female and 91% have completed education to at least primary level, with most (67%) having also completed secondary or higher. Of those surveyed 63% are over 60 years old, and a further 35% are between 36-60, with just 2% 35 or younger. A vast majority (72%) consider sugar cane farming as a core, though not sole, source of income for the household, which sits at an average size of 4 people. Among these figures, there is also no significant difference between the certified and non-certified sample, ensuring that other control factors have been kept as similar as possible for the comparison to be valid.

Image 2: Sloping sugar cane fields at Valton CCS



Figure 7: Pie chart showing the regional distribution of household survey respondents

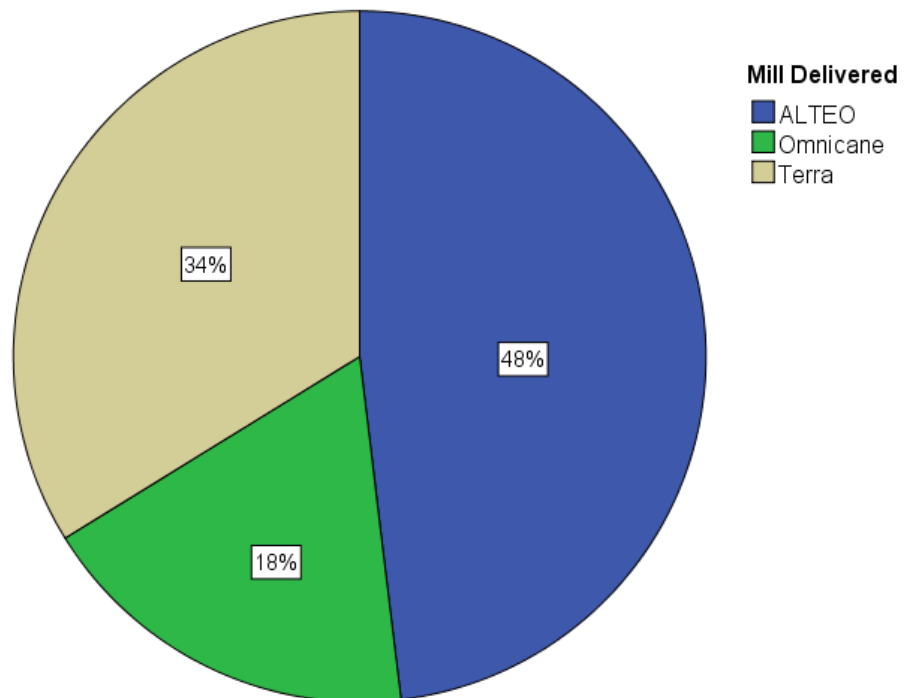


Figure 8: Pie chart showing the primary delivery mill of household survey respondents

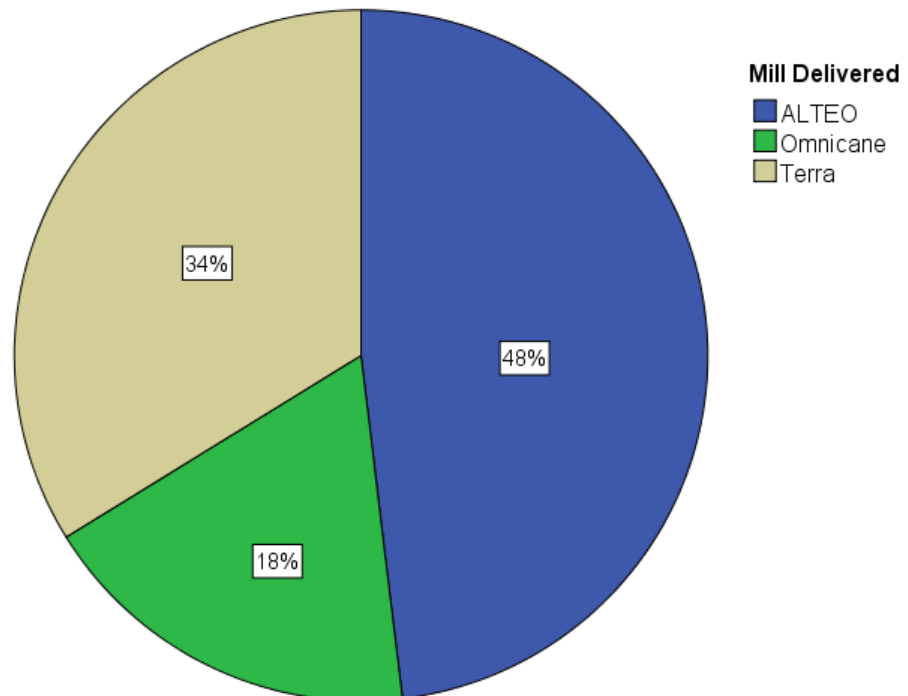


Figure 9: Pie chart showing the land gradient distribution of household survey respondents

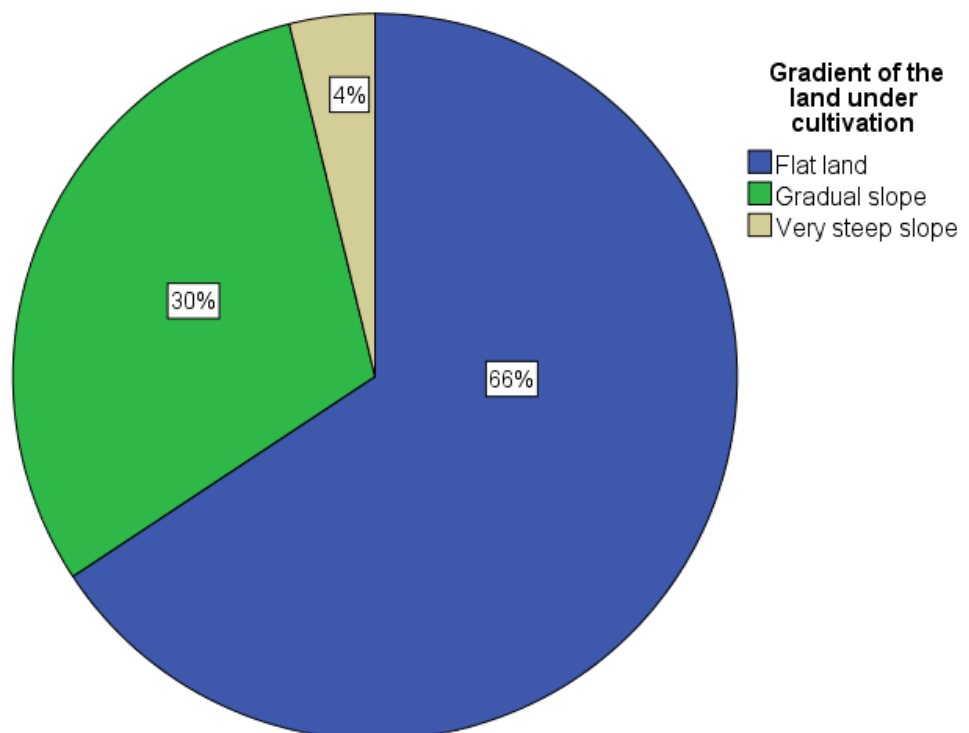


Figure 10: Box plot showing the area under cane (in Hectares Ha) for certified and non-certified small planters. The box plots show that there is no significant difference between the size of area under sugar cane among the certified and non-certified small planters. The mean average area under cane is 1.58Ha and 1.82Ha and the median sits at 0.82Ha and 1.03Ha respectively.

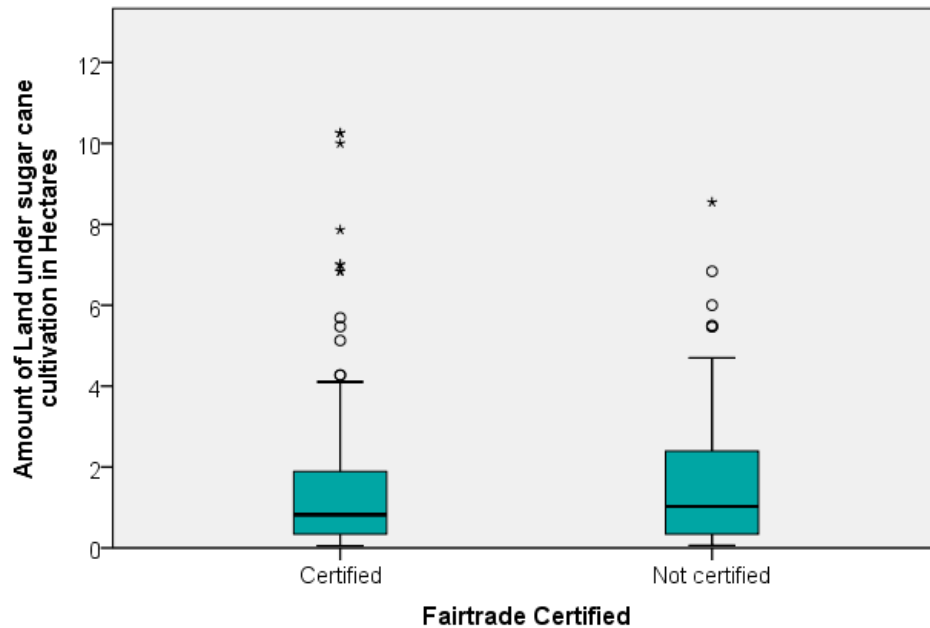
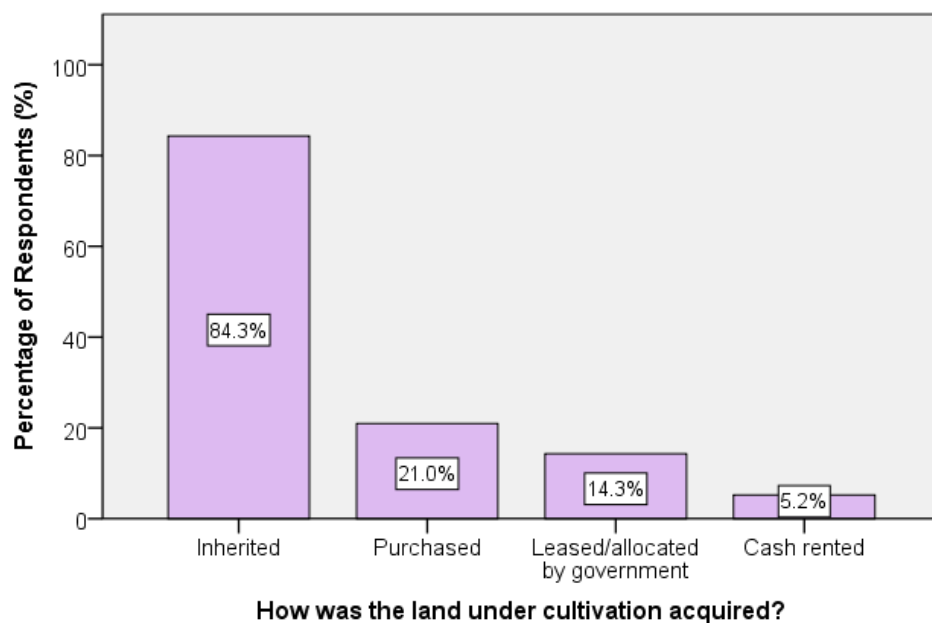


Figure 11: Bar graph showing the mode of acquisition of land under sugar cane cultivation by survey respondents (certified and non-certified). 84% have at least some land which is inherited and 21% have purchased at least a portion of their land. Less (14%) have leased land from the government and only a small amount (5%) have some land which they cash rent.



3.3. Limitations and adaptations

The impact of Fairtrade has been assessed through comparing Fairtrade certified planters with non-Fairtrade certified planters. While this was the best method available given the circumstances, if a baseline study would have been available, a longitudinal analysis would have been the ideal addition to strengthen the study further. In addition to direct comparisons of household data, the study draws on the subjective perception of participants, pertaining to their experience of Fairtrade and how this has influenced their farm business, the SPO, and their livelihood as a result. The study compared the subjective view of participants' experience of sugar cane farming before and after Fairtrade certification. In practice, the timeframe spans greater than 10 years for many SPOs. With no baseline, there is therefore room for error in both perceptions, and the comparisons made with the group of non-certified SPO respondents. To minimise error through this approach, it was stressed to all participants that full honesty was encouraged, highlighting the anonymity of their response, and 'non-audit' nature of the study, with an emphasis on ensuring that the participants feel safe and at ease. The inclusion of key informants who have been working in the industry for upwards of 20 years also helps to contextualise the findings.

There is also the potential of strong interactions and interdependence between mutual causal processes, which cannot be easily disaggregated from one-another. For example, the Fairtrade tools, and those which exist within the industry have strong alignment in their goals. For example, many of the practices promoted through the Fairtrade standards are similarly encouraged by the local extension team. Therefore, there are limitations to the applicability of this reports findings to other Fairtrade sugar producing regions, particularly those with poorer institutional support.

Finally, the study was conducted during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic created additional challenges for the data collection process. Hence, the surveys were conducted in line with international COVID-19 safety protocol and many of the key informant interviews were conducted remotely, via Zoom calls. Due to the limited availability of participants at each SPO, the research design was expanded to include an increased number of SPOs, both certified and non-certified, in the study.

Ultimately, despite operating in the context of COVID-19, the inclusion of a greater number of SPOs in the survey, the use of a wide range of key informants and focus groups, enabled a robust and immersive engagement of the research team with SPOs and stakeholders in the sugar industry. Therefore, while the inevitable limitations remain, the methodology used has enabled the report to capture an authentic picture of the influence of Fairtrade on the Mauritius sugar sector.

4. Research findings

This section explores the findings from the primary data collection. The findings from each of the different methodologies are compartmentalised thematically according to the four sub-questions posed in the introduction and cover the following four areas. First, the agricultural, environmental, and economic impact of Fairtrade at the level of the SPO community are explored. Second, the report shifts to the implications of Fairtrade for governance within the SPOs and throughout the value chain. Third, the impact of the Fairtrade Premium on SPOs and their surrounding community. Fourth, the impact of Fairtrade certification on the perception of Mauritian sugar cane products, by corporations who purchase Fairtrade sugar from MSS, and their own customers.

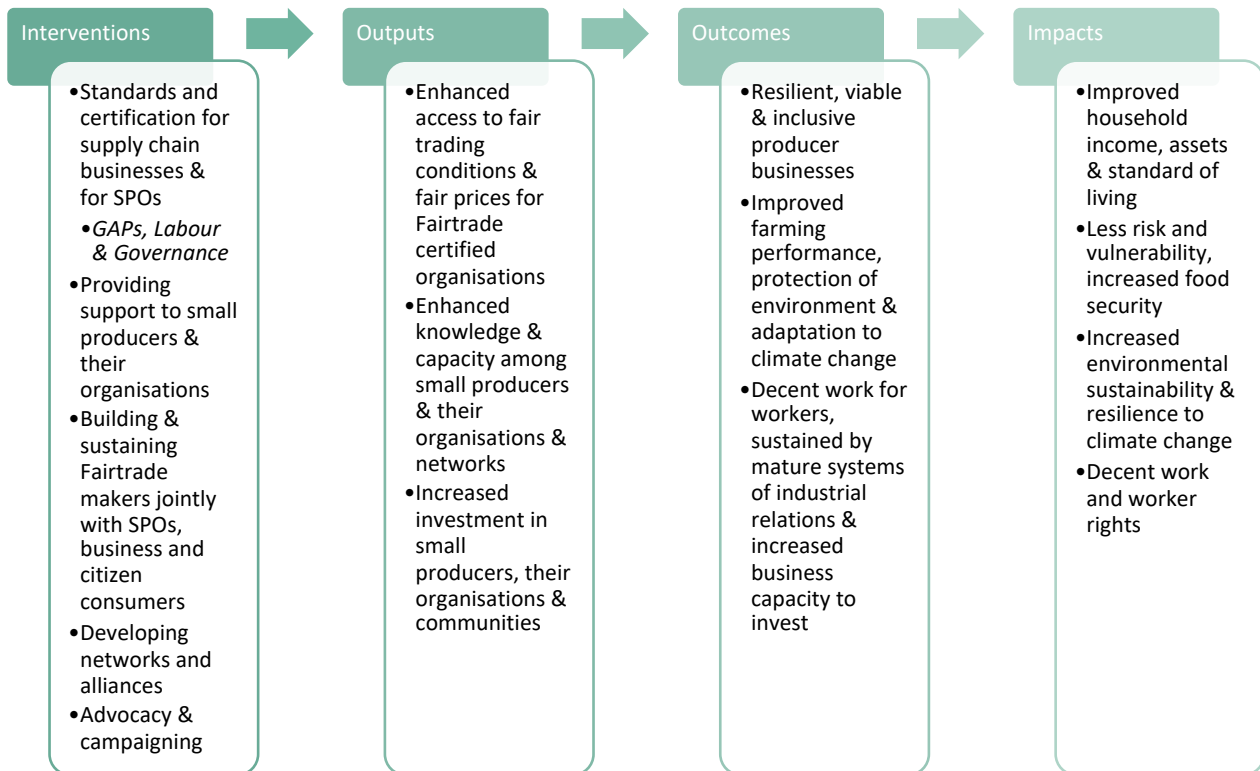
4.1 The agricultural, environmental, and economic impact of Fairtrade on certified producer organisations and the farm labourers

4.1.1 Agricultural and environmental impacts of Fairtrade

The study demonstrates that Fairtrade interventions have led to positive agricultural and environmental outputs and outcomes. The combined influence of the Fairtrade standards, technical trainings, and Premium usage has enabled positive agriculture and environmental behaviour change across the certified Mauritian SPOs.

Furthermore, the behaviour change, and corresponding adoption of better farming practices has contributed toward positive impacts such as the improved environmental wellbeing of the surrounding ecosystem, and an increased satisfaction with sugar cane yields among certified SPO members. To capture the effects of Fairtrade on the agricultural, environmental, and economic facets of sugar cane farming, evidence in this section has been collated according to the logical sequence of events. It starts with a section on the evidence for the successful implementation of interventions and their direct outputs and is followed by a section on the subsequent relevant outcomes and impacts, which are outlined in Fairtrade's current and past ToC (summarised in figure 12).

Figure 12: Diagram of the relevant elements of the Fairtrade ToC for agricultural, environmental, and economic impact of Fairtrade

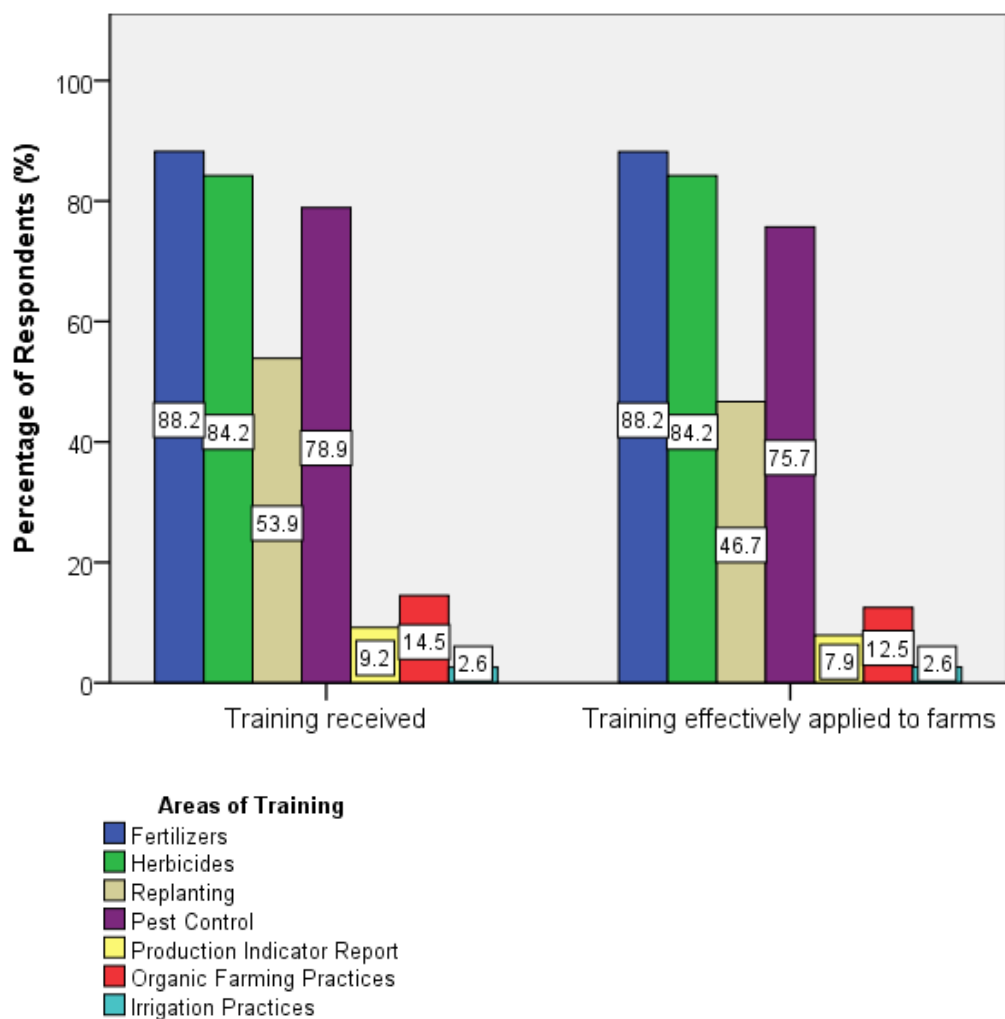


Agriculture and environment training OUTPUTS: knowledge and understanding

Fairtrade targets the adoption of good agricultural practices (GAPs) through the Fairtrade standards, and trainings, which aim to enhance the awareness and understanding of the standards among small planters. To this end, training interventions have been successfully implemented across the certified SPOs. Nearly all (96%) of certified producers have received training on production and environmental practices, with the greatest focus on appropriate (i.e., more targeted and reduced) use of fertilisers, herbicides, and pest control practices (Figure 13). The trainings were conducted primarily by members of cooperative leadership (who have themselves been trained by Fairtrade or MCI) and/or a Fairtrade agent. To a lesser degree, the trainings have been supported by other consultants and the local MCI extension team. In addition to the formal training sessions provided by FTA, small producers also receive information on the Fairtrade standards via one-to-one interactions with other SPO members, through the annual general meeting (AGM), and less frequently by direct engagement with the FSA extension officer.

Figure 13: Bar graph to show the percentage of certified small planter respondents, which have received agricultural trainings in key areas stipulated by Fairtrade, and the percentage which report having applied their new knowledge within their sugar cane enterprises.

For example, the figure shows that 79-89% of certified small planters interviewed have received training on fertilisers, herbicides, and pest control. Close to 100% of the respondents that have received these trainings also report having implemented them effective.



For example, over 80% of certified respondents report an understanding of integrated pest management, efficient fertiliser practices, appropriate use of PPE, and awareness of the use of safe handling of hazardous chemicals. For instance, one small planter remarked that, ***“The Fairtrade trainings on the standards have helped members of my SPO to know which good [agricultural] practices we should be using on our farms and why. We are more aware that it is important to use less chemical fertiliser, and fertiliser that is more environmentally friendly for our soils!”***

KEY INSIGHT BOX 1

Increased environmental awareness and adoption of GAPs

As a result of the trainings on the Fairtrade standards, certified planters also show an understanding of the link between their farm practices and their resulting environmental impacts. The appointment of an 'environmental representative' within every certified SPO has also helped to drive a shift in awareness and sense of pride in the land, which they are stewards of (Image 3). The raised awareness has led to a greater sense of responsibility for the landscape within which they farm, which in turn, has aided the positive behaviour change process. Furthermore, the trainings, which were targeted towards small planters, workers, and other community members, have enabled an increased awareness of broader climate change challenges and the associated risks to their businesses and livelihoods.

The interviews highlighted that a community wide climate change awareness has created a sense of accountability and has further encouraged GAPs such as halting the use of chemicals on protected areas, or near to waterways. A Carbon and Water footprint assessment, funded by Fairtrade International and conducted in 2019, has also been reported to improve the understanding that SPOs face as a result of climate change in those which were part of the study. However, among the SPOs which were not part of the study, there remains limited awareness of the project or its output.

Image 3: Trainings underway at Century CCS by the environmental representative, Noruttun Sardanan.



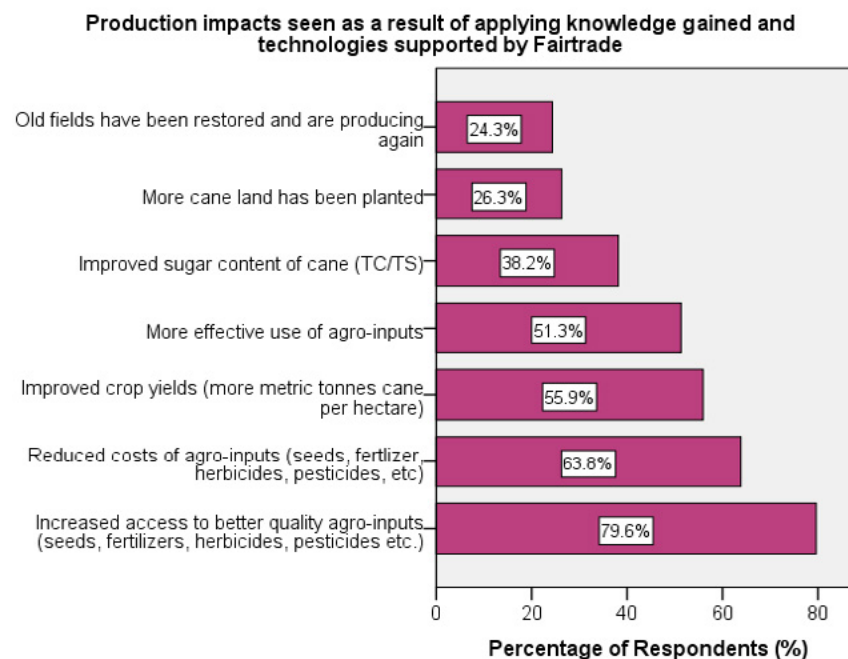
Fairtrade also targets adoption of GAPs through supporting SPO led interventions which help small planters overcome barriers to implementation. Successful initiatives include centralised purchase and distribution of resources to members, formal links to local chemical suppliers, and/or subsidisation or advanced provision of resources, which are only repaid when planters have sufficient cash flow. SPOs allocate a portion of the Fairtrade Premium funds towards such resources, which account for a varying proportion of their total cost. The remainder of the cost is covered by a combination of government subsidy (which has been provided from 2018 onward), additional external funding, and from the planter's own capital. The initiatives provide planters with timely access to resources such as fertilisers and herbicides, enabling them to improve the timings of their operations. Additionally, effective environmental initiatives which have been implemented include the organisation of specific disposal points for planters to deliver their empty chemical containers, and additional financial incentives to do so. Furthermore, the regular audits have provided an additional layer of incentives for the behaviour change. The governance skills and financial resources required for the successful implementation of these initiatives are discussed further in section 4.2 and 4.3 respectively.

Agriculture and environment OUTCOMES: Adoption of GAPs

Small producers have demonstrated application of their knowledge from the Fairtrade related trainings. The most widespread adoption of GAPs is seen in better use of fertilisers, herbicides, and pest control measures (Figure 13). A clear trend associated with these practices

across the island is widespread improvements in the timing of critical farming activities because of both improved knowledge, and timelier access to the resources. Indeed, certified planters report increased access to better quality agro-inputs (80%) and 51% report more effective usage of inputs (Figure 14). Furthermore, widespread use of PPE (particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic) is reported, a trend seen among both certified and non-certified planters.

Figure 14: Bar graph showing the proportion of certified small planters which report positive production impacts as a result of applying knowledge or technologies gained specifically by Fairtrade support and/or training. Increased access to, and reduced cost of better quality agro-inputs, and increased crop yields, are the most reported beneficial production impacts.



KEY INSIGHT BOX 2

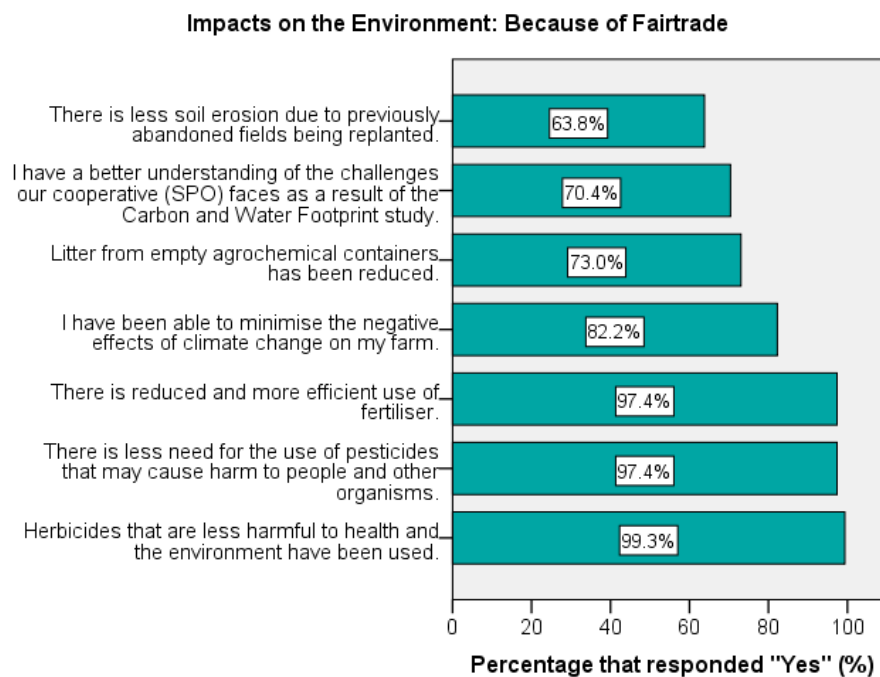
Adoption of better environmental practices

Adoption of better environmental practices extend to a broad range of activities. In addition to cleaner fields, practices reported include the use of trash blankets post-harvest, and the respect of buffer zones along water ways, which are kept free of chemicals. Furthermore, they have adopted biological methods to enhance biodiversity and manage risks, such as the planting of coconut trees for wind protection (Image 4).

Most certified planters report that because of Fairtrade litter from empty agrochemical containers has been reduced (73%), that there is reduced and more efficient use of fertiliser (97%), and that less harmful chemicals are being used (99%) for both human and environmental health (Figure 15). Qualitative findings back this up, with certified small planters emphasising that aligning to the Fairtrade standard has meant that they use more environmentally friendly fertilisers and are more aware of the best practices to ensure minimal run-off. They have also implemented activities which support reduced use of herbicide, such as trash blankets and manual weeding. Furthermore, certified small planters feel more able to adapt to the changing timing of rainfall patterns due to climate change. Their ability to adapt stems from greater awareness for need to align their operations with rainfall patterns, which they attribute to Fairtrade trainings, and the increased availability of fertilisers and other resources.

Environmentally, there has been a shift towards adoption of better waste management practices, leading to more widely visible 'clean fields'. Indeed, the qualitative interviews highlighted that it is widely recognised among SPO members and others within the industry, that Fairtrade has influenced the shift across the industry towards both cleaner fields and better environmental practices. A certified SPO member shared that, **"Our countryside looks much cleaner than it used to, with local farmers now understanding what should be done with waste chemical containers thanks to both the trainings and incentives for better disposal practices. There is also a greater sense of pride in our fields now."** This helps to demonstrate the shift in both practices and cultural outlook towards the environmental upkeep of their farms.

Figure 15: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive positive environmental impacts specifically because of Fairtrade interventions. For example, 99% of respondents perceive that because of Fairtrade, herbicides that are less harmful to health and the environment have been used.



While many of the reported positive changes align to existing GAPs proposed by the MCIA and therefore cannot be explained by Fairtrade interventions alone, a common observation among industry stakeholders is that while the Fairtrade standards are in many respects similar to those within the sugar sector in Mauritius, their positive interaction with existing institutional mechanisms has driven the increased adoption of specific good practices, which without Fairtrade would have been adopted much slower across the community of small planters. As highlighted by MCIA representatives interviewed, ***“the presence of Fairtrade has sped up the process of adoption of the already good standards set out by the Mauritius sugar industry”***. The qualitative insights from non-certified SPOs further support this observation. Stakeholders perceive that non-certified communities are not implementing good agricultural and environmental practices anywhere close to the rate of certified SPOs. This is due to lack of resources, finances, and the knowledge to enable widespread adoption of changing environmental standards.

Localised GAP adoption

On a more granular level, the specific GAPs adopted vary from one SPO to the next. The more isolated uptake of some GAPs is due to a combination of knowledge, local applicability, and funding or resources available. Examples include adoption of bio-fertilisers and bio-herbicides, and the reduction in chemical usage. Contour planting in sloping areas is also reported to a small degree, along with other beneficial environmental practices such as planting of muguet and vetiver grass at crop boundaries, and inter-cropping with leguminous crops before replant.

The GAPs with more limited uptake appear to have greater barriers to adoption. They require more resources, coordination, or effort to implement. Hence, only some SPO boards have the combined capacity to achieve the desired behavioural shifts in agronomic and business practices among their members. Indeed, the SPO boards which collectively have more agricultural experience, business acumen, and proactive approach to their leadership roles are consistently delivering greater behavioural shifts among members. Successful SPO boards also tend to have a large membership base which provides them with larger Fairtrade Premium funds compared to smaller SPOs. This allows them to fund key activities. However, larger SPOs do not only have more Fairtrade Premium funds but can also leverage their size and skills to attract further funding. **For example, where funding remains a barrier, such as with the purchase of bio-fertilisers, one SPO, Century CCS, was proactive in sourcing additional external funding on top of the Fairtrade Premium to help members cover the cost (Image 5). This demonstrates how when combined with Fairtrade resources, larger, better resourced, and better connected SPOs, can really maximise their support provision to members and impact across the community.** Barriers for the smaller or less well informed SPOs, include the lack of awareness or access to additional support mechanisms in the industry, including government loan facilities.

Image 4: L'Esperance MCS farmer's coconut trees planted for wind protection



Image 5: Members receiving bio-fertiliser and bio-herbicide at Century CCS



Certain other practices encouraged by Fairtrade are yet to be implemented by the SPOs. Organic farming practices are one example of this (Figure 13). However, this does not necessarily indicate a lack of interest in the practices. For example, when probed about organic farming, the appetite for related projects is apparent, but the perception among the small planters is that such a project would need to be led and supported by other industry stakeholders for adoption of these practices to occur.

Agriculture and environment IMPACTS: Productivity, yield, and environmental shifts

Numerous indicators suggest that Fairtrade has positively impacted agriculture and the local environment of the certified SPOs. For example, certified SPO members report improved yield, income, and climate resilience relative to non-certified SPOs. While income and resilience are ultimately impacted by a complex set of interacting factors, the results show that there is positive correlation to the presence of Fairtrade.

KEY INSIGHT BOX 3

Yield improvements due to Fairtrade standards

Positive effects can be seen for small planter yields, which provide the primary link between agricultural practices and improved income. For example, 72% of certified planters reported that they are at least somewhat satisfied with their yields, as opposed to just 41% of non-certified planters. **Additionally, 22% of certified small producers reported yield increases in the past 3 years. This is statistically significantly higher than non-certified planters, of which only 2% reported a yield increase. 56% of the certified SPO members reported improved crop yields due to implementing Fairtrade practices, (Figure 16) and 38% have experienced improved sugar content of their cane over the full period of them being Fairtrade certified. Together, these results suggest significant positive agricultural impacts for many individuals within the certified SPOs.**

The small planters attribute a large part of the instances of yield improvements to Fairtrade.

For example, they frequently cite the Fairtrade Premium and trainings as key to yield increases, and the subsequent improvement in inputs and knowledge of good field management practices resulting from the Premium and trainings respectively (Table 3). Fairtrade activities align to and support the work of other industry stakeholders, providing a complementary role to the existing services available to support yield improvement in the industry.

Figure 16: Bar graph showing the percentage of small planters which reported different trends in yield in the last three years for both certified and non-certified SPOs. *The difference between certified and not certified SPOs is highly significant ($P < 0.01$). Certified planters more likely to report both yield increases than the non-certified small planters.*

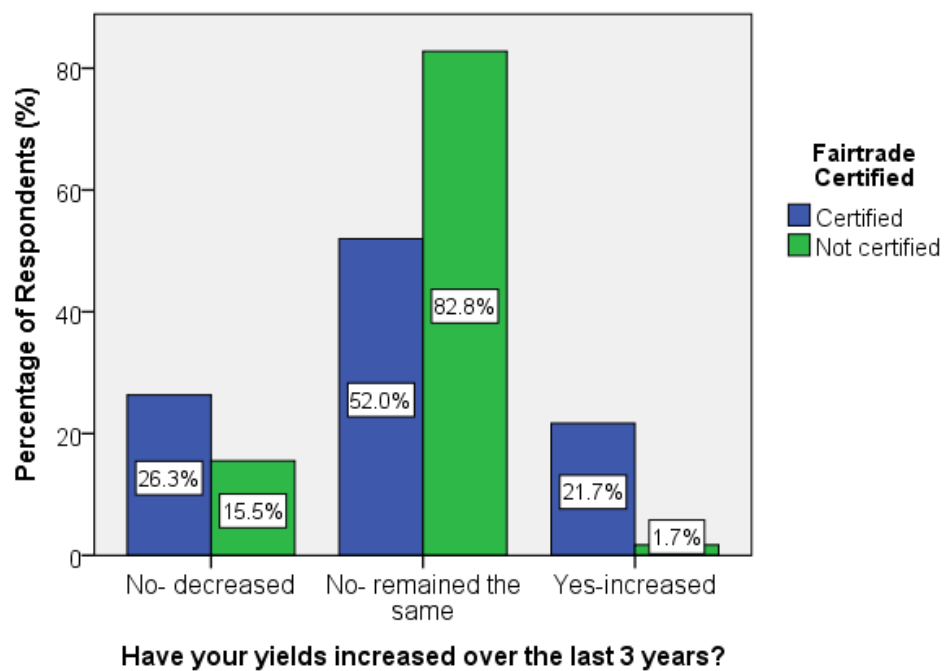
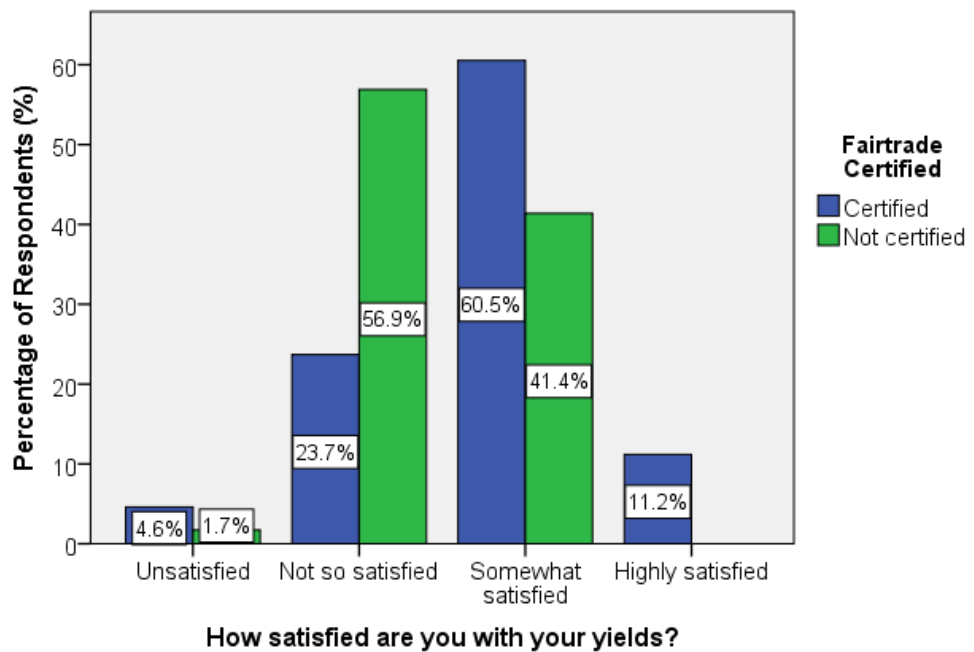


Figure 17: Bar graph showing the percentage of small planters which reported different levels of yield satisfaction for both certified and non-certified SPOs. The difference between certified and not certified SPOs is highly significant ($P < 0.01$). Certified SPOs reported a higher level of satisfaction with yields than non-certified SPOs.



However, the yield improvements are not reported by all certified SPO members (Figure 16), which suggests that the beneficial effects of Fairtrade on agricultural practices either do not extend to all members, or that the effects are insufficient to overcome other negative production factors experienced by the planters. Indeed, all small planters reported facing external shocks, which has resulted in declining yields across the sector in the last decade (Figure 3). Table 3 highlights some of the key factors which planters perceive to have impacted their yields. Fairtrade is repeatedly reported as a key contributor, but changes to rainfall patterns, droughts, labour shortages, and major spikes in input prices have outweighed the benefits of Fairtrade for some. This suggests the need for greater efforts across the industry to support small planters overcome the environmental and economic shocks.

Table 3: Common reasons for yield changes in the past 3 years among certified and non-certified small planters (2018-2021)

Reason for positive yield changes	Reason for negative yield changes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fairtrade Premium 2. Government subsidies 3. Fairtrade training 4. Better inputs 5. Favorable climate conditions (good rainfall) 6. New cane varieties 7. More effort placed on field management 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pests/shortage of pesticides 2. Climate change – Floods, drought 3. COVID-19 pandemic – less attention to fields 4. Low soil fertility 5. Losses to accidental fires (Green cane harvesting is the norm in Mauritius) 6. Shortage of labour 7. Irrigation issues 8. Increased cost of inputs

KEY INSIGHT BOX 4

Greater environmental resilience

There are positive environmental impacts in the form of a perceived increase in both environmental sustainability and climate resilience among the certified SPOs. Over 80% of certified planters say that Fairtrade has enabled them to minimise the effects of climate change on their farms to some degree, 24% report that old fields have been restored and are producing again, and 65% report observing less soil erosion because of this (Figure 15). Certified planters are, however, still some way from building the necessary climate resilience to be able to overcome the added challenges that to farming sugar cane in Mauritius. For example, in the past 3 years, 75% of planters have been negatively affected by drought, and 27% by floods. Additionally, 81% report being affected by higher temperatures, and changes in rainfall patterns, which have affected 54% of planters, have also pushed the optimal timing of planting and harvesting out of sync with the harvest season in Mauritius (Figure 18). This has had a negative impact on the yields of both certified and non-certified planters (Figure 13 and Table 3).

Saying this, the survey showed that certified producers are significantly more likely to have thought ahead and consider implementing strategies to adapt to climate change. They are also significantly more optimistic regarding their ability to overcome future challenges as a result of climate change. For example, while certified small planters are just as likely to have experienced negative changes in their local climate (Figure 18) and an increase in environmental shocks such as droughts, certified planters are significantly less likely to report environmental factors as a reason they may stop growing sugar cane in the next five years (20%) relative to non-certified small planters (38%) (Figure 19). Certified small planters also show greater optimism regarding their ability to overcome environmental factors such as changing patterns of rainfall or drought, than the non-certified planters. This optimism is linked to a generally more positive outlook towards sugar cane farming among certified small planters.

Figure 18: Bar graph showing the percentage of small planters which have experienced specific environmental changes for both certified and non-certified small planters. There is no significant difference in findings between certified and non-certified small planters.

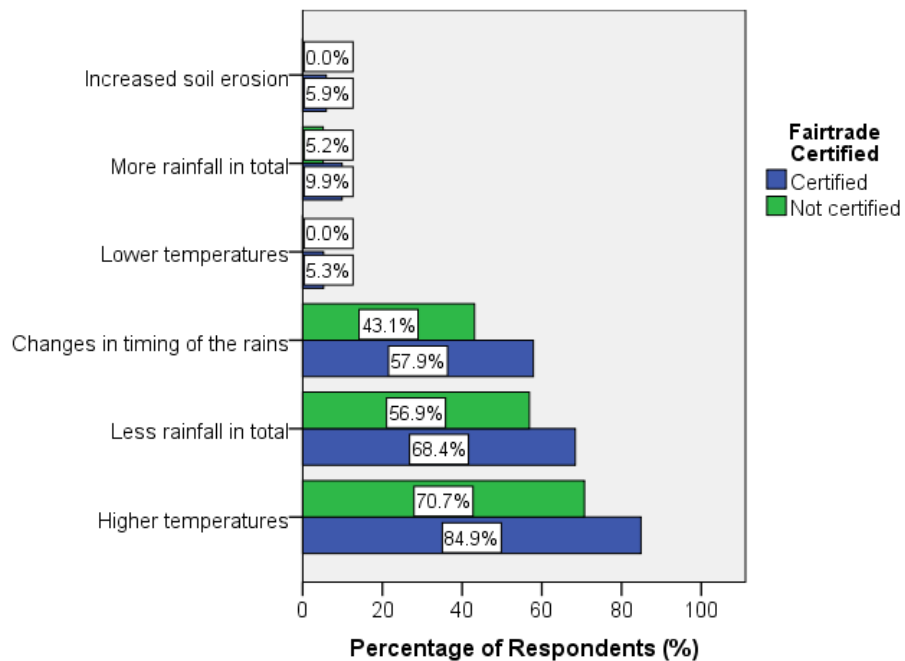
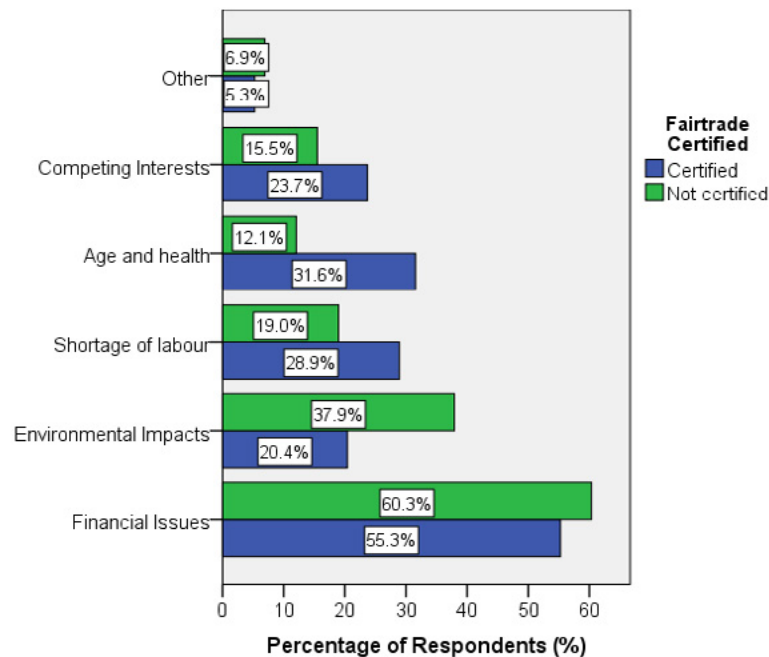


Figure 19: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified and non-certified small planters small which cite specific reasons for that may influence them to not grow sugar cane in the next 5 years. Non-certified small planters are highly significantly more likely to perceive environmental factors as a reason to stop growing sugar cane, despite both groups experiencing similar climate related challenges.



4.1.2 Economic impacts

Sugar cane farming viability: OUTPUTS and OUTCOMES

The study suggests that Fairtrade has positively influenced the economic outcomes for many members of the certified SPOs. Economic relief is achieved primarily through the direct injection of funds from the Fairtrade Premium of \$60 per ton of sugar sold, or in the region of \$200-\$1000 per small planter per year, and through increased farming yield productivity and efficiencies due to adoption of GAPs. Section 4.1.1 demonstrated that the Fairtrade trainings and standards influence the adoption of the GAPs among certified small planters. Practices which are repeatedly reported to positively impact the overall income planters receive from sugar cane farming include reduced and more targeted use of fertilisers and other chemicals, and optimal timing of operations, such as chemical application and weeding (Figure 14). It also highlighted that the Premium has been leveraged to subsidise inputs, increasing their accessibility and affordability. Indeed, for planters

with between 0.5-2.5Ha of sugar cane, at a yield of 7 tons of sucrose per hectare (TSH) the Premium of \$60/ton of sugar translates to an additional income of approximately 10,000-40,000 MUR per planter per annum (\$200-\$1000), at an exchange rate of 43 MUR to the dollar (taken from the rate in December 2021). Each SPO allocates the Premium funds differently, but the SPO members receive a direct Fairtrade subsidy to spend on their farming operations of between 75-200 MUR (\$2-5) per ton of sugar cane, and a significant portion of the remaining Premium fund directly supports the economic outcomes indirectly through subsidised purchase of resources or activities.

Sugar cane farming viability: IMPACTS

KEY INSIGHT BOX 5

Critical role of the Fairtrade Premium as a 'lifeline' for small planters and the sustainability of the industry

The Premium has enabled small planters to keep farming sugar cane, and in doing so, has supported the ongoing supply of sugar in otherwise unsustainable market conditions. Indeed, all certified planters stressed that the Fairtrade Premium has been instrumental in enabling them to continue farming sugar cane. The Premium has served as a lifeline for many, particularly after the major EU sugar price decrease of 36% from 2006-2009, and again after the removal of sugar quotas in the EU in 2017 (Deepchand, 2019). A sense of limited financial support from elsewhere was felt at the time, which meant that the Premium became a critical safety net to keep the income at or slightly above the cost of production for many small producers, particularly where financial support from other sources remained limited. Therefore, rather than providing additional income for further improvements, from 2016 onwards, it played a critical role in simply enabling many planters to continue growing sugar cane. Indeed, the interviews highlighted that the rate of land abandonment is lower among Fairtrade certified SPOs relative to non-certified SPOs. It is further supported by the finding that the area under cane has increased for most certified SPOs in the study, contrasting with the industry trend.

While Fairtrade has enabled many small planters to stay in sugar cane production, the extent of the economic impacts of Fairtrade varies both within and between different certified SPOs. As with yield changes, while certified planters are significantly more likely to report that their sugar cane income increased (24%) than non-certified planters (<2%) in the past three years, many certified small planters still report stagnant or declining income (Figure 20). Indeed, the major economic shocks in recent years have meant that both certified and non-certified small planters who wish to remain in sugar cane still face threats to their economic viability, with question marks over their future ability to keep farming. For example, in the past 3 years, over 80% have been impacted in some way by negative shifts in environmental conditions, primarily through increased prevalence of drought and changes to timing of rainfall (Figure 18). Further, the continued rise of input costs is among the most cited factors for concern, particularly with spikes in fertiliser costs in the 2021 season, as well as increased cost of labour and haulage.

In the longer term, however, the majority of certified small planters perceive Fairtrade to have enabled forms of poverty reduction and economic relief (Figure 21). More than 80% of certified small planters report that their household income has increased due to both the Premium 'top-up' and improved production practices, which has then helped them to pay household bills, among conferring other livelihood benefits (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified and non-certified small planters who report different trends in income in the past 3 years. Difference is highly significant ($p < 0.01$). Proportionally, more certified SPO farmers reported increases in income.

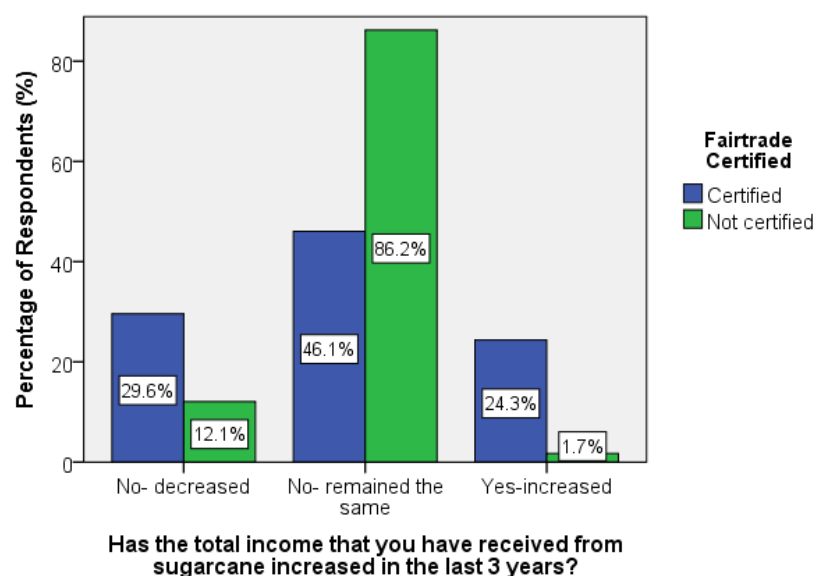
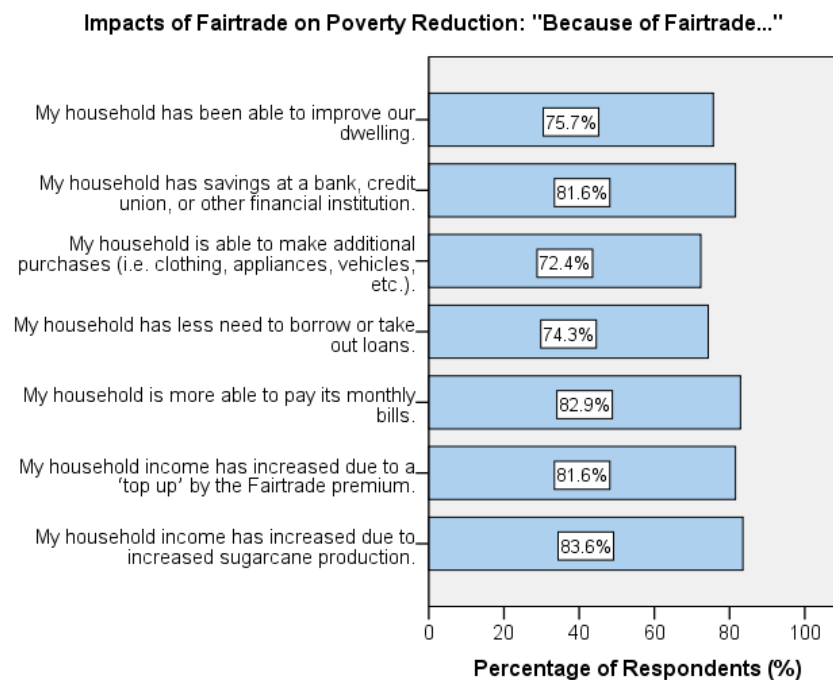


Figure 21: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive there to be different positive impacts on Poverty Reduction, specifically because of Fairtrade interventions. Over 80% of certified respondents report that Fairtrade has enabled an increase in income due to both a top up by the Premium and due to increased income, as well as being more able to pay monthly bills.

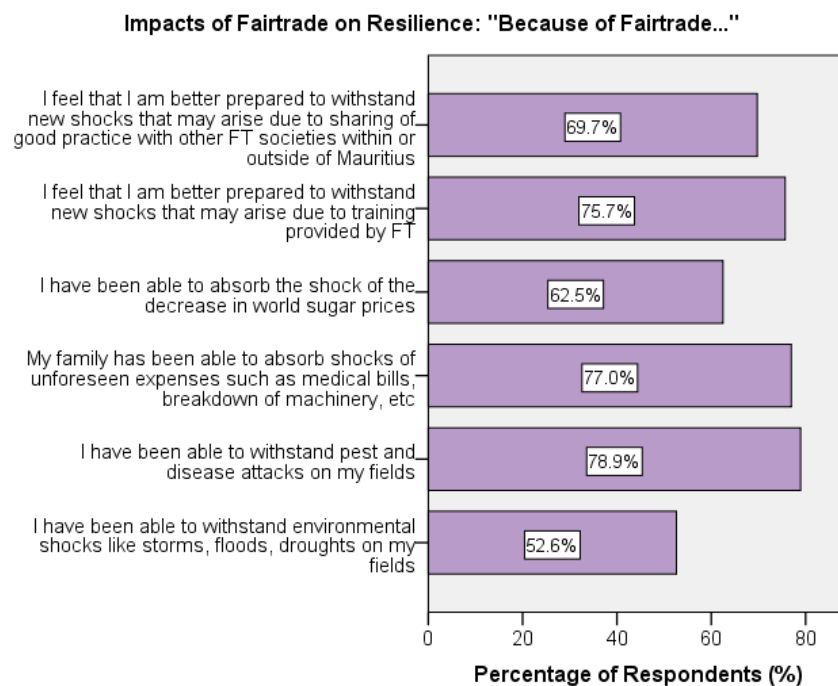


KEY INSIGHT BOX 6

Fairtrade boost to economic resilience

Despite the many factors which have negatively influenced production and profitability, the study reveals a significantly higher degree of optimism and sense of resilience to economic shocks among the certified planters. Indeed, certified planters, express that Fairtrade has enabled a significant portion of certified planters to better withstand P&D (79%), other environmental (53%) and price (62%) shocks (Figure 22). There is also a sense of increased readiness to withstand new shocks that arise due to the trainings that they have received (76%) and sharing of good practice (70%). While these results are promising, they highlight room for further penetration of such benefits to the whole community of certified SPO members.

Figure 22: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive there to be different positive impacts on their resilience, specifically because of Fairtrade interventions. *Ability to withstand pest and disease attack, and ability to absorb the shock of unforeseen expenses are the most cited aspects of resilience improvement.*



Livelihoods and long-term viability of sugar cane farming: IMPACTS

To understand the long-term economic viability of sugar cane farming for small producers, the role that sugar cane plays in the livelihood strategies of small-planter households, as well as the non-economic incentives behind growing sugar cane must be taken into consideration. Sugar cane often plays a small, yet key role in small planters' holistic livelihood strategies as almost all planters derive income from other sources as well. Despite being the biggest income source to most small planters (72%), less than 20% of small planters receive over 50% of their income from sugar cane. Further, 46% of planters report that sugar cane contributes to less than 25% of their household income. Nearly a quarter (24%) reported that over 50% of their income is from sugar cane, compared to only 2% of non-certified planters.

Regardless, the need to diversify income for all planters is clear. Many planters interviewed highlighted that in previous generations, the sugar cane income could potentially support an entire household, whereas now, it is only feasible as a supplementary income. Female small planters highlighted in the focus groups that, ***“While we once saw sugar cane as a robust source of income to keep our families going, now it can only ever serve as a supplement to other forms of income we have had to source. In most cases, this will be office jobs for our partners and children.”*** The increased cost of living and the reduced sugar cane profitability have both contributed to this. More than half (56%) of certified farmers report that Fairtrade has enabled them to diversify their income in some way, though visible signs of this remain limited to a few SPOs, which have made targeted investments to diversify the income of their members. The extent of diversification is covered in more detail in section 4.3.

KEY INSIGHT BOX 7

Sugar cane plays a valuable role for small planter’s livelihood strategies beyond the income it provides

While sugar cane income is not enough alone to support a household, there are non-economic incentives which have kept (and are likely to continue to keep) small planters in sugar cane production. For instance, while only 25% of planters report that they have additional money left over from the income after covering all agricultural expenses, over 90% of all respondents, including those that report no profit, demonstrate a strong cultural incentive to continue farming sugar cane. There is a sense of loyalty, and of sugar cane being *‘in their blood’*, which has spurred them to stay in sugar cane. Retired planters also report that farming gives them a sense of purpose, connection to their environment, and a healthy lifestyle. Furthermore, keeping the land under sugar cane helps to keep unwanted rubbish dumping from happening on their land. As captured by a small producer, ***“Sugar cane farming helps us to keep active and purposeful in our old age. It also helps us to maintain the land in good condition, as if we didn’t farm, people would just dump rubbish onto our land!”*** – Valton CCS small producer.

A lack of alternative land use options poses a further factor influencing the continuation of sugar cane farming, particularly among the non-certified farmers, 80% of which report growing sugar cane even when the price is low due to no alternative options as opposed to 46% of the certified population. This suggests a level of increased agency and choice

among the certified farmers regarding how they use their land, and regarding their decision to continue farming sugar cane. **To conclude, current market conditions do not render sugar cane a financially lucrative crop. However, the farmers who still persist in farming sugar cane attribute their commitment to a lack of more attractive alternative land uses as well as its long-standing cultural importance.**

4.1.3 Labour conditions

Labour conditions: OUTPUTS and OUTCOMES

The study has shown that Fairtrade has led to positive outcomes regarding labour conditions on small planter's farms. The improvements are attributed most strongly to the Fairtrade trainings on labour conditions, which have resulted in significantly higher awareness and understanding of good labour practices than among non-certified small producers.

For example, certified small planters demonstrate a good understanding and awareness of ensuring zero tolerance of forced labour and discrimination, and good working conditions in the context of sugar cane farming. They also conduct trainings with workers to ensure their rights are known (Image 6). However, there remains confusion and gaps in understanding regarding the applicability of certain other labour standards, such as payment terms and documentation requirements. The confusion emerges from the ambiguity of requirements for businesses of different sizes within Mauritius and in the Fairtrade SPO Standard requirements on labour. Most small producers for example, conduct much of the farm work themselves and employ only one or two additional individuals on a seasonal basis, if at all. For more resource intensive tasks such as harvesting and haulage, they use contractor services. The consensus among planters and key industry stakeholders is that for planters with this arrangement, certain additional documentation and tax requirements do not apply, but the sense of ambiguity remains. Furthermore, there is a general discontent with the perceived inconsistencies in complying with Fairtrade labour standards as they apply in the Mauritius context. Both planters and industry stakeholders highlighted this as an area that requires an alignment of all stakeholders based on a global interpretation of the standards (FI, FTA and FLOCERT) to ensure compliance of specific labour requirements by the planters themselves and any contractor directly servicing their farms⁶.

⁶ The FI standards unit were made aware of the challenges surrounding clarity of labour standards in 2020, and they are in the process of building stakeholder alignment on the appropriate ways forward.

Fairtrade financed and are rolling out a 'Good Labour Practices Program' across Mauritius, in response to aforementioned challenges associated with labour, consistent with the findings in this report. The aim of the programme is to begin influencing more stringent practices for labour among the small planters. Because of the complex nature of the changes required; potential early adopters have been selected first. Four out of five targeted SPOs have received initial training, but the training process was delayed significantly due to COVID-19. Therefore, the SPOs engaged during the study are not yet in a position to implement the changes, making it too early to assess the impacts of the programme. That being said, the respondents showed positive engagement in the programme when questioned. Further follow up on this matter is recommended⁷ in due course.

Labour conditions: IMPACTS

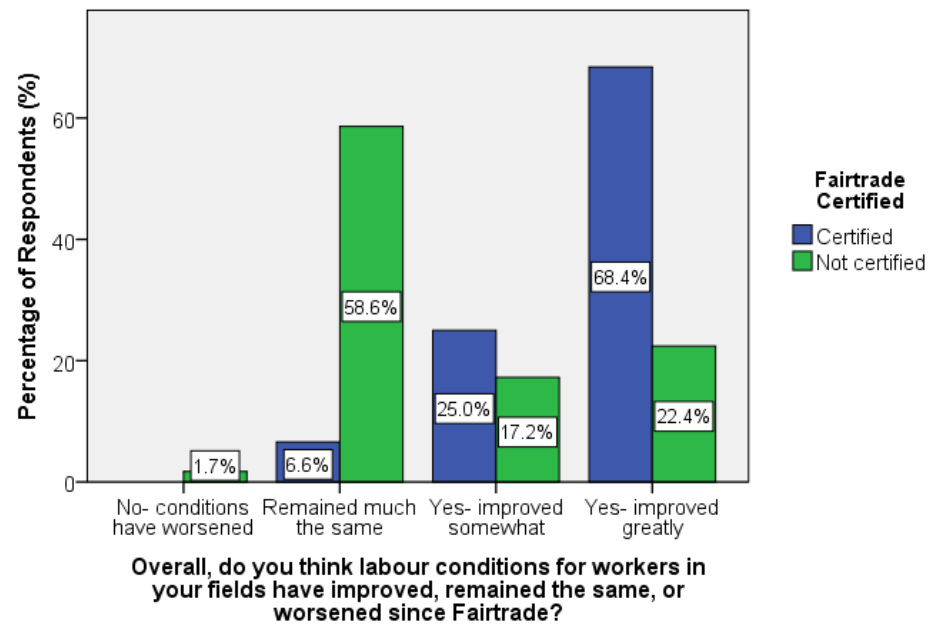
KEY INSIGHT BOX 8

Improvements to labour conditions within SPOs

Labour conditions have improved significantly because of the Fairtrade training and standards. In the last 10 years nearly all (93%) of certified planters reported an improvement in the conditions for workers as opposed to just 40% of the non-certified planters (Figure 23). In line with Fairtrade standards, there is universal provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) for both agricultural operation and for COVID-19 protection among certified SPOs, with a high degree of satisfaction for the PPE quality among both planters and labourers. While the Premium is primarily used directly for the planters, the SPOs report using a portion of the fund to subsidise income and provide food hampers for workers. Indeed, 63% of certified planters report that workers receive a better salary because of Fairtrade. Workers also benefit from health check-ups and improved nutrition, often funded through the Premium. Overall, in line with improved conditions, workers on certified farms also show a greater satisfaction with their jobs than before Fairtrade was introduced.

⁷ In Oct 2022 FTA offered physical refresher physical trainings on Better Labour Practices to the relevant SPOs as part of the program as well as rolled out trainings on the BLP program for 12 additional SPOs in Mauritius at the same time.

Figure 23: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified and non-certified planters which perceive there to have been changes to labour conditions since Fairtrade has been implemented in Mauritius. There is a highly significant difference ($p < 0.01$). Certified SPOs report greater improvement in labour conditions than non-certified SPOs.



KEY INSIGHT BOX 9

Positive labour impacts seen throughout the industry

The impacts of Fairtrade on labour conditions extend beyond the certified small producers, with a broader reach throughout the industry. The standards have been applied to the contractors, which directly service the certified SPOs and to the millers supplied by the certified SPOs. The changes required for the contractors to reach the Fairtrade labour standards have been strongly enabled by the millers in the industry. Millers reported that, **“Fairtrade standards have helped to direct the changes made to our own standards of labour and those of the contractors we work with to service the certified small planters”**. Alteo, for example, partner with contractors as part of a service that they offer, which manages harvesting and delivery on behalf of the planters. Alteo report that the Fairtrade labour standards have largely shaped the protocol used both within their organisation and among all contractors that they partner with to deliver services to all small planters, certified or not. To support

the transition, they provide the contractors with administrative assistance to ensure they meet the necessary labour standards, such as tools to enable effective record keeping of worker's hours, contracts with employees, and use of payslips.

Despite the positive improvements in labour standards, the availability of labour remains a key challenge for the future sustainability of sugar cane farming. Indeed, labour shortages and corresponding high labour costs remain among the biggest challenges faced by planters today. More than a quarter (26%) of small planters cite labour as a key reason they may not be able to continue sugar cane farming, second only to financial issues (Figure 19). **Therefore, it can be concluded that while the Fairtrade labour standards have resulted in improved labour conditions well beyond the certified SPOs, the industry faces major challenges to ensure sufficient worker capacity in future. Hence, labour conditions and especially incomes have to be further improved across the board to ensure that the sectors labour demands can be met.**

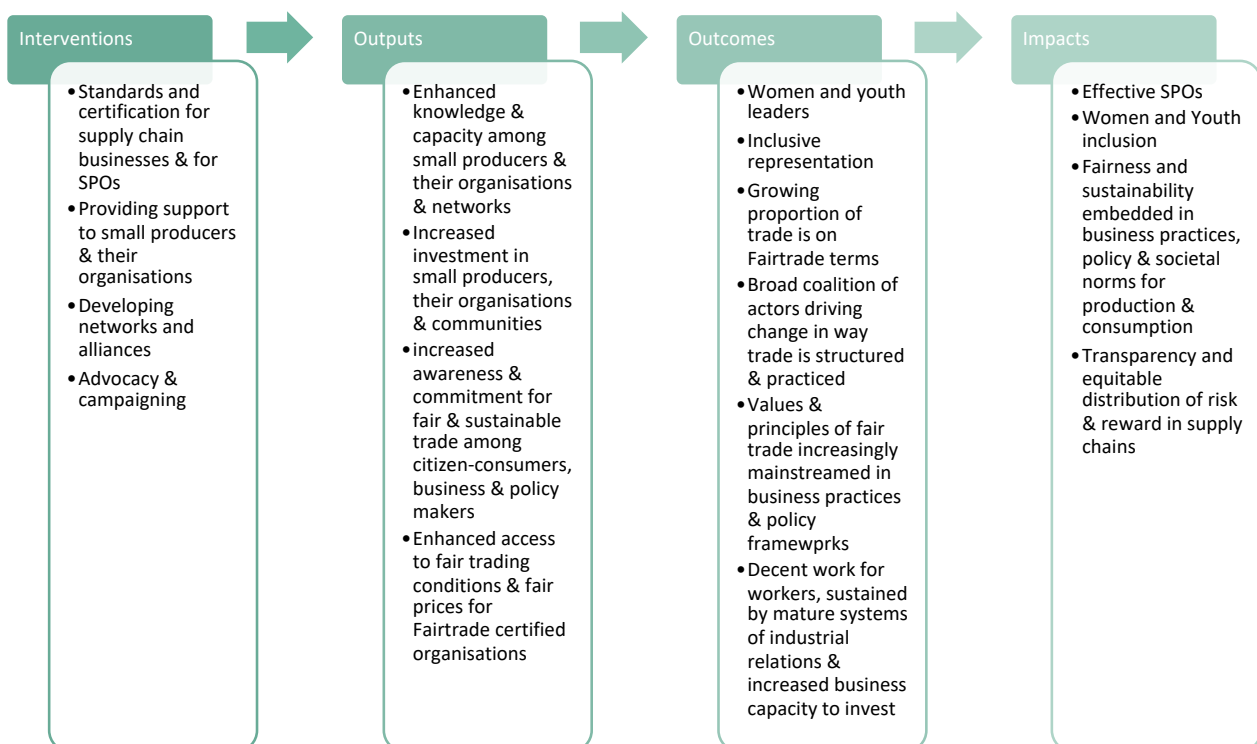
Image 6: Workers on farm in PPE during harvest season, being sensitised on their rights by representatives of Rose CCS



4.2 The impact of Fairtrade on the institutional governance of certified SPOs and the sugar cane industry in Mauritius

This section explores the impacts of Fairtrade on the governance of the SPOs, and the broader institutional impacts across the Mauritius sugar industry. It leverages key elements of the Fairtrade ToC (Figure 24) to understand the effects of the various relevant interventions, outputs, outcomes and impacts the first dives into the changes to the leadership capability of the SPO board members, followed by the effects on inclusion and representation within the SPOs. It then explores the institutional challenges surrounding certification and auditing, which emerged as a key challenge throughout the study. Finally, it explores the broader shifts in governance throughout the sugar industry in the 10 years since Fairtrade was first introduced.

Figure 24: Diagram of the relevant elements of the Fairtrade ToC related to Fairtrade institutional and governance impacts



4.2.1 SPO institutional leadership and communication

SPO leadership: INTERVENTIONS and OUTPUTS

Fairtrade has enabled significant behavioural change among the SPO leadership over the 10+ years it has been operating in Mauritius. The improvements have been largely attested to the emphasis on Fairtrade-led trainings, which encourage good governance among the SPO leadership. The trainings have provided board members with skills to enable better and more efficient record keeping. They have also been designed to enable more engagement from the full board members as there has historically been a strong over-reliance on the secretary within the Mauritian SPOs. Resultingly, while the secretary still plays a critical role, there has been an increase in the contribution of other board members. Notable contributions include the board presidents and environmental officers, who along with the secretary, Fairtrade channels much of its communication and training efforts through.

SPO leadership: OUTCOMES and IMPACTS

The change in governance and board leadership has been seen across all SPOs, leading to improvements in governance practices, and to the broader culture of the SPO, albeit to varying degrees.

The better management of the certified SPOs has also encouraged more members to join. 82% of certified planters, and 7 out of 9 certified SPOs, have seen an increase in membership in their SPO and a resulting increase in the volume of sugar cane produced within it. However, the increase in membership is not universal across certified SPOs, with 2 of the 9 certified SPOs reporting no increase or a decline in membership. While size of the SPO was highlighted as a factor during the qualitative interviews, with those below 50 members particularly struggling, the survey revealed that the decline in membership can still take place among some of the larger SPOs as well.

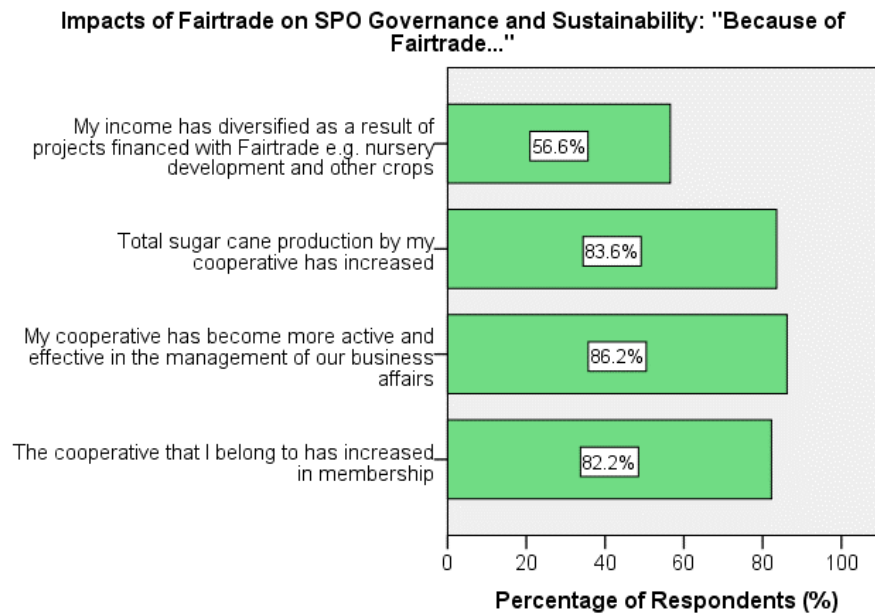
KEY INSIGHT BOX 10

SPO leadership, communication, and engagement improvements

96% of small producers reported an improvement in the overall governance and leadership of their boards because of the Fairtrade interventions. They highlight the improvements in the SPO board, from organisational capabilities to service provision for members. Furthermore, 86% report that the SPO leadership has become more active and effective in managing business affairs (Figure 25). Indeed, the functioning of the SPO has gone from simply paying SPO members their rightful sugar income, to a more dynamic institution through which support services are provided, and key records are documented and managed. The IT trainings provided through Fairtrade have also enabled better book-keeping, which aid in day-to-day management as well as SPO readiness for audits. From a cultural perspective, many small producers expressed that the Fairtrade standards have reinforced the cooperatives' values based on voluntary participation, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, and solidarity.

Furthermore, many agree that communication and engagement between SPO leadership and members has increased. While the number of meetings remains comparable to the counterfactual group, the emphasis on transparency and information sharing appears higher among the certified SPOs, with 79% of certified members reporting better dissemination of information. Certified SPOs also show significantly greater information sharing and transparency than non-certified SPOs, through more diverse communication platforms such as WhatsApp or SMS, training sessions, and letters to ensure transparency of decision making. A further indication of improved engagement among certified SPOs is the rise in meeting and training attendance. The attendance extends beyond the planters, to workers and other community members where the content of the meeting is of relevance to them. In this manner, Fairtrade has left a footprint beyond the SPO members to the broader community.

Figure 25: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive there to be different positive impacts on the sustainability of their business and SPO specifically because of Fairtrade interventions. Over 80% of respondents report that their SPO sugar production and membership has increased, and that their SPO has become more active/effective in managing SPO business affairs.



4.2.2 SPO inclusion and representation (participation, democracy, and empowerment)

This section extends the learnings from the leadership and communication section, to explore how Fairtrade has influenced the inclusivity of the SPO as well as fair and equitable representation of members, with a focus on the role of women and youth within the SPO.

Fairtrade Premium usage

There is a sense of inclusivity in the decision making regarding the investment decisions for the Premium investment among most members of certified SPOs, and general satisfaction with how the process is conducted. Assignment of the Fairtrade Premium investments is a democratically demarcated procedure, which they use to collectively agree how the Premium fund will be spent. 98% of members say they feel members have an equal say in decision-making processes within the SPO. However, the study reveals that as many as 50% of SPO members are not in full understanding of every stage of the process surrounding

the Premium, particularly with the needs assessment and usage of the Fairtrade development plan. The degree of inclusivity in this process is also visibly different from one SPO to the next, with some SPOs taking a more participatory approach with members than others. This highlights the potential benefit of greater support provision to the SPOs in the facilitation of inclusivity throughout the Premium investment decision making process.

Women inclusion

Fairtrade efforts towards increased inclusivity have been focused largely on engagement of women and youth efforts, both at leadership level and in the general contribution of members. Interventions have aimed to increase the presence of women and youth on the boards, as well as encourage greater attendance at meetings and trainings. However, the degree of active involvement among minority groups varies between SPOs, with anywhere from 40-100% of respondents in each SPO perceiving there to be increased involvement of women and youth in the industry. Furthermore, while there is a rise in the representation of women at board level in an isolated number of certified SPOs, this is not yet a widespread trend.

Fairtrade policies encourage greater participation of women leadership within the SPO, which have led to greater involvement of women since Fairtrade was first introduced. Furthermore, the increased attendance of women at certified SPO meetings is widespread. Some SPOs, such as Rose CCS and Camp de Masque MCS participation of women is higher than it is for men. However, at a leadership level, the involvement of women remains low across many SPOs, suggesting more systemic challenges that need to be overcome for women to have an equal level of participation to men within the SPO.

Women within certified SPOs also show an increased interest in the farming operations as a result of Fairtrade. Women report that the trainings have been among the most valuable elements of the certification for them as it has empowered them to be more engaged in their farm business, through access to new knowledge about their business and the environmental impacts of their actions. They highlight that prior to this, access to knowledge of good business practices was a barrier for them, which they feel has to some degree been removed. Furthermore, the survey results show a significantly higher degree of women involvement in farm business operations and management. For example, certified women farmers are more involved in activities such as weeding and book-keeping than among the non-certified planters (approximately 25% and 0-10% respectively).

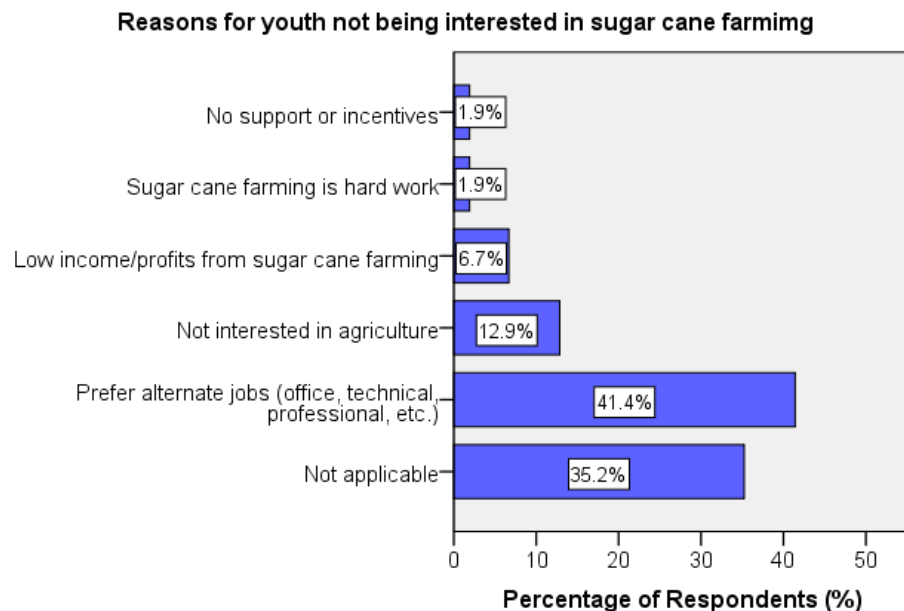
However, in mixed group settings, observationally, women in certified SPOs are often still overpowered by the male voices. Furthermore, some of the existing SPO practices lead to unintended exclusion of women. One example highlighted was the scheduling of meetings at inconvenient times for women, such as when they are expected to be performing other household duties, traditionally reserved for females within the household. This presents an additional barrier to attendance at meetings for women, which could be overcome if scheduled at a weekend or more suitable time of day.

Youth inclusion

The lack of interest among youth for sugar cane farming is starkly visible. Youth interest in farming is not a new problem, but it appears to have been exacerbated in the last 10 years. Most planters (84%), both certified and non-certified, report that youth show no interest in farming due to the low income it offers, and the hard manual labour it requires. Most youth have ambitions to work in white collar jobs, which have become more abundant as the economy of Mauritius has grown (Figure 26). Saying that, the youth that do show interest, attest some of the interest to the presence of Fairtrade, and the international interest and links that it creates. Fairtrade certified SPOs have been supported to develop a succession plan, and many of them have recruited individuals to represent the youth of their community and build their knowledge of the SPO processes. Despite these efforts, limited interest among youth means that succession both at the level of individual farms and within the SPO boards remains a challenge, leaving a question mark as to how the future of farming in Mauritius will be shaped.

The lack of youth interest is a particular problem when considering the ageing population of the current farmers. Indeed, the small planters rank age and health among the top 3 reasons that threaten their ability to continue to farming sugar cane. Unlike among the current generation of farmers, the youth do not show the same signs of cultural attachment to the crop, suggesting that when the land is passed down, they are likely to look for alternative uses for the land.

Figure 26: Bar graph showing the combined percentage of certified and non-certified small planters who report different perceived reasons for lack of youth engagement in sugar cane farming.



Opportunities for improvement

Inefficiencies remain within the SPO boards, resulting in missed opportunities which could be accessed with the same time and resources, but under better organisation. Most of their time is taken up by contacting planters one-by-one, and in many cases their systems remain manual. The SPOs are also still largely dependent on a few individuals, and so the manual nature of payments and accounting create a bottleneck to the speed of service for SPO members. Furthermore, the exposure of SPO members to different initiatives, ideas, or innovative ways to use the Premium is largely determined by the capacity of these individuals. There is also room for efficiency improvement in the services of the secretary and board members, which if implemented, could avail their time for more proactive or innovative endeavours with the support of Fairtrade.

There is also still a tendency for unprepared or last-minute requests from SPO leadership with other key stakeholders, such as millers. This has resulted in sub-optimal outcomes, such as lack of stakeholder attendance at meetings or inability to source resources, due to a lack of forward planning. In the context of audits, the varied degree of preparedness among some SPOs makes ensuring the availability of required paperwork and sufficient meeting attendance, even more challenging.

One of the major challenges which prevent further improvements in SPO leadership and governance is the under-resourced nature of the board members. A key learning, which industry stakeholders highlighted from the Altromercato sustainability development programme, is the effectiveness of having a large on the ground presence. From this, stakeholders show a strong desire for greater levels of local resource to support the SPO secretaries and board members to successfully meet the Fairtrade requirements.

Furthermore, there is limited collaboration between SPOs. Even SPOs which are geographically overlapping, and in some cases, which use the same premises to meet, show limited sharing of ideas or resources. There is limited willingness to collaborate, with a desire for the existing SPO structures to stay as they are. In addition, there are many inconsistencies between how SPO boards manage their roles, with some being significantly more proactive and/or effective in the roles. Therefore, additional collaboration, be it through pooling of resources or sharing of good practice, could enable more rapid good practices and improvements to spread throughout the industry. It could also enable more optimal use of the Fairtrade Premium by pooling the funds and resources. However, the socio-political barriers to this may prove problematic if not facilitated and managed carefully.

4.2.3 Impact of the Fairtrade auditing and governance process on the sustainability of the SPOs

Volatility of certification has been raised by the industry stakeholders and SPOs engaged in the study as both a threat to the future success of Fairtrade in Mauritius, and as a major barrier to maximising positive impact among the SPOs. The volume of Fairtrade sugar has declined, primarily due to the decertification of many SPOs, from a peak of 38 certified SPOs in 2015 (Figure 4), to 21 at the time of the study. The SPOs are audited for certification by FLOCERT auditors in line with the standards set by FI⁸, and FLOCERT follow an internationally recognised auditing process to ensure the credibility of the Fairtrade brand.⁹ In addition to this, FLOCERT are themselves audited, and they provide a formal process through which to appeal or complain¹⁰. The standards and have undergone numerous evolutions to ensure that they continue to drive the desired behaviour change across the sugar sector, while also maintaining local relevance

8 <https://www.fairtrade.net/standard/spo>

9 <https://www.flocert.net/solutions/fairtrade/how-it-works>

10 <https://www.flocert.net/about-flocert/vision-values/quality-and-appeals>

through specific adaptations to accompanying interpretation notes to align to the local context. The SPOs receive support from FTA to help them develop the capabilities and embed the processes required to meet the standards. The study has found that in the most part, the current version of the standards well catered the drive positive behaviour change among SPOs from an environmental, social, governance, and economic perspective, including increased the leadership and organisational capabilities of the SPOs. However, the study highlights a small number of instances where either a specific element of the standards and the interpretation notes, or of the auditing process, still lead to what the SPOs deem to be unnecessary barriers to conformity. The resulting additional challenges to conform and subsequent decertification of many SPOs, puts the sustainability of the SPOs and subsequently the broader industry at risk.

The first challenge is the perceived feasibility of meeting specific requirements of the Fairtrade standards set by FI¹¹ in the Mauritius context. The primary challenge raised by SPOs is meeting attendance during the audits.

The planters argue that the majority of SPO members have other jobs and work commitments (as supported by the finding that for many planters the sugar cane is not the primary or sole source of income), and therefore that it is not possible to have all members required at the FLOCERT audit meeting as part of the whole SPO meeting. Usually, the auditor agrees on the audit dates with the SPO and then sends the audit preparation letter with a detailed programme 15 days prior to the audit to enable them to prepare adequately. However, for the case of follow-up audit, the producer organisation is informed less than 5 days prior to the exercise and no preparation letter is sent for the same. The specific challenge with attendance arises when specific planters are called on to be audited on their farm, and while most auditors provide up to 3 days' notice to the specific farmers selected to be audited, some planters are given just a couple of hours' notice, which they express is very difficult to accommodate. This is due to many being largely part-time and having other work commitments, or in the case of elderly with medical constraints, being unable to make the necessary transport arrangements. Multiple SPOs report that an inability to meet this requirement has then led to non-conformities.

A second core challenge raised is the cost of additional audits and lack of sufficient support in the case of non-conformities, which can lead to temporary suspensions. SPOs highlight that together this acts as a further barrier to SPOs to maintain certification or attain certification in the first instance. The SPOs raise the need for additional support

11 It is the role of FI as the scheme owner to set the standards and determines where, if at all, the standards need to be adapted to local contextual nuances.

from Fairtrade and across the industry to help them rectify the non-conformities within the designated timeframe.

The final challenge raised relates to the on the ground conduct of specific FLOCERT auditor(s), who due combined with not accommodating sufficiently the wish for more auditor rotation, stated to be part of the FLOCERT process.¹² It is the perception of the SPOs and other local stakeholders that some FLOCERT auditors, which are disproportionately used across Mauritius, including reportedly sometimes in subsequent audits, are rude and dismissive in their conduct. Furthermore, the SPOs report that the FLOCERT auditors in question are negatively biased in their interpretation of the standards (relative to other auditors), leading to what SPOs believe to be unfair outcomes.¹³ The observation could not be directly verified or measured by the research team, but due to the frequency with which the concern was raised by different SPOs, the researchers felt it an important observation to include in the final report. The Mauritius stakeholders who raised the issue, including the planters, recognise their own potential bias, and emphasise their willingness to undergo audits with transparency and clear guidelines.

From the above challenges raised, it is recommended that the standards and auditing process should be reviewed more closely by a third party and compared to the process globally. The main request by SPOs and other local stakeholders is to explore if improvements can be made to insitutional processes to better enable and support the SPOs, and make reasonable allowances for any local contextual nuances, which cannot be overcome and do not in any way compromise the integrity of the Fairtrade standard.

12 FLOCERT works with a world-wide network of auditors. However, it is not viable to have several auditors in every possible location. Thus, FLOCERT uses a mix of local auditors and non-local auditors. In general, the selection of auditors follows a rotating scheme, but allows for exceptions.

