Current state of cotton production in Cameroon, between the conventional system and the opportunities offered by organic cotton

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Outline of the presentation

I. Introduction

II. Importance of cotton in the world and African economies and the case of Cameroon

III. Brief presentation of the major actors: SDCC and CNPCC

IV. Current production system, management, research and transformation and sales processes

V. The opportunities for organic cotton

VI. Some results on organic cotton in Cameroon
The development of agriculture is one of the most powerful levers on which to act to end extreme poverty, strengthen the sharing of prosperity and feed the 9.7 billion people who will inhabit the planet in 2050 (World Bank, 2023).

Cotton is a major sector of the economy, driving economic growth and development in many countries around the world, starting with the least developed. (WTO, 2019).

- **In Africa** (WTO, 2019)
  
  Cotton is a very important crop, for the following reasons. It provides a livelihood for more than 15 million people in sub-Saharan Africa. Products and by-products from cotton fibres, linters, seeds and stalks are a source of growth, income and employment in many sectors of the economy and contribute to food self-sufficiency.
Cotton is an essential source of foreign currency, generating between 5 and 50% of the GDP of African cotton-producing countries. Rising production costs in the major cotton-producing countries could make Africa the new destination for textiles. The continent must rise to the challenge (WTO, 2019)

Cotton production and trade, contributes to:

- the reduction of extreme poverty (ODD 1);
- achieving the Zero Hunger objective (ODD 2);
- empowering women, many of whom are involved in picking and processing cotton and marketing its products, l’ODD 5;
- shared and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work, l’ODD 8.
In Cameroon (SDCC, 2023)

- 150,000 - 200,000 producers (20% women);
- 2 million persons;
- 60% net agricultural income;
- 6% of exportation income;
- 14.1% of GDP.

Cotton is an essential source of employment and income, supporting millions of smallholders and their families.

Part of the population is excluded from the chain, as they do not have easy access to land and input credit, particularly young people and women.

One way of involving young people and women, who are excluded from the production chain in the current context, is to promote organic cotton.
In Cameroon, against a backdrop of strong demographic growth, persistent insecurity and increasing conflict between farmers and transhumant herders, cotton is of major economic importance in the northern part of the country, the poorest region.

Cotton provides income for 2 millions people (around 30% of the rural population), contributing to food security, in addition to cereal crops grown in rotation (Michel F. et al., 2020).

One way of involving young people and women, who are excluded from the production chain in the current context, is to promote the cultivation of organic cotton.
In Cameroon, cotton company SODECOTON!!

- Annual redistribution of more than 50 billion CFA francs to producers for the purchase of conventional seed cotton after repayment of the input credit;
- Replenishment of producer groups' operating accounts:
  - payment for crop year activities;
  - various marketing bonuses;
  - overweighing of cottonseed at the weighbridge.
II. Brief presentation of the major actors, SODECOTON and CNPCC

- Semi-public limited company with majority public shareholding, with a Board of Directors;
- Capital of 1,51 billions of F CFA;
- Shareholders: Republic of Cameroon 59%, GEOCOTON 30%, SMIC 11%;
- Company Category 1;

Industrial facilities:
- 9 Seeds factories extraction: Minimal capacity of 320,000 tons of cotton seeds/year;
- 2 oil factories extraction: With capacity of 150,000 tons of cotton seeds/year;
- Logistic: 600 cars and civil engineering materials;
- Hman ressources: 2,267 permanent salaries (7% women) + 3,000 seasonal workers per year
II. Brief presentation of the major actors, SODECOTON and CNPCC

Significant involvement of producers in the management of the sector

- Representing and defending the interests of cotton growers at national and international level;
- Supply of quality agricultural inputs and equipment on interest-free credit at prices lower than local market prices;
- Professionalization of producers and their groups: literacy and management;
- Development of cereal banks (storage);

Ongoing transformation of farmers' organizations into cooperatives = towards INTERPROFESSIONS
III. Current production system, management, research and transformation and sales processes

Agricultural Research Institute for Development (IRAD)
Soudano-Sahelian regional Centre (Maroua)

- Genetics
- Soil management
- Pests and diseases control
- Cropping systems
- Weeds control
- Diversification.

DPA
(Production)

RAE
(Agro-ecological office)

RSP
(Pilote test office)

ATB
(Bio organic office)

DS
(Sales office)

Producer
Conventional cotton production in Cameroon is based on a chemical-intensive production system that has negative effects on human health and the environment. The volatility of the world market is also problematic, leaving many farmers in debt when prices fall.

Organic cotton production offers a safer and more profitable alternative, with up to two to three times the profit and safer, organic forms of pest control and soil fertilization.
IV. Organic cotton opportunities

Organic cotton production offers many advantages and opportunities:

- Producer income: 100 F cfa more per kg (22/23) than conventional;
- Producer health: good individual and family health;
- Producer resignation: locally available bioinsecticides
- The environment, particularly with regard to water consumption and quality and the problem of pollution.
- Cotton represents 5% of the cultivated land around the world but 25% of the pesticides used.
V. Some results on organic cotton in Cameroon

Effects of bio-insecticide treatments on *Helicoverpa armigera* at the station and on the farm

Table 1: Cumul des populations de chenilles *Helicoverpa armigera* sur les différents sites en Stations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objets</th>
<th>Makébi</th>
<th>Meskine</th>
<th>Djalingo</th>
<th>Soukoundou</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T0</td>
<td>37,5 C</td>
<td>31,3 B</td>
<td>31,2 B</td>
<td>53,1 B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>12,5 A</td>
<td>9,4 A</td>
<td>12,5 A</td>
<td>6,3 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>9,4 A</td>
<td>6,3 A</td>
<td>9,4 A</td>
<td>12,5 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>6,3 A</td>
<td>6,3 A</td>
<td>6,3 A</td>
<td>9,4 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>21,9 B</td>
<td>3,1 A</td>
<td>3,1 A</td>
<td>6,3 A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the treatments used (T1, T2, T3 and T4) significantly reduced the accumulation of *Helicoverpa armigera* caterpillars compared with T0 at all the sites.
V. Some results on organic cotton in Cameroon

Some data on organic cotton production initiative in Cameroon

**Table 2: Comparative data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organic cotton</th>
<th>Conventional cotton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Producers</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>150 000–200 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producers excluded</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and young</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area sown (ha)</td>
<td>135,75</td>
<td>250 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production (T)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>350 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield (kg/ha)</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase price</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION!