



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RURAL ADULT CATHOLIC MOVEMENTS

# VOICE OF THE RURAL WORLD

2007/03 N°87

## FAIR TRADE

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**VMR**

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*Coverpage: Harvesting time - Indonesia*

Periodical published by FIMARC in 4 languages which highlights the rural world's life and activities of the member Movements belonging or not to the Federation

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*The last number of the VMR dealt with solidarity economy. We discussed it in general without touching its different aspects. In this VMR, we will focus on fair trade, one of the mechanisms that could be amplified in order to develop this economy.*

*Fair trade was created in the 1960's and hasn't stopped growing ever since. Its turnover is increasing year after year but only accounts for 0.01% to 0.02% of the global market. Fair trade is above all a different approach to trade and its objective is to eventually change commercial rules in depth. It is based on principles that must allow producers to make a dignified living out of their work: long term relationships; stable prices in order not to depend on the arbitrariness of the market; prefunding of production to avoid usurers; respect for social justice; protection of the environment, financial transparency; participative and democratic functioning...*

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*We will see the positive impact it can have on thousands of small producers, e.g. women and marginalized people who, in the classic economy, have little chance to develop.*

*We will also try to define its limits in its current state of organization. This is due to the fact that we are in commercial relationships with requirements of different kinds, e.g. sanitary controls, product certification, transport costs that have an impact on the environment and on prices... Fair and trade are two words that are sometimes difficult to associate.*

*A true fair trade would give the same standard of living to producers and consumers. We are far from that point but we are still convinced that if we join alternative forces claiming a different economy, a different justice, we will develop new relationships that will succeed in making things change.*

*In this VMR, you will also find the usual headings and the interview of a woman from Latin America, a continent that has a lot of fair trade experience and all kinds of commercial and non commercial exchanges experience as well.*

*We hope you will enjoy this VMR.*

*Daisy Herman  
Secretary general.*



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## Action of the Movements

### Egypt

In March 2007, the IDAM, the development department of the Minia diocese, launched a participative survey in 10 village communities, which involved some 80.000 people. The objective of the survey was to identify the most obvious problems, the successful projects and, on that basis, to draft recommendations that would be put forward to political authorities in order to try to change social policies.

The main problems underlined are the lack of incomes for families, which obliges men to find a job abroad or in the capital city, an insufficient waste collection system, a lack of activities and future perspectives for young people, many of whom want to leave the country



*IDAM Staff members  
El Minia, July 2007*



*Smiths in Lassa Haut region  
Togo - July 2007*

## **Togo**

In the Lassa-Haut region, the main activity is focused on agriculture. Nevertheless, in this mountainous and rocky land region, agriculture is not easy. Farmers got organized to sell their products in groups and to develop practical artisanal activities. Thus, for instance, some blacksmiths work in groups of three people: one beater, one blower and one ironmaster. They all have their own responsibilities, which allows them to be efficient in the production of hoes, “*dabas*” (traditional African tool) and other tools that are useful in the daily life of the farmers who live in the region... They also take care of the income part: when one piece is done, they sell it in turn and the one who sells keeps the money. Some pieces are sold to buy charcoal and iron, which is the basic raw material.

## **Cameroon**

The MARC, created in 2005, is continuing the movement development activities in national and parish teams and the development and support to social and economic projects. In national meetings, part of the time is dedicated to visiting cattle breeding or cultivation projects. During and after these visits, practical training sessions are organized in order to value successful projects and to give practical pieces of advice to improve the projects of pig, chicken, African ground pigs breeding or soya, manioc or pineapple growing.



*The grass cutter has a short tail,  
small ears and a stocky body.  
Its weight is around 9 kg and  
its height 60 cm*



*Organic products shop  
Seoul - South Korea - May 2006*

## **South Korea**

The KCFM movement, which we met in South Korea during the FI-MARC World Meeting, is a good example of the desire to promote local products. The originality of the movement is the constant and practical work done with consumers.

Every year, groups of consumers, or groups of children from the cities, are invited to the country side to take part to training camps. The objective is to have a direct contact with the life of farmers, to work with them in the field, to see pears pollination, to harvest products.

The dimension of working with consumers is a guarantee of success and development of customer loyalty. Consumers know how products are made, they know about working and processing conditions and agree to pay a fair price to producers.

These groups of consumers who have become aware of the situation support producers and the claims of the agricultural world.

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## **Vietnam**

The MAI VIETNAMESE HANDICRAFTS centre was created at the beginning of the 1990's, mainly as a training centre for children on the street. Since children's situation has improved, the centre is currently working with women from the underprivileged suburbs of Ho Chi Minh City. With the handicrafts production activities, these women earn 50 US\$ per month when the minimum income in the country is 20 US\$. One of fair trade features is that it gives women a chance to value their work in adequate conditions and with reasonable and stable incomes.

## **India**

For a few years, the INFACT and INAG member groups have been working on the promotion of organic agricultural products and, since they have grasped the meaning of food sovereignty, they are also working on production diversity with the objective to meet the local needs of rural populations. Wiser for these convictions, in January 2005, the organizations created the FTK (Fair Trade Alliance Kerala), the first organic products shop in Kerala.

Currently, the FTK activities are mainly developing in Kerala but they already have established contacts with Tamil Nadu and, in the coming years, contacts will undoubtedly be established with other neighbouring states.

## **Paraguay**

In the framework of the movement's development activities, grassroots communities are carrying out interesting activities aiming at learning how to defend their fundamental rights. Another interesting experience is the creation of "solidarity shops" where you can find basic products at a fair price and weight. These shops are also places where the members can meet through barter. Companies and traditional shops are located far away from the country side and these "solidarity shops" are the only possible way to meet basic needs in a consensual and internal regulation system.





## Brazil

Brazil, like Mexico, is directly affected by the growing demand of cereals for the production of agro-fuel. Food is three times more expensive if you compare prices in the first semester of 2006 and the prices in the first semester of 2007. There are 800 million motorized vehicles in the world – the same number of people survive in chronic malnutrition conditions. In Mexico, the population mobilized recently to denounce the 60% increase in the price of tortillas, people's basic food. Malnutrition is threatening 50 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean, 10% of the population of the continent. Because of the expansion of the land farmed to produce ethanol, this fuel could become a predator of human lives.

## Portugal

Every 3 years, the ACR Movement holds its National Assembly. The Assembly took place in Viseu on July 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> and the reflection theme was "Dreaming and drawing the future" in a prospective approach to the postmodern society.

This also was the opportunity for the movement to analyze the results of the study carried out in the movement on the characteristics of the groups and their commitments in church and in society to define the action priorities for the 3 coming years



*ACR General Assembly  
Viseu, Portugal,  
July 2007*



*L'Aubaine, Second hand shop  
Belgium*

## **Belgium**

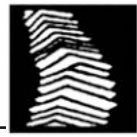
L'Aubaine, a second hand shop, organizes every second Tuesday of the month a clothes transformation workshop. On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, the regional ACRF held a one day meeting titled "Women, recycling queens".

That day, different activities were carried out, e.g. a fashion show to present the creations with second hand clothes, a picture contest to highlight the value of the objects used for something they weren't meant before and the distribution of a practical leaflet on what you can do with used clothes. They also presented board games for children and adults that were made of recycled materials

## **Croatia**

Created by the Catholic Church and supported by some companies, NAUK association's first goal is to train farmers to help them work more efficiently in the rural regions where the production level is low. The objective of the association is to create a 200 hectare educational farm to organize this training program on organic agriculture and to provide schools, collectivities... located in the region with products of quality.