13 FLOCERT cannot respond to generalised feedback. However, on the matter of potential bias of auditors, they do point to FLOCERT's Impartiality SOP "EXE Impartiality SOP 15 en" <https://www.flocert.net/about-flocert/vision-values/quality-and-appeals/> where a dedicated chapter resumes the approach to Auditor Independence.

4.2.4 Broader institutional influence of Fairtrade on agriculture and the sugar industry in Mauritius

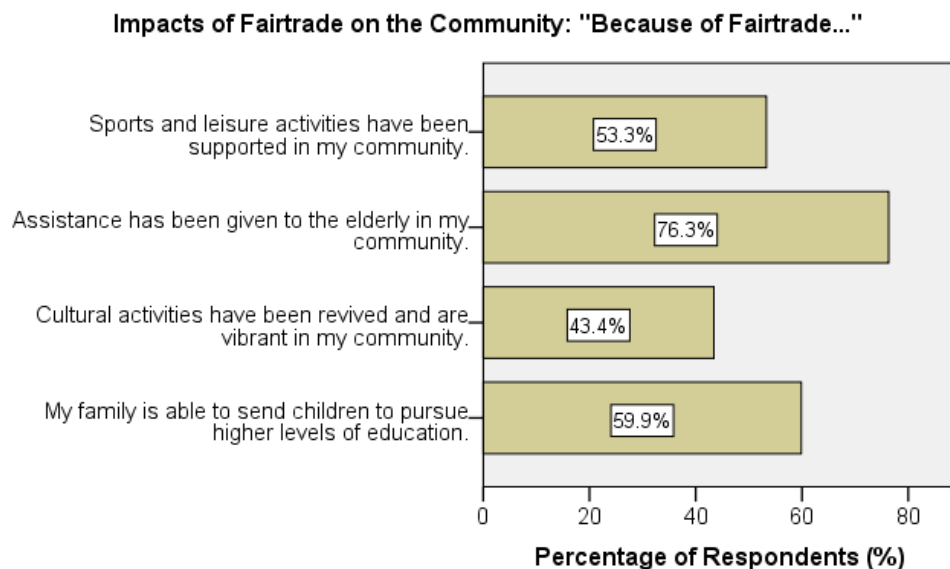
There are also signs that Fairtrade has had some positive effects throughout the sugar industry and into the broader agricultural sector in Mauritius. This section explores the impacts at a community, industry, and national level.

Community IMPACTS

Fairtrade interventions have been extended directly to the local communities in which the SPOs operate. As will be explored in section 4.3, most SPOs choose to allocate a small proportion of the Premium to assisting the broader community, who are typically less financially stable than the SPO members. Community support initiatives also help to increase visibility of the SPO as a welcome entity and to encourage greater women and youth participation. The most common community interventions include funding for local schools and elderly or disabled members of the community. For example, 76% of certified small planters reported that Fairtrade assistance has been given to elderly in the community (Figure 27). SPOs also put money and resources towards community events, such as sports tournaments. 53% report investment in sports and leisure activities and 43% agree that cultural activities have been boosted by Fairtrade investments.

In addition to the direct benefits of economic support, the community and farm labourers also benefits from regular access to trainings provided by Fairtrade. Among the frequent trainings provided through Fairtrade, farm labourers and other community members are invited to join. The trainings have helped raise awareness and understanding among community members most notably during the COVID-19 pandemic, also serving as a suitable platform to share critical resources through. The trainings have also enabled greater awareness of the challenges associated with climate change and the environmental impacts of farming among the communities. Accordingly, the Fairtrade and neighbouring areas are noticeably cleaner, with a greater pride in the local landscape among planters and community members.

Figure 27: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive there to be different positive social impacts within the surrounding community specifically because of Fairtrade interventions



Industry IMPACTS

At an industry level, the Fairtrade standards have also shown some signs of broader influence. For example, Fairtrade has helped to raise awareness of key challenges associated with both climate change and good labour practices. For example, the millers report positive changes to their own labour standards which have been influenced by the Fairtrade standards (see section 4.1.3). The millers, and the associated farming contractors with whom they partner to service the small planters, have adopted better labour practices, and altered how they store agricultural chemicals, to meet the required Fairtrade standards. This has a knock-on positive effect to the other non-certified SPOs and individual planters which they also service.

With respect to the adoption of GAPs and better environmental impacts, Fairtrade is considered among many small planters and other industry bodies to have influenced the greater environmental awareness seen throughout the agricultural industries in Mauritius. Furthermore, interviewees expressed that Fairtrade standards have provided an additional positive force to encourage the more rapid adoption of GAPs throughout the industry.

Furthermore, Fairtrade projects have provided an additional avenue through which wider positive impacts have been enabled, for example by encouraging the development of more effective relationships between partner SPOs and other stakeholders. For example, stakeholders involved in the 'Carbon and Water Footprint Study', which included millers Alteo and Omnicane, and Fairtrade planters, expressed that it helped to develop improved relationships between participants, increased sharing of knowledge and mutual understanding. It also produced useful research findings, which can be leveraged by the whole Mauritian sugar industry to market the low carbon footprint of Mauritian sugar relative to other producers, confirmed through the study. Other instances of collaboration include knowledge exchange with certified SPOs from elsewhere around the globe, such as those in Belize. These instances of interaction have highlighted the opportunities for learning and sharing of good practice not only between SPOs in Mauritius, but globally, although this feedback remains anecdotal.

National IMPACTS

The impacts at a national level are more tentative, but stakeholders express that Fairtrade has been a welcome addition as a positive influence for small producers in the country. The Government of Mauritius has various departments, which are positioned to support sugar cane farmers in different ways. Government stakeholders perceive the Fairtrade standards as closely aligned to the agricultural and rural development agenda of the nation and therefore they encourage SPOs to achieve certification. While the introduction of Fairtrade was not government led, the Ministry of Agro-Industry has played a role in supporting the financing of SPOs certification costs. The Cooperatives Division of the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives also occasionally provides direct support to SPOs when they are at risk of non-compliance and reaches out directly to them. However, beyond this there is limited engagement. Small planters also frequently cite a perceived lack of government support as one of the influencing factors which makes them less likely to continue farming sugar cane. Where there have been aligned efforts at a national level, for example in overcoming the nationwide rise of abandoned land through the Land Area Management Unit, the small planters have felt limited effects on the ground. Indeed, availability of land remains a frequently cited challenge for small planters' ability to keep farming. Additional purchase of mechanical harvesters is another area that government has aimed to support small planters in overcoming the shortage of labour, which aligns strongly to the planters needs, but is yet to show tangible positive impacts. The limited national level engagement and collaboration highlights major opportunities for further maximising the Fairtrade impact across small-producer communities.

4.2.5 The non-certified SPO outlook on Fairtrade and barriers to entry

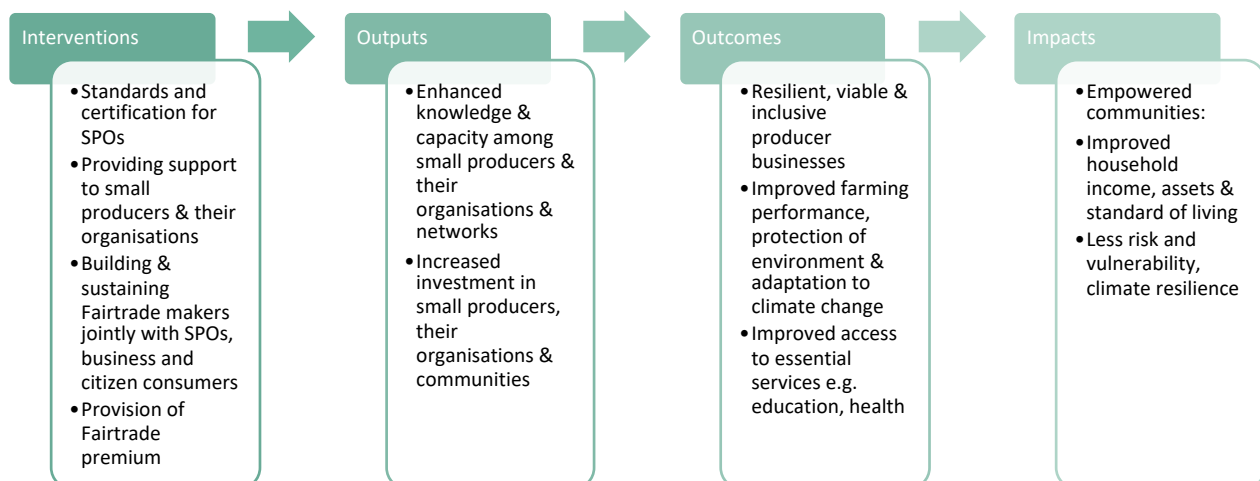
For non-certified SPOs, there is significant interest among members to be Fairtrade certified. Among those interviewed, 85% of non-certified small planters report that they would support their SPO in the decision to become Fairtrade certified. Among those with a basic understanding of Fairtrade, the Premium is the primary reason behind their desire to become certified, though the hope of better yields and agronomic practices was also a factor. However, the awareness of Fairtrade and the potential corresponding benefits were shown to be largely lacking among the interviewees and survey respondents with no prior experience of Fairtrade.

Furthermore, the study highlighted several barriers to entry for non-certified SPOs. The barriers can be categorised broadly as financial, governance and knowledge related. For example, SPOs perceive the cost for initial audit and entry process to be high, and many do not have the finances, resources, or knowhow to initiate the process. While the Mauritian government can offer support for these costs, there is limited awareness of this or how to go about it. From a governance perspective, for some SPOs, significant upskilling in good governance practices, from leadership transparency and organisational skills to more practical bookkeeping, is required. Therefore, without significant external support and training, attaining the necessary standard is not feasible. Finally, the requirements for Fairtrade certification are perceived to be onerous, particularly for the SPO leadership. Therefore, even where the SPO boards do have the necessary awareness and capacity for Fairtrade certification, they do not necessarily consider the benefits for the members to be worth the additional time and sacrifices that they as leaders may need to make. In conclusion, in addition to the need for greater support for the certified SPOs, there is a requirement for greater support and awareness building for non-certified SPOs, in order to increase the interest in, and reach of Fairtrade in Mauritius.

4.3 The impact of the Fairtrade Premium on the operations and viability of certified SPOs

This section explores the effects of the Fairtrade Premium on certified SPOs and the surrounding communities. The Premium is the focal intervention of interest for small planters and SPOs, with the near universal perception that it serves as a critical boost of income for the member households and communities. Indeed, it is the \$60/ton of sugar sold that entices most existing and potential SPOs to achieve Fairtrade certification. In over 10 years of Fairtrade in Mauritius, the Premium has enabled an investment of over Rs500M (\$10M+) direct to the local farming communities. Broadly speaking, this investment has shown positive outcomes, and has consequently contributed to beneficial impacts for sugar cane production, the local environment, and the community. This section explores the trends in use and impact of the Premium across the island, from the direct outputs to broader impacts as seen in figure 28. It highlights the most beneficial uses of the Premium for agricultural, environmental, and social impacts. It also explores the direct link between the Premium use and the economic viability of sugar cane farming for small producers.

Figure 28: Diagram of the relevant elements of the Fairtrade ToC related to Fairtrade Premium usage and impacts



Fairtrade Premium usage: OUTPUTS and OUTCOMES

The Premium is consistently split for usage across different agricultural, environmental, and community targeted impacts by SPOs. Unlike in other regions where Fairtrade operates, 100% of the sugar volume produced by the certified SPO is sold under the Fairtrade label. At an exchange rate of 43 MUR to the dollar, the SPO members, most with 0.5-2.5Ha each, and an average yield of 7 TSH are allocated approximately 10,000-40,000 MUR each (\$200-\$1000). Scaled up, this is the equivalent of between 250,000 MUR to 7.7M MUR (\$5500- \$180,000) channelled directly to the smallest to largest SPOs respectively. As the figures show, the financial output of the Premium varies significantly between the SPOs. The larger SPOs also report instances of successful application for other financial support, which further adds to the pool of funds available to the SPO members. Small producers express that the Premium and additional funds are in many cases critical to fund the interventions, and at the very least supplementary.

In turn, the larger SPOs can offer more robust service provision and support to their members, which has led to the trend in increasing membership among these SPOs. Conversely, the smallest certified SPOs report stagnation or decline in numbers of members, either as individuals stop farming sugar cane or choose to go to another SPO. The vast difference in volume of Premium injected into the SPO communities, results in a different outcome experienced. Accordingly, the findings highlight the potential for a greater positive impact among the larger cooperatives, where they tend to have greater access to financial resources, and often more robust, proactive leadership.

4.3.1 Impact of the Fairtrade Premium on agricultural and environmental factors

Despite the difference in Premium received by the SPOs of varying sizes, there are common trends in the perceived best uses of the Premium among all members. Over 80% of members, reported that the agricultural and environmental uses of the Premium have had a very positive impact on the community, and the remainder cited at least some improvements.

KEY INSIGHT BOX 11

Fairtrade Premium usage to drive productivity improvements**SPO members across the island report highest favourability for the Premium fund to support provision of direct cash subsidies.**

77% of respondents reported that the supplementary payment to the planters, which ranges from Rs75-200/ton (\$2-5/ton) of sugar cane depending on the SPO is the most critical for their operations (Figure 29). Its popularity is linked to the associated flexibility to use the additional finances wherever they deem pressing each season. The small planters express that the subsidy has been critical in enabling them to stay afloat in the face of recent price shocks.

Related to productivity, subsidisation of fertilisers and bio-fertilisers (75%), followed by provision of PPE and other field equipment (67%) were also seen as among the most effective Premium uses.

Through these purchases, the Fairtrade Premium has also contributed to more optimised timing of operations, by removing some of the financial and organisational barriers to access the resources when necessary. However, due to the dramatic increase in cost of fertilisers and other inputs, it is often not possible for inputs to be subsidised to the level which many would need to maintain cost of production below the threshold required for net profit.

Environmentally speaking, planters report that bio-fertiliser provision (78%), incentives for reduction in pesticide use (74%), and incentives for the safe disposal of chemicals (58%) as the top three most effective uses of the Fairtrade Premium (Figure 30).

In addition to the direct uses of the Premium for agricultural and environmental benefits, the trainings on GAPs and environmental awareness were also pointed out as important accompanying measures funded through the Premium, to empower individuals to use the additional resources more effectively.

Figure 29: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive specific agricultural uses of the Premium to have had the greatest positive impact for their farm business

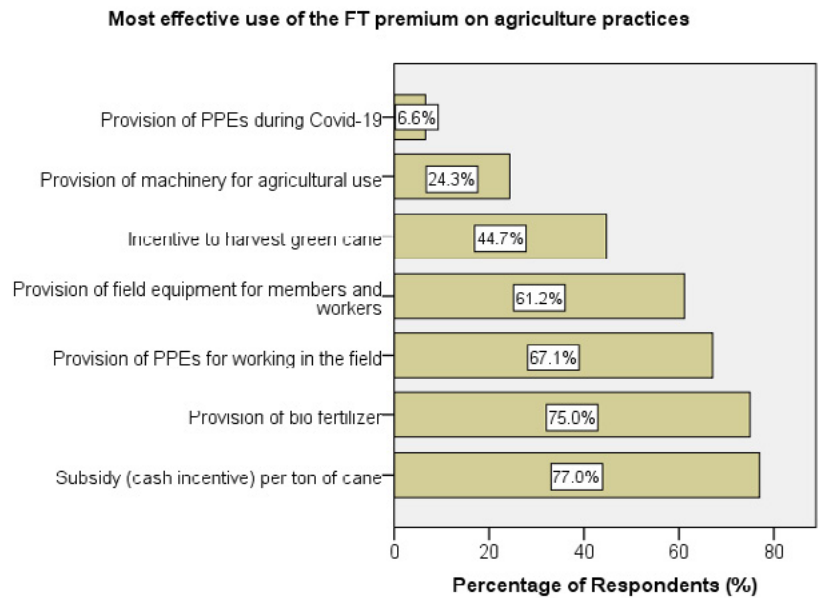
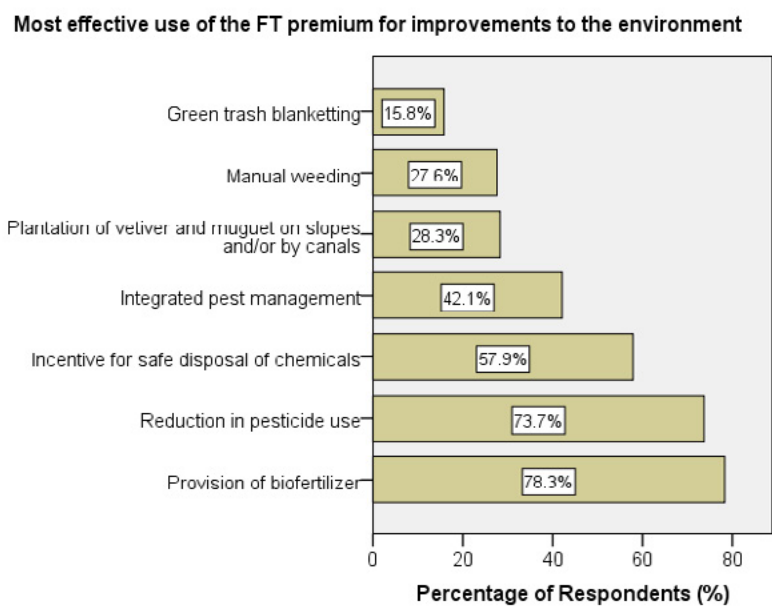


Figure 30: Bar graph showing the percentage of certified small planters which perceive specific uses of the Premium to have had the greatest positive impact on the environment



4.3.2 Impact of the Premium on economic viability

KEY INSIGHT BOX 12

Fairtrade Premium usage to boost economic viability

The Premium has contributed to improved economic viability both directly and indirectly. Channelling the Premium through a direct cash subsidy and harvesting subsidy has helped to cover the increased input costs associated with sugar cane farming. Meanwhile, other incentives have supported improved productivity or reduced input costs, such as bulk fertiliser purchases by the SPO, overall helping to boost poverty reduction (Figure 21). The combined effects of these Fairtrade Premium

investments are perceived to be improvements to the agricultural, environmental, and economic outcomes from sugar cane farming, among the certified small planters. However, many external factors which influence the economic viability of sugar cane have meant that even with the Fairtrade Premium, most small producers (75%) are at a high risk of not making any profit from the sugar proceeds, reporting that they often break even at best.

One further area that the Premium has aided to a small degree, is in the use of the Premium for alternative income streams, either within agriculture, community services, or tourism. For example, L'Esperance MCS, in the north of the island has invested the Premium into a villa, which is rented out and provides additional income of 80,000 MUR per month (Image 7). Such investments require a significant degree of capital, paired with a combination of business acumen, financial literacy, and risk appetite, which is not so common among the SPO leadership and members. Hence, while an investment of this nature has proven beneficial in the long term, there is often limited appetite for such an investment among many of the SPOs. There is comparatively more appetite for agricultural diversification among small planters, but the lack of obvious alternative commercial crops has also made planters hesitant to invest. The limited sense of diversification potential highlights an opportunity for a future Fairtrade project, to improve the financial literacy of the board and SPO members, investigate suitable alternative income streams, as well as enable administrative support to source additional funding for future business opportunities.

Image 7: The villa owned by Esperance MCS, which provides additional income to the cooperative



4.3.3 Impact of the Fairtrade Premium on the local community

In addition to agricultural and environmental purposes, a small portion of the Premium is consistently targeted for use within the local SPO community. Certified SPOs consistently choose to allocate a portion of their Premium towards the community as it is seen as an effective way to reach the more vulnerable, and less financially stable members of the community. The community investment has been shown to help revive local communities to some degree, particularly among the larger SPOs which have a greater Premium budget. The most cited beneficial community uses of the Premium are targeted towards supporting the workers, local schools, and vulnerable elderly or disabled individuals. This has helped to strengthen the positive perception of Fairtrade and sugar cane farming within the SPO communities. This section explores the most beneficial uses of the Premium, as well as highlighting opportunities for future investments.

The most popular Fairtrade Premium uses towards the community are also those most cited across Mauritius. Donations to the elderly (59%), local disabled children (49%), and local school funds (43%), are seen as the most beneficial uses of the Premium for community upliftment, which are tied to a sense of pride and cultural duty from the small planters. Bonuses for workers and planters, as well as food hampers, medical check-ups, and community activities are also frequently quoted as having a beneficial impact on the livelihoods of those within the community. When given the opportunity to identify additional areas

that planters would like the Premium to be used within the community, a medical check-up service proved most popular. However, many express the desire for any additional Premium to be used within the farm business to help stay afloat in what have been particularly challenging years.

There are isolated instances where the (often larger) SPOs have invested the Premium in projects which enable alternative income streams or a booster to other livelihood assets. One example has been the use of the Premium to construct local cooperative premises, such as the project seen at L'Escalier CCS in the southern region (Image 8). The new premises serve as a community meeting point, which did not exist before. They are also offered to the local community for ceremonies, such as weddings and birthdays at a concessional fee, providing income to the SPO while also providing a low-cost service to community members.

Image 8: L'Escalier CCS secretary in front of the new cooperative premises



Investment in food gardens have also proved to be a successful use of the Premium by Century CCS in the north of the island, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Image 9 & 10). The SPO leveraged the Premium and additional funding secured to source the basic materials required for the gardens, and for the necessary trainings to manage them effectively. The initiative has helped to provide additional food for the community members (including and beyond the small planters) which has not only supported their access to nutritious food during a financially challenging time, but it has also provided additional income through the sale of surplus produce, and a stronger sense of pride in their land.

Image 9 & 10: Century CCS members tending to their vegetable gardens funded through the support of Fairtrade



Fairtrade Premium related challenges

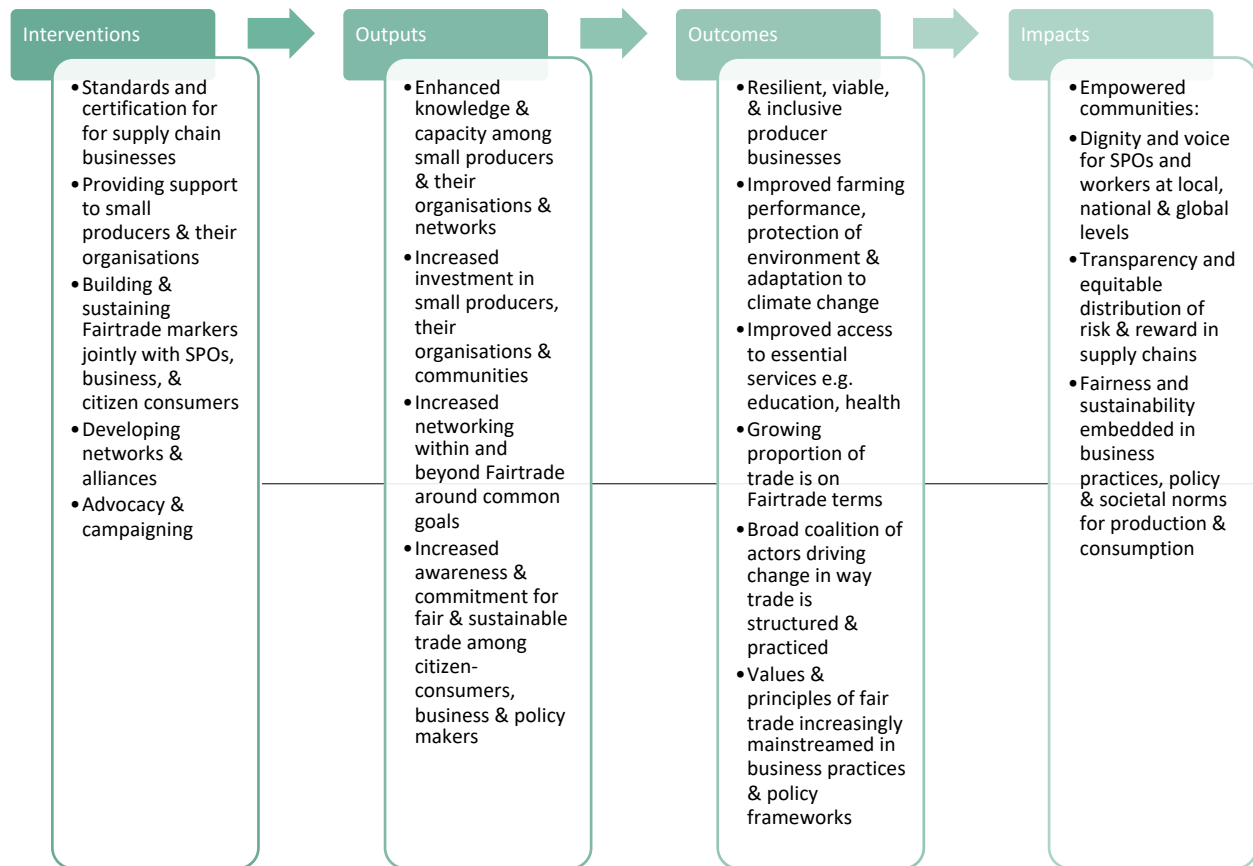
The interviews highlight that SPOs find it challenging to prioritise allocation of the Premium spend, due to the vast array of areas in which they feel additional investment is required. The limited funding that they have at their disposal acts as a bottleneck for greater investment in initiatives to improve overall farm business and SPO viability. If they had access to greater funds, planters report a desire for the funding to be channelled towards input costs, and activities such as improvements in road infrastructure, which would enable easier access to the small planter's fields. Small planters look primarily to Fairtrade for this additional funding and support, as there is limited awareness and/or trust of the other support mechanisms available for small planters, for example from government agencies or through development assistance.

Greater collaboration among SPOs could also improve the impact of the Premium. There is limited deliberate sharing of good practice between the SPOs regarding their use of the Premium and good governance practices. Rather, there is often heightened competition felt between them, brought about by the perceived need to compete with one another for members. While a degree of healthy competition can have positive effects, there are potentially missed benefits due to the lack of willingness to share ideas or pool resources, particularly among the SPOs which are geographically adjacent to one another. **Future focus on catalysing collaboration, facilitated by Fairtrade, could therefore increase the overall benefits of the Premium.**

4.4 The impact of Fairtrade on the perception of Mauritian cane sugar products on the global market and changes to global market access

This section explores the impacts of Fairtrade on the perception of the Mauritian sugar cane industry, and broader changes across the value chain as well as the broader institutional impacts across the Mauritius sugar industry. It incorporates the key elements of the Fairtrade ToC (Figure 31) to understand the effects of the various relevant interventions, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. It first explores the perception of Mauritius and its Fairtrade sugar cane products. This is followed by benefits seen due to Fairtrade for the Mauritius sugar industry and changes to market access.

Figure 31: Diagram of the relevant elements of the Fairtrade ToC related to Fairtrade Premium usage and impacts



4.4.1 Customer perception of Mauritius sugar industry

The client survey shows that among customers, the image of Mauritius as a sugar producing country is positive, with respect to both the Fairtrade and non-Fairtrade sugar products on offer from MSS.

Customers perceive the sugar from Mauritius to be of good quality accompanied with reliable service provision and well-structured systems along the value chain to ensure that the customer expectations are met. The consumers to which the Fairtrade products are sold, also have a very positive view of Fairtrade and the principles for which it stands. The key factors which influence the MSS customer and end consumer to purchase Fairtrade sugar, are its association with fair treatment and pay, particularly for the small planters and labourers in the value chain. In purchasing Fairtrade sugar, they hope to contribute towards a more sustainable sugar industry. However, a tension remains between the trend for more ethical sourcing, and the consideration of price. Indeed, customers consider the price of Fairtrade sugar as one limiting factor for its increase in market share.

Beyond the general association of fair trade and sustainable production with the Fairtrade brand, there is limited knowledge among customers as to the specific benefits of Fairtrade in Mauritius and the outcomes of them supporting Fairtrade certified SPOs. For example, 89% of customers reported no knowledge of the specific uses of the Premium or impacts on sustainability of sugar production (Figure 32). This included a lack of knowledge of the Carbon and Water Footprint study. However, when probed, customers showed a strong interest in receiving more information on both projects and the specific uses and impacts of the Fairtrade Premium. For example, the majority (88%) of customers asked, indicate that information on the Good Labour Practice programme, would be of medium to high interest for them (Figure 33). It is worth highlighting that information of this nature is available on the MSS website and its annual reports, and in Fairtrade International's newsletters. Therefore, better dissemination of such materials could help to raise awareness of the reach and impacts of Fairtrade initiatives.

Figure 32: Pie chart showing the percentage of MSS clients with an awareness of sustainability impacts of Fairtrade in Mauritius

Have you seen examples or been informed of the sustainability impact of Fairtrade in Mauritius?

10 responses

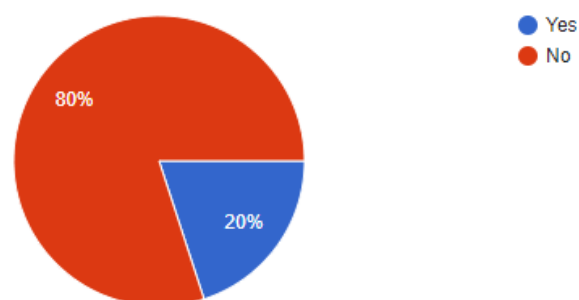
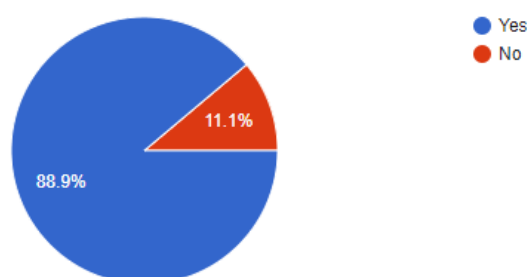


Figure 33: Pie chart showing the percentage of MSS clients with interest in the Better Labour Practices project in Mauritius

Would you be interested in receiving information on the recently implemented Better Labour Practices Project, which was started in Mauritius at the SPO/ cooperative level?

9 responses



Most customers also expressed interest in more active engagement with the Fairtrade certified SPOs than they have had historically. At present, while site visits are popular for some customers, two thirds of customers report that they do not actively engage with the certified SPOs. However, they expressed interest in more site visits, as well as potential future partnerships on specific projects. The greatest interest is from customers which source high volumes and a significant proportion of their total Fairtrade sugar from Mauritius. Key themes of interest for future collaboration include climate resilience, female and youth empowerment, and diversification of income, all of which have been indicated as potentially beneficial through the study.

The knowledge of Fairtrade in the local Mauritius context is also very limited. Indeed, Fairtrade has a low visibility among Mauritian stakeholders outside of the industry, as well as among many of the non-certified planters. As a result, the pride demonstrated by the certified SPOs regarding Fairtrade and the international linkages it provides, does not extend far into the broader Mauritian community. Increased marketing of the Fairtrade story within Mauritius may help to shift the perception of sugar cane farming among youth, as well as increase the appetite for Fairtrade products locally, owing to the increase in middle income households across Mauritius.

4.4.2 Benefits to the Mauritius Sugar Industry

Fairtrade is recognised to have positively influenced the Mauritius sugar industry in multiple ways. Industry stakeholders interviewed, including the FSA extension officers, MSS, and cooperatives division, recognise that it played a role in raising the awareness of climate change and the actions that can be taken by planters to adapt to and mitigate further negative environmental impacts. Furthermore, Fairtrade has encouraged millers and contractors working beyond the certified SPOs to adopt better labour practices and management of chemicals, in line with the Fairtrade labour standards.

Where other stakeholders have been resource constrained, such as government agencies and MCIA, Fairtrade has provided an additional boost, to influence positive behavioural change among planters, and as an additional source of financial and technical support. The Fairtrade standards align closely to the agronomic and environmental standards pushed within the local sugar industry and are perceived by stakeholders to have enabled more rapid adoption of key practices among certified SPOs, which in turn is enabling faster adoption across the island. However, due to the overlapping and interconnecting interventions within the industry, the definitive influence of Fairtrade is difficult to ascertain, beyond identifying the general positive direction in which it is pushing behaviour.

4.4.3 Mauritius Fairtrade market access

The interest in Mauritius as a Fairtrade sugar producer has steadily increased since MSS first started selling the products in 2009. The number of Fairtrade customers has doubled, and the volume of Fairtrade sugar produced each year has historically been sold without any challenges in sourcing customers. MSS' presence as a specialist producer nation has grown in this time, which combined with the Fairtrade offering, has enabled entry into a broader range of customer segments looking for speciality sugars. Indeed, Fairtrade is considered an important product for the customers who purchase it from Mauritius, citing the interest in ethical sourcing of products from consumers, with a focus on fairness and sustainability. Customers also generally see Mauritius as a preferred Fairtrade sugar producing origin, acting as a one stop shop, due to the ease of engagement, quality, and breadth of products. When asked, some customers expressed an interest in purchasing more Fairtrade sugar from Mauritius if it was to become available, due to MSS' track record of high-quality service and products. Indeed, the responses ranged from 0-100% increase in desired purchase of Fairtrade sugar from Mauritius.

A key factor which helps give the MSS an edge over competitors in this respect, and with future opportunities for expanding the Fairtrade sales, is the wide-ranging suite of potentially Fairtrade certified speciality sugars, not available elsewhere. To this end, Fairtrade adds value to MSS, as an additional vehicle to support its objective to penetrate the most sophisticated and niche markets.

The image that customer's associate with Mauritius Fairtrade is very positive, but several challenges were highlighted, which may limit future market access. For example, the perceived lack of communication and transparency with customers on the impacts of Fairtrade and the Premium means that there is not a clear understanding of the specific effects of Fairtrade on the small producer organisations to which they support. They show a strong desire for this in future and a willingness to communicate the impacts with consumers. Furthermore, the volatility of Fairtrade volume available from one season to the next, due to decertification of SPOs, has created uncertainties and challenges for supply, and as a result customers have had to source Fairtrade sugar from elsewhere. There was also some reservation over a future increase in Fairtrade purchase from MSS, due to perceived demand remaining stable rather than increasing among consumers. Finally, beyond the increase in the number of Fairtrade customers, and a consistent interest **in Fairtrade sugar, there is limited evidence from the study on the effects of Fairtrade in expanding MSS' access to global markets. Rather, the long history of reliable supply, high quality, and ease of transaction mean that Mauritius remains a popular, albeit small, player in the global sugar market.**

5. Discussion and conclusion

The study has responded to the initial research questions set by FI:

- **Has Fairtrade been a useful tool in assuring the economic sustainability of small farmers growing cane, over the 10 years of certification?**
- **How has Fairtrade certification impacted the image of Mauritius as a sugar producing origin and seller of Fairtrade certified sugar?**

The broad scope of the study has helped to reveal wide ranging impacts of the various Fairtrade interventions throughout the Mauritius sugar industry. This final section summarises insights from the key findings, highlighting the successes, as well as the biggest challenges and areas for future focus. In addition, it provides several recommendations for FI and industry stakeholders to maximise the future positive impacts of Fairtrade within the Mauritius sugar sector.

5.1 Main successes and challenges

A key conclusion from the study is that Fairtrade interventions show positive impacts on economic, environmental, and social resilience and sustainability of SPOs and their members. This finding has been seen both relative to the counterfactual group of non-certified SPOs and based on the perceived changes by the certified SPO members and key industry stakeholders. The impacts range from environmental and agronomic improvements through increased use of GAPs, to dampening the effects of economic shocks, and improving the sense of optimism towards their place as farmers in the sugar industry. Fairtrade has also increased the resilience of the industry to different environmental, social, and economic factors, through support to its small planters, albeit to varying degrees and with varying penetration into the broader small planter community. The evidence suggests that Fairtrade has played a positive role in the more rapid adoption of GAPs, as well as encouraging a greater awareness of climate change and the need for better environmental and labour practices across the sector.

At an industry level, the impacts of Fairtrade on the image of Mauritius as a sugar producing origin are more nuanced. Fairtrade products have strengthened the value offering MSS is able to provide its customers, supporting their penetration of niche and sophisticated markets. As interest in sustainably certified produce has grown globally, a Fairtrade offering

has enabled Mauritius to keep up with demand. However, the volatility of Fairtrade certification has negatively impacted MSS' ability to meet customer demands. The key successes, challenges, and recommendations are highlighted below for each of the four questions posed.

Question 1: What has been the agricultural, environmental, and economic impact of Fairtrade on certified producer organisations, the workers, and the wider community?

Fairtrade, and more specifically the Fairtrade Premium, is seen as a vital injection of cash direct to farming communities, which has enabled them to keep farming sugar cane. The combined effects of productivity improvements and Premium funds have served as the required 'lifeline' to keep small planters afloat in economically challenging times.

Economically speaking, Fairtrade is linked to direct increase in income for a large minority (24%) of certified small planters, even in the face of numerous external shocks in the past three years, compared to only 2% of non-certified small planters (Figure 20). Significantly more (80+%) have reported a general increase in income since becoming Fairtrade certified (Figure 21). The study has also shown that the economic benefits are not necessarily the primary reason which small planters stay in sugar cane. Indeed, the cultural ties and lifestyle benefits are critical to both certified and non-certified planters.

Fairtrade has acted as an accelerator for the adoption of GAPs, which improve productivity, environmental impact of operations, and resilience to climatic shocks. Reduced and better usage of chemical inputs, cleaner fields (appropriate disposal of waste), and use of IPM practices have been widely adopted by the certified SPOs. The addition of an environmental representative, greater access to trainings and standards, and additional income from productivity improvements have led to a sense of greater resilience and optimism in the face of climatic and economic shocks. There is still room for improvement to ensure GAPs are adopted by all members of the SPOs, and collective efforts are required to enable continued innovation to overcome the threats of changing climatic patterns and to support farmers to implement practices which are not only less harmful to the environment, but ultimately regenerative in nature.

Labour improvements have also been clearly demonstrated through the study, with significantly greater improvements reported among the certified v non-certified planters. Over the last 10 years nearly all (93%) of certified planters reported an improvement in the conditions for workers as opposed to 40% of the non-certified planters (Figure 23). The effects of the improved labour conditions extend more broadly

to other stakeholders in the industry, such as millers and contractors who service the certified SPOs, providing evidence of beneficial Fairtrade impacts beyond just the certified SPOs. Despite this, labour shortages remain a critical challenge for all planters and the need for mechanisation is seen as core to the ability of the industry to sustain itself into the future. What this means for small planters on land unsuitable for mechanisation is unclear but requires further future consideration.

Question 2: What has been the impact of Fairtrade on the institutional governance of certified SPOs and the sugar cane industry in Mauritius?

The reliance on the SPO boards for the implementation of the Fairtrade standards can be seen as both a blessing and a curse.

By focusing the efforts through the existing governance structures, internalisation of capability is encouraged. Indeed, the governance abilities and performance of certified SPOs has improved significantly in their time under Fairtrade certification, as reported by 98% of small planters. Indeed, **Fairtrade has significantly boosted the capability of certified SPOs to effectively govern, lead, and support their members.** Fairtrade has enabled the shift in role of SPO boards from simply paying the SPO members for their sugar, to a more dynamic institution through which support services are provided, and key records are documented and managed. The sense of participation, empowerment, and equality among members has grown, attracting new members to SPOs as a result. Other improvements include increased meeting attendance and effective information sharing within the SPOs, resulting in increased participation of women both within the SPO and on their farming operations across most certified SPOs. **However, without the additional reinforcement of external support, the degree of change enabled within the SPOs is limited, and SPO leadership shows many areas for future efficiency improvements. Furthermore, the limited involvement of women and youth in the leadership throughout the community remains an ongoing challenge.**

A sense of international support is felt by small planters through the Fairtrade membership and certification. However, the SPOs still express a need for greater levels of support from FI and Fairtrade Africa to implement the standards. Mauritian stakeholders view the standards to be continually rising at an unrealistic rate, with little indication of the direction in which it will move. This makes the actions of the SPOs and industry players more reactionary than proactive. Stakeholders therefore express a desire for greater communication regarding the future changes to the standards, as well as the request for more direct 'on the ground' support.

Furthermore, the effects of Fairtrade in the context of a robust industry, as is seen in Mauritius, are likely to have had a greater overall positive impact on the small planters, and certified and non-certified producers alike, due to the willingness of stakeholders to collaborate and build on the work of Fairtrade. Especially as in the case of Mauritius where the efforts are largely aligned, and the institutional framework is robust relative to other sugar producing nations. In the same vein, a key area for improvement is the potential to foster more deliberate instances of collaboration, both among the different SPOs and to encourage greater strategic alignment of stakeholder interests for more effective use of resources. This is particularly visible with respect to the challenge of SPO decertification, and the need for a more centralised and proactive efforts to support the various SPOs in need.

The decertification of SPOs consistently presented itself as one of the most pressing issues within the existing governance processes at an industry level. The mistrust and discontent with the engagement with FLOCERT was stark among both SPOs and industry stakeholders, highlighting the need for significant future investment in rectifying the relationship with FLOCERT, and exploring ways to increase the transparency and perceived fairness in the process, as well as looking to better align it with the local context and needs of SPOs.

Finally, the study highlighted several barriers to entry for non-certified SPOs. The barriers can be categorised broadly as financial, governance and knowledge related. For example, SPOs perceive the cost for initial audit and entry process to be high, and many do not have the finances, resources, or knowhow to initiate the process. While the Mauritian government can offer support for these costs, there is limited awareness of this or how to go about it.

Question 3: What has been the impact of the Fairtrade Premium on the operations and viability of certified SPOs?

The study has highlighted just how critical the financial Premium is for the functioning of Fairtrade in Mauritius. The Fairtrade Premium has been an instrumental lifeline for small planters, enabling them to keep farming sugar cane. In doing so, it has supported the ongoing supply of sugar in otherwise unsustainable market conditions. Furthermore, it is the Premium that entices the SPO members to join Fairtrade, as a positive incentive, and further enabler for them to align their practices to the standard in order to qualify for certification.

In the longer term, members demonstrate satisfaction with how the Premium is used across agricultural, environmental, and social initiatives. **The most beneficial agricultural Premium uses are the direct cash**

subsidy (77%), subsidisation of fertilisers and bio-fertilisers (75%), followed by provision of PPE and other field equipment (67%). With respect to environmental benefits, bio-fertiliser provision (78%), incentives for reduction in pesticide use (74%), and incentives for the safe disposal of chemicals (58%) are seen as the top three most effective uses of the Premium (Figure 30). Finally, donations to the elderly (59%), local disabled children (49%), and local school funds (43%), are seen as the most beneficial uses of the Premium for community upliftment.

However, it is also critical that the Fairtrade Premium is not seen as a silver bullet intervention to improve the practices and degree of equity within the sugar value chain. Indeed, rather than acting as a catalyst to support initiatives for additional income and best in class agricultural, environmental, and labour practices, it has become a source of funding simply helping small producers to get by. It appears to halt the decline of small producers, but in no way overcomes the more systemic challenges facing the sugar industry. For example, the major spikes in input price and fluctuating sugar price means that even with the additional Premium and use of better farming practices, sugar cane may not be a viable option for many small planters. Furthermore, the \$60/ton of sugar remains a significant amount to the farmers, but the inflationary nature of costs means that this amount does not go as far as it did when first introduced. This suggests that a review of the Premium value, sugar pricing mechanisms, and additional funding available to farmers should be holistically reviewed to ultimately find a more robust way to ensure small planters are able to keep farming sugar cane.

Question 4: What has been the impact of Fairtrade on the perception of Mauritian sugar cane products on the global market and changes to global market access?

The perception of the Mauritius sugar industry has been impacted by Fairtrade among customers of MSS. In the past 10 years, the number of Fairtrade customers has doubled. And MSS clients also express a positive perception of MSS due to the unique offering of a wide range of speciality products combined with their Fairtrade offering. Existing customers also demonstrate appetite for purchase of greater volumes of Fairtrade sugar. However, the bottleneck remains the lack of volume of certified sugar within Mauritius, which is driven by the volatility of certification brought about by the high rates of decertification.

