Practical Mergers: Export-oriented Value Chains and Food Sovereignty Pathways

in Haiti and Ecuador

by

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the possibilities and limitations of food sovereign agricultural value chains and the role that alternative trading arrangements, including export-oriented fair trade, can play in their development. The dissertation first develops value chain evaluation criteria from the conceptual congruence between the principles of food sovereignty and fair trade. This framework identifies six criteria that contribute to a ‘practical merger’, which is defined as an export-oriented value chain that aligns closely with food sovereignty principles.

Utilizing a comparative case study methodology with a small-scale fair trade mango grower association in Haiti and a small-scale fair trade banana producer association in Ecuador, this dissertation analyzes the diverse processes and mechanisms that smallholders and their associations use to take advantage of the benefits, and mitigate the risks, of participation in fair trade export markets. It examines the following questions: What core principles of food sovereignty can be practically merged with market-based development agendas to create more equitable export-oriented value chains for small-scale producers? How can the practical merger framework contribute to understanding the relationships between participation in fair trade supply chains and food sovereignty principles?

My case studies show that small-scale producers desire and rely on participation in international markets, but experience challenges related to farm size and economies of scale, the lack of participation in value chain governance, and value distribution asymmetries throughout the supply chains. Results also highlight additional limitations to small-scale producers’ abilities to shape export-oriented value chains in their favor. In Haiti, technical and structural challenges (such as access to transportation infrastructure, credit, and processing facilities) and relational challenges (reliance on a single buyer/exporter, and market competition from international value chain
interventions) present obstacles to the realization of a practical merger. In Ecuador, barriers to this realization include producer/associations’ inability to influence the locus of value creation, as well as challenges around influencing policy and value chain governance beyond the local/regional level. This dissertation concludes by elaborating on the conditions necessary for export-oriented value chains to achieve a practical merger and the types of food system transformations that practical mergers in export oriented value chains can stimulate.
Lay Summary

This research explores the benefits and challenges of small-scale farmers’ participation in international supply chains. This work explores the practical mergers between market-based models of food system transformation, such as fair trade, and more radical social movement approaches such as food sovereignty within tropical fruit value chains in Haiti and Ecuador. This dissertation acknowledges the tensions of merging such approaches while also highlighting the distinct, yet complementary roles that different approaches to food system transformation can play in the development of more equitable, sustainable and participatory international trading arrangements.
Preface

This dissertation is my final work to meet the requirements of the Doctorate of Philosophy in Integrated Studies in Land and Food Systems granted in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at the University of British Columbia.

This study was accorded minimal risk status through the UBC Office of Behavioral Research Ethics (BREB H14-02100: August 2014-August 2017). Participants in this study did not encounter any physical, social, or psychological risks beyond those encountered as part of everyday life.

This study was funded in part by a Joseph Armand Bombardier Doctoral Scholarship (2014-2017) from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) as well as the Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement (MSFSS) for work in Ecuador (2015). Additional financial and intellectual support was made possible through the “Food systems and health equity in an era of globalization” Think, Eat and Grow Green Globally (TEG3) research project. TEG3 is a 5-year interdisciplinary CIHR funded research program on pathways to health equity conducted in Ecuador and Canada.

All chapters of this dissertation are unpublished, original work by the author C. Hergesheimer (2017).
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations affiliated)</td>
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<td>FMP</td>
<td>Fairtrade Minimum Prices</td>
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<td>FS</td>
<td>Food Sovereignty</td>
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<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Fair Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>FENAPCOM</td>
<td>Fédération Nationale des Associations de Producteurs pour la Commercialisation de la Mangue (Federation for Mango Production and Commercialization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHP</td>
<td>Haiti Hope Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund (United Nations affiliated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBG</td>
<td>Producer Business Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEG3</td>
<td>Think, Eat, Grow, Green, Globally</td>
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<tr>
<td>TNS</td>
<td>Technoserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>UROCAL</td>
<td>La Union Regional de Organizaciones Campesinas Litoral (Regional Union of Coastal Peasant Organizations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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parents and extended family whose support and encouragement helped to sustain me through this process.
Dedication

For UROCAL and FENAPCOM.
Chapter 1 Introduction

This thesis emerges from the exploration of interdisciplinary questions related to the interacting social, environmental and economic dimensions of food systems. My particular interest upon beginning work in the Integrated Studies in Land and Food Systems program was in agrarian studies and social transformation within the food system; in particular the role of alternative food networks and approaches to enable such transformations. My focus has been drawn to the possible congruencies between the more radical, international social movement built around the concept of ‘food sovereignty’ and market-based models of incremental food system transformation, in particular fair trade. My initial fascination with these approaches prompted me delve deeper to better understand and evaluate them.

Food sovereignty is a practical and political movement designed to reconfigure food systems in the interest of equity, empowerment and justice. Food sovereignty champions greater producer control and decision-making in the design of food systems through democratic food governance, and enacts the ecological and human health protection of production units through agro-ecological farming methods. These objectives contribute to the larger goals of the creation and maintenance of strong and productive rural economies and viable farmer livelihoods. The political demands of the movement have focused on a reformation of trade relationships, greater regulation of multi-national, neo-liberal and globalizing influences on agricultural systems (including food dumping and ‘land grabbing’) and promoting the rights of peasants to survive as meaningful actors within the global food system. Small-scale farmers have been the most affected by the global integration of capital into agrifood systems around the globe. Finally, some advocates for food sovereignty have often rejected the notion that “any participation in the corporate food regime” (Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck, 2011) and specifically, market-based
mechanisms (such as eco-certifications, market regulation, or ‘pro-poor’ focused value chain interventions) can create lasting food system change.

Fair trade, on the other hand, struck me fundamentally as a market mechanism that may be able to create more equal and favorable trading opportunities for (typically southern) smallholders producing ‘commodities’ for northern consumers. Fair trade has experienced rapid growth over the last two decades and although it can offer economic advantages when compared to conventional trading relationships (such as minimum price protection, additional premiums for community investment and stable international trading contracts) it has been critiqued for its reformist stance and because it defies the laws of supply and demand (through price protection). Furthermore, fair trade has been critiqued as a simply another mechanism to incorporate and subsume disadvantaged smallholders into global value chains with little direct return to the producers themselves.

While these two movements diverge significantly in their processes and calls to action, as will be shown in the subsequent chapter, I remained unconvinced that they were inherently antithetical to one another, or that they cannot be brought together in new and context specific ways. Motivated by a desire to better understand how these different “alternative” food system conceptions interact, this dissertation set out to explore the following questions:

- What core principles of food sovereignty theory can be practically merged with market-based economic development agendas to create more sustainable and equitable export-oriented value chains for small-scale producers?

- How can a “practical merger” framework contribute to understanding the relationships between participation in fair trade export-oriented supply chains and food sovereignty principles?
- Can an export oriented value chain (supported by fair trade) align closely food sovereignty principles and ideals?

1.1 Explorations in Haiti: Mango Value Chains

I first traveled to Haiti to explore the impacts of a well-publicized fair trade intervention project that connected to both food sovereignty ideals and fair trade principles. Mangos are an extremely important crop in Haiti, providing both food security and valuable economic returns to thousands of families within Haiti’s population of nearly 11 million (as of 2015). Haiti has been exporting mangos since the 1980s and value chain interventions focused on strengthening mango exports to increase export revenue and improve farmer livelihoods have been underway in Haiti since 2003. These NGO-driven interventions have focused on enhancing mango production through grafting and planting, increasing the percentage of export quality mangos through quality control and the adoption of best practice techniques and building linkages between small producers and exporters. Since the high points in the late 1980s and early 1990s and following a period of stagnation in the late 1990s (FAO, 2015), the growth rate of mango exports and revenues rose slowly in the early 2000s due in part to these interventions (HNST, 2005). In spite of the decade-plus historical presence of value chain interventions, none of these intervention programs and projects received the international acclaim brought on by the large scale, multi-stakeholder Haiti Hope Project (2010-2015) that entered the country immediately following the earthquake of 2010. This particular intervention project and its impacts are a key focal point of my research.

Technical reports related to the Haitian mango industry have been useful for characterizing the industry and understanding basic supply chain dynamics. However, little
analysis has been conducted related to larger structural dynamics resulting from ‘refinements’ within sub-sectors of the larger supply chain. These dynamics include concerns of power, standardization, inclusion, governance capacity, and the transformative impacts on smallholder producer groups. In addition, despite the slow rise of certified exports since 2008, none of these have directly addressed concerns about the impacts of Third Party Certification schemes, in particular, fair trade. Despite being in existence in the country since 2008, the impact of fair trade on market stability, farm livelihoods and as it relates to food sovereignty in Haiti has not been explored in the literature. Finally, there is no research on how participation in the export mango program impacts household-level food production and security.

1.2 Alternative Banana Chains in Southern Ecuador

In contrast to the relatively new, decentralized fair trade mango value chain in Haiti, I became interested in similar questions within the context of a historically rich, heavily integrated, and well-known global value chain. My doctoral research assistantship with the Think, Eat and Grow Green Globally (TEG3) project at the University of British Columbia and the Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar in Quito, Ecuador connected me with one of the most influential peasant producer organizations in the southern part of the country. In Machala, the self-proclaimed ‘banana capital of the world’, I met members of La Unión Regional de Organizaciones Campesinas Litoral (Regional Union of Coastal Peasant Organizations) (UROCAL) and became interested in applying my practical merger framework to a highly developed, tightly networked, and historically rich, fair trade value chain being utilized by a small-scale producer social movement.

Bananas constitute one of the world’s most highly traded commodities and Ecuador is the
world leader in export banana production. The history of industrial and corporate banana production and the history of agricultural and economic development in Ecuador’s southern coastal region are nearly inseparable. Nearly two billion USD worth of the country’s international trade comes from this fruit and over 10 percent of the population finds employment directly and indirectly in this sector (Elberhi et al, 2016). The different production regimes and the complexities of the supply chains that facilitate the movement of bananas from Ecuador’s south coast across the globe are vertically integrated and very efficient.

Southern Ecuador is one of the most productive agricultural regions on the planet. As Steven Striffler (2001) highlights, southern Ecuador is also a region with a rich history and ongoing set of corporate-peasant-corporate struggles over land, markets and power. Given the complex process of moving bananas from a small port in South America to Europe or the United State of America, ‘alternative’ banana chains—those that are Global Gap, fair trade and/or certified organic—involves essentially the same stakeholders, use the same logistics and draw from similar commercial relations as their conventional counterparts. Furthermore, much like conventional banana chains, value creation is typically concentrated downstream from the actual production unit in the hands of exporters, importers and international retailers. What this means in practice is that in many ways, the off-farm and downstream value chain impacts of alternative banana chains do not appear to be, at first look, fundamentally different from their conventional counterparts. Multi-national companies, such as Chiquita and Del Monte, don’t operate plantations directly in Ecuador as they do in other banana producing countries due to peasant uprisings and agrarian mobilizations and victories (see Striffler, 2001). However, in many cases binding contracts with small and medium-sized farmers, price fluctuations and downstream logistics governance still remain under the control of distant multi-nationals for much of the
sector- the alternative sector included. According to Latorre et al (2015), in the case of the banana in Ecuador: “Complex networks of vertical and horizontal integration interconnect TNCs [transnational corporations] with diffuse economic agents, including national firms and small-scale farmers, facilitating the appropriation of Ecuadorean value added” (p. 63). Given these conditions and complexities, questions regarding the transformative potential of alternative banana chains to enhance the livelihoods of struggling banana farmers became even more apparent and the practical merger framework found a second study site.

Finally, and certainly an important component of the motivation for undertaking the Ecuadorian case study, Ecuador made global headlines by officially institutionalizing the concept of food sovereignty in 2009. Through a participatory process involving government ministries and civil society, the country embedded the concept of La Soberanía Alimentaria [Food Sovereignty] into their national constitution and created a series of laws and clauses to uphold it. After seven years, however, it is unclear what food sovereignty, a social movement whose roots and origin philosophy is inherently anti-capitalist, looks like in practice for export-oriented banana producers, producers whose work is inevitably tied into the capitalist, global food system. The international market plays an important role to varying degrees in the survival of the peasantry, the provision of livelihoods and food security, market stability, rural development and sustainable agricultural continuity in a rapidly changing food system. How and to what extent export-oriented banana producers can utilize and redefine aspects of food sovereignty principles to restructure their participation in international value chains is a question that remains unresolved in assessments of food sovereignty in the Ecuadorian context.

Overall, my dissertation will explore the role of fair trade certified export-oriented value chains in Haiti and Ecuador, their relationship with food sovereignty principles and the ways in
which the practical merging of these systems are being formed and reformed. The next section summarizes the chapters that make up this dissertation.

1.3 Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 reviews the shifting grassroots and theoretical discourse around how food sovereignty can be conceptualized and practiced, challenging local-global, alternative-conventional and self-sufficiency-international trade binaries. These theoretical advances and practical applications draw out questions surrounding the possibilities and limitations of a food sovereign, yet export-oriented, agricultural value chain. Fair trade and food sovereignty are two tendencies that have been invoked in response to the negative impacts of the conventional food system. These orientations that challenge the hegemony of the dominant food system are often championed by a similar set of actors and institutions but the relationship between them remains highly underdeveloped in the current literature. This chapter outlines the conceptual and practical congruencies between the guiding fair trade principles and food sovereignty pillars and also examines divergences between them in terms of objectives, strategies and tactics. Chapter 2 then develops evaluation criteria for export-oriented agricultural value chains that emerge from the conceptual congruence between the principles of food sovereignty and fair trade. The chapter concludes with an evaluation framework for examining the criteria that will subsequently be applied to two case studies of practical mergers between fair trade and food sovereignty initiatives in Haiti and Ecuador.

Chapter 3 characterizes the mango and banana production sectors in Haiti and Ecuador. It then elaborates on the guiding research questions and presents an overview of the research methodology, the study’s limitations, and a reflexivity statement.
Chapters 4 and 5 are based on fieldwork in central Haiti. Chapter 4 explores peasant participation in the Francis mango value chain in relation to four of the practical merger criteria laid out in chapter 2: the survival of the peasantry within global markets (criterion 1), impacts on livelihoods and food security (criterion 2), the importance of agroecology as a production mode (criterion 3); and the role of fair trade in helping provide market stability (criterion 4). This case study concludes that producers desire participation in export value chains and the current system is inclusive of smallholders. This chapter also highlights that while the mango production system is characterized by agroecological methods, provides some market stability and can positively bolster household incomes, particular obstacles exist to the full realization of key criteria for practical mergers when viewed through a food sovereignty lens. Technical and material structural challenges (such as roads, access to credit, processing facilities) and relational challenges (such as reliance on a single buyer/exporter, market competition from international value chain interventions) are key obstacles to the realization of practical mergers.

Chapter 5 examines one particular international value chain intervention, the Haiti Hope Project (HHP). Drawing explicitly on Ouma’s (2013, 2015) theory of “market re-making”, this chapter aims to look at some of the implications of market (re)making that have accompanied the HHP. Existing evaluations of the HHP have failed to consider the structural and power dynamics, or what Ulrich (2014) calls “power constellations” that shape marginal producers’ access to benefits from the restructuring of this export-oriented value chain. This chapter assesses the restructuring impacts of the HHP (2010-2015) on established, local groups belonging to the Fédération Nationale des Associations de Producteurs pour la Commercialisation de la Mangue (Federation for Mango Production and Commercialization) (FENAPCOM). Some of the local groups that led to the creation of FENAPCOM were the first
national producer cooperatives working within the fair trade/organic value chain. This chapter
focuses specifically on issues of participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) and equity
and rights (criterion 6). It contends that despite linking thousands more smallholders with
international markets, reducing post-harvest losses and reject rates through greater value chain
coordination and best practices training, the re-marketization process brought on by the HHP has
undermined some producer groups’ struggles for food sovereignty in terms of their ability to
exercise autonomy, have a voice in value chain governance, have equitable levels of
participation and gain access to necessary support resources to maintain market share.

Chapter 6, based on work in southern Ecuador, explores the dual role of a social
movement organization and fair trade banana farmer’s cooperative (UROCAL) in helping
facilitate value chains that merge market-based economic development with support for
smallholders and environmental sustainability. This chapter shows how UROCAL’s promotion
of, and support for, agro-ecological practices, solidarity building and multi-scalar support
networks, and the use of ‘opportunistic’ third party certification schemes to maintain stable,
niche markets works towards a more equitable banana value chain. This chapter argues that these
mechanisms, the processes involved in their operation, and the outcomes they produce are
important to UROCAL’s work in creating banana production and marketing regimes that share
many conceptual and practical congruencies with food sovereignty principles. However, this
chapter also highlights that these three mechanisms are not sufficient on their own to produce a
banana value chain that fully aligns with food sovereignty ideals. Barriers to this realization
include the recurring challenges associated with producer/associations ability to influence the
locus of value creation in favor of the producer end of the chain, as well as challenges around
influencing policy and value chain governance beyond the local/regional level.
Chapter 7 returns to the conceptual framework from Chapter 2 and compares the results of the two cases across the practical merger evaluation criteria. Although export-oriented value chains in Haiti and Ecuador differ significantly in their product, history and current composition, both lend insight to how the ‘practical mergers’ framework can be utilized in examining the performance of export oriented fruit supply chains. This chapter contributes to the ongoing debates on the relationship between food sovereignty principles and smallholder participation in international trade. The benefits and the limitations of the practical mergers framework are also assessed with particular attention to the need for a deeper exploration into how value is accorded to different criteria within the framework. The chapter concludes by assessing how well the framework helps us understand the unique relationships between different types of export-oriented value chains and food sovereignty principles.

1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, by analyzing the performance of these projects and programs via ethnographic and case study research, this dissertation contributes to an emergent body of literature exploring the entangled relationships between international trade and food sovereignty principles (Bacon, 2014; Burnett and Murphy, 2014). This dissertation argues that attention must be given to the ways in which international trade arrangements affect the survival of the peasantry, provide for livelihood and food security needs, and how they prioritize and encourage agro-ecological production methods. Attention must also be given to how international trade arrangements deliver on producer desires for market stability, what opportunities they provide for participation in policy and governance and the ways in which they champion and ensure equity and rights. Examining the drivers and processes by which markets are created and
transformed, how producers’ voices are represented, as well as how institutional rhetoric works both alongside and against grassroots mobilizations, all contribute to these deliverables.

Finally, I show that although the circumstances of Ecuadorian banana producers and Haitian peasants selling mangos are quite distinct, they share similar struggles. These include a common desire for stability, equity, participation and viable rural livelihoods to be met, at least in part, through continued participation in international markets. This dissertation thus provides a framework for evaluation of the mechanisms and processes available to create more equitable and favorable conditions of participation for producers and their associations.
Chapter 2 From Inclinations to Indications: Practical Mergers between Fair Trade and Food Sovereignty

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter identifies the conceptual and practical congruencies between fair trade and food sovereignty in their idealized form(s) by outlining the core principles and pillars of each. This chapter then draws from Wright’s (2010) work on social transformation to show how fair trade and food sovereignty take differing approaches to pursuing transformation of the capitalist food system. By mapping these different approaches onto Wright’s (2010) framework (see Table 2.3), this chapter suggests that neither approach for food system transformation can be judged a priori as more or less effective given that their intentions and means, and expected outcome measures of success, differ. This framework helps highlight the value of a diversity of methods and approaches to food systems transformation. Each approach operates in different (although not always opposing) realms and draws on different strategies and tactics in efforts toward what might be considered a shared goal.

2.2 The Rise of Alternative Food Networks

In responding to growing demands of Northern consumers within the increasingly globalized food system, a host of problems have accompanied the intensification of export-oriented agriculture worldwide. Many of these problems stem from the profit-oriented goals of the corporate food regime and its emphasis on reducing labor costs (Holt, Giménez and Shattuck, 2011; McMichael, 2009), and the reduction of farmer control, participation and autonomy in
value chains (Stock and Forney, 2014; Stock, Forney, Emery, and Wittman, 2014). Concerns are also on the rise related to increases in land grabbing (Borras et al. 2012; Rosset, 2011), trends to externalize environmental costs of production and distribution (Pretty et al., 2000), new regulatory standards “locking out” resource-strapped small farmers (Kraak et al., 2011; Van der Wall, 2010), and increasing multi-national control of many/most of the stages in the value chain through vertical and horizontal integration (Pietrobelli, 2008).

Alternative approaches to the dominant export-driven global food system aim to increase the social and environmental sustainability of production systems. In part, this can take the form of increasing transparency through shorter food supply chains, implementing protective measures in particular for small-scale farmers, and working to redesign and create new types of trading relationships. Small farmers in particular have increasingly occupied a more constrained position when it comes to trade (Van der Wall, 2010; Wilkinson, 2007) due to their inability to secure not only stable market access but also equitable economic returns. These concerns have inspired a particular approach—fair trade certification—that seeks to reform trading standards to produce more equitable trading outcomes for mainly small-scale producers (Goodman, 2004; Jaffee, Kloppenburg, and Monroy, 2004; Nicholls, 2010; Paul, 2005; Wilkinson, 2007; Fridell, 2006). In its idealized form, fair trade offers better trading conditions to, and secures the contract stability and labor rights of, marginalized producers and workers—including small-scale farmers and larger enterprises, especially in the South. Fair trade does this via stable base prices, individual and collective price premiums, and internationally recognized third-party certification standards including regulations around environmental management and labor conditions (Bezençon, 2009; Nicholls, 2010; Wald and Hill, 2015; Wilkinson, 2007). Fair trade also aims to provide primarily northern consumers with pathways towards ethical consumption that will
theoretically help shift exploitative trade relations (Jaffee et al., 2004; Nicholls, 2010; Sylla, 2014). As fair trade has evolved, however, some of those directly involved have in fact explicitly argued that it has “practically passed from being a movement to being a certification that generates any quantity of rules” (cited in Bacon 2015).

As of 2017, there were an estimated 1.65 million producers involved in certified fair trade arrangements around the globe (Fairtrade International, 2017). Fairtrade proponents often contrast fair trade with the inequitable arrangements and the neoliberal economic model inherent in the “free trade” agenda. While still advocating a market-based solution, the trade in fair trade is seen by them primarily as the means to the larger goal of empowerment for marginalized producers through guaranteed market access, a yearly price premium plus stable minimum price contracts (Doherty et al, 2014; Nicholls and Opal, 2005).

Another prominent alternative food movement is that of food sovereignty, introduced on the global stage by La Via Campesina in 1996. Food sovereignty is broadly defined as the right of local peoples to control their own food systems, including markets, ecological resources, food cultures, and production modes (Wittman, 2009; 2011). The academic literature on food sovereignty has grown substantially in recent years. While its translation into specific policies and its applications as a binding legal framework have been questioned (Beuchelt and Virchow, 2012; Edelman et al., 2014; Hospes, 2013), the framework of food sovereignty continues to offer an alternative approach to the logic of the corporate food regime with its focus on equality, sustainability, democracy, redistribution, and agro-ecological production principles (Conversi, 2016; Henderson, 2016; Martiniello, 2015; Wittman, 2015). While some have described it as “aspirational” (Edelman et al., 2014), and others have critiqued the philosophies and identities attributed to its participants as ‘homogenizing’, specifically regarding the assumption of a shared
vision and goals stemming from a supposed uniform peasant class (Bernstein, 2014; Henderson, 2016), Conversi (2016) still calls it “…one of the most comprehensive and plurally articulated responses to the devastating consequences of neo-liberal globalization” (p. 6).

2.3 Fair Trade and Food Sovereignty

Although specific objectives of fair trade certification and the food sovereignty movement are often championed by similar actors and institutions, few studies have examined the relationships between them (Bacon, 2015; Bacon et al., 2014; Burnett, 2013) or systematically addressed conceptual similarities and differences as approaches to effecting food system transformation. While a first glance might identify some shared values, the food sovereignty movement’s practical compatibility with fair trade deserves further scrutiny. One challenge results from the increased “mainstreaming” of the fair trade movement (Hira and Ferrie, 2006; Le Mare, 2008; Nelson, 2014; Wilkinson, 2007), leading to what some scholars call corporately captured fair trade. This occurs when large corporations may purchase and distribute only a small amount of fair trade product within the their larger product line but still promote themselves as champions of fair trade (Sylla, 2014). Furthermore, the recent ruling that large plantations can now be certified fair trade is creating what Besky (2015) calls an “identity crisis” for the movement. Given fair trade’s original emphasis on directly supporting small-scale producers and family farms that were marginalized due to their inability to compete via economies of scale, such a move has created ruptures within the movement (Besky, 2015). Scholars also question whether fair trade represents the most effective way to achieve expected outcomes of increased returns and environmental and social development (Arnould et al., 2009;
Le Mare, 2008) while actually challenging conventional trade relations given that the fair trade system is still deeply situated within the model of global capitalism (Sylla, 2014).

For example, there are differences in how proponents of the two alternative food system framings responded to the 2008 food crisis (Burnett, 2013). Burnett’s analysis suggests that in contrast to food sovereignty advocates using the crisis as an example to strengthen their calls for more democratic and participatory governance initiatives and network building, fair trade’s responses were primarily oriented towards increased regulation of its market-based private governance model in the interest of food shock protection for their participating farmers. Burnett claims that this response represented a missed opportunity for fair trade to assert itself into the political realm in a more meaningful way (Burnett, 2013). Given that food sovereignty’s overarching aims are focused on food system transformation (Wittman, 2015), the emphasis on policy engagement and responses—vs. the continued promotion, and support for, a market-led response—is key. Without evidence that fair trade can produce viable policy responses regarding food system restructuring in the face of crisis, it may not be sufficient to foster environmentally and socially just export food chains that also address issues of food insecurity (Bacon, 2015; Bacon et al., 2014). These overarching critiques form part of the complex relationship around the compatibility of fair trade, or other third party certification schemes, and food sovereignty pathways.

2.3.1 Barriers to Compatibility

One of the biggest theoretical barriers to compatibility between food sovereignty and fair trade is a lack of clarity around the actual role or function of trade in today’s global economy. The international declarations on food sovereignty (Nyéléni, 2007; 2009) include core pillars
advocating the “localization of food systems” and explicitly promoting “food for people”. The wording of these pillars leads some scholars to argue that food sovereignty is primarily concerned with household production and self-sufficiency as the first priority and thus is inherently incompatible with international trade. In line with this, Robbins (2015) claims that localization as it relates to the concept of food sovereignty has not been properly unpacked and leaves many questions including how localization relates to export-oriented agriculture as the basis of a food economy and whether or not localization has the ability to drive transformative changes in food systems beyond simply sites of production and consumption. Sylla (2014) draws attention to a global context in which fair trade projects still operate within the logic and mechanisms of the capitalist system, which thereby calls into question the transformative potential of fair trade. Questions of how to channel fair trade in a way that is compatible with localization efforts, as well as how ‘alternative’ fair trade really is given its reliance on many aspects of the industrial food system, both pose further challenges to the congruence between the two models.

2.3.2 Practical Entanglements

Recent literature has been moving beyond the question of whether trade has a place in food sovereignty (Burnett and Murphy, 2014) to explore questions related to which conditions of trade relationships can reflect the interests of producers and align with core food sovereignty principles and ideals (Burnett and Murphy, 2014; Edelman et al., 2014; Li, 2015; Martiniello, 2015; Shattuck et al., 2015). Much of this literature argues that, in the words of Bacon (2015), there exists an “entangled relationship” between international trade and food sovereignty that deserves more critical attention. While the food sovereignty movement has spoken clearly about the need for alternatives to the corporate, neo-liberal free trade agenda in agricultural systems,
the policies and practices that would produce particular trade relations that challenge this paradigm lack consensus.

The food sovereignty framework advocates that smallholders actively resist the formalization and corporatization of agriculture and push for democracy and food sovereignty. This contrasts to market-based approaches that see formal value chains and ‘inclusive business opportunities’ as a key mechanism for integrating small farmers into global markets, working towards stable market access and hopefully influencing poverty reduction (Vorley et al., 2012). While often set as contrasting one another, a more symbiotic, entangled, approach can also be observed. As Vorley elaborates:

Looking more closely at proposals to support small-scale farmers within changing agrifood industries, market-based and rights-based development are not altogether separate or opposed. In practice, it is rarely a simple matter of choosing one approach over the other, and many development agencies are in fact operating from a rights-based approach at the policy level while adopting a market-based approach on the ground (p. 12).

Some authors suggest the need to move away from “the social movement discourse of food sovereignty which often implicitly assumes self-sufficiency or food autonomy as the goal” (Calix de Dios et al., 2014, p. 204). Others contend that critical thinking must move beyond the normative discourse of food sovereignty as always prioritizing domestic production over international trade (Clapp, 2014). From this perspective, food sovereignty is not “anti-trade” (Rehber, 2012). The conflation of food sovereignty with self-sufficiency oriented primarily towards household and domestic-oriented production risks a type of “defense localism” (Winter,
that fails to consider the context and desires of smallholders throughout the world, as well as global food security needs particularly in urban areas.

The claims about food sovereignty’s need to break from a strict identity with self-sufficiency and as a “stark oppositional frame” to neo-liberal conceptions of food security (Clapp, 2014, p. 4) are further bolstered by case study work that advocates the importance of respecting producers’ decision rights when it comes to their chosen production systems (Louis, 2015; Martiniello, 2015; Kerssen, 2015; Li, 2015; Agarawal, 2014; Ofstehage, 2012), and accepting producers’ desires to participate in alternative economies involving cash crops to maintain desired livelihood outcomes (Kerssen, 2015; Louis, 2015; Martiniello, 2015; Ofstehage, 2012). Jansen (2015) points out that many marginal rural producers wish to become economically productive agriculturalists and that engaging with international markets is often necessary, in their view, to achieve this goal. Burnett and Murphy (2014) reason that for millions of producers around the world, “…livelihoods are dependent on export markets and despite many inherent challenges, those involved do not necessarily want to exit international markets” (p. 2). Mannon (2005) also observes that small-scale, subsistence farmers often “covet access to export markets” due to the perceived or actual financial rewards (p.17). Agarwal (2014) also firmly argues in favor of respecting “individual, democratic choice” when it comes to examining any tensions between the personal goals of households and the political goals of the idealized, collective movement.

Farmers adopt different and varying forms of commoditization with different understandings of what market opportunities and profit mean. Profit may be viewed in a more holistic way than through a traditional ‘market driven’ lens focused on accumulation and maximization. Considerations for market involvement include the selection of what crops they
will grow to generate income, what seeds to use, and how the “social relations that counter
tmarket consumption can play a role in shaping the impact of the market” (Martiniello, 2015, p. 
520). Cash crop markets bring with them various interpretations of benefit and/or risk (Steckley 
and Weis, 2016) given the complex process of market involvement. For example, emphasis and
investment placed on volatile cash crops without stable buyers may undermine household food 
security in favor of risk taking for economic rewards. On the other hand, market involvement 
under the right conditions may provide stable economic returns and allow for investment in 
household production infrastructure or the purchase of non-farm related goods such as school 
uniforms and automobiles. As Ros Tonen et al (2016) claim, “Extending the sovereignty 
principle to smallholders’ choices to invest in the relationships they deem valuable, or have 
reason to value, is a valid argument for reconsidering the food sovereignty movement’s stand on 
international trade” (p.529). The UN Committee on World Food Security also tackles the 
international trade issue head on in their Recommendations on Connecting Smallholders to 
Markets Report, noting that “International markets can have impacts on smallholders’ food 
security and nutrition which can be better understood through data collection and analysis” 
(Brem-Wilson, 2015). Overall, how small producers can organize and balance their rights and 
desires to participate in export-oriented (sometimes corporately led) markets to supplement their 
traditional agricultural activities and in a way that benefits them on their own terms is a question 
that remains unresolved in the food sovereignty debates (Burnett and Murphy, 2014; Edelman et 
al., 2014; Shattuck et al., 2015).
2.4 Shifting Perceptions and International Trade Binaries

The shifting perceptions around how food sovereignty can be conceptualized and practiced are challenging the local-global, the alternative-conventional and the self-sufficiency-international trade binaries (Shattuck et al., 2015; Wittman, 2015). Shifting inclusion and exclusion criteria for fair trade value chains are also adding complexity to the often-stated fallacy of an inevitable binary between “free trade or “fair trade” (Jaffee et al., 2004). Such theoretical advances and practical applications draw out questions surrounding the possibilities and limitations of export-oriented agricultural value chains: How might those value chains bolstered by Third Party Certification, specifically fair trade, actually support the principles of food sovereignty? Identifying value chain characteristics that can support food sovereignty principles holds great promise for informing future policy work surrounding the creation and support for such arrangements.

It is clear that there is a recurring tension between the fair trade system as a market-based solution to the negative effects of globalized agribusiness and the food sovereignty movement’s contestation of market mechanisms as legitimate drivers of sustainable food systems. This dissertation draws from commonly recognized food sovereignty principles and fair trade evaluation criteria to highlight a potential symbiotic relationship between these two concepts and their broad shared goals. Furthermore, as a result of the shifting conceptualizations and practices of food sovereignty and challenges facing fair trade (both the brand and the movement), developing a deeper understanding of the conceptual and practical congruence (and divergence) between fair trade value chains and food sovereignty principles could prove useful in future development and refinement of food sovereignty indicators, an area where only preliminary
work has been done (Wittman and Blesh, 2015; Binimelis et al., 2014; Simón Reardon and Pérez, 2010).

2.5 Practical Mergers: Towards an Adapted Framework

This chapter proposes an original, hybrid evaluation framework for export-oriented agricultural value chains that incorporates core principles of both fair trade and food sovereignty. This framework is a conceptual tool to explore criteria that contribute to an ideal type ‘practical merger’ between food sovereignty principles and fair trade, export-oriented value chain arrangements. The case studies that form the latter chapters of this dissertation show that while market-oriented third party certification (fair trade included) is not enough for radical, large-scale food system transformation on its own, it can help with meeting certain criteria which bring some export-oriented value chains into a closer alignment with food sovereignty principles. This framework calls into question the merits and feasibility of expanding the scope and reach of fair trade to include key elements that also support processes towards food sovereignty outcomes.

While the definitions and practices of food sovereignty are shifting and dynamic and the concept is often seen as more of a continuous process than an outcome to be achieved (McKay et al., 2014; Shiavoni, 2016), various articulations of core principles have been internationally drafted and revised since the concept’s official inception in 1996. The revision of the Nyéléni declaration (2007) covers six inter-related principles (Table 2.1) that form a foundation of the international food sovereignty movement. These six pillars are recognized in both the social movement realm exemplified by La Vía Campesina and in numerous academic works (Alonso-Fradejas et al., 2015; Binimelis et al., 2014; Martiniello, 2015; Wittman, 2011). The Nyéléni declaration of 2007 notes these principles as constituting the definition of food sovereignty.
However, recent work argues for more flexibility in their interpretation. According to Schiavoni (2016), “While these pillars are not to be taken rigidly and certainly should not be mistaken for a checklist, they serve as helpful guideposts for analysis into the multiple dimensions of food sovereignty, as conceived of by transnational social movements” (p. 18). While the Nyéléni principles are widely recognized as shaping the movement, work on operationalizing these pillars is nascent and lacks consensus (Chaifetz and Jagger, 2014; Reardon and Perez, 2010; Quaye et al., 2010; Binimelis et al, 2014; Wittman and Blesh, 2015).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Focuses on Food For people</td>
<td>Food sovereignty puts the right to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food for all individuals, peoples and communities, including those who are hungry, under occupation, in conflict zones and marginalized, at the center of food, agriculture, livestock and fisheries policies;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Values Food Providers</td>
<td>Food sovereignty values and supports the contributions, and respects the rights, of women and men, peasants and small-scale family farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fisher folk, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and agricultural and fisheries workers, including migrants, who cultivate, grow, harvest and process food;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Localizes Food Systems</td>
<td>Food sovereignty brings food providers and consumers closer together; puts providers and consumers at the center of decision-making on food issues; protects food providers from the dumping of food and food aid in local markets; protects consumers from poor quality and unhealthy food, inappropriate food aid and food tainted with genetically modified organisms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Puts Control Locally</td>
<td>Food sovereignty places control over territory, land, grazing, water, seeds, livestock and fish populations on local food providers and respects their rights. They can use and share them in socially and environmentally sustainable ways which conserve diversity; it recognizes that local territories often cross geopolitical borders and ensures the right of local communities to inhabit and use their territories; it promotes positive interaction between food providers in different regions and territories and from different sectors that helps resolve internal conflicts or conflicts with local and national authorities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Builds Knowledge and Skills</td>
<td>Food sovereignty builds on the skills and local knowledge of food providers and their local organizations that conserve, develop and manage localized food production and harvesting systems, developing appropriate research systems to support this and passing on this wisdom to future generations;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Works with Nature</td>
<td>Food sovereignty uses the contributions of nature in diverse, low external input agro ecological production and harvesting methods that maximize the contribution of ecosystems and improve resilience and adaptation, especially in the face of climate change; it seeks to “heal the planet so that the planet may heal us”</td>
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Source: Nyéléni Forum for Food Sovereignty (2007)
2.6 Fair Trade Principles and Performance Indicators

Fair trade has emerged as a response to the challenges surrounding the concentration of profits away from producers, the emphasis on reducing labor costs, and the restricted market access faced by many smallholders in the Global South. The movement is focused broadly on social, economic and environmental development as well as giving particular attention to labor issues and rights. Collective social objectives are met via higher retail prices of fair trade goods that return direct economic rewards to producer associations through yearly premiums and collective investment in social programs (Fairtrade International, 2017). The proposed economic development and value of the fair trade system is met via higher direct returns, price and contract stability and, in some cases, access to pre-season financing for small producers (Nelson and Martin, 2014; Nelson and Pound, 2009; Paul, 2005). The broad environmental objectives are pursued through standards which encourage less input-intensive systems of production to reduce environmental impacts (Elder et al., 2013) including provisions for sustainable water use and the encouragement of buffer zones to encourage biodiversity (Fairtrade International, 2017). Regulations banning the use of child labor and advocating for a minimum wage for workers attempt to tackle ongoing labor issues and worker’s rights in global value chains (Blackman and Rivera, 2011; Terstappen, Hanson, and McLaughlin, 2012).

While fair trade has a globally agreed upon set of performance indicators (Table 2.2) that can be used to identify both direct and indirect impacts (Fairtrade International, 2017), the fair trade certification system is not without its critics. Critiques of the Fairtrade monitoring system include negative assessments of rigor, in terms of study design and the choice of methodological tools, as well as the observation that many studies are commissioned and undertaken by consultants and the fair trade organizations themselves (McArdle and Thomas, 2012; Nelson and
Martin, 2014; Nelson and Pound, 2009; Terstappen et al., 2012). There are also growing concerns around inequitable producer access to fair trade certification programs, whether geographical or due to governance requirements (Smith, 2014; Vagneron and Roquigny, 2011) and persistent inequitable gender relations in both production and decision making (McArdle and Thomas, 2012; Terstappen et al., 2012). Critics also point to the lack of direct enforcement of health and environmental standards in some fair trade products (Elder et al., 2013; Vagneron and Roquigny, 2011), issues around fair trade’s ability to scale up (Bacon, 2015; Hira and Ferrie, 2006), and concerns about the ability of market-based mechanisms to actually restructure existing patterns of inequality (Clark and Hussey, 2015; Ingenbleek and Meulenberg, 2006; Vagneron and Roquigny, 2011). Some scholars also argue that the certified fair trade system as it currently stands should not be seen as an achieved endpoint, and should continue to act as stepping stone for work towards “a fairer trade” that is attentive to the requirements for transformative production and trading relations (Bacon, 2015). Others argue that fair trade ideals emphasize participatory control by small producers themselves while the system itself, Fairtrade International, is still governed by a large association distant from the realities of small producers. As such, fair trade has yet to sufficiently deliver on its promise of equitable social control (Clark and Hussey, 2015). Others argue that fair trade fails to deliver transformative potential, specifically “…the capacities and infrastructure to help offset the negative impact of globalization” and works mainly to ‘include’ (via alternative market based means) those who have been ‘excluded’ by neo-liberal globalization (Fridell, 2006, p. 9) has not been realized. Such concerns continue to undermine the transformative potential of the movement in practice and continue to create critics of the system’s overall worth.
There has been steady demand-side market growth globally for fair trade products since the early 2000’s. The total value of sales has increased nearly ten fold, from 832,000 Euros in 2004 (Statista, 2017) to total sales now estimated at 7.88 billion Euros in 2016 (Fairtrade International, 2016). In Canada, reports indicated that as of 2014, there were nearly 7000 Fairtrade products available for sale, an increase of 40% since 2012. Estimated sales in Canada alone are CAD$332 million (FairTrade Canada, 2015). Furthermore, there has been a five-fold increase in the number of producer organizations globally, with bananas and coffee suppliers growing 10 fold and 7 fold respectively between 2008-2012 (Elliot, 2012). Despite these trends, there are lingering questions about the relative roles of supply and consumer demand for fair trade products as a driver of fair trade’s potential as a model for food system transformation. Such questions revolve around the market’s continued ability to absorb an increased supply of fair trade products (which influences the growth of new, and the stability of existing fair trade contracts). These markets are somewhat unpredictable, especially in times of consumer economic vulnerability. For example, traditional economic theory posits that economic downturns result in consumers becoming more price aware and thus shifting their purchasing patterns (Estilami et al, 2001 cited in Bondy and Tawar, 2011). However little work has explored how ‘untraditional consumers’ or ‘ethical consumers’, those driven by values and morals react with regards to fair trade purchases during such downturns. Impacts of fair trade during the recent global recession exemplify such unknowns. Bondy and Tawar (2011) suggest that while overall fair trade consumption dropped following the 2008-2009 recession, only a little over 20 percent of consumers altered their overall spending patterns in a significant way. Other work notes that in the face of recent worldwide economic downturns, sales of fair trade goods have not only remained stable but have in fact increased. Even during the recession of 2009, global Fair
Trade sales increased by 12% (Stenzel, 2011). However, economic shocks in consumer countries may influence the purchasing power of individuals and thus predicted models of fair trade growth and sales can only be based on steady-state economic scenarios, as well as steady-state food trends in consumer countries. As such, while more and more producers may meet the requirements for certification and desire the opportunities for niche market access, consumer demand, shifting food trends and taste preferences represent variables of interest in relation to fair trade’s ability to scale up, as well as its transformative potential. While many studies of fair trade have been on the supply side (impacts on farmers and communities) (Defries et al, 2017; Bacon, 2015; 2014; Dammert and Mohan, 2014; Trauger, 2014; Bezencon, 2009) or the demand side (purchasing decisions, consumption trends, impacts of mainstreaming) (Hainmueller et al, 2017; Taylor and Boasson, 2014; O’Conner et al, 2014; Lockie and Goodman, 2006; Hira and Ferrie, 2006; Pelsmacker et al., 2005) further work is called for examining the relative role of each of these in relation to the predicted expansion trajectory of fair trade production and sales in the coming years.

Despite the many challenges and critiques, fair trade does have a defined set of development goals, a specific theory of change, and targeted indicators (Fairtrade International, 2017). The following table outlines the fair trade requirements for producer participation and the broad goals tied to fair trade. The core principles/key objectives of fair trade have been operationalized by Fairtrade International into a standard set of performance indicators that can be used for monitoring and evaluation that is carried out on a yearly basis by the organization itself. The standards and respective indicators were developed on the basis of consultations with key stakeholders within the Fairtrade system and were officially codified and harmonized at the global level in 1997. These indicators are utilized by Fairtrade International for assessment,
improvement and monitoring for compliance with certification standards (Fairtrade International, 2017).
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<th>Principle</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
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| Social Development   | Appendix A For small-scale producers Fairtrade standards require an organizational structure that allows the producers to actually bring a product to the market. All members of the organization need to have access to democratic decision-making processes and as far as possible participate in the activities of the organization. The organization needs to be set up in a transparent way for its members and must not discriminate any particular member or social group. For hired labor situations, the Fairtrade standards require the company to bring social rights and security to its workers. Some of the core elements are: training opportunities, non discriminatory employment practices, no child labour, no forced labour, access to collective bargaining processes and freedom of association of the workforce, condition of employment exceeding legal minimum requirements, adequate occupational safety and health conditions and sufficient facilities for the workforce to manage the Fairtrade Premium. | Producers must be small-scale  
Democratic governance  
Education on environment and labor requirements,  
Monitor and evaluate production standards  
Fair trade Development Plan developed with member input  
Allocation of Fair trade Premium with member input  
Accounting System  
Democratic Structure/Transparent Administration (e.g. Board and AGM)  
Membership Records,  
Organization meetings |
| Economic Development | Appendix B Standards require the buyers to pay a Fairtrade Minimum Price and/or a Fairtrade Premium to the producers. The Fairtrade Minimum Price aims to help producers cover the costs of sustainable production. The Fairtrade Premium is money for the producers or for the workers on a plantation to invest in improving the quality of their lives. Premium money in this sense is meant to improve the situation of workers, farmers and local communities in health, education, environment, economy etc. The farmers or workers decide the most important priorities for themselves and manage the use of the Fairtrade Premium. Fairtrade standards require buyers to give a financial advance on contracts, called pre-financing, if producers ask for it. This is to help producers to have access to capital and so overcome what can be one of the biggest obstacles to their development. This promotes entrepreneurship and can assist the economic development of entire rural communities. | Traceability schemes to identify member’s own production, prevent re-selling, organize record keeping, and for marking/branding purposes  
Contracts including minimum pricing, volume, quality, payment terms, and mechanism for conflict resolution |
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<tr>
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| Environmental Development | Fairtrade standards include requirements for environmentally sound agricultural practices. The focus areas are: minimized and safe use of agrochemicals, proper and safe management of waste, maintenance of soil fertility and water resources and no use of genetically modified organisms. Fairtrade standards do not require organic certification as part of its requirements. However, organic production is promoted and is rewarded by higher Fairtrade Minimum Prices for organically grown products. | Pest Management  
Training on IPM, Storage/Labeling/Disposal  
List of Utilized Pesticides/no use of prohibited  
Soil and Water  
Training on Soil Erosion  
Training on Fertilizer Use  
Records of Soil Amendment Practices  
Training on Water use for Irrigation  
Records on Water Sources  
Training on Waste Water, Waste  
Training on Waste Management  
No GMOs, Must not intentionally use GM seeds  
Biodiversity  
Report on actions to conserve biodiversity  
Maintain buffer zones  
Energy and GHG emissions  
Report on energy use in processing facilities  
Report on practices to reduce GHG emission (i.e. use of organic fertilizer) |
| Forced labor and Child Labor | Forced labour and child labour are prohibited in the Fairtrade standards.                                                                                                                                 | Equal Opportunity Employment  
Freedom from Discrimination/WorkPlace Harassment  
Freedom from Forced Labor  
Minimum Working Age of 15 years  
Freedom of Association/Collective Bargaining  
Minimum Wage Compliance  
Regularly Scheduled Payments  
Written Contract for Employment  
Occupational Health and Safety  
First Aid, Clean Water, Toilets, Showers  
Training on Pesticide Use and Handling (risks)  
PPE available  
Training on Hazardous Work Conditions |

Source: Fairtrade International (2017)
According to Fairtrade International, the key objectives of the standards are to ensure that producers receive prices that cover their average costs of sustainable production; provide an additional fair trade premium which can be invested in projects that enhance social, economic and environmental development; enable pre-financing for producers who require it; facilitate long-term trading partnerships and enable greater producer control over the trading process; set clear core and development criteria to ensure that the conditions of production and trade of all Fairtrade certified products are socially, economically fair and environmentally responsible (Fairtrade International, 2017). It is important to note that in contrast to the food sovereignty pillars noted in the first table, fair trade has principles, definitions, and indicators. These indicators have been built via consensus over time and as such, there is agreement as to the evaluative framework for measuring fair trade outcomes.

2.7 Common Ground: Practical Mergers towards Food System Transformation

Both fair trade and food sovereignty share similarities regarding their support for small-scale producers, the desire for a more equitable value distribution and an importance placed on the ecological integrity of systems of production (Bacon, 2015). While there are these and other points of agreement between the two models, these two frameworks do not share the same orientation and processes towards how and through what mechanisms trade ought to be reformed. In addition, while fair trade is primarily focused on reforming trade mechanisms and labor rights from a niche within the larger capitalist food system (Fridell, 2006), food sovereignty’s concerns extend well beyond the issue of securing more equitable trade.