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## **Fair trade puts human beings at the heart of economy**

*When the crazy man points to the moon, the idiot looks at the finger". In other words, we all tend to focus on details but not on the cause of the situation. This saying can be applied to the way we see fair trade: it is not only about studying the content of fair trade but also seeing beyond that to understand the world trade economic mechanisms. Then, we will be able to act wherever we can make things change so that people can have a better life.*

*The objective of the dossier is to highlight the purpose of fair trade and to propose an approach to the classic world trade mechanisms. Even if it's just a tiny part of the world trade, faire trade defines how world trade could serve people and communities and not financial stake-holders above all.*

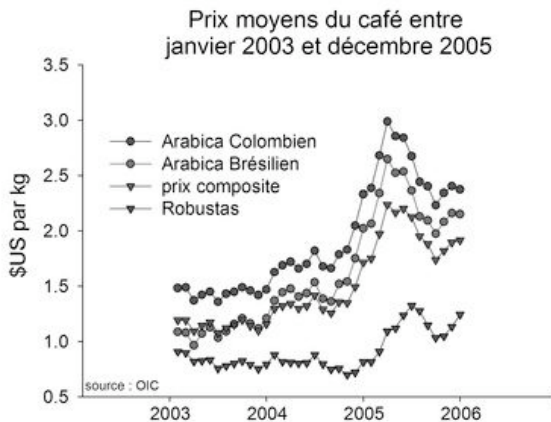
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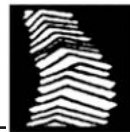
## “GOD IS NOT THE ONE WHO SETS THE PRICE OF COFFEE”

For a few years, Africa market share has been decreasing in the classic world trade and in fair trade. Trade is more important for emerging countries such as India, Brazil and others, to the detriment of the poorest. We have to admit that fair trade cannot integrate the poorest countries of the planet.

### Producers avoid three kinds of exploitation

Coffee global price is set by the London Stock exchange. The English pound of coffee (453 grams) production cost is 0.80 €; the price on the global market (average 2000 – 2005) is 0.50 € per pound; thus, producers produce at a loss. Consequently, in Africa, the loss of earnings is higher than the public aid for fighting HIV/AIDS; in Uganda, when the coffee price is beyond 0.75, children do not go to school through lack of money in their families.





Unlike the classic global trade, coffee fair trade pays around 1€. Thus, producers have higher incomes, a fair price for their coffee, which is a human right; relationships between producers and consumers are defined in terms of human rights and not just in financial terms.

In Haiti, producing and selling coffee on the fair trade market allow producers avoiding three kinds of exploitation. “God is not the one who sets the price of coffee but the London Stock exchange”. This highlights the global trade mechanisms and the power of transnational companies (TNC); producers avoid the fate of the price and power of TNC. They also avoid the production and marketing monopolies, which are in the hands of the 9 big families of the country; producers become aware of the fact that they can act together and implement another kind of agriculture. Finally, women get their freedom since they also have money and can decide what is good for their families and communities. Fair trade puts the economic decision power – and thus the political one – in the hands of local stake-holders

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## Accessing the market is not enough

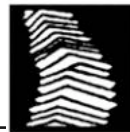
In Guinea, the potato market distributes 2 million euros in a fair way to the different stake-holders of production and marketing and, with the exports, it makes foreign currencies enter the country. It generates incomes for 500 local producers. The imports of potatoes subsidized by Europe are sold at a lower price on local markets, which destabilizes them. It is not enough to produce and sell fairly; it is also necessary to resist the imports at a lower price and to question the classic world trade mechanisms.

In the 1960's, Southern countries said they wanted to control their development and capacities: "Trade instead of aid". The liberalization of the world trade, spurred on by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), has not delivered the expected results.

Between 1975 and 2000, ACP countries (Africa, the Caribbean, and Pacific) exports to Europe went from 6.7% to 4%. The mere access to the market cannot generate development processes. Fair trade – which distributes incomes to all stake-holders – is a tool for implementing at the local level true development means in the framework of food sovereignty.

*Questions asked to the groups and movements:*

- *At the local and national level, do you know any experience of fair trade?*
- *Who are the stake-holders and communities involved and how do they work?*



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## SOLIDARITY AND JUSTICE AT THE HEART OF NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONSHIPS

Fair trade is the development of a real economic partnership, in which producers and consumers are equal, in dialogue, transparency and mutual respect. Selling products at a price set beforehand and higher than in the classic trade generates incomes for producers.



*Denis Lambert, past speaker of OXFAM World Shops  
Belgium - May 2007*

Thus, they can get organized to launch development projects at the local level. They can access their fundamental rights: health, education, housing, social security, etc. This success is based on three principles: sustainable commercial relationships between producers and buyers, with a guarantee that prices are stable and remunerative, support to producers' organizations in order to carry out local development projects; information to consumers.

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In the North, the associations also have to defend and promote some values: solidarity and justice with Southern partners; work for peace and disarmament; reject of any kind of xenophobia and racism. All this leads to individual, social and political changes aiming at a sustainable and solidarity development in the North and in the South, which implies that organizations must work in a democratic and participative manner, that their management and actions must be transparent and that they must value the skills of all their members.

### **Social mobilization requirements**

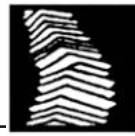
Fair trade economic decisions involve political decisions. The economic solidarity requires a social transformation political project and thus a social mobilization, since the two trade and development models – liberal on the one hand and in solidarity on the other – are clashing in the North and in the South. Consequently, all countries are analyzing their local realities to see how society works and what they can do to make it show solidarity.

More and more, in Northern countries, consumers are becoming aware of their responsibilities as buyers of products from the South. The big superstores networks have understood that they have the possibility to find their place on this market in order to have a good “marketing image” but also to make profit. Obviously, we can wonder if these networks really want to support the development of Southern producers or if they want to get their share of this growing commercial niche. We could also ask ourselves if fair products should be sold in fair conditions for the people who work in these superstores.

### **Changing the rules of world trade**

Most commercial activities go from South to North, where the strongest purchasing power is. Nevertheless, if producers consider that the priority should be export products – coffee, tea, fruits – will they still be able to grow their own food? Thus, even in the fair trade, producers run the risk of depending too much on the products bought by the North.





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This is why the development of fair trade at the national level should also be considered in order to meet people's local needs and their food habits. In other words, it is about raising the issue of food sovereignty and the implementation of another economy, a solidarity economy.

Fair trade must also give power to local producers, allowing them to develop productions adapted to the environment, culture and history of their people. Thus, there is a social and economic dimension which involves support to small producers and the proposal of an alternative consumption model in Northern countries.

Development also has an educational dimension since people analyze consumption and marketing models in the North and in the South. Finally, there is also a political dimension since citizens become sensitive to the situation and pressure the political and economic decision makers in order to change world trade rules.

*Questions asked to groups and movements:*

- *How important are the different types of alternative trade in your country?*
- *How do these alternatives lead people to analyze the local, national, regional and global trade?*

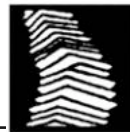
## Fair trade requirements

Four requirements have to be fulfilled to develop fair trade and act for the transformation of the classic world trade:

- To carry out a deep reform of the international financial organizations (International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization); to make sure that the reference of these organizations are human rights such as they were proclaimed by the UNO in 1948;
- To make sure that commercial and economic rules are subject to economic and social rights, especially the right to food, which can be achieved by food sovereignty;
- To open a debate, at the local and global level, on the agricultural production price level so that producers and families can earn a decent amount of money working and selling their products;

To implement the right that States and groups of States have to protect their local agricultural productions, markets and local trade; which is actually the implementation of food sovereignty by the political power.

*(According to the French magazine "Altermondes", N°3 – September-November 2005 – dossier on "Trade and Development").*



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## MULTIPLYING WATER DROPS

In many countries, actions are carried out to develop a proximity fair trade. In Chile, the “Solidarity Foundation” supports 84 artisanal workshops that employ 449 producers to grant them access to the market. In Burkina Faso, disabled people produce leather and cloth objects, which allows them to get money and to exist as social people in the eyes of their families and children. In Nepal, some Untouchables produce local artisanal products and have contacts with a local company owned by Untouchables.



*Farmer's fair, El Salvador .*

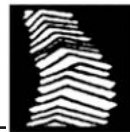
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In Peru, the artisanal production for fair trade highlights the following characteristics: it creates jobs for women who can this way have incomes; these incomes change social relationships between men and women; the craft industry creates stable jobs in the rural world, which slows down migration; it ensures the protection of local jobs and know-how. It generates an individual and community self-esteem: we are able to produce and control our way of life and our future.



*Logo of the Solidarity Economy manual edited by the Sustainable Agricultural Platform in El Salvador*

In Guatemala, 64% of the cultivable land is in the hands of 2.2% of the population. Since 1990, the Inter diocesan Land Pastoral (ILP) has helped farmers get organized and develop organic farming in the framework of a solidarity economy. Products are sold in short local circuits, in a direct contact with consumers and collectivities (hotels, restaurants, canteens). This proximity fair trade allows an exchange of information among local consumers on the challenges of organic food (without pesticides and GMO) and develops new forms of solidarity in the country



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## **We can all do something to achieve a fairer trade**

In Laos, an association is growing rice in a mountainous zone and trains farmers: the production is growing and the local market is developing. Farmers grow rice, develop other crops, build transport tracks, and transform their products locally. This fair trade is part of the food sovereignty process. “Since we produce in an organic and fair way, we can and we must constantly farm our land in order to fee farmers and the local population”.

In Spain, the rural Movement supports the development of fair trade and organizes information and awareness raising workshops for rural people for a better equity in the commercial world. The Movement invites its members to value fair products and also to act for better social and ecological conditions in the local production, processing, transport and marketing of their products.

The same Movement proposes three kinds of action. As worker, to fight for fairer and more social working conditions, supporting cooperation and all kinds of collective work while developing the participation and commitment of all. As consumers, to change our consumption model in the rich countries to increase our quality of life: organic and fair products that respect the work of producers, who should be paid at a fair price. When we have money, even not much, we should wonder what the bank is doing with our money: trying to achieve a maximum profit or trying to act for a solidarity economy? This can lead us to choosing an ethical bank, ethical and solidarity funds in the framework of a solidarity economy.

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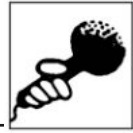
## Human rights, the base of justice

Fair trade considers that it is essential to ensure the democratic participation of all people and communities, which values a plurality of ideas, experiences, motivations, etc. It fosters individual and collective participation to achieve its goals and assess them. By training all stake-holders of the market, fair trade helps people become aware of economic and social processes, and of the local and global situation.

It all leads to rejecting inequalities. Thus, fair trade can bring its contribution to the creation of a utopia that gives hope to poor and left out people. Unfortunately, it is still a drop of water that only accounts for a very small part of the international trade (between 0.01% and 0.02%). Nevertheless, it is a drop of water that refreshes producers' lives. The debate must start in the political field in order to fight for a different kind of globalization. Consequently, we must establish fair and solidarity relationships between producers and consumers, in the North and in the South. We always go back to the principle of food sovereignty, with a right for all people to choose their production depending on the local needs that have to be met, in local market organizations, with human rights for all as a reference.

*Question asked to groups and movements:*

- *What actions are we carrying out, or could we carry out, personally and in our group or community, to foster fair trade, food sovereignty and a solidarity economy?*



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**For this VMR, we interviewed  
Teresa Martinez Delgado,  
a member of CEDESA Mexico**

**Teresa, could you introduce yourself?**

My name is Teresa Martinez Delgado. I am a member of the general coordination of CEDESA (Agricultural Development Center) and I am a representative of the Mexican network of Community Trade (REMECC). I took part to two World Meetings of the FIMARC,



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in 1992 and 1996, since CEDESA is a FIMARC Associated Organization. Lucha Riviera, a CEDESA co-founding member, completed two mandates in the Executive Committee, which gave us the opportunity to develop close contacts with the federation.

For us, the FIMARC is a space for reflecting upon and analyzing our Christian commitment and it gave us a chance to know more about the different situations experienced by Latin American countries and the rest of the world, to establish contacts with other national organizations and develop solidarity relationships. This allowed us to develop a holistic vision of our work at CEDESA.

### **What motivates your action?**

In the 90's, with the free trade agreement, small Mexican producers were faced with a difficult situation. The dominant economic system, which is only about competition and not sharing, which tries to accumulate profit and not to meet basic needs, which endangers life by fostering a dehumanizing economy, made people poorer in the rural world.