Additionally, the paradox remains that while customers and consumers show greater interest in traded goods, price remains a limiting factor to the size of the Fairtrade market. Indeed, customers still report

that price is the biggest challenge when securing Fairtrade sugar for consumers. In this sense, while it is the Fairtrade Premium which acts as a powerful source of funding through which small planters are able to maintain the higher standards set by Fairtrade, as well as provide the desperately needed additional income, it is this very payment which restricts the further expansion of Fairtrade's reach.

The lack of awareness among customers regarding the positive impacts of Fairtrade was highlighted as a key area for improvement.

Customers show a strong appetite for stories and statistics on the usage of the Fairtrade Premium, which can then be communicated with customers. The larger customers also demonstrate an appetite for more collaboration on specific projects which align with their sustainability targets. Therefore, while the image of MSS has been supported by Fairtrade, there are clear opportunities to enhance this further, and potentially maximise the reach of Fairtrade both locally and globally.

5.2 Future recommendations

Recommendations which emerge from the study extend from boarder principles for Fairtrade interactions to more targeted projects which Fairtrade could facilitate. At the core of these, is the opportunity for more transparency and collaborative efforts among stakeholders to maximise the effectiveness of existing resources, complemented with additional on the ground support to SPOs where possible.

Recommendations for key stakeholders are as follows:

Fairtrade

- ▶ **Review and clarify the (primarily labour) standards internally to ensure they meet contextual considerations.** Clarification on the application of specific labour requirements of the SPO standards with the objective to understand the global intention of the standard requirement and the local interpretation of certain requirements in line with audits in other sugar producing countries.
 - In conjunction with this, and to ensure SPOs are not negatively impacted in the coming year's audits, Fairtrade can provide refresher training on the standards, and the SPOs can collaborate with Fairtrade to ensure all requirements are met.

- ▶ **Commission a review of the audit outcomes over the past 5 years and compare with audits in other countries.** The review will investigate alignment of the FLOCERT auditing process and outcomes in Mauritius relative to the Fairtrade global standards in other sugar regions¹⁴, while potentially also addressing the need for additional support and/or interpretation notes to better align to the context and needs of SPOs. Key points include aligning to and clarifying the requirement on labour standards and adapting the local interpretation for meeting attendance during an audit.
 - The report should be used to guide key industry supporting partners, including FTA, MSS, and MSIRI to better resource themselves to support SPOs across Mauritius.
- ▶ **Increase the communication surrounding, and accessibility to Fairtrade standards to reduce future barriers for SPOs wishing to certify, and to reduce risk of future decertification.** This should be targeted toward existing and prospective certified SPOs and external partners.
 - Incentivise first time certification through increased awareness of the benefits to SPOs and provide access to additional resourcing support mechanisms in partnership with key stakeholders including MSS, donors, and government.
- ▶ **Review the financial support mechanisms available to SPOs including the Fairtrade Premium, to correct for higher inputs costs and economic shocks, and to enable planters to stay in business.** Fairtrade financial support mechanisms alone cannot be seen as the solution to low income, so any solutions should be considered in the context of multi-stakeholder arrangements which build the financial resilience of the planters at a more systemic level. Potential solutions include:
 - **Fairtrade (FI and/or FTA) could independently as well as jointly raise funds or invest available funds in areas agreed to be of need.**
 - **Fairtrade could explore fundraising opportunities and potential collaborations with other aligned international organisations and/or customers willing to invest in their suppliers, to mobilise additional funds and resources for SPOs and simultaneously minimise duplication of efforts.**

¹⁴ <https://www.flocert.net/solutions/fairtrade/how-it-works>

- Leverage the additional funding for capital investment targeted toward specific projects, which build economic and environmental resilience. Funding of this nature could, amongst others, support irrigation repairs, and machinery purchase to overcome the decline in labour availability.
- Additional support provision should be made to ensure the suitable physical and financial management of the assets to maximise value from any investment.
- **Explore equitable sharing mechanisms for the value derived from existing and future income diversification efforts** e.g., from sales of Fairtrade rum and ethanol.
- **Explore additional financial protection mechanisms to reduce risk and build resilience for the SPOs**, potentially in collaboration with development finance institutions or other partners. These may support existing or new industry instruments. One example is to 'fill in the gaps' in the current crop insurance system¹⁵ to provide an additional safety net, such as in the case where specific geographic regions may not qualify for insurance pay-outs but are still negatively affected by environmental shocks.
- ▶ **Develop policies and/or initiatives that help to overcome the risk of labour shortages for Fairtrade planters**, such as through providing additional financial incentive for labourers.
- ▶ **Facilitate the consolidation of SPO efforts to achieve governance, financial, and efficiency gains and enable greater resilience for the SPOs in the face of increased economic and environmental shocks.** Furthermore, encouraging certification of new SPOs with generally larger member numbers and collective land size could increase the sustainability for the Fairtrade market, as well as increase the collaboration between farmers who depend on farming as their sole source of income and smaller SPOs for whom farming alone is not sustainable (and often provides a supplementary income only).
- **Consolidation may be through formally combining existing SPO structures, or through more targeted collaboration efforts among the separate SPOs as they currently stand. The recommendation is paired with a need for caution and the use of exemplary participatory facilitation processes** to ensure that the existing socio-political dynamics within and between

¹⁵ <https://www.sifb.mu/about-sifb/>

the SPOs, which have acted as a barrier to the consolidation of efforts to date, are appropriately incorporated. Hence, an inclusive, participatory approach will be critical to create a sense of ownership and willingness for the change among the SPOs.

- The potential benefits of the consolidation include the pooling of leadership capabilities, resources and buying power for the SPOs. FTA would be an ideal partner to facilitate a pilot project to trial such a transition.

Fairtrade Africa (FTA)

- ▶ **Support to increase ‘on the ground’ resources and presence** to better support the SPO leadership to implement the Fairtrade standards effectively and to support in the implementation of the above recommendations made to FI.
- ▶ **Facilitate more interactive and engaging refresher trainings on key governance, labour, and Premium usage processes to ensure all members within the certified SPOs have a clear understanding of the Fairtrade standards.** This will enable even further uptake in the good governance and GAPs already seen.
- ▶ **Facilitate more effective best practice sharing between SPOs on the adoption of GAPs and governance practices, and on effective uses of the Fairtrade Premium.** With respect to the latter, examples in which SPOs have leveraged the Premium (and other) funds to **invest in diversification of income and/or livelihood strategies.**
- ▶ **Increase the participation of women and youth in key positions and decision-making processes in SPOs.** To do so, address barriers that currently hold women and youth back from participating.
 - **Potential interventions for women inclusion:** more suitable timing of meetings to accommodate for women’s typical schedules, create dedicated speaking times or spaces for women planters in the SPO, skilled facilitation to regulate the contribution of different members within a meeting or workshop.
 - **Potential interventions for youth inclusion:** Create financial incentives for youth involvement in the industry, potentially through higher skilled and more engaging jobs, and create more global networking opportunities through Fairtrade.

FLOCERT

- ▶ **Review the exception made to the rotation of auditors** due to the high degree of dissatisfaction among SPOs with the local auditor most frequently used¹⁶.
- ▶ **Create a high-level annual report, which summarises the key challenges faced by the audited SPOs for FI, FTA, and MSS with respect to maintaining certification.** A national level FLOCERT report would keep SPO identity confidential, as is a necessary part of the existing audit process design. In the case that it is not in the normal portfolio of FLOCERT, it could be provided as an additional paid service.

SPO leadership

- ▶ **Increase efforts to collaborate among SPOs to pool existing resources and leverage both resources and knowledge for a more proactive approach to supporting SPO members.** For example, through direct access to funding and resources, exposure to beneficial projects, or knowledge sharing.
- ▶ **Invest in tools to maximise the efficiency of existing management and leadership responsibilities.** For example, explore more effective ways of communicating with SPO members, and increase rapid or instant access to farm business records and/or payments for SPO members.

MSS

- ▶ **Support the co-ordination of large-scale multi-stakeholder projects funded through Fairtrade and other external investment sources, as a trusted and unbiased partner.**
- ▶ **In collaboration with the Ministry of Cooperatives, coordinate the review of existing SPO structures, to facilitate consolidation of SPOs.** However, this process must be fully participatory and remain culturally sensitive for any future SPO governance system to be sustainable .
- ▶ **Increase communication and marketing efforts locally to raise awareness of the MSS and Fairtrade brands and build interest among Mauritian citizens in the local sugar industry.** This has the

¹⁶ FLOCERT works with a world-wide network of auditors. However, it is not viable to have several auditors in every possible location. Thus, FLOCERT uses a mix of local auditors and non-local auditors. In general, the selection of auditors follows a rotating scheme, but allows for exceptions.

potential to increase the interest in the sugar cane industry among youth and to open a local market for Fairtrade products among the growing middle class.

- ▶ **Increase communication of the benefits of Fairtrade for SPOs with existing and potential new Fairtrade customers.** The findings of the report can be used to do this in the first instance, but frequent updates on the benefits to SPOs, with both regular stories and industry wide statistics of the benefits will also be beneficial.

Government

- ▶ **Develop an industry-wide small planter mechanisation and labour transition plan, differentiated for each region or community to account for the variety of opportunities and geographic constraints.** The plan should encompass locally relevant ways to overcome the labour shortages and support the development of higher skilled jobs to attract youth interest.
- ▶ **Improve the communication and accessibility of existing financial support mechanisms available to current and prospective certified SPOs to allow more SPOs to benefit from existing support mechanisms available.**

Customers

- ▶ **Explore collaborative partnerships and funding models in with Fairtrade and other international partners to provide additional support and financial assistance to the SPOs, in addition to the existing Premium.** This can be specifically designed and targeted to meet existing targets set by the customer for more sustainable sourcing, for example to support SPOs to become more 'climate smart' by reducing the GHG emissions and building climate resilience.
- ▶ **Explore the possibility of supporting SPOs to receive additional payment for the provision of ecosystem services within the customer's value chain , in line with the rapidly evolving market for carbon and other ecosystem provisions.**

These findings and recommendations provide detailed feedback to FI, FTA and MSS on the impacts of Fairtrade, and areas for potential improvements. The report is also designed to be shared with customers, consumers, as well as planters in Mauritius and around the world, to provide a more informed understanding of the benefits of Fairtrade within the sugar industry.

5.3 Closing remarks

The aim of this report was to provide detailed feedback to FI, MSS, and other industry stakeholders on the impacts and possible improvements for Fairtrade in the Mauritius sugar sector. The report will also serve as a reference guide for SPOs, and the positive results prepared as an accompanying presentation and leaflet for MSS as a marketing tool. In addition to this, the report has been designed such that the findings can be shared with customers, consumers, and planters both in Mauritius and around the world, as well as communication tools for the use of MSS to support the sales of Fairtrade sugar to benefit sugar cane producers . The sharing of knowledge within the report will provide a more informed understanding of the benefits of Fairtrade, and the potential impact of individuals' actions within the bigger global food system in which Fairtrade and Mauritian sugar cane farmers operate in. Fairtrade has been demonstrated to be a highly useful tool in Mauritius, enabling not only a significant injection of additional income to small planters, but also in influencing fairer and more transparent practices for sustainable sugar cane production. While this is the case, the limitations of Fairtrade, as a voluntary sustainability standard must also be recognised. The continuing challenges faced by the Mauritius sugar sector, and specifically the certified SPOs, highlight the need for a much wider multi-stakeholder approach to making global sugar value chains more equitable and sustainable. The broader advocacy role taken by Fairtrade in this regard is indeed a positive start, and in addition to the specific recommendations above, the role of Fairtrade in facilitating more systemic changes is something to be explored further. For this to be successful, commitment of key stakeholders, from governments and corporations to planters and consumers as engaged citizens will be necessary.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Sub-questions posed by FI in the terms of reference

Overall objective

Over the period of certification of roughly 10 years, has Fairtrade been a useful tool in assuring the economic sustainability of small farmers growing¹¹ cane and how has Fairtrade certification impacted the image¹² of Mauritius as a sugar producing origin and a seller of Fairtrade certified sugar.

The assessment will provide answers to the following questions and summarize whether the overall objective had been met:

To what extent have the Fairtrade production, business, social & environmental standards & certification driven change in producing Fairtrade sugar/cane at Fairtrade small farmer level with regards to sustainable production & economic sustainability?

Sub questions:

1.1. What kind of overall change (competitiveness, clean cane campaigns?) in the field of cane sugar production and environmental practices can be attributed to the Fairtrade standards and interventions¹³?

1.1.1. What is the effect of the use of chemical inputs (fertilizers, herbicides, etc) on the productivity of sugar cane production (that had been financed by Premium?)

1.1.2. Are there any specific Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) including organic practices of which the adoption can be attributed to the Fairtrade standards? If so, what GAPs and what are the impacts of those GAPs?

1.1.3. What kind of changes (e.g., on soil erosion, production on mountainous areas, coastal zones) were brought about by compliance with the environmental criteria in the production section of the Fairtrade SPO Standards? Please mention, whether this is due to adoption of standards, or interventions like trainings, information sharing and if so, by whom those were supplied.

1.2. What kind of changes can be attributed by the first set of trainings on the Good Labour Practices Program¹⁴, and compliance with the labour criteria in the production section of the Fairtrade SPO standards? If due to interventions like trainings, information sharing, please identify by whom those were supplied.

1.3. What are the demonstrable impacts of Fairtrade (versus non-Fairtrade at comparable¹⁵ small farmer level) with regards to economic sustainability of cane planters ensuring they were able to continue to grow cane vs significant land abandonment over the last 10 years in Mauritius. *Increased abandoning of land previously under cane is a significant challenge for Mauritius as a sugar cane producer.*

To which extent have the Fairtrade Standards impacted the way cooperatives operate in Mauritius?

Sub questions:

2.1. How have Fairtrade standards & interventions impacted internal operations of Fairtrade certified SPOs (with a focus on governance, interactions of members & management)?

2.2. What has been the notable change or the value addition of Fairtrade certification within Mauritius and globally - at community, neighbouring cane farmers, sugar factories, research institutes, government, MSS and globally towards buyers, other Fairtrade producers?

2.3. How has Fairtrade sugar from Mauritius from Fairtrade certified entities (SPOs & MSS) impacted the image of Mauritius as a Fairtrade certified origin both within the country as well as in the eyes of other sugar producer origins and global buyers?

To which extent did the Fairtrade Premium investment (paid to the coops for Fairtrade sugar sold by the MSS to Fairtrade buyers) contribute to the economic sustainability and sustainable sugar cane farming in Mauritius?

Sub questions:

3.1 What kind of impact can be attributed to the Fairtrade Premium investment in making sugar cane cultivation in Mauritius more economically sustainable?

3.1.2. Where the Premium had been used to top up the cane/sugar price, please compare FT with FT and/or non-FT farms, who don't offer this service, and what kind of impact derived of this measure?

3.2. What is the notable impact in increasing production financed by the Premium in the execution of GAPs? (The research team would be asked to list the most successful investments and provide evidence of their successful and the difference they make in comparison to a counterfactual case).

3.3 What are the most successful examples of how Premium investments have driven change at 1) agricultural, 2) environmental and 3) social

(community) level? (The research team would be asked to list the most successful example per category and provide evidence of why they were chosen to be successful). Is there a notable positive pattern to demonstrate the evolution or learnings with regards to the Premium investment over the period of certification?

3.4 Comparing Mauritius' position as a seller of SUGAR before and after Fairtrade certification, how has access to Fairtrade certified sugar impacted Mauritius as a seller of sugar towards clients? Has Fairtrade brought the Mauritians into segments that they weren't previously in – including MSS' role as an exporter of Fairtrade sugar?

3.5 How has Fairtrade certification impacted the role of MSS as global exporter, as well as potential joint efforts of the sector & government for their (and what kind of) engagement towards driving Fairtrade certification up to successfully selling Fairtrade sugar?

Appendix B

Household survey questions

I. IDENTIFICATION PANEL (ALL)

1	Date of interview	Select date from calendar
2	Location of interview	Take GPS location
3	Enumerator (Select ONE only)	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
4	Regional Cluster (Select ONE only)	1. North 2. South 3. East Centre/East
5	Sugar Producer Organization (SPO) (Select ONE only)	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
6	How many years have you been a member of this cooperative?	Number of years:
7	Sugar mill delivered to	1. ALTEO 2. Omnicane 3. Terra

II. RESPONDENT INFORMATION (ASK ALL)

8	Name of respondent	1. [Give full name]
9	Gender of respondent	1. Male 2. Female
10	Age of respondent	1. [Give exact figure]
11	Age category of respondent (Note: not to be asked directly, enumerator to score based on answer to previous question)	1. 18-35 2. 36- 60 years 3. Older than 60 years

12	Relationship to the head of household	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head of household 2. Spouse 3. Son 4. Daughter 5. Father 6. Mother 7. Grandson 8. Granddaughter 9. Son-in-law 10. Daughter-in-law 11. Other [please specify]
13	Marital status of respondent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single 2. Married/Common Law Union 3. Divorced or Separated 4. Widowed
14	Level of education of respondent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No schooling 2. Incomplete primary school 3. Completed primary school 4. Incomplete secondary school 5. Completed secondary school 6. Incomplete tertiary 7. Completed tertiary
14	How many persons live in your household? [Members of a household live in the same dwelling or compound. They eat together and share common resources such as electricity, water, etc. They need not be related by blood or marriage]	[Please specify]
15	Is sugar cane farming your MAIN occupation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No
16	Other MAIN occupation of respondent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Other farming [please specify] 2. Government worker 3. Private sector worker [please specify] 4. Business/Sales [please specify] 5. Other [please specify]
17	What percentage of your working hours do you dedicate to cane farming activities?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 0-25% 2. 25-50% 3. 50-75% 4. 75-100%

III. DECISION MAKING (ASK ALL)

18	Do you consider yourself or another individual to be the primary decision-maker on your farm?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, myself [GO TO 21] 2. No, someone else [GO TO 19] 3. No, Shared decision-making [GO TO 20]
19	If "No, someone else" then who is the primary decision-maker on your farm?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spouse 2. Parent 3. Child 4. Sibling 5. Other family member [please specify] 6. Non-family member [please specify]
20	If decision-making is shared, who do you share decision-making with? (Select ALL that apply)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spouse 2. Parent 3. Child 4. Sibling 5. Other family member [please specify] 6. Non-family member [please specify]

IV. SUGAR CANE FARMS (ASK ALL)

Land		
21	How long has your household been farming sugar cane?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less than five years 2. Between 5 and 10 years 3. More than 10 years 4. More than 20 years
22	How many hectares of land does the household have in total?	[Please specify]
23	How many hectares are under sugar cane cultivation?	[Please specify]
24	How did your household acquire/get access to the land under sugar cane cultivation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inherited 2. Purchased 3. Leased/allocated by government 4. Cash rented 5. Sharecropped 6. Borrowed for free 7. Cleared and occupied/Squatting 8. Other access [please specify] 9.
25	What is the elevation of land under cultivation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High elevation 2. Low elevation

26	What is the gradient of the land under cultivation?	1. Flat land 2. Gradual slope 3. Very steep slope
27	How much rainfall does the land under cultivation receive?	1. Very little rainfall 2. Right amount of rainfall 3. Too much rainfall 4. Fluctuates between too much and too little
28	Is your coop supported by a government led irrigation project? E.g. the Northern Plains Irrigation Project in Mauritius (NPIP)	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
29	Is your sugar cane under irrigation?	1. Yes- all 2. Yes- some 3. No- rainfed (Skip to 31)
30	What irrigation system do you use?	1. Overhead sprinkler 2. Overhead pivot 3. Drip irrigation 4. Other (please specify)
31	Do you see yourself continuing to farm sugar cane for at least the next 5 years?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
32	Are there any reasons why you may no longer grow sugar cane in the next 5 years? [Select ALL that apply, DO NOT READ OUT CHOICES]	1. Competing interests (i.e. tourism, housing, other types of agriculture, and other developments) 2. Environmental impacts (erosion, flooding, being too close to the sea, etc.) 3. Financial issues (foreclosure from banks, need to sell to cover emergency expenses, etc.) 4. Other [please specify]
Understanding your business		
33	Have your yields increased over the last 3 years?	1. Yes- increased 2. No- decreased 3. No- remained the same
34	Are there reasons for any changes in yields over the past 3 years?	[Please specify]
35	How satisfied are you with your yields?	1. Highly satisfied 2. Somewhat satisfied 3. Not so satisfied 4. Unsatisfied
36	From results of your sugar cane being tested in the field or at the mill, how does the sucrose content rate?	1. High 2. Medium 3. Low 4. Don't know results of testing

37	Has the total income that you have received from sugar cane increased in the last 3 years?	1. Yes- increased 2. No- decreased 3. No- remained the same
38	Are there reasons for any changes in income from sugar cane in the last 3 years?	[please describe]
39	What percentage of your household income currently comes from sugar cane farming?	1. 0-25% 2. 25-50% 3. 50-75% 4. 75-100% 5. I don't know
40	Has the income from sugar cane been enough to cover agriculture expenses?	1. Yes, and money is leftover for other household expenses 2. Yes, just enough to cover 3. No, not enough to cover
Youth and succession planning		
41	Is there anyone (besides yourself) in your household/family who has shown interest in joining the sugar cane farming business in the future?	1. Yes 2. No [GO TO 40]
42	Do the interested individuals include anyone under the age of 35?	1. Yes 2. No
43	In cases where there is no interest, why aren't individuals under 35 interested in taking over the family sugar farming operations?	[Please describe why]
Satisfaction with sugar as a crop		
Answer the extent to which you agree with each of the following:		
44	"I grow sugar cane because it gets a better price than other crops"	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
45	"I would plant more sugar cane if I had more land and/or labour available to me"	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
46	"I have to grow sugar cane, even when the price is low and costs are high, since no better alternative exists"	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
47	"I grow sugar cane because it is part of our culture"	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Impact of climate change on sugar production		
48	In the last five years, have you noticed any changes in the local climate, environment, or growing conditions, which have affected your farm business?	1. Yes 2. No [GO TO 49]

49	Which changes have been the most dominant? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Higher temperatures 2. Lower temperatures 3. More rainfall in total 4. Less rainfall in total 5. Changes in the timing of the rains 6. More frequent cyclones 7. Increased soil Erosion 8. Higher Sea Level and farms flooded 9. Other [please specify] <p>.....</p>
50	Have any climate events affected your sugar cane crop in the last 3 years? (These could include droughts, floods, cyclones etc.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cyclone 2. Drought 3. Flood 4. Other (please specify) <p>.....</p>
51	Have you thought about undertaking any strategies to adapt to climate change? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Installing irrigation 2. Installing drainage 3. Planting more resilient cane varieties 4. Changing the timing of my harvest 5. No, I have not thought about it 6. Other (please specify) <p>.....</p>

V. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FAIRTRADE (ASK FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED ONLY)

52	Have you received any training on the Fairtrade Standards?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No [GO TO 52]
53	Who carried out the training sessions that you have attended? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cooperatives/Societies 2. Government agency 3. Fairtrade agent 4. Consultant 5. Other [Please specify] 6. 7. I am not sure
54	Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, how often have you attended training courses on Fairtrade Standards and other related training?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least once a month 2. At least once a year 3. It has been over a year since I attended any training session.

55	Other than training sessions, are there any other mechanisms by which you have been exposed to information on the Fairtrade standards?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, from one-to-one interactions with another member of my SPO 2. Yes, via information sharing at the at the AGM 3. Yes, via info sharing at other non-training linked SPO events 4. Yes, via direct access to the Fairtrade standards 5. Yes, via info sharing from my extension officer 6. Yes, via printed or online material (flyer, poster, newsletter, email etc) 7. No, I have received no additional exposure
56	What have you learnt about the Fairtrade Standard general requirements as it relates to cooperatives (SPOs)? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a limit on the size of cultivated land (i.e. 30 or less hectares, exception of 15% of membership allowed up to 100 hectares); at least 66% must be small scale producers. 2. At least 50% of volume sold as Fairtrade produce must come from small scale producers. 3. Payments are made as per the revenue sharing model in Mauritius. 4. Announced and unannounced audits can be conducted. 5. The SPO must be legally registered, keep records of commercialization, and financial statements. 6. The decision to join Fairtrade was a democratic and informed decision taken by the general assembly. 7. The SPO must be in compliance with national legislation (cooperative act of 2016). 8. All production and sales of Fairtrade produce must be properly documented. 9. Contracts/agreements must be signed with SPOs and SPOs must honour all contracts must be honoured parties agree to changes. 10. The SPO can be decertified for any non-compliances. 11. Other 12. None

57	What have you learnt about production practices as it relates to the Fairtrade Standard? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Where it leads to more secure incomes, the Fairtrade Premium can be invested in activities which increase productivity and quality2. SPOs must train their members in integrated pest management3. SPOs must train their members on awareness of risks, and safe handling, storage and disposal of pesticides and other hazardous chemicals4. SPOs must ensure that all members and workers wear PPEs.5. SPOs must train their members on the efficient and proper use of fertilizers and alternate ways to improve soil fertility.6. SPOs must train their members on water management practices.7. SPOs must responsibly manage waste disposal8. Other9. None
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58	<p>What have you learnt about how the Fairtrade Premium should be invested by your SPO? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fairtrade Premium is a sum of money, in addition to the price, paid into a communal fund for farmers to improve their social, economic, and environmental conditions. 2. The use of this additional income is decided on and managed democratically by the small scale farmer organization. 3. The cooperative general assembly (GA) has the final say on how the Premium is invested 4. The investment of the Fairtrade Premium is based on a needs assessment 5. The needs assessment is adequately communicated with SPO members 6. The needs assessment is used to inform the Fairtrade Development Plan 7. All the activities that are planned to be used with the Fairtrade Premium are first documented in the Fairtrade Development Plan before they are implemented. 8. The investment of the Fairtrade Premium is agreed after the Fairtrade Development plan has been invested at the AGM 9. Other 10. None
59	<p>What have you learnt about the Fairtrade Standard as it applies to labour conditions? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SPO must not tolerate discrimination, abuse, gender-based violence, 2. The SPO must not tolerate forced labour, and child labour. 3. The SPO must allow workers to be members of labour organizations / trade unions / worker committees without fear of repercussions 4. Workers must have access to clean drinking water, and hand-washing facilities. 5. Records of labourer's hours worked and payments made to them should be kept 6. Depending on the number of workers and status of employment etc Workers are to be paid equitably, on regular basis, and in legal tender. 7. Other 8. None

VI. EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF FAIRTRADE INTERVENTIONS ON PRODUCTION (ASK FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED ONLY)

60	Have you or a member of your household received any training or assistance with farm practices or technologies training that was funded by the Fairtrade Premium?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No [GO TO 65] 3. I don't know [GO TO 65]
61	Which of the following areas of training or assistance did you or member of your household receive? [Check as many as apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fertilizers 2. Herbicides 3. Replanting 4. Pest control 5. Production Indicator Report 6. Organic farming practices 7. Irrigation practices 8. Other: [please specify]
62	Which areas of training that you received were you able to effectively apply the knowledge gained about farm practices and technologies to your fields? [Check as many as apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fertilizers 2. Herbicides 3. Replanting 4. Pest control 5. Production Indicator Report 6. Organic farming practices 7. Irrigation practices 8. Other: [please specify] 9. None
63	If NONE, why were you not able to apply the farm practices and technologies for which training and assistance was provided?	Text answer:
64	Will you continue to use the farm practices and technologies that you learnt through these trainings?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, will use all 2. Yes, will use some 3. Not sure which ones 4. No

65	Which of the following production impacts were you able to see by applying knowledge gained and technologies to your fields? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improved crop yields (more metric tonnes cane per hectare) 2. Improved sugar content of cane (TC/TS) 3. More cane land has been planted 4. Old fields have been restored and are producing again 5. Increased access to better quality agro-inputs (seeds, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides etc.) 6. Reduced cost of agro-inputs (seeds, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, etc.) 7. More effective use of agro-inputs 8. Increased agriculture profits 9. Reduced need to borrow for cane fields 10. Other 11. None
66	Of all the interventions which Fairtrade has encouraged for your sugar cane production, which top three interventions have been the most important to your farm? (Select the TOP THREE)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fertiliser Training and Technical Assistance 2. Herbicide Training and Technical Assistance 3. Replanting 4. Pest Control 5. Other [please specify]
67	How important was access to the Fairtrade Premium in enabling you to implement these interventions?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Premium was critical to fund all the interventions 2. The Premium was required to fund part of the cost of the interventions 3. The Premium assisted, but was not necessary for us to implement the interventions 4. The Premium was not used to fund the interventions

VII. EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF FAIRTRADE ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND MANAGEMENT OF FARMERS COOPERATIVES/SOCIETIES (ASK ALL)

Perception/awareness of association and branch activities		
68	Did your cooperative/society arrange any meetings with members at cooperative/society level in the 12 months prior to the Covid19 pandemic, before February 2020?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No [GO TO 69] 3. I don't know [GO TO 69]
69	If YES, how many meetings were arranged?	[please specify]
70	If YES, how many meetings did you or a member of your household you attend?	[please specify]
71	How are you currently kept informed of the cooperative's/society's decisions? Select all that apply.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verbally by the society/ cooperative's staff 2. By printed bulletin/flyer 3. By radio or television 4. Text message/WhatsApp 5. At the AGM 6. At trainings 7. At other meetings 8. Other

VIII. EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF FAIRTRADE ON WORKING AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS (ASK ALL)

General Labour Conditions		
72	Who employs the workers that work on your sugar cane farms? (select all that apply)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The sugar cane farmer 2. The cooperative (SPO) 3. Service providers/contractors
73	On what basis are workers employed? (select all that apply)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fulltime 2. Part-time 3. Seasonal 4. Casual/ ad-hoc
74	How frequently are workers paid?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weekly 2. Bi-weekly (every 2 weeks) 3. Monthly 4. Piece-work (upon completion of tasks)
75	How are worker's social security contributions paid?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By the sugar cane farmer 2. By the service provider/contractor 3. By the worker 4. Don't know

76	For which services do YOU hire people to work in your sugar cane business who are paid by YOU directly? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management 2. Book-keeping and accounts 3. Planting 4. Weeding 5. Fertiliser and herbicide application 6. Cutting green cane 7. Driving / loading / delivery 8. Use of modern technology (internet, computer, digitalization) 9. Other [please specify] <p>.....</p>
77	For what timeframe are workers hired?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Up to one week at a time 2. Up to one month at a time 3. On a seasonal basis 4. As permanent staff
78	In what areas of the business do members of your household participate? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management 2. Book-keeping and accounts 3. Planting 4. Weeding 5. Fertiliser and herbicide application 6. Cane cutting 7. Driving / loading / delivery 8. Use of modern technology (internet, computer, digitalization) 9. Other [please specify]
79	In which of the following activities of your sugar cane business do any female members of your household participate? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management 2. Book-keeping and accounts 3. Planting 4. Weeding 5. Fertiliser and herbicide application 6. Cane cutting 7. Driving / loading / delivery 8. Use of modern technology (internet, computer, digitalization) 9. Other [please specify] <p>.....</p>
Worker Safety		
80	Which of the following protective clothing or equipment does your farm / cooperative (SPO) have access to? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boots 2. Gloves 3. Raincoats 4. Masks 5. Goggles 6. Shin guards 7. First Aid kits 8. Other [Specify] <p>.....</p>

81	How is the protective clothing and equipment distributed?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The farm owner keeps, maintains, and distributes clothing and equipment to the workers when needed. 2. The cooperative (SPO) keeps, maintains, and distributes clothing and equipment to the workers when needed. 3. The workers keep and maintain the clothing and equipment. 4. Other [specify]
82	How do your workers rate the quality and effectiveness of the protective clothing and equipment? [Focus Group with workers]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High 2. Medium 3. Low
83	What percentage of your workers willingly use protective clothing and equipment?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 75 to 100% 2. 50 to 75% 3. 25 to 50% 4. 0-25%
Forced Labour		
84	Are you aware of what 'forced labour' is?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes 2. No [GO TO 86]
85	From whom did you learn about forced labour? [Select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government agency 2. Farmers' Cooperative/Society 3. Consultant 4. Fairtrade 5. Other [please specify]
86	Which of the following statements do you understand as a form of forced labour on the farm? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People work involuntarily 2. People work under the threat of physical punishment 3. People work under substandard conditions 4. Workers movements are restricted 5. Workers identity documents are withheld 6. Workers' wages are withheld 7. Workers are forced into fraudulent debt 8. Workers are prevented from expressing their views or filing complaints 9. Workers cannot quit the job whenever they desire. 10. Other [Specify]

Provision of water for workers		
87	Do you and members of your society/ cooperative ensure that workers have clean drinking water while working in the fields?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, we provide water in the fields 2. No, workers are responsible for taking their own water
88	Overall, do you think labour conditions for workers in your fields have improved, remained the same, or worsened since Fairtrade?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes- improved greatly 2. Yes- improved somewhat 3. Remained much the same 4. No- conditions have worsened

IX: PROJECTS/PROGRAMMES FUNDED BY THE Fairtrade Premium (ASK FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED ONLY)

89	What have been the most effective uses of the Premium on agricultural practices that have benefited your household and/or workers (if any)? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subsidy (cash incentive) per ton of cane 2. Incentive to harvest green cane 3. Provision of bio fertilizer 4. Provision of field equipment for members and workers 5. Provision of machinery for agricultural use 6. Provision of PPE for working in the field 7. Provision of PPE during COVID 8. Other (please specify)
90	What has been the most effective use of the Premium on improvements to the environment that have benefited your household and/or workers (if any)? [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manual weeding 2. Green trash blanketing 3. Reduction in pesticide use 4. Provision of bio fertilizer 5. Plantation of vetiver and muguet on slopes and/or by canals 6. Integrated pest management 7. Incentive for safe disposal of chemical 8. Other (please specify)
91	Have the agriculture and environmentally oriented programmes run by Fairtrade had a positive impact on your community?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very positive 2. Somewhat positive 3. No impact 4. Somewhat negative 5. Very negative

92	<p>What has been the most effective use of the Premium on contributions towards the community that have benefited your household and/ or workers (if any)? E.g. education, social programmes, or community programmes [Multiple choice: select ALL that apply]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low-cost loans 2. End of year bonus 3. Food hampers 4. Assistance for education 5. Donation for disabled children 6. Donation for elderly 7. Leisure activities for workers 8. Sports and youth activities 9. Cultural activities 10. Medical check-ups 11. Death/funeral grant 12. Other [please specify] <p>.....</p>
93	<p>Have the social and community-oriented programmes run by Fairtrade had a positive impact on your community?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Very positive 2. Somewhat positive 3. No impact 4. Somewhat negative 5. Very negative
94	<p>Would you suggest any additional programmes or initiatives that may be relevant to you and your community, but are not offered?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low-cost loans 2. End of year bonus 3. Food hampers 4. Assistance for education 5. Donation for disabled children 6. Donation for elderly 7. Leisure activities for workers 8. Sports and youth activities 9. Cultural activities 10. Medical check-ups 11. Death/funeral grant 12. Other [please specify] <p>.....</p>

X. DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS OF FAIRTRADE (ASK FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED ONLY)

Poverty Reduction: Because of Fairtrade...		
95	My household income has increased due to increased sugar cane production.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
96	My household income has increased due to a 'top up' by the Fairtrade Premium	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
97	My household is more able to pay its monthly bills.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
98	My household has less need to borrow or take out loans.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
99	My household can make additional purchases (i.e., clothing, appliances, vehicles, etc.).	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
100	My household has savings at a bank, credit union, or other financial institution.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
101	My household has been able to improve our dwelling.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Social Impacts: Because of Fairtrade...		
102	My family can send children to pursue higher levels of education.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
103	Cultural activities have been revived and are vibrant in my community.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
104	Assistance has been given to the elderly in my community.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
105	Sports and leisure activities have been supported in my community.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Environmental Impacts: Because of Fairtrade...		
106	Litter from empty agrochemical containers has been reduced.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
107	There is reduced and more efficient use of fertiliser.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure

108	Herbicides that are less harmful to health and the environment have been used.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
109	There is less need for the use of pesticides that may cause harm to people and other organisms.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
110	I have been able to minimise the negative effects of climate change on my farm.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
111	There is less soil erosion due to previously abandoned fields being replanted	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
112	I have a better understanding of the challenges our SPO faces because of the Carbon and Water Footprint study	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Impact on Sustainability: Because of Fairtrade...		
113	The cooperative that I belong to has increased in membership.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
114	My cooperative has become more active and effective in the management of our business affairs.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
115	Total sugar cane production by my cooperative has increased.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
116	My income has diversified as a result of projects financed with Fairtrade e.g. nursery development and other crops	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Impact on Labour Conditions: Because of Fairtrade...		
117	Workers receive better salaries and social security benefits	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
118	Workers use personal protective equipment that reduces exposure to hazardous materials.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
119	Workers benefit from health check-ups and improved nutrition.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
120	Workers are more satisfied with their jobs within the SPO	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Impact on Equity and Empowerment: Because of Fairtrade...		
121	The leadership of my SPO has shown great improvement in overall governance and leadership skills.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure

122	My SPO does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination based on race, religion, age, marital status, disability, HIV/AIDS status, national origin, etc.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
123	Benefits are more equally distributed among cooperative members.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
124	Information is disseminated more effectively to the membership.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
125	Cooperative members have equal say in decision-making processes.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
126	There is a greater involvement of women and youth in the industry.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
127	Women and youth are taking up more leadership roles in the industry.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Impact on Nutritional Security: Because of Fairtrade...		
128	My household can grow or purchase nutritious foods.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
Impacts on Resilience: Because of Fairtrade...		
129	I have been able to withstand environmental shocks like storms, floods, droughts on my fields.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
130	I have been able to withstand pest and disease attacks on my fields.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
131	My family has been able to absorb shocks of unforeseen expenses such as medical bills, breakdown of machinery, etc.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
132	I have been able to absorb the shock of the decrease in world sugar prices.	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
133	I feel that I am better prepared to withstand new shocks that may arise due to training provided by FT	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
134	I feel that I am better prepared to withstand new shocks that may arise due to sharing of good practice with other FT societies within or outside of Mauritius	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure

**XI. NON-FAIRTRADE SPOs & SPOs SEEKING RECERTIFICATION
(ASK NON-FAIRTRADE CERTIFIED ONLY)**

135	Has your cooperative/society been Fairtrade certified in the past?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
136	Are you aware if you cooperative/society is seeking Fairtrade certification or recertification?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
137	Do you support your cooperative/society becoming Fairtrade certified or recertified?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
138	Do you think that if your cooperative/society becomes Fairtrade certified you would be "better off" as a sugar cane farmer?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Not sure
139	What are the reasons you wish your cooperative/society to be certified or recertified?	[Please describe]
140	Do you foresee any barriers to becoming FT certified?	[Please describe]

THIS IS THE END OF THIS INTERVIEW. DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.

Appendix C

Client survey

Questions:

Introduction																					
1. As a representative of one of MSS's valued Fairtrade sugar clients, what is your job role within this organisation?	Text answer																				
2. Per year, how much sugar do you procure from Mauritius, in total?	Number entry (tons)																				
Fairtrade																					
3. Do you procure Fairtrade certified sugar from other origins than Mauritius?	Yes/No																				
4. Of your total Fairtrade sugar purchases, approximately what percentage comes from Mauritius?	Number entry (percentage)																				
5. What comes to mind when you think of Fairtrade?	Text answer																				
6. Why do you buy Fairtrade certified sugar?	Text answer																				
7. What are the core messages that you share with your customers regarding the benefits of Fairtrade?	Text answer																				
8. How favourably is the Fairtrade label seen by the end consumer to which your products are sold?	Number scale																				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td colspan="5">Poor</td> <td colspan="5">Outstanding</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> </tr> </table>		Poor					Outstanding					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor					Outstanding																
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10												
Mauritian sugar and Fairtrade																					
9. What is your overall impression of Mauritius as a Fairtrade certified origin?	Text answer																				
10. In the last 3 years, on average, how many tons of Fairtrade certified sugar have you procured from Mauritius?	Number entry (tons)																				
11. Which Fairtrade certified sugars do you currently procure from Mauritius? The following are the 5 sugar families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demeraras • Raw sugars • Goldens • White refined • Soft Sugars (Muscovado, Molasses) 	Multiple selection																				
12. Since which year have you been a client of MSS?	Year selection																				
13. Since which year have you been procuring Fairtrade certified sugar from Mauritius?	Year selection																				

<p>14. How does the service you receive from the Mauritian industry (MSS, mills, coops) compare to the average of other origins?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="5">Poor</td> <td colspan="5">Outstanding</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> </tr> </table> <p>Please explain your answer</p>	Poor					Outstanding					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	<p>Number scale Text answer</p>
Poor					Outstanding																
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10												
<p>15. Does Fairtrade certified sugar from Mauritius consistently meet the required standard with respect the reliability of supply?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="5">Very low</td> <td colspan="5">Very high</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> </tr> </table> <p>Please explain your answer</p>	Very low					Very high					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	<p>Number scale Text answer</p>
Very low					Very high																
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10												
<p>16. What are the key strengths (pros) of Fairtrade certified sugar from Mauritius?</p>	<p>Text answer</p>																				
<p>17. What are the key drawbacks (cons) of Fairtrade certified sugar from Mauritius?</p>	<p>Text answer</p>																				
<p>18. If more Fairtrade certified sugar from Mauritius became available, would you buy more?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="5">Very low</td> <td colspan="5">Very high</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td> </tr> </table> <p>a. Please explain your answer b. As an estimated percentage (of how much you buy now), how much more Fairtrade certified sugar would you buy from Mauritius?</p>	Very low					Very high					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	<p>Number scale Text answer Number entry (percentage)</p>
Very low					Very high																
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10												
Your company and Fairtrade in Mauritius																					
<p>19. As a buyer, what are the benefits to you when purchasing Fairtrade sugar from Mauritius?</p>	<p>Text answer</p>																				
<p>20. Are there any services delivered by MSS, the mills, or the coops that attracts you as a buyer specifically?</p>	<p>Text answer</p>																				
<p>21. Do you actively engage with Fairtrade certified farmers in Mauritius?</p> <p>a. Through projects collaboration (please specify below) b. Through site visits c. Other (Please specify below) d. We do not actively engage with them</p> <p>If you engage with Fairtrade certified farmers in Mauritius via specific projects or other means, please can you specify the details?</p>	<p>Multiple selection Text answer</p>																				

<p>22. Are you interested in actively engaging with Fairtrade farmers in Mauritius?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. From a brand association opportunities (please specify below) b. Through project collaborations (please specify below) c. Through site visits d. Other (Please specify) e. Not interested in future engagement opportunities <p>If you indicated an interest in future opportunities to engage with Fairtrade certified farmers in Mauritius, please can you specify the details?</p>	<p>Multiple selection Text answer</p>										
<p>23. Would you be interested in opportunities to associate your brand with any of the following project themes by investing additional funding specific to a project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Projects to increase farmers' resilience to climate change b. Projects to enable diversification of income c. Projects with a focus on female empowerment d. Youth engagement projects e. Other (please specify below) <p>If you would be interested in close brand association with specific project, please provide more detail</p>	<p>Multiple selection Text answer</p>										
<p>24. As an example of a recent Fairtrade project, have you heard about the Carbon and Water Footprint Study carried out in Mauritius?</p> <p>What is your impression of it?</p>	<p>Yes/No Text answer</p>										
<p>25. Would you be interested in receiving information on the recently implemented Better Labour Practices Project, which was started in Mauritius at the SPO/ cooperative level?</p> <p>How meaningful would the outcome of the Better Labour Practices Project be to your organisation?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="3">Very low</td> <td colspan="2">Very high</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </table>	Very low			Very high		1	2	3	4	5	<p>Yes/No Multiple choice</p>
Very low			Very high								
1	2	3	4	5							
<p>26. More generally, what is your perception of the Fairtrade Premium?</p> <p>Are there any specific Premium investment projects which have impressed you?</p>	<p>Text answer Text answer</p>										
<p>27. Have you seen examples or been informed of the sustainability impact of Fairtrade in Mauritius?</p> <p>What are they?</p>	<p>Yes/No Text answer</p>										
<p>28. Are there any areas that you would like to know more about in terms of Fairtrade's impact?</p>	<p>Text answer</p>										
<p>29. Is there anything else you would like to share with regard to your experience of Fairtrade and Mauritius?</p>	<p>Text answer</p>										