This section utilizes Erik Olin-Wright’s (2010) theory of social transformation to frame both of these movements in relation to their place within a matrix of possible transformation
strategies as they relate to the food system. Mapping the strategies and goals of food sovereignty and fair trade onto this matrix helps highlight the contribution that each can make to the larger common objective of addressing challenges inherent in the dominant, capitalist trading system. In both fair trade and food sovereignty, smaller, context-specific victories around land tenure, stable contracts, farmer to farmer knowledge or marginal increases in economic rewards can be valuable, even if they are not ‘total’ or because they may form alliances with corporate partners. These advances highlight the role of particular approaches (such as fair trade) in ‘widening the gaps’ that may in fact make larger, more inter-related and complex changes, such as those called for by food sovereignty, possible.

2.8 A Theory of Social Transformation: Ruptural, Interstitial, and Symbiotic Strategies in the Struggle for Food System Change

Wright (2010) identifies three different “logics of social transformation” to tackle capitalist structures that he refers to as ruptural, interstitial, and symbiotic (Table 2.3). These logics differ both in terms of their visions of the trajectory of systemic transformation and in their understanding of the nature of the strategies needed to move along the pathway towards transformation. The first logic (ruptural) envisions creating brand new institutions fueled by a decisive break with existing organizations and structures. This is primarily a “revolutionary scenario” which purports that “…through direct confrontation and political struggles it is possible to create a radical disjuncture in institutional structures in which existing institutions are destroyed and new ones built in a fairly rapid way. Smash first, build second” (p.212). Such a logic falls in line with a radical view of food system transformation (Holt Giménez and Shattuck,
2011; Shattuck et al., 2015; Wittman, 2015). The ruptural strategy is congruent with the more militant demands (and strategies) of the food sovereignty movement.

Interstitial and symbiotic transformations follow different paths and utilize different resources. Interstitial models seek to develop new models outside the government “…in the niches, spaces and margins of capitalist society”. Symbiotic strategies, on the other hand, involve “…extending and deepening the institutional forms of popular social empowerment [which] simultaneously helps solve certain practical problems faced by dominant classes and elites” (Wright, 2010, p.212). Both interstitial and symbiotic strategies advocate a more moderate ‘work within the system’ (or ‘ignore the system’ but don’t destroy the system) type of approach to transformation. Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck (2011) would categorize both of these strategies as “reformist” in their orientation and “progressive” at best in their politics. Wright (2010) is well aware of the critics who

…have often disparaged such efforts [both interstitial and symbiotic], seeing them as palliative or merely symbolic, offering little prospect of serious challenge to the status quo. Yet, cumulatively, such developments can not only make a real difference in the lives of people, but potentially constitute a key component of enlarging the transformative scope for social empowerment in the society as a whole (Wright, 2010, p. 212).
Table 2.3  A Model of Transformation (Wright, 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision of trajectory of systemic transformations beyond capitalism</th>
<th>Political tradition most closely associated with logic of transformation</th>
<th>Pivotal collective actors for transformation</th>
<th>Strategic logic with respect to the state</th>
<th>Strategic logic with respect to the capitalist class</th>
<th>Metaphors of success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruptural</td>
<td>Revolutionary socialist/communist</td>
<td>Classes organized in political parties</td>
<td>Attack the state</td>
<td>Confront the bourgeoisie</td>
<td>War (victories and defeats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstitial metamorphosis</td>
<td>Anarchist</td>
<td>Social movements</td>
<td>Build alternatives outside of the state</td>
<td>Ignore the bourgeoisie</td>
<td>Ecological competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbiotic metamorphosis</td>
<td>Social democratic</td>
<td>Coalitions of social forces and labor</td>
<td>Use the state: struggle on the terrain of the state</td>
<td>Collaborate with the bourgeoisie</td>
<td>Evolutionary adaptations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite its original intentions “…to create a parallel trading network that aspires to be free from the pressures imposed by profit driven trans nationals and the imperatives of capitalism” (Brown, 1993 cited in Fridell, 2006, p. 13) fair trade operates and seeks its development goals overtly within the capitalist economy, even though it is often referred to as an alternative food system. As data from the banana and mango value chain case studies in later chapters will demonstrate, while ‘alternative’ to conventional arrangements in some regards, the alternative chains (especially beyond the immediate sites of production) are still negotiated and governed by many of the same actors as the conventional systems. They rely on mainstream distribution systems, international food safety regulations, conventional retailers, and sometimes corporate branding strategies in order to reach a scale at which they can have a differentiated economic impact (and market segmentation enabling greater market reach) compared to their conventional counterparts.

Food sovereignty advocates, on the other hand, have long argued for a large-scale
remaking of the conventional production and trading systems to respect and include the interests of smallholders worldwide. The rights of people to create, control, and govern the type of food system they wish to see is a complex undertaking. For example, the strengthening of domestic markets, the struggles for access to the productive resources required to ensure food security and maintain viable rural livelihoods differs drastically from ‘reformative’ or ‘progressive’ mechanisms such as stable contracts and premiums associated with the continued export cash crops. The main strategy of fair trade, i.e. bringing the poor into capitalist world food markets, even via an alternative trading orientation, stands in contrast to the larger transformative agenda of food sovereignty which includes a large-scale restructuring of all agricultural trade policies and practices. We see this most clearly in the broader calls to action to restructure the whole global food system (beyond trade) along more equitable and sustainable lines (with the role of international trade subject to this redefinition). Food sovereignty’s anti-capitalist and anti-corporate food regime agenda (Holt Giménez and Shattuck, 2011) calls into question the transformative (and co-opting) potential of any participation in the corporate food regime, even those progressive movements that are working towards alternative trading arrangements. Such collaborations risk “taming the social movement itself” – in this case fair trade, through the utilization of the market as a regulatory tool (Jaffee, 2012, p. 95). Such evidence highlights the fact that fair trade and food sovereignty have different visions for the mechanisms and possibilities for food system transformation.

Overall, while the food sovereignty vision can be seen as radical in its calls to action and the need for large-scale transformation (Holt Giménez and Shattuck, 2011; Wittman, 2015; Wittman and Blesh, 2015), fair trade has been considered “progressive” and partly “reformist” (Holt Giménez and Shattuck, 2011) in its attempts to create alternative avenues for production
and trading within the existing system. Using Wright’s (2010) matrix, it is possible highlight the complexities inherent in fair trade as a transformative tool. While fair trade tries to “build new institutions outside of the government” (i.e. Third Party Certification Bodies, NGO partnerships) and works within the “niches and margins of capitalism” (Interstitial metamorphosis), it is not at all ‘anarchist’ in its tendencies (given its onerous regulatory and reporting structures). While fair trade may or may not represent a social movement in the traditional sense, it certainly cannot afford to “ignore the bourgeoisie” (Wright, 2010, p.212) as some would argue these are its primary clients. Fair trade also differs as both a philosophy (more idealistic and visionary) and an institutionalized system (more structured, moderate and practical) and thus it draws on a range of differing strategies of transformation. Fair trade represents a hybrid business model (Doherty, Haugh, and Lyon, 2014), one that selectively employs tools and techniques in both state and non-state arenas and works within the niches of capitalism yet relies on capitalism to fund its expansion (Wright, 2010). The complexity of classifying what fair trade actually is further suggests the advantages in seeing it as a hybrid model. As Paul (2005) notes, “Fair trade is at once a social movement, an alternative form of trade and a development intervention” (p. 134).

The definitions and practices of food sovereignty are also opening up the boundaries of the concept, allowing it to hybridize certain mechanisms from within the state via formal institutionalization (Clark, 2015; 2017; Wittman, 2015). Institutionalization in this context means the codification of norms and ideals into organizations, associations and governmental contexts. This institutionalization helps with legitimization of the concept and may provide mechanisms such as supportive policies or laws to help enact and regulate some food sovereignty projects and initiatives. The expansion of the food sovereignty concept outside of its social movement origins into the government and NGO sectors demonstrates how food sovereignty as a movement cannot
fall strictly within the domains of *only* one of the three logics. A hybrid evaluative framework for export-oriented fair trade value chains also finds strength in the general differences between “rights based” and “market based” approaches to agriculture, a theoretical development elaborated on by Vorley et al. (2012).

Wright’s (2010) framework opens up new possibilities for viewing hybrid approaches to value chain development and food system transformation strategies. Wright’s framework recognizes the value of dramatic visions for transformation (i.e. a ruptural, rights-based food sovereignty approach), as well as more marginal and incremental changes such as those offered by fair trade (a market-based, symbiotic approach). These more marginal and incremental changes may have a powerful cumulative effect in terms of their primary functions (i.e. increased economic rewards to producers, rural development initiatives, stable pricing and contracts, protected labor) as well as via additional impacts (pushing a public discourse around the conditions of production in the food system and public interest in new trading models more generally). Just as Vorley (2012) highlights mergers taking place in some cases between rights-based and market-based approaches within value chain development, similar to Wright’s (2010) symbiotic strategy, the fair trade system is an approach that uses some of the mechanisms and logic of capitalism to fuel its growth and works from within the system to increase its reach and influence. As such, a more comprehensive and holistic evaluative framework is needed. Such a framework should allow some core food sovereignty concerns (land access, gender equality, farmer autonomy, the balance between resources for household/domestic markets and certified export commodities) to make their way into a well-recognized and growing regulatory and labeling framework without having to brand the concepts of the movement separately. The next
section focuses on the development of such an evaluative framework.

2.9 Practical Mergers: A Comparative Evaluative Framework for Fair Trade and Food Sovereignty

The tables above show that standardized fair trade principles and performance indicators share conceptual congruencies with the international food sovereignty pillars promoted in public declarations. These broad similarities include an emphasis on supporting small-scale producers, environmental management, democratic governance, and sustainable economic livelihoods. While food sovereignty has been less narrowly focused on specific mechanisms to enhance the economic dimensions for small farmers, fair trade tackles the economic question within its foundational logic. In the case of fair trade, emphasis is placed on secure and equitable contracts, complete with minimum price requirements and yearly premium payments as well as clearly articulated labor standards to protect wages and work hours. Wright’s (2010) framework and Vorley’s (2012) observations suggest that there may be multiple hybrid logics and trajectories in working toward transformation (in our case, of the food system) and each serves an important role. While the differing logics may appear to form very divergent movements, upon application there is a common goal—transforming at the very least some of the negative implications of the conventional food system—with different means.

Although some food sovereignty indicators have been proposed in the literature (Reardon and Perez, 2010; Quaye et al., 2010; Binimelis et al, 2014; Wittman and Blesh, 2015) there is no clearly agreed upon set of standards by which to measure progress towards food sovereignty outcomes. For example, Simon Reardon and Perez (2010) drew heavily on an agroecological perspective in their indicator development but the list of indicators proposed fails to address
economic dimensions beyond household and domestic self-sufficiency. Others have highlighted indicator sets such as the cultural indicators of indigenous people’s food and agroecological systems developed under the multi-stakeholder Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) (Woodley et al, 2009 cited in Binimelis et al, 2014) or the right to food indicators of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (FAO 2008).

Work in Brazil has also measured some aspects of food sovereignty with small-scale diversified farmers (Wittman and Blesh, 2015). In addition, work by Ecuadorian researcher Jamie Breilh highlights the interplay between four key concepts: sovereignty, solidarity, sustainability and (bio)security and the relationships between them in examining the long term (re)productive capacity of individual production units and the proximate surrounding communities (Breilh, 2013; 2014; Spiegel, Breilh and Yassi, 2015). This “4 S framework” puts forth a holistic, multi-dimensional framing of health that also operationalizes food sovereignty in the context of agricultural production regimes and health equity (Weiler et al, 2014). Finally, Binimelis et al (2014) develop two very comprehensive lists of categories and sub-categories as well as linked indicators, one for the international level and one for the local (Catalan) level. These cover a wide range of relevant food sovereignty concerns including access to resources, issues of control and autonomy, agro-ecology, gender, education, the balance of trade relationships, diet, the right to food and related policies (Binimelis et al, 2014). However, despite these various articulations from various regions of the world, there is still no clearly agreed upon standards by which to map and measure the progress of food sovereignty initiatives towards a stated goal.

Overall, the establishment of an internationally comparable set of food sovereignty indicators is challenging and debates still exist about whether this is a goal that ought to be
pursued. This is due in a large part to the overall dynamism of the food sovereignty concept, the contextual interpretations of food sovereignty and the different priorities, actions and strategies in unique circumstances put forward by various groups of actors (academics, government, civil society) (Binimelis et al, 2014). Such conditions will be demonstrated by the case studies in the following chapters. Finally, as Binimelis et al (2014) go on to note: “It is neither feasible or desirable to create a perfect list of food sovereignty indicators. They should adapt to the different contexts where the struggle for food sovereignty is taking place” (p. 327). Given the challenges with the development of indicators noted here, my dissertation has chosen to identify a set of criteria as possible markers for evaluation while allowing for their adaptability in particular circumstances.

While the development of food sovereignty indicators is still in its infancy, the current list of fair trade performance indicators is on its own insufficient to assess the achievement of food sovereignty objectives. Key matters such as land tenure as well as how to evaluate a livelihood and food security strategy that draws on exports, domestic market production and household food production (or a combination of the three) are not represented in existing fair trade indicators. In addition, key socio-political issues such as the gender division of labor and in leadership, territorial issues surrounding land access, as well as mechanisms to ensure producer autonomy and control are also poorly represented in existing fair trade indicators. A comparative, evaluative framework that represents both fair trade and food sovereignty principles must include and highlight such key issues. As such, this dissertation proposes a set of food sovereignty performance criteria that operationalize the Nyéléni principles outlined in Table 2.1. The table below provides some examples of criteria that could be measured in communities involved in fair trade value chains that are not currently covered in the fair trade performance
criteria but are important for food sovereignty.
### Table 2.4 Food Sovereignty Performance Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Sovereignty Pillar</th>
<th>Performance Criteria</th>
<th>Examples of Operationalization of Food Sovereignty principle in the Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Focus on Food for people         | • Household and community food security indicators (e.g. HFIAS indicators)  
• Ratio of household food production to production for export markets  
• Household and community self-sufficiency ratio | • Menzies, 2000  
• Wittman and Blesh, 2015  
• Binimelis et al, 2014  
• Calix de Dios et al. 2014 |
| Values Food Providers            | • Secure land access to traditional territory (vs. MNC control)  
• Access to inputs (seeds, water)  
• Gender representation in leadership/board positions  
• Household gender division of labor | • Rosset, 2008  
• Rosset et al, 2009  
• Borras et al. (2012)  
• Desmarais 2002; 2007  
• Patel, 2007; 2009  
• Young-Park, White and Julia, 2015 |
| Localizes Food Systems           | • Domestic market opportunities | • Louis, 2015  
• Li, 2015  
• Kerssen, 2015  
• Wittman and Blesh, 2015 |
| Puts Control Locally             | • Local participation in designing and implementing food and agricultural policy  
• Participatory value chain governance  
• Stability of long term contracts to encourage the investment in technology and resources  
• Sources of credit (government, NGO, local buyers or international advances from partnerships) and corresponding level of autonomy over us | • Stock et al. 2014  
• Binimelis et al, 2014  
• Kerssen, 2015  
• Dupraz and Postolle, 2013  
• Ros-Tonen et al, 2015 |
| Builds Knowledge and Skills      | • Access to agricultural extension and research  
• Access to governance and business training | • Campo et al, 2017  
• Rosset et al., 2011  
• Snapp, Blackie and Donovan, 2003  
• Anderson and Feder, 2004 |
| Works with Nature                | • Characterization of bio-diverse farms (e.g. number of crops cultivated, source of inputs)  
• Low input and regenerative production systems  
• Appropriate technological innovations | • Alteri, 2009  
• Timmerman and Felix, 2015  
• Alteri and Toledo, 2011  
• Levidow et al, 2015  
• Hart, 2015 |
2.10 Practical Mergers Approach