We were faced with a lack of jobs or with underpaid jobs, the closing down of companies and the fact that Mexican products could no longer be sold on some markets. At the same time, they opened the borders to transnational companies, which exploit our resources, sell our land, water, minerals, energy and use the cheap Mexican workforce.

This situation obliged us to find alternative markets so that small producers could survive.

### **How did you start this action?**

In 1992, CEDESA, together with Peasant Action and CALPULLI (USA), held a meeting on Alternative trade, to which 45 agricultural producers, small stockbreeders, craftsmen, and loan and credit cooperatives took part. Father Graziano Masón and Ruben Tapia, members of the Latin American Network of Alternative Trade, RELACC, whose headquarters are in Ecuador, were also present, since they developed alternatives in their countries. The objective of the meeting was to analyze market-related problems and to find concrete alternatives to our local problems.





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This is how we joined RELACC and started our work, following their recommendations and experiences.

In a first step, we structured our organization by regions, which was the basis we needed to boost the national network and set the main lines of our work: production, processing and marketing; training; self-supplying and savings.

In another immediate action, we developed a common system for buying basic material in order to get the best possible prices and start selling beans, corn and honey among producers, setting prices in common, which was the basis of a solidarity market that proves that it is possible to sell and buy in a different manner.

By developing the production activity, aiming at producing for consuming, we started to sell our surplus from door to door so that products could directly reach the people who needed them. Then, we organized “tasting weeks” in agreement with local authorities, in order to reach more people and make us known in the other states of the country.

### **Could you tell us about “national fairs”?**

The fact that we are in the RELACC network gives us a chance to know about other countries experiences, fairs among others, but also the participation to 2 sessions of

Tianguis Tláloc in Mexico City. These different experiences motivated us to organize a first regional fair in CEDESA, which had a strong impact on the region and strongly motivated peasant communities, social organizations and some official organizations to create a trade and barter system.

In 2001, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Fair was organized on a public square in Dolorés Hidalgo, and since then we have reached the 8<sup>th</sup> edition, which took place last 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> August with a growing success. The number of participants has been growing and has reached 300 producers who presented their organic products, traditional medicine products, food, handicrafts...

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18 states were present and organized cultural and artistic activities; round tables on different issues, workshops for children, young people and adults to exchange experiences related to a sustainable peasant life, negotiation tables, social money, barter, multiple barter... Our fair is known as the "Luchas RIVERA National fair for producers and consumers for a dignified and sustainable life".

Nuestra Experiencia con las Ferias de  
Productores y Consumidores  
"Por una Vida Digna y Sustentable"



Red Mexicana de Comercio Comunitario  
REMECC.

Centro de Desarrollo Agropecuario, A.C.  
CEDESA

Agosto 2003

### **What is the general goal of these Fairs?**

The general goal is to strengthen producers and consumers organizations through the exchange of knowledge and experience that make it possible to keep on developing spaces, fairer ways to sell and buy goods and services available to all people.

Fairs are a way to recover our community values and cultural traditions such as barter or solidarity exchange, to foster alternative money, socially responsible consumption and healthy products; the organic production that respects the environment and lifestyles that allow developing the human being in a holistic vision, in harmony with all human beings, their cultures, nature and God.

These fairs are the image, the visualization of the daily actions that producers carry out for a Dignified Life and thus to strengthen families' and communities' economy and food.

They also strongly look like a party and for us they are very important places in which we can be acknowledged as People.



*Fair trade in Dolorès Hidalgo*

**What results have you achieved along the years?**

We see a progressive increase in the participation of producers' organizations, with public impacts at the local, regional and national levels. Another result is the use of social money, barter and contacts developed among 85 national organizations and networks, which gave visibility to groups of producers.

We can also mention the development of values such as solidarity, mutual support, agreements to set fair prices, the development of a production that respects nature and the revival of our culture and traditions.



**Besides these fairs, have your actions become more daily and constant?**

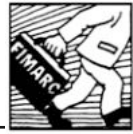
Since production is more stable and constant, community marketplaces are required. Local markets are places where producers can constantly offer their products. For 3 years, in the Dolorés Hidalgo community, producers from the neighboring communities have been meeting every 8 days to show and sell their products in a direct sale system from producers to consumers.

Thus, these small producers can improve family economy. The products sold are regional specialties; products derived from corn, honey and propolis, prickly pears, whole-meal bread, handicrafts, medicinal plants, natural medicine products...

Another initiative is the Mexican shopping basket. We buy and sell in common 84 basic products in the 16 peasant communities of 3 municipalities where 150 families are living. This is done on a monthly basis.

This system was created to make sure that these families were supplied with food and to help them settle in their regions. The idea behind the shopping basket is to supply these families with the products they do not produce and to improve their diet. It is also a means of developing closer contacts among the producers of the different regions of the country. The system creates food security for these peasant families and they can save 25% of the costs, since it is a direct sale system, to consume quality products, to improve their diet, to exchange seeds with other communities and to know producers from other regions





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## General Information

### Coordination

The Secretary general went to Egypt last July. The objective of the visit, among others, was to meet Bishop Ibrahim, the Bishop of Minia, the diocese of Father Abraam, the new Ecclesiastical Assistant of the FIMARC, in order to specify the support mission he has been entrusted with. Since the Pontifical Council for the Laity has already approved the election of Father Abraam, he will replace Father Didier Lefebvre in November



*Mrg Ibrahim Sedrak, Bishop of El Minia - Egypt - July 2007*



*Some responsible of the MFC movement with the African Coordinator and International Chaplain - Kara, Togo - July 2007*

The Western African coordinator and the international ecclesiastical assistant made the most of their presence in the region to take part to the Citizen Forum organized by the IYCI, meet the national leaders of the MFC, Togo, and MCR, Benin. A regional meeting will be held in the region in 2008 in order to give neighboring countries a chance to meet, exchange and develop common strategies, e.g. in terms of food sovereignty.

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The European coordinators met for 4 days in Croatia in order to lay the foundations of the continental seminar that is supposed to take place in 2008. Croatia could host the seminar, which is why the program was organized in this country. The coordinators could know better the NAUK organization, which has been in touch with the FIMARC for several years, and become aware of the country rural reality

The 34<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference of the UNESCO will be held in Paris from Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October to November 3<sup>rd</sup>. An international forum of the civil society will also be held by the UNESCO on October 25<sup>th</sup> on two issues: "Citizens and global governance – united in action" and "Multiple partnerships to achieve UNESCO's objectives – concrete examples".

The CIDSE, the International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity, will hold in Soesterberg, The Netherlands, from 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> October, a conference in the framework of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the encyclical letter *Populorum Progressio*.

Since *Populorum Progressio* has had a considerable influence on the action of the CIDSE, its member organizations and partners in the last 40 years, the CIDSE really wants to celebrate this anniversary by organizing a prospective conference on the identity and future of the development catholic action.

The conference participative approach and nature will give participants a chance to have an in-depth reflection on the challenges and opportunities that are drawing the attention of the catholic development action and to stimulate an open debate on future values, visions and perspectives

The IYCS and the IMCS held their national councils in these last months. The new people elected will be in charge in Paris at the beginning of September. We wish them good luck with this commitment to serving students. In Brussels, the IYWO celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the international coordination. In July, the MIAMSI and the IYCI, movements of young and adult independents, organized jointly their citizen forum in Africa



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The general assembly of the Conference of ICO was held in Paris in June. They also celebrated the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CICO and planned its future, taking into consideration the proposal put forward by the Secretary of State, which would like to set up a Forum of international catholic NGOs.

The CICO decided in its General Assembly to continue its activities in a group. In order to achieve this objective, the mandate of the Coordination Committee was renewed to gather the elements shared in the working group and in the debates in order to present and develop a clear platform and group concept.



*ICO Conference, Paris - June 2007*



*Father Abraam and some members of IDAM staff  
Egypt - July 2007*



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