Drawing from both the internationally recognized food sovereignty principles (Nyéléni Declaration, 2007; 2009) and the internationally recognized fair trade principles (Fairtrade International, 2017), this project identifies six criteria that show overlap between the two food system approaches. Table 2.5 names these criteria and demonstrates where the selected criteria align with both a principle (or principles) of fair trade and a pillar (or pillars) of food sovereignty. Without proposing these as strict indicators (or the only indicators), the right-hand column operationalizes each of these criteria through measurable concepts. Throughout this dissertation, this framework is how I will measure the achievement of practical mergers towards food sovereignty in fair trade value chains. Following along with Wright’s (2010) framework, the practical merger criteria consist of a mix of ruptural strategies and more symbiotic approaches.
### Table 2.5 Intersections between Fair Trade and Food Sovereignty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Fair trade principle(s)</th>
<th>Food sovereignty pillar(s)</th>
<th>Indicators for operationalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Survival of the peasantry within global markets | Social Development Economic Development | Values food providers               | • Systems to support smallholder market access  
• Average farm size  
• Barriers to participation and entry into groups  
• Access to market regardless of volume of production or farm size |
| 2. Livelihoods and Food Security             | Social Development                  | Focuses on food for people          | • Length of agricultural season and labor patterns  
• Total hours invested in local and/or export agriculture  
• Self-reported food production + food security  
• Source of food consumed  
• Export production volume |
| 3. Agroecology                               | Environmental development           | Works with nature                   | • Number of crops produced  
• Use and source of inputs and agricultural chemicals  
• Mode of production (and relevant certifications)  
• Monoculture or mixed farm system |
| 4. Market Stability                          | Economic Development,               | Values food providers, focuses on food for people | • Total income from exports and other marketed crops  
• Uses of income from export crops  
• Voluntary desire for participation in export markets  
• Contract conditions (length, base price) |
| 5. Participation in policy and governance    | Social development                  | Puts control locally, Builds skills and knowledge | • Type of group/role in group  
• List barriers to group membership  
• Method of participation Example(s) of influence of participation in policies/decisions  
• Solidarity and support networks |
| 6. Equity and rights                         | Labor rights, social development    | Values food providers, Equal access for women | • Labor dynamics  
• Knowledge of FT standards (specifically labor regulations), Mechanism for protection of workers’ rights  
• Land tenure status (own, lease, sharecrop, hired labor)  
• Number of women in production and on executives |
2.11 Six Criteria Characterizing Practical Mergers

An ideal type practical merger is an export-oriented value chain that exemplifies these six criteria. However, the food sovereignty framework values local context and the democratic choice of producers to participate in food production and trade arrangements which best serve their needs (Agarwal, 2014; Li, 2015). As such, producers and their associations may place more value on some criteria than others depending on the context and conditions they face. The practical mergers framework allows for the possibility of examining export-oriented value chains that display some practical merger criteria, even in cases wherein not all of these criteria are met to the fullest extent, or some are not met at all. The case studies in the following chapters exemplify examples of this caveat. The next section outlines the justification for the six ideal type practical mergers criteria.

2.11.1 Survival of the Peasantry within Global Markets

Agrarian political economy posits that the infusion of capital into agriculture will usher the disappearance of the peasantry from the countryside (Araghi, 1995; Bernstein, 2006; McMichael, 2009). Some theorists argue that modernization will transform the peasantry into wage laborers, or ‘petty commodity producers’ through processes of capital accumulation and a restructuring of land and labor (Bernstein, 2006). Other arguments support this contention, suggesting that the combination of development policies, industrialization, globalization and export led growth have “actually denied a future to peasants” (Naranjo, 2012, p. 231). However, others have argued that the peasantry will form a parallel system not subject to the same rules and logic of capitalism and globalization and thus be able to ‘resist’ the homogenizing and globalizing forces of industrial capitalism and continue produce and reproduce their own developmental logic (Van der Ploeg,
2013; 2014; Niska et al, 2012) via a type of “alternative agrarianism” (McMichael, 2013a). In other cases still, producers presented with limited domestic markets seek out export opportunities, and deliberately forge international trade relations as a means to “ensure their survival” without seeing this as undermining their small-scale producer identities or politics (Kerssen, 2015, p. 495). As van der Ploeg (2013) notes: “it is important to recognize that being embedded in (and subordinated to the overall logic of) capitalism does not imply that all agriculture is capitalist agriculture” (p. 4).

The case studies that make up this dissertation thus examine the extent to which the peasantry is able to choose to become embedded in capitalist trading relations using such alternative and niche market trading relations to remain as independent, (relatively) autonomous agriculturalists with a desire to maintain their traditional livelihoods. Do practical mergers enable a break with a dichotomous “peasant-entrepreneur” typology based on farmer motivations (for subsistence versus the maximization of economic returns and efficiency)? This dissertation hypothesizes that farmers engaged with alternative and fair trade markets can be viewed as “both peasants and entrepreneurs” pursuing market-oriented activities within the frame of “ecological entrepreneurship” which includes values of autonomy, profitability and rural wellbeing (Niska, Vesala and Vesala, 2012). Furthermore, these producer groups and their respective associations could hold desires directed at reforming trading relationships to create more favorable conditions of participation (Edelman, 2014). In this way, this criterion examines the protective measures that fair trade offers to promote both access to markets as a mechanism for (economic) survival and as a mechanism to allow smallholders to persist as a social class. However, the ability for the
peasantry to ‘strategically utilize’ agribusiness linkages to niche marks to their advantage and to assist with their economic survival relies on a number of important and inter-related factors.

One of the biggest challenges for smallholders in entering international value chains has to do with volume and regulatory requirements. Set output volume to meet exporter demands or quality control regulations that require access to expensive technologies can limit the ability of resource-poor smallholders to enter international supply chains (DeSchutter, 2010). In light of this, mechanisms for entry into global supply chains for smallholders without capital or technology as a barrier is one of the first important aspects to consider with regards to a practical merger. Systems that encourage innovative means of collective action—such as the formation of “producer companies” (Trebbin and Hassler, 2012), cooperatives and shared processing facilities—to meet supply and regulatory demands have proven valuable to tackle some of the access challenges, including onerous and costly entry regulations, faced by smallholders who desire participation in global markets (Fischer, 2014; Markelova, 2009).

Farmland dispossession is another big challenge facing smallholders. Export orientation has increased farm size and dispossessed many smallholders around the globe (i.e. banana plantations). In other cases, land grabs have resulted in a ‘reorganization’ of traditional production systems. As Borras et al (2012) have noted, especially where land grabs have been on existing agricultural frontiers “…peasants, rural labourers and indigenous peoples [are incorporated] into the emerging commercial farms, commodity chain, and industrial plantations” (p. 847). In other instances, increased commercialization of specific crops has driven up land values and changed land access for smaller and resource poor farmers (Yaro et al. 2017).

Can fair trade help hold smallholders to the land? Can fair trade offer small producers supportive mechanisms such as higher prices and stable contracts to participate in global markets
regardless of farm size or product volume? The ability of smallholders to sell their production into global markets if desired regardless of their farm size and output volume is also important in terms of equalizing trade opportunities. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 draw attention to the importance of continued support for smallholders in the face of increasing concentration and consolidation of both the mango and banana industries.

Both food sovereignty and fair trade encourage different types of approaches and policies that support the survival of the peasantry. Food sovereignty advocates the protection of access to traditional land and attempts to protect domestic markets against global agribusiness, whether global agribusiness enters through food aid (dumping), the promotion of inequitable trading contracts, or via land grabbing connected to the larger processes of global capitalism and the accumulation of wealth (McMichael, 2009; 2013; Borras et al, 2012). Fair trade promotes the survival of the peasantry via preferential market access primarily for smallholders (Jaffee, 2012; Bacon, 2010).

It is important to note that in contrast to the ‘disappearance thesis’, which argues that capitalism will lead to the demise of the peasantry (Araghi, 1995), the survival of the peasantry criterion within the practical mergers framework argues that peasant participation in international trade relations on their own terms (and aided by niche market certification) can contribute to the survival of the ‘new peasantry’ (Van Der Ploeg, 2013). Seen in this light, the survival of the peasantry could be a considered a ruptural strategy, demanding a new type of relationship between international actors, capital (and markets) and the peasantry as an active and engaged political, social and economic class.
2.11.2 Livelihood and Food Security

Participation in export markets can make an important contribution to peasant livelihoods and many producers desire participation in export markets (Louis, 2015; Soper, 2015; Burnett and Murphy, 2014; Mannon, 2005). Within this framework, there are a number of different ways for small farmers to achieve livelihood outcomes and meet food security needs. The question of whether livelihood and food security needs should be met via household food production (i.e. self-sufficiency) or via participation in cash cropping for export markets, or through multiple or combined strategies, is a theoretical question that has been taken up by numerous authors in the literature over the last decades. Nearly 30 years ago, Glover and Kusterer (1990) questioned the “diversion” of resources for household agriculture in favor of efforts to supply affluent northern consumers (p. 17).

In their case study of Indonesia, Vel et al (2016) describe how the conversion of rice fields to palm oil plantations is currently happening in spite of a government law and policy restricting such activities in the interest of national food self-sufficiency. Vel et al (2016) also argue that small producers who are engaged in conversion from rice to palm oil become highly dependent on the market for food security provisioning and risk undermining the continuation of farming livelihoods (Vel et al., 2016). Cramb et al (2016) point out the complexities involved in assessing the outcomes of inclusion in cash crop schemes. Their recent comparative case study work of four different cash crop schemes in South East Asia highlights the need to examine the complex and shifting interplay of agro-economic characteristics, agribusiness involvement, and incentives, as well as how shifting land tenure dynamics produce “favorable or unfavorable conjunctures for inclusive smallholder development” (Cramb et al, 2016, p. 3).
Others have argued that in general, positive synergies between food cropping and cash cropping can and do exist. Examples include small farmers acquiring necessary inputs and resources from cash crops to invest in greater productivity of food crops (Govereh and Jayne, 2003; Van den Broeck and Maertens, 2016) or having cash crops strategically concentrated at certain times, leaving the rainy season for traditional agricultural activities (Larochez-Dupraz and Huchet-Bourdon, 2016; Maertens and Swinnen, 2009).

Other evidence is less conclusive about the overall positive or negative impacts of participating in export-oriented cash crop production on farmer livelihoods and food security. For example, Van Der Brock et al (2016) found that while competition between horticultural exports and household food production may exist, a review of the current evidence does not point to a universal causal relationship between increased exports and decreases in food security. They claim, as others do, that it is more valuable to examine the relationship between exports and rising food imports (Gauthier, 2008; Van den Broeck and Maertens, 2016). While an open market with low or zero tariffs can reduce the price of imported foodstuffs for consumers, production incentives for national producers are weakened given the need to compete with low priced imports. This cycle can reduce domestic production of particular goods overall and make consumers dependent on markets and thus at risk of price fluctuations which increase the risk of food insecurity (Larochez-Dupraz and Huchet-Bourdon, 2016; Steckley and Weis, 2016).

Agricultural specialization—focusing agricultural activities on one or two specific crops, as a means to secure ‘comparative advantage’—has been championed as a way for smallholders to maximize efficiency and profit. Based on this logic, the peasantry must make calculations about the costs and benefits of cash cropping versus self-sufficiency. These calculations require examining investments and economic returns in terms of available land and labor power, as well
as markets access, prices and household food security needs (Govereh and Jayne, 2003; Timmer, 1997). However, there are also additional household level benefits beyond just increases in farm income from cash crops. Household level synergies can occur when revenue from a cash crop allows families to acquire other needed resources and allow farmers to invest in other crops in their household mix. These can take the form of credit provided by outgrower schemes for specific crops that can be invested into other aspects of the farm to ensure participation and family stability into the future. Such synergies can also occur during the availability of more general support and training services offered via cash cropping schemes (Govereh and Jayne, 2003). As such, examining the various strategies by which smallholders secure livelihood needs and food security is another criterion when evaluating a practical merger.

In some cases, a seasonal commitment and the allocation of labor resources towards export crops does not overshadow or exclude desired household agricultural activities required for household food production and domestic market opportunities (i.e. food security). Can fair trade assist with securing livelihoods where traditional farming patterns for household food security and local market economies co-exist alongside strategic participation in export markets? To what extent are fair trade arrangements important to those producers whose livelihood and food security needs are met primarily though using cash crop income to purchase foodstuffs?

Chapter 4 deals with this notion of livelihoods, focusing on the characteristics of export mango production and relationship to traditional farming patterns and household food security. This case showcases the ways in which the nature of seasonal mango production and the unique dynamics of the industry allow for participation in export markets alongside traditional farming patterns. The combination of year-round mixed subsistence agricultural activities combined with seasonal cash cropping makes an important contribution to household and community food
security (Cohello et al, 2014). In Chapter 6, for Ecuador fair trade banana producers, more stable year-round export revenues (provide by fair trade contracts and prices when compared to conventional price fluctuations) become the means by which producer families secure livelihoods and meet food security needs. Year-round income from banana production allows for the purchase of foodstuffs at local markets and supermarkets. In contrast to the survival of the peasantry, literature in both fair trade and food sovereignty points to smallholders desire to maintain stability and enhance food security via a number of conventional and established pathways. This dynamic points to the moderate, symbiotic nature of criterion 2.

2.11.3 Agro-ecology

A sustainable production system that maintains and promotes an ecological and bio-diverse land base and utilizes low input production techniques is a key pillar of the food sovereignty (works with nature), and a desired practice promoted by fair trade (environmental development). Both approaches champion low input production systems to maintain ecological and human health (Timmerman and Felix, 2015; Levidow et al., 2104; Elder et al., 2013). From a food sovereignty perspective, on-farm ecological sustainability ensures the continuity and productivity of farms into the future as well links to the larger mandate of combatting climate change (through diversification or over-yielding as a safety net during ecological changes) (Alteri, 2009; 2011) and broader ideals of environmental sustainability and “contributive justice” (Levidow et al, 2014). Agroecological production systems can also serve larger goals beyond the protection of the proximal environment (Alteri and Toledo, 2011) including some who see a multi-functional agroecology as “a practical alternative with the aim of mobilizing new peasants” (Calvário, 2017, p. 413) or others who argue that peasant controlled production systems, grounded in local
ecologies “entails a *re-introduction of nature* into the agricultural process of production” (van der Ploeg, 2013, p. 15).

Agroforestry systems combined with rural development initiatives funded by certification premiums (fair trade and organic) follow what Hart et al (2015) suggests is a trend toward combining agricultural models with other land uses to make whole systems more “multi-functional”. This idea involves merging primary agricultural goods with the provision of other ecosystem services such as protection of water resources and forest areas. These efforts are then supported by collective producer movements as drivers in defining and shaping farming and landscape systems (Hart, 2015). Chapter 6 addresses this idea of the multi-functionality and interconnectedness of the agroecological banana production systems in Ecuador. The small-scale mango production systems in Haiti and the agro-ecological banana farms in the south of Ecuador are mixed crop, low input farming systems. Chapters 4 and 6 describe these mixed crop, chemical free production systems in the context of their surrounding communities. Attention to the number and types of crops produced, land use dynamics and seasonal cropping cycles, the source of inputs, as well as exploring the dynamics of access to productive resources such as seeds and water are important assessment indicators. Chapters 4 and 6 also draw linkages between agro-ecological models in meeting new certification requirements, requirements which when met, translate to higher economic benefits for individual farmers and producer communities via collective fair trade premiums. Furthermore, as a distinct strategy for change within the context of fair trade and food sovereignty, an agroecological approach represents a symbolic and practical means to invert and challenge the dominant production model. In contrast to farm size increases, use of agro-chemicals, single cropping, hired labor, and a separation of
farming practices from nature and ecosystems, the practice of agro-ecology is an act of resistance and a ruptural response on the pathway towards food system transformation.

2.11.4 Market Stability

A stable marketing structure is the fourth key feature of a successful practical merger that enables more favorable participation in international trade for small-scale producers. There are a number of ways in which smallholders attempt to achieve market stability. Government based programs and public procurement initiatives are often focused on domestic sourcing and distribution to advance food sovereignty and household food security (Quaye et al, 2010) through the creation of “mediated markets” (Wittman and Blesh, 2015) designed to make trade more “socially efficient” through the protection of trade relationships (Rocha, 2007 cited in Wittman and Blesh, 2015). Private certification standards (such as fair trade) are also used by international certifying bodies to regulate stable prices.

For some small producers in export markets, moving away from a reliance on spot market selling into long term fair trade marketing arrangements can be beneficial to the economic stability and to ensure consistent market access (Dammert and Mohan, 2014). Contract production (whether fair trade or not) is often appealing to producers because of the assistance with performance and production, as well as offering a degree of risk assurance to producers (Masakure and Henson, 2005). Stable marketing contracts, such as those provided by fair trade, can be accompanied by a range of benefits and costs such as increased information flows throughout the supply chain and pricing consistency. However, such situations also bring contractual obligation(s), the potential for unfair contracts or the potential for contractual disputes (Young, 2002). Other authors point out “...how the unequal nature of such [contract]
relationships can lead to skewed income distribution, pervasive indebtedness, familial tensions, food insecurity” (Makakure and Hanson, 2005, p. 1723). However, fair trade, at least in its ideal philosophy, can be seen as a “strategic tool” to advance development and champion social inclusion (Wilkinson, 2007) and thus directly attempts to mitigate many of these contractual risks. Fair trade is also known to build organizational capacity, utilize the bargaining and representative power of groups to help meet collective marketing objectives, and bring more direct trading relationships with specific partners which may offer enhanced communication channels and greater opportunities to ensure stability. Chapters 4 and 6 highlight the importance of fair trade as a means to help secure consistent and transparent trading partnerships with stable base prices.

Finally, while many of the aspects of long term, stable contracts are seen as beneficial, producers must also have autonomy to remove themselves from exploitative or unfavorable arrangements. The benefits of such arrangements may fail to materialize if smallholders lack mechanisms to protect themselves from external influences and interventions that may attempt to undermine their market share and market stability (Steckley and Weiss, 2016). Chapter 5 deals in depth with this latter issue. Demands for stability in purchase volumes, pricing and contracts represent a symbiotic transformational strategy designed to create more dependable and predictable engagements with international partners. Small farmers can build on such ‘stable engagement’ to invest and scale up as the market and their own resources allow. Such stable engagement may also provide an opportunity to assert collective supplier power in the context of price negotiations or value chain design.
2.11.5 Participation in Policy and Governance

A further criterion for evaluating a practical merger is the participation of producers and their respective associations in value chain governance and policy making. The ways in which participation, citizenship, and democracy are enacted is a foundational element of a food sovereignty paradigm (Wittman, 2011). While acknowledging that active participation can be constrained by “the socio-economic limitations of their members” (Raynolds, Murray and Taylor, 2004, p. 1115) policies and initiatives to help reduce marginalization and reduce hunger must be built by soliciting the active participation of peasants (Naranjo, 2012). The formation of strong groups to push for such participation becomes paramount. Cooperative formation for marketing as a requirement of fair trade certification is one way that attempts to create spaces for producer participation (Valkila and Nygren, 2009). Third-party certification governance regulations hold the potential to create greater group engagement and facilitate local inspection services that increase the bargaining power and participation avenues of smallholders (Lyons, 2013). However, greater levels of attention must be given to the role that fair trade producer organizations play in value chain policy design and institutional governance (Tallontire, 2009). Food sovereignty’s emphasis on “putting control locally” also highlights the importance placed on producer’s voice and agency in helping construct and control trading arrangements that benefit them on their own terms (Burnett and Murphy, 2014). Examining the types of mechanisms and opportunities producers have available for participation in policy circles (Brem-Wilson, 2015) as well their ability to be involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of value chains (Vagneron, 2009) is a key variable of interest. Levels of participation are also connected to the enactment of rights. As Boone et al (2016) note, food sovereignty requires a
reconceptualising [of] development processes so that communities participate in iterative processes of reflection and feedback, enforcing their rights to define local agricultural and food access policies” (p. 244). Such an iterative process is more likely to occur if producers have voice and decision-making abilities within their respective organizations and, if possible, in larger policy circles. Chapter 6 of this dissertation deals with this issue in-depth in the context of Ecuador. In addition, strong networks and linkages for support and solidarity, as well as collective action can act as an important foundation to help generate opportunities for participation. Both chapters 5 and 6 examine the role of producer associations and network linkages as mechanisms to support individual farmers as well as providing solidarity around struggles for larger issues around autonomy, equity, inclusion and justice. Smallholders have typically held restricted bargaining positions within international value chains and their participation in larger policy arenas has been limited at best (Desmarais, 2007). As such, the call for smallholder participation in value chain policy and governance (beyond their local level) is a ruptural and radical strategy to accord smallholder needs and interests a more prominent place in value chain design, value chain governance and the larger policy implications that shape international investment and trade relationships (Brem-Wilson, 2015).

2.11.6 Equity and Rights

A critical and reflective analysis of ‘rights’ based frameworks has been foundational to examinations and articulations of food sovereignty (Claeys, 2012; Patel, 2007). Many scholars have examined the relationship between food sovereignty and related rights-based concepts such as health equity (Spiegel, 2015; Weiler et al, 2014), gender equity (Young-Park, White and Julia,
and newly emerging food justice type practices and initiatives that attempt to counter the inequalities of an economic, market oriented logic championed by neo-liberalism (Alkon, 2013). Food sovereignty frameworks advocate and encourage the participation of women producers and in leadership roles (Young-Park, White and Julia, 2015; Patel et al., 2007) and push more generally for policy spaces in which rights and obligations become a central feature of the discussion of food production and consumption (Wittman, 2011). The concepts of equity and rights, as well as the participation in policy making to ensure such rights, are an integral component of the food sovereignty movement (Patel, 2009; Naranjo, 2012).

Fair trade regulations articulate specific labor rights and worker standards (Besky, 2015; Terstappen, Hanson and McLaughlin, 2012). An analysis of what counts as equitable wages for employment in the sector must also be seen in relation to a countries minimum wage. Fair trade regulations also advocate increasing gender equity in both production and in leadership (McArdle and Smith, 2014). While fair trade’s guiding philosophy has also championed some efforts to address inequitable trading relations between southern producers and northern consumers, fair trade is less explicit about general notions of equity and rights outside of marketing arrangements and producer cooperative arrangements, particularly within food system governance arrangements.

On a practical level, inequitable value distribution between upstream and downstream actors in many international supply chains highlight challenges of food systems delivering economic equity. As such, both fair trade and food sovereignty argue for the creation of more favorable and more equitable conditions of participation for all those included in value chain operations. Both movements share an orientation that leans (in varying degrees) towards the accomplishment of equity and rights where these have been marginalized. In fair trade, the
economic and labor dimensions are paramount. In food sovereignty, equity and rights take on much broader and larger aims such as “peoples right to food sovereignty” and ensuring the “rights of peasants”. Rights in this context take on both ‘instrumental’ (political, social and economic) and ‘expressive’ (norms, ideals and values) dimensions (Claeys, 2012).

Assessing the processes and barriers involved in joining groups as well as the group’s capacity to help provide solidarity and market access lends insight into how equity and rights can be supported through collective bargaining power and collective governance activities. Chapter 4, 5 and 6 explore some of these issues in the case of Haiti and Ecuador’s producer associations. Finally, extending the discussion of equity and rights from concerns related to pricing, labor and group dynamics/structure at the local level (i.e. fair trade) to encompass those broader concerns of equity, empowerment and justice (championed food sovereignty) is a ruptural-type reconfiguration of traditional power dynamics. It is also an explicit call for the acknowledgement of small-scale producer’s rights, needs and desires within international supply chains.

2.12 Conclusion

Fair trade and food sovereignty are two alternative food movements and conceptualizations aimed at shifting the negative impacts of the conventional food system. Although often championed by a similar set of actors and institutions, the relationship between these two different orientations remains underdeveloped in the current literature. This chapter has outlined the main tenets and principles of both movements and then proposed a conceptual framework that can be used to evaluate export-oriented agricultural supply chains that merges both fair trade and food sovereignty concerns. This “practical mergers” framework is suited to case study work focusing on both technical value chain dynamics as well as the socio-economic
and ecological conditions underpinning farmers’ participation and valuation of certified export-oriented value chain arrangements. The use of the evaluation framework also offers opportunities to examine places where challenges and limitations impede the realization of a practical merger between fair trade and food sovereignty.
Chapter 3 Methodology

This dissertation builds on calls to examine more deeply the relationship between food sovereignty principles and markets, specifically international markets (Burnett and Murphy, 2014; Edelman et al., 2014; Henderson, 2016; Shattuck et al., 2015; Soper, 2015; Brem-Wilson, 2015; Wittman, 2015). For example, the Committee on World Food Security’s working document (2015) identified the need for deeper explorations into the types of trading arrangements which will benefit and support the sustainability of small farming operations around the world (Brem-Wilson, 2015). In this study, I focus on those value chains under fair trade certification, hypothesizing such certifications to be a foundation to creating, following and possibly achieving some food sovereignty ideals.

In exploring the overriding question of what core aspects of food sovereignty theory can be practically merged with market-based development agendas to create more sustainable and equitable export-oriented value chains for small-scale producers, this dissertation asks the following specific questions: How and to what extent can export-oriented value chains embody principles of food sovereignty and support the survival of the peasantry? How do export-oriented value chains impact the livelihoods and food security of smallholders in Haiti and Ecuador? In what ways can the practical mergers criteria assist our theorizing about the under-explored relationship between fair trade and food sovereignty specifically in the realms of market stability, producer participation, and regarding the realization of equity and rights? This work is based on two distinct case studies involving different agricultural products (mangos and bananas) in two different regions of the world (Haiti and Ecuador). The case studies exemplify diverse ways in which smallholders and their associations struggle for more ideal conditions of participation in export value chains.
Comparative case designs facilitate exploration of a phenomenon in diverse settings (Darke et al, 1998). In both cases studied here, the object of study is the many and diverse ways in which smallholders and their respective associations struggle to create and secure more ideal conditions of participation in export-oriented value chains. Both cases also highlight the common theme of fair trade as a mechanism to tackle some of the challenges inherent in these struggles. At the same time, the two case studies illustrate context-specific dynamics that enable a fuller exploration of the complex dynamics of export-oriented agricultural supply chains. For example, banana varieties have been bred to travel well internationally; mangos (in Haiti) have not received the same attention or infrastructure investment. Bananas are predominantly plantation crops; mangos (in the case of Haiti in particular) are small farm crops. The vast majority of export bananas are a standardized variety (Cavendish) and are hugely popular in the industrialized world; mangos are one of the world's most loved tropical fruit crops, but unique, country specific varieties are still emerging and gaining recognition beyond their countries of origin. Furthermore, these different commodities are located within two very different value chain arrangements. The banana value chain has a long history, is highly integrated, and is dominated by multinational corporations who control and organize many/most stages of the international supply chain to meet international demands for both year-round supply and quality. The Francis mango value chain is young, decentralized, and struggling to address ongoing value chain logistics related to quality control and transport infrastructure, given the seasonal nature and lower output volumes.

This case study employs qualitative methods to examine the cross-case (in)congruencies between certified, export-oriented value chains and food sovereignty principles. While some of the challenges facing smallholders in different parts of the world share common ground, the
diversity of the lived experiences, the unique value chain arrangements, and a given community’s responses to challenges are very different. While case study methodology and resultant analysis can make only “contingent generalizations that apply to the sub-class of cases similar to the ones under study” (George and Bennett, 2004, p. 31), both these cases explore the mechanisms and processes that may support the process of food sovereignty within the unique situational context of the farmers and their respective associations.

The first part of this chapter justifies the case selections and provides an overview of the field sites. The second part reviews the methodological and epistemological approach to the case studies as well as data collection strategies. The final section offers a brief statement on researcher reflexivity.

3.1 Case Study 1: The Francis Mango in Haiti

I chose Haiti as a case study of food sovereignty, fair trade, and export-oriented value chains for four main reasons. First, Haiti is the only country to operate an export mango industry based on a smallholder ‘backyard system’ rather than a series of centralized plantations. Second, the particular variety of mango suitable for export represents a geographically unique product (only produced in Haiti) and a seasonal rather than year-round crop. This seasonal feature allows producers to pursue household production alongside some export-oriented production. Third, Haiti has struggled with food self-sufficiency and food insecurity for the nearly three decades, given its shift towards exports and import substitution (Shamsie, 2012; McGuigan, 2006). This struggle is connected to policies of global integration as well as structural adjustment programs combined with an international donor discourse of agricultural modernization and poverty reduction achieved via exports (Cohen, 2013; Fatton, 2011; Gauthier, 2008; MARNDR, 2013;
Shamsie, 2012; Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). Fourth, with the exception of Steckley (2016) and Steckley et al (2015) and Hypolite (2014; 2013), much of the existing English language research about the mango sector in Haiti has been consultant-based assessments and/or organizationally-driven, without a deep critical perspective given to processes unfolding within particular sub-areas of the sector.

These assessments include general characterizations of the supply chain, including an overview of its structure, participating actors, production, harvesting and transport practices, prices received and number of tons exported annually (Castenada et al, 2010; Hypolite, 2013). Technical reports on the Haitian mango industry cover inefficiencies in the supply chain, rates of rejection, export-quality post-harvest losses, and the lack of technical and knowledge-based resources required to reduce inefficiencies in the interest of greater profit (Pierreval, 2012; Taiwan ICDF Report, 2012). Industry strategic plans for growth describe further developing the sub-sector through national investment with the private sector or via NGO-led value chain interventions. (IADB, 2012; Francis Mango Strategic Plan, 2010). These industry perspectives highlight the potential of greater vertical integration, coordination and consolidation to address inefficiencies throughout the supply chain.

This body of prior work has given limited voice to the insights of knowledgeable local actors, and in particular, small-scale mango producers themselves. My use of descriptive, ethnographic techniques was chosen primarily to give voice to these actors and join a small but growing community of scholars offering a critical perspective with a food sovereignty lens on the unfolding of interventions in reshaping the Francis mango value chain.
3.1.1 Site Description

Haiti shares the western third of the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic. Agriculture plays a dominant role in the economy, holding particular importance for nearly 60 percent of the population who depend on it for their survival (Eicher-Miller et al., 2011). Agriculture in Haiti accounts for almost 25 percent of the country’s GDP. There are a total of 1.7 million hectares in agricultural production, which makes up over 60 percent of the total land base, with average farm size reported as 1.5 hectares. Most farms are broken up into three to five small units (MARNDR, 2013) with smallholders controlling production decisions.
Smallholders working and controlling their own very small parcels mostly for household consumption characterizes this “counter plantation” model. This model has been a strong response to the long history of outside influences driving policies towards the creation of agricultural workers producing primarily export cash crops (Dubois, 2012) that primarily benefitted colonial masters and then later national elites (Fatton, 2011; 2006). Current arrangements of export-oriented agriculture continue to primarily benefit national elites and international business.

There has been a significant lack of contemporary government investment in the agricultural sector, just 4 percent of the national budget in the first half of the 2000s (Cohen, 2013). This lack of investment and lack of sector-wide regulation has contributed to a large part of the productive land being subject to environmental degradation through poor, unregulated farming practices (McGuigan, 2006; Smucker et al., 2005) as well as contributed to the declining economic viability of the agricultural sector as a whole (Zannotti, 2009).

Rising food import balances (Cohen, 2013; Shamsie, 2012), declining rates of food self-sufficiency, and rampant food insecurity in many rural areas (McGuigan, 2006; Steckley and Shamsie, 2015) also suggest a disconnect between investment priorities and the current levels of need. Haiti exemplifies a tension between a more liberal trade–based approach and farmers’ associations advocating a “food sovereignty” model (Shamsie, 2012) focused on increasing the country’s self-sufficiency and strengthening domestic markets (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015; USAID, 2011b). Responses to food security challenges alongside potential economic opportunities from the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Rural Development (MARNDR) are both confronting and exemplifying these contradictions. MARNDR’s (2013) National Agricultural Investment Plan highlights the importance of agriculture for achieving
domestic food security, facilitating the country’s economic recovery, and encouraging social stability. The plan seeks to boost self-sufficiency in agriculture from the current level of 50 percent up to 60 percent, while also raising household incomes. In addition, it promotes agro-enterprise development, which is expected to increase agricultural exports by at least 40 percent from the 2011 baseline of US $30.74 million (Banque de la République d’Haïti, 2012 cited in Cohen, 2013). Within the portion of this new framework and plan focused on increasing agricultural exports, renewed attention has been given to one of Haiti’s most valuable exports - the Madame Francisque mango, commonly known as the Francis mango.

3.1.2 The Francis Mango in Haiti

Mango (*Mangifera indica*) is the second largest Haitian export crop by volume after cocoa beans and the third in dollar value per ton following cocoa beans and coffee (FAO, 2015). The exporting of mangos annually nets more than ten million dollars to the Haitian economy (Castañeda et al., 2011; Hyppolite et al., 2014) and estimates suggest that over 200,000 people in the country have some involvement in the mango value chain (USAID, 2011b). A wide range of mango varieties are grown in the country (by some estimates, over 150). However, only one variety, the Francis mango, has export potential due to its ability to withstand the hot water treatment required by American importing regulations (Castañeda et al., 2011). Despite exporting over 9000 tons of Francis mangos in 2011 (FAO, 2014), Haiti has yet to fully benefit from this new wave of fruit export potential due to lack of infrastructure supporting its supply chains. Although Haiti was a leading global exporter of mangos until the late 1980s, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) estimates that now that only 20 percent of marketable fruit reaches international markets because of excessive quality losses caused by
poor organization, poor harvesting, and transport practices (Hyppolite, 2013, 2014). As such, Haiti has fallen off the list of the top five mango exporting countries (FAO, 2015).

In addition to poor organization and limited infrastructure, a number of other factors have further complicated direct investment in strengthening the existing national organizations and their supply chain efforts. Just weeks after the earthquake in 2010, a $9.5 million public-private partnership involving NGO’s, corporate actors, the Inter-American Development Bank, USAID, the Clinton-Bush Foundation, and the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture, entered the country under the title of the “Haiti Hope Project” (HHP). The objective of this program was to assist an estimated 25,000 mango growers increase their production and access to markets (Technoserve, 2014; Aldeman, 2011). This five-year project (2010-2015) focused on providing technical, organizational, production and marketing support focused on increasing output, enhancing quality control and supply chain management, and reducing post-harvest, export-quality losses. This project implemented the development of new producer “cells” which drew active producers away from independent marketing, and, whether intentional or not, drew some active producers away from collective marketing with existing national and regionally organized groups.

While the long-term implications of this project on the restructuring of peasant farming dynamics—including land, labor and capital interactions—and the future of the program itself remains to be seen, over the last five years, the HHP mango program has employed over one hundred local individuals to provide agricultural extension services and basic technical assistance. Technoserve has aided “thousands” of growers with their business development

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1 Post-harvest losses in the context of this dissertation refer to mangos that were rejected from export value chains, many due to quality constraints. While some of these mangos are wasted, others are eaten or sold into second tier, local markets for a substantially lower price. For example, producers from my sample reported 10% or less of rejected mangos were actually “wasted”.

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program since 2010. Alongside the Technoserve Mango Program, other NGO-led projects throughout the country assist smallholders to capture increased market share for their products and increase production output of export varieties through planting new trees and/or grafting as well in order to preserve fragile environments by incentivizing the conservation of mango trees (Organization for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, 2015). Successes of NGO-led development projects within Haiti are context dependent (Schuller, 2009), and their ability to meet local needs and provide the promised economic growth and empowerment for the poor (Adelman, 2010; Fukuda-Parr, 2009; McGuigan, 2006) has been met some criticism from development scholars within Haiti (Bellegarde-Smith, 2011; Cohen, 2013; Fatton, 2011) and farther afield (Adelman, 2010; McGuigan, 2006; Shamsie, 2012).

Many of these projects for agricultural development appear to be placing an emphasis on developing the export mango sector as the most important direction for the country. Cohen (2013) suggests that in contrast to years past, USAID’s current agricultural development program actually strikes “an appropriate balance” between support for food crop production for domestic markets and export crops, with the main emphasis on the former (Cohen, 2013). However, this report does not describe the definition of what an “appropriate balance” would look like. Following Hurricane Matthew in 2016, of the 56 million dollars in emergency relief funds earmarked for food security and nutrition, most took the form of short term emergency food aid provide by the World Food Program, with only 9 million directed towards the ‘restoration of rural productive capacity’ (Hauge, 2017). Huge amounts of food aid and investment in agro-export industries stand in contrast to limited investment in strengthening domestic agricultural capacity and addressing the lack of rural infrastructure and agricultural extension services which have impacted the development of a strong rural economy (MARNDR, 2013).
3.1.3  Research Partner: FENAPCOM

The Haiti case study is focused on FENAPCOM, a national mango producer and marketing association. The Fédération Nationale des Associations de Producteurs pour la Commercialisation de la Mangue (FENAPCOM) was established in 2005 and remains an active player in the mango value chain. FENAPCOM represents approximately 15,000 of the reported 200,000 total mango farmers in the country (Multilateral Investment Fund, 2014), or 7.5 percent of the country’s mango growers and consolidates products through a series of marketing and organizational cooperatives spread across five different departments.

The majority of FENAPCOM’s organic and fair trade mango groups are clustered in two regions: the Artibonite Valley and Plateau Central region. These regions also represent the majority of active mango production within the country for both conventional and certified fair trade and organic mangos for export. Within these two regions, four groups in particular are actively engaged in certified organic and fair trade production and marketing of mangos. Fieldwork was focused on these four primary groups given their various sizes (from 75 members to over 700 members), their participation in a fair trade and organic marketing scheme, their strong connections to FENAPCOM executive and well as based on relationships built through pre-dissertation fieldwork. Chapters 4 and 5 that follow examine FENAPCOM producer and organization perspectives on how and to what extent food sovereignty principles are represented in the fair trade Francis mango value chain. These chapters also highlight the limitations and barriers to a practical merger between fair trade and food sovereignty.

3.2  Case Study 2: UROCAL’s Fair Trade Banana Program

I chose to situate my second case study in Ecuador as a case study of food sovereignty,
fair trade, and export-oriented value chains for four reasons. First, the Ecuadorian banana industry has a long and rich history involving the constantly shifting dynamics among multinational organizations, state power, and peasant movements (Striffler, 2001). Many of the dynamics present in the larger food sovereignty struggles can be found within this history. Secondly, bananas have been suggested to be one of only a few fair trade commodities that deliver returns to its participants based on a number of literature reviews (DeFries et al, 2017; Samba-Sylla, 2014; Rueben et al, 2011; Rueben et al, 2008). Third, the industry is composed primarily of small-scale farmers (less than 30 hectares) who own their own farms yet have rigid contracts with distant multi-nationals who, following peasant uprisings in the 1950 and 1960s, were driven away from direct ownership and oversight, leaving a unique hybrid model of power and influence (Striffler, 2001). Finally, Ecuador’s incorporation of food sovereignty into its national constitution (2009) offers a chance to examine the practical workings of food sovereignty (Clark, 2015; 2017; Giunta, 2014; Schiavoni, 2015) especially within the export-oriented sectors of the Ecuadorian economy.

Ecuador is the biggest exporter of bananas worldwide, with 61 percent ($1.9 billion in 2009) of its total agricultural GDP from the banana sector, and 95 percent of production destined for overseas markets. In Ecuador 147,282 ha—nearly 0.6 percent of Ecuador’s land area—are used for banana cultivation. Commercial banana production occurs mainly in the provinces of Los Ríos, Guayas, and El Oro.
About 10–12 percent of all economically active people in the country obtain some direct or indirect economic benefits from banana production (FAO, 2016). Government and private sector investments in the production regime have reached an estimated US$ 4 billion between area planted, infrastructure, packing facilities, and ports. Nearly another billion has been invested in necessary “associated industries” such as cardboard boxing, plastics, supplies, aerial fumigation, research facilities, domestic transportation, and others (Vega, 2011).

Distinct forms of banana production styles co-exist in Ecuador, ranging from smallholder Organic/fair trade producer associations to large, corporately owned but nationally managed conventional plantations. While awareness is increasing about environmental concerns from...
heavy pesticide use on plantations, only a small percentage (less than 10 percent) of producers in the region under study have fully switched to certified organic methods.

The international banana export supply chain requires high degrees of integration between producers, suppliers, and consumers. In the last 60 years, Ecuador has undergone vast transformations in its banana supply chains in both governance and production, breaking away from a large-scale, multi-national controlled plantation model which dominated the southern coastal regions following the collapse of cacao exports in the early part of the 1900s. Unlike most other banana producing nations in Latin America, large-scale multi nationals do not directly control banana production in Ecuador. The majority of export production comes from contracted smallholders farming fewer than 30 hectares (Elberhi et al, 2016). This shift was a direct result of peasant struggles within the country, and these social movements have a strong history in the region under study (Garcia, 2013; Striffler, 2001; Striffler, 1999). Despite the incorporation of food sovereignty principles into its 2009 constitution, some work suggests that the food sovereignty agenda and its impacts are discursive at best and have not translated into the right to food and participation in transformative policy changes in any meaningful way (Clark, 2015; 2017; Giunta, 2014).

3.2.1 Research Partner: UROCAL

In Ecuador, the majority of banana production occurs in three provinces: El Oro, Azuay, and Guayas. The Union Regional De Organizaciones Campesinas Litoral (UROCAL) emerged in 1974 in the context of agrarian reform and the land rights movement in Ecuador (Garcia, 2013). UROCAL is a regional organization composed of small- and medium-sized producers running a fair trade banana program, a fair trade cacao program, and a food sovereignty program that supports diversified production for subsistence and local markets. Approximately 279
producer families belong to UROCAL’s fair trade banana production program, spread throughout these three provinces (UROCAL, 2015). The producers belonging to UROCAL’s fair trade banana program are advocating and practicing an agro-ecological approach to production and processing of bananas and are involved in a certified fair trade and organic marketing structure while also fostering business strategies aimed at increasing exports to maintain market share (Field visits, November 2013/Feb 2014/November 2015).

Given UROCAL’s development during the ‘second wave’ of agrarian reform (1970-1985), the issue of land access, which had at one time been the primary concern for landless peasants, had given way to struggles calling for state resources to support a predominantly landed peasantry. This peasantry demanded assistance with the production and commercialization of agricultural crops in their zone and associated rural development projects. As such, UROCAL’s key role in the early years became one of helping secure access to state credit and development project funding. Deeply attached to UROCAL’s emergence is the ongoing “struggle against exploitative market relations embodied in the system of middlemen” (Striffler, 2001, p.184). Advancing beyond the access to land question, it was this struggle, the struggle for equity and access to markets, through which they sought to unite the peasantry with a common aim (Striffler, 2001). This particular struggle in southern Ecuador was inherently connected to larger resistance movements also present in other countries in the region, many of which challenged the neo-liberal economic regime and its associated policies that were concentrating wealth in the forms of capital and land in the hands of local and foreign elites and driving the marginalization of rural producers and their communities (Veltmeyer, 2005 cited in Ghimire, 2005).

Seeking to understand more about the key role of UROCAL in facilitating specific types
of value chains for its producers, fieldwork was focused on members of the organization and the
dynamics of the various programs of operation. My research questions included: What types of
mechanisms does UROCAL utilize and support in order to assist producers with more favorable
banana value chains? Are these mechanisms sufficient to create pathways towards international
value chains that represent elements of the food sovereignty agenda?

3.3 Case Study Methods

Case studies provide deep description about particular circumstances and social
arrangements (Cavaye, 1996; Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 1978). Case researchers typically examine
pre-defined phenomena in a natural context and do not control or manipulate variables (Cavaye,
1996; Darke et al., 1998). While there are diverse case study methods, this dissertation starts
with Gerring’s (2004) definition of a case study as:

… an in-depth study of a single unit (a relatively bounded phenomenon) where the
scholar’s aim is to elucidate features of a larger class of similar phenomena […]. Thus, the
case study method is correctly understood as a particular way of defining cases, not a way
of analyzing cases or a way of modeling causal relations (p. 341, emphasis added).

Case study field methods can be highly structured, positivist and deductive, or
unstructured, interpretive and inductive or employ a combination of both approaches depending
on the objectives of the work (Cavaye, 1996). The approach in this study began with research
objectives based on the conceptual framework in Chapter 1 (primarily a deductive approach).
However, fieldwork revealed additional important concepts and themes that warranted deeper
investigation. Easton (2010) highlights the validity of this iterative process of case study work
while also emphasizing the importance of in-depth work to understand a phenomenon

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comprehensively:

Case research can therefore be defined as a research method that involves investigating one or a small number of social entities or situations about which data are collected using multiple sources of data and developing a holistic description through an iterative research process (p. 119).

Gerring (2004) points out that the case study design or methodology is one that practitioners frequently employ yet lacks agreed upon principles and practices. Case study methodology has been critiqued by some for its lack of rigor, including the absence of control groups (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Seuring, 2008). Case study designs are also critiqued for their inability to put forward definitive, causative statements about relationships (Darke et al., 1998; Seuring, 2008) or move research findings from the particular to the general. However, in a seminal work on the value of case studies in the research tradition, Flyvbjerg (2006) seeks to counter the view that case studies are not valuable in their own right, best serve the role of “pilot testing” or are simply the first step in theoretical development.

Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that such a line of thinking corresponds with the dominant hypothetico-deductive model that is seen by many social scientists as the most appropriate paradigm for gaining insight about the social world. Such a model seeks primarily to establish causal relations and generalizations resulting from the testing of pre-defined hypotheses in specific circumstances. In order to move away from “methodological monopoly” and for case studies and the case study methodology to be more widely accepted, Flyvbjerg suggests that five misunderstandings need to be addressed. These include accepting the value of practical, context-dependent knowledge; letting go of the idea that generalizations are the most important output of scientific inquiry; allowing experience as the justification for selection of particular cases;
banishing the assumption that case studies inherently lead to more biased results; and finally, the
desire to summarize case studies as a larger body of work rather than seeing them as narrative
accounts of context-specific knowledge in and of their own right (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Case studies are particularly helpful in the articulation of specific circumstances (Seuring,
2008) benefiting from the “thick description” (Geertz, 1976) of events as they are experienced.
Case studies can also make important contributions to the development and/or refinement of
theory and inspire directions for future research (Cavaye, 1996; Eisenhardt, 1989; Flyvbjerg,
2006) building from ‘bounded’ events recorded at a particular site of study (Candea, 2007).

Case research can be employed in a number of different ways and thus can lead to
different styles and types of research outputs. Case research can employ a combination of
qualitative and quantitative methods (Cavaye, 1996). The data from my dissertation aims both to
provide understandings of “particular situations and events” (Maxwell, 2010, p.156) as well as to
refine the theoretical and conceptual development of mechanisms and processes—seen as
practical mergers in the case of this dissertation—that can be used to explore the congruence
between food sovereignty principles and international value chains. Finally, some practitioners
have argued that a good case study “…is presented as an interesting and convincing story”
(Darke et al, 1998, p. 286). The narrative and descriptive style used in the presentation of results
in chapter 4 and 5 in particular prioritizes the voice of participants. Given these multiple
objectives, case research was chosen as the most appropriate method.

In the social sciences, epistemology refers to the ways in which knowledge is
constructed. In terms of epistemology, Easton (2010) argues in favor of a critical realist
perspective, especially when examining claims emerging from case study work. Easton (2010)
suggests that a critical realist perspective allows for claims about the social world to be causative
based on the *process* of the unfolding of events, rather than simply through observations of a particular set of outcomes. Maxwell’s (2004) work supports similar claims. Critical realism, most commonly attributed to Roy Bhaskar (1978), breaks from the dominant “regularity” understanding of causation—one that seeks simply to identify whether a relationship between two variables exists or whether one event influences another, what Maxwell calls “causal description”—and instead focuses on what he calls “casual explanation”. Causal explanation addresses questions of how and/or why a relationship exists. Critical realism also moves away from a variable oriented approach to research—typically sought through experimental designs—and gives prominence to process theory.

According to Maxwell (2004), “process theory, in contrast [to variance theory], deals with *events* and the processes that connect them; it is based on an analysis of the causal *processes* by which some events influence others” (p. 5). Maxwell goes on to note additional differences that separate critical realism from dominant experimental and strictly outcome based understandings of validity and causality. He points out that this “process causality” can be observed in single cases rather than the causative description of experimental designs, designs that demands repeated observations over time to draw inferences. He also points out the integral role of study context and the meanings participants give as crucial to identifying and shaping the processes at work within relationships, and by extension, the resulting process explanations involved.

Since most case study research does not employ a control group, the internal validity of conclusions can be somewhat limited. However, critical realism observes validity in a different way which is quite complementary with qualitative and case study research. Validity, as is typically the case in experimental research, is focused on evaluating the generalizable connection
between research design, procedures and the resultant outcomes. From a realist perspective however, validity focuses on whether the relationship between the claim and the phenomena that the claim is about, works in the context at hand. A critical realist understanding of validity also offers the possibility for alternate descriptions, explanations and interpretations to emerge (Maxwell, 2010). Such is the case because explanatory processes are not always definitive. Maxwell (2010) points out the distinctive feature of a realist orientation.

…[critical realists] deny that we have any objective or certain knowledge of the world, and accept the possibility of alternative valid accounts of any phenomenon. All theories about the world are grounded in a particular perspective and worldview, and all knowledge is partial, incomplete, and fallible (p. 150).

As such, the job of the case researcher is to report on these relationships and present the information of the case as thoroughly as possible. Attention to observing and reporting on particular processes and mechanisms, as well as identifying relationships within the context of these two cases is highlighted throughout the empirical chapters of this dissertation. Ethnographic techniques that examine the various relationships within the cases can also assist with this process.

3.4 Multi-sited Ethnography

Originally articulated by George Marcus in 1995, multi-cited ethnography is a means to capture ethnography “within the world system” generally developing around interdisciplinary systems that traverse space and time; things such as media, science, technology, various strands of cultural studies and “commodity chains” (Marcus, 1995). Agrarian and food studies are amenable to this ethnographic outlook, especially those that can be examined at a systems level.
The examination of value chain dynamics from various vantage points and perspectives fall within this realm. Multi-sited ethnography focuses on the relational dynamics of independent sites and/or the movement of goods and information throughout a given supply chain (Friedberg, 2001; Hannerz, 2003). Multi-sited ethnography is also consistent with an iterative case study process and facilitates an emergent research design that allows actors, information and field sites to unfold as the research process gets underway (Candea, 2007). This dissertation employs several ethnographic methods including participant observation at various stages in the supply chain, in-depth interviews, and the reliance on key informants who have extensive knowledge of the value chain dynamics and the relationships embedded within it as a main source of the collaborative production of data.

3.5 Methods

This dissertation employs a combination of mainly qualitative, case study methods including surveys, archival research, document reviews, and group and individual interviews. These traditional case study methods were complemented by additional ethnographic methods, including participant observation, the use of photographs, and the development of relationships with key informants and communities in situ. The comparative case study method was chosen as a means to provide detailed examples of the very different ways in which the balances among export-oriented value chains, household food security, and food sovereignty ideals might be enacted on the ground. The comparative case study method also offered insight into the diverse historical and present conditions that enable or restrict the merging of participation in export markets with food sovereignty pathways. The use of multiple methods is also commonplace in
ethnographic work that considers the unique dynamics of differing sites and the limitations faced by researchers.

3.5.1 Surveys

In Haiti, I developed a survey instrument that was delivered to 149 producers from four farmer groups belonging to FENAPCOM. Key informants assisted with the recruitment of local assistance for the delivery of this survey in four regions of my work in Haiti. Producer members of the local communities delivered these surveys in the local language (Kreyol) on my behalf. The final analysis included 147 surveys. The surveys were a mix of Likert-scale, short answer and multiple-choice questions. Survey responses were entered into a spreadsheet and were primarily analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify means, medians and ranges of responses. Categorical questions (Yes/Somewhat/No) were accorded a numerical value and analyzed as nominal data. Key words were also counted and recorded where appropriate. Chapter 4 of this dissertation draws primarily on the results of this survey. Further details on the sampling strategy are reviewed in the methods section of chapter 4.

In Ecuador, I analyzed the data set from the annual producer survey delivered by UROCAL in 2015. This data included gross production volumes, farm locations and sizes, cropping characteristics, and number of years holding certifications (both organic and fair trade). 130 active UROCAL members from five different groups are recorded in this survey.

3.5.2 Archival Research and Document Reviews

In both Haiti and Ecuador, fieldwork involved the use of archival sources and a document review. Both case studies included a literature search of relevant Ministry of Agriculture
documents, public contractor reports, industry development plans, unpublished and published theses, organizational and policy papers, newspaper and press releases, and producer group records where available. These documents helped develop historical and current context for the products, understand value chain dynamics and actors, and identify groups particularly relevant to my study objectives. These documents were also analyzed for common themes that assisted with the formation of interview questions. In Haiti, official FENAPCOM minutes from two years of General Assemblies (2014/2015) and official communications with the main partner/exporter, Perry Exporters Ltd. were also analyzed. In Ecuador, I examined program records, newspaper articles, photographs, presentations, UROCAL organizational reports, and promotional materials with the goal of understanding the context-specific balance and discourse of the social, political and economic goals of UROCAL’s operations.

3.5.3 Group and Individual Interviews

In both study sites, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth, and group interviews as well unstructured, opportunistic conversations during participant observation. To support my objectives for thorough description, I relied on key informants from within the producer associations in both Haiti and Ecuador. Emphasis was placed on ongoing dialogue with these key informants across my recurring visits. While some of these key informants were identified through preliminary site visits, other important actors emerged through my ongoing analysis of background data and through the formation of linkages and insights developed on the ground.

In Haiti, five in-depth interviews with producers, group executives from within my sample groups, and two additional employees from the international Technoserve program were conducted. Ongoing informal interviews were conducted during field visits, social activities, and
participant observation. Some of the interviews were tape-recorded with a translator, while most responses from conversations with my key informants were recorded short form in fieldwork notes. My recurring key informant interviews in Haiti were conducted in English. After preliminary analysis, two brief additional follow up interviews with key informants were conducted in December 2016.

In Ecuador, with the assistance of key informants within UROCAL, I initially assembled a core list of respondents based on their involvement in the food sovereignty program and the fair trade banana program. Twelve structured interviews were conducted in Spanish with producers within my partner organization (UROCAL) in southern Ecuador office. Once interviews had begun, I expanded my potential list through snowball sampling and reached out to these other actors. Interviewees provided ideas of where to turn next. In total, I conducted seven semi-structured key informant interviews with the directors of the three distinct UROCAL programs (fair trade banana, fair trade Cacao, and food sovereignty), the president of the association as well as those actors linked to these core programs. These interviews focused on the historical development of the programs and the main objectives of each, the role of fair trade in the program’s successes, and the services offered by UROCAL programs to producer-members. These interviews lasted between 20 and 60 minutes each. I conducted additional group interviews with members of two of the dominant producer associations (n=2) under the UROCAL banner as well as formal and interviews with project recipients of the food sovereignty projects (n=3). While not random, this sample is broadly representative of the range of key actors, perspectives, and expertise regarding the export and food sovereignty programs of UROCAL.
3.5.4 Participant Observation

Throughout the case study observation and the multi-sited ethnographic methodology, relationships with key informants played a crucial role in both cases. Key informants developed through the cross-national research partnership between Canada and Ecuador (Think, Eat, Grow, Green, Globally- TEG3) greatly assisted with group access in the Ecuadorian banana sector. Key informants and long-established TEG3 relations were crucial to my ability to work and study alongside UROCAL in their day-to-day operations.

During my initial visit to Machala in February 2013, I worked at the UROCAL office and went on three different ride-along excursions into the field. Over the course of this week of preliminary fieldwork, I visited seven agro-ecological banana farms and participated in packing and washing activities. I engaged in extensive in-depth conversations with two key informants from UROCAL representing the certification initiatives, technical assistance, and quality control to gain a better understanding of the modes of production used by the producers belonging to the association. During my third extended visit, from November 2015 to January 2016, I worked in the UROCAL office daily. I also attended two of UROCAL’s producer meetings, one in the town of Shumiral and the other, the 2015 national assembly in Machala. Attendance at these meetings gave insight into the key role of UROCAL in building solidarity between producers, as well as the mechanisms for dissent and producer participation.

In Haiti, participant observation was carried out at multiple field sites during two mango harvest seasons, including mango harvesting, transport, washing, preliminary post-harvest selection, and bulk loading for transport to the exporters. I also attended nine meetings in total with various participating producer groups. These meetings related to training, planning, and pre-season concerns.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Fieldwork Location</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Pre-dissertation fieldwork, development of initial research contacts and partners, gathering of background data on banana sector and UROCAL’s activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Pre-dissertation fieldwork, preliminary meetings with multiple groups executive, gathering of data on the certified mango sub-sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>January-February</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Indicator development and refinement with TEG3 team and local research partners, meetings, exploratory interviews and field site visits in La Florida. Further literature reviews and indicator refinement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September-March-May</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Survey development based on pre-dissertation fieldwork and literature reviews. Structured and unstructured interviews, extensive participant observation during first mango harvest season, survey delivery by local group members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>October-December</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Development of interview questions and refinement of research objectives, follow up field visits, meeting observation, individual interviews, group interviews, and document analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Additional interviews, survey data preliminary analysis, ongoing literature reviews of emergent studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Sharing of initial results with key informants, two follow-up interviews with target questions based on preliminary analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.6 Statement on Research Ethics and Informed Consent

This study was accorded minimal risk status through the UBC Office of Behavioral Research Ethics (BREB H14-02100: August 2014-August 2017). Participants in this study did not encounter any physical, social, or psychological risks beyond those encountered as part of everyday life.

This study examined activities related to the participant’s regular and previous experiences in supply chains and the associated dynamics of community participation. I was familiar with the ethics and processes involved in sociological research involving human subjects, and local informants also advised me when appropriate on local conditions and dynamics that may impact my relationship with participants. Survey delivery in Haiti was accomplished via the use of qualified local residents selected by and based on the expertise of key research informants. These local residents informed all prospective survey participants of the voluntary nature of their participation. All information given by participants was given freely and voluntarily; no compensation was given for participation in the survey work.

Participant identity was anonymized during the data cleaning procedure through the use of numbers in recorded survey responses. Digital audio recordings and textual interview transcripts were stored on the primary investigator’s password protected computer. In both Haiti and Ecuador, some key informants and interviewees granted permission to for their names to be used in the final reports.

Because this study may form part of a longer-term study, the data is archived in electronic form. The data will not be destroyed unless requested by an individual participant, in which case all related electronic and paper copies of the interview
transcript/relevant field note sections will be destroyed. Preliminary analysis and conclusions were shared with FENAPCOM group leaders to solicit feedback on my conclusions and analysis.

3.7 Study Limitations

The case study accounts gathered here provide contextually bounded information about specific groups of smallholders with very different aims and objectives. Limitations to the results of the casework include relatively small sample sizes, lack of a control group for comparative purposes in Haiti and Ecuador, and limited data gathered from directly from banana producers (in the case of Ecuador). This latter decision was made based on the TEG long-term project plans to survey of a large number of banana producers for a later stage of the TEG3 project and the risk of survey fatigue. This limitation was partially mitigated by the availability of recent production and fair trade premium data (2015) provided by UROCAL for analysis. Finally, the use of different methods in the two cases provides some limitations to the comparative nature of the data. However, choosing different methods based on pre-dissertation fieldwork and reflexive decisions made in the field is consistent with the iterative nature of ethnographic techniques.

Despite these limitations, this comparative case study work provides cross-sectional accounts of particular bounded dynamics and circumstances. This dissertation highlights the various ways in which smallholders and their representative associations grapple with the available tools and techniques, negotiate the various policies and programs, and struggle with the opportunities and barriers that present themselves. These
shared struggles are made in attempts to shape and re-shape export-oriented value chains for the benefit of farmer livelihoods and sustainable rural development.

Given that my work was directed at very particular national organizations in the respective countries under study (FENAPCOM in Haiti and UROCAL in Ecuador) I considered these organizations to be the boundaries of my research. Given logistical constraints to surveying a larger number of Ecuadorian banana producers in a comparative format to the survey delivered in Haiti, the decision was made to target my research and accord different weight to each of two different perspectives. In Haiti, the producer perspective was highlighted through direct survey work (Chapter 4) while the association perspective on the impacts of an international value chain intervention primarily informs the argument in the following chapter (Chapter 5). In Ecuador, the association/organizational perspective was prioritized in data collection related to the role and perspectives of the organization in supporting value chains and food sovereignty efforts (Chapter 6). This decision allowed me to explore the dynamics of export-oriented value chains from these two different stakeholder perspectives and bring them into cross-scalar summary for the concluding chapter (Chapter 7).

The sampling procedure in both these cases was purposive, based on relationships developed as part of pre-dissertation fieldwork. These differing perspectives and vantage points are useful in relation to the overall research questions explored in this study given the diversity of actors involved in making value chains work. Furthermore, the need for two different orientations (association and producer) in two different case studies was primarily based on the differing histories of the export orientation of the industries with the rich history of Ecuadorian banana value chains (1930-present) differing from Haiti’s
mango industry (1980s-present). Furthermore, UROCAL has historically been, and still is, a leader in the push for more sustainable banana chains and viable rural livelihoods. As such, the strong social movement roots of UROCAL (1974-present) and their historical role in helping re-shape the banana industry in the region were an important contribution to my research. While the organizational perspective of FENAPCOM in Haiti is the main unifying voice in the struggles documented in Chapter 4, the producer perspective in Haiti was particularly useful given the fact that all sampled producers were simultaneously involved in both export and household/domestic market production. This is not the case in Ecuador where producers are involved in banana production year-round, and household production makes up only a small percentage of the daily food needs of Ecuadorian producers.

3.8 A Closing Statement on Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality

The conditions and dynamics of both these case studies and the associated industries highlighted the attention that must be given to the dynamics of “critical ethnography” in terms of researcher positioning and reflexivity as a distinct outsider (Foley, 2002). In relation to being an outsider, as a white male researching smallholder value chains in Haiti and Ecuador, I was confronted by language and cultural barriers. In order to address this, I immersed myself in the daily activities of producers and communities (in Haiti) and worked in the office alongside UROCAL staff to keep myself in proximity to my informants and UROCAL’s day-to-day operations. In addition, I worked alongside banana producers in both harvest and post harvest activities to gain insight into the daily conditions facing producers. Participants in Haiti and Ecuador were
helpful, welcoming and expressed interest in my work (and my interest in living and studying in rural Haiti in particular).

Reflexivity and the critical turn in ethnographic work were of particular importance both during and following fieldwork. In the spirit of ‘activist anthropology’ as Foley (2002) points out, critical ethnography “…positions the writer as much less of an imperial, authoritative learner” (p. 475), as well insists on researchers acknowledging their own responsibility and indebtedness to the research participants (Foley, 2002).

As a clear outsider in my field sites, sharing my research results with my key informants and my requests for clarity and/or disagreement in my ongoing analysis was imperative to helping tell their story. Rather than seeing my work as something they needed, I am indebted to these particular groups for the learning and experiences they provided me.

The positioning of these groups and their alternative perspectives to the status quo directions for value chain development provided me with unique insight. I became embedded within groups struggling for alternatives. Both groups’ ‘alternative positioning’ vis-a-vis the dominant discourses of agricultural development influenced my observations of the complexities of integrating efforts to food sovereignty within international supply chain arrangements. This was influential on the critical perspective I ended up bringing to my analysis. While I acknowledge my predisposition in support of small producers and their associations struggling for relevance and representation in their trading relationships, connecting with key informants who shared insights into these struggles was an unanticipated benefit. This benefit was also one that inevitably shaped the critical perspective taken throughout this dissertation.
Finally, I sought to build what Foley (2002) calls a “linguistic reciprocity”, hoping the local stakeholders and communities will “…engage with and learn from what is left of my anthropological voice” (p. 484) even after my particular research endeavors have ended. I hope that pieces of this research resonate with the smallholders and representative associations who assisted me despite my inability to truly understand their day-to-day circumstances and struggles.

It is also my hope that I can help assist these groups, FENAPCOM in particular, to tell a different story than the one presented by the popular media of pre-program anticipated successes and now of post-program outcomes being met. This story must highlight both the importance of the mango value chain to producers as well as their challenging positioning and limited power within the context of scarce government investment, and powerful international value chain interventions. It is my hope that continued solidarity can be built and perhaps lobbying for policy alternatives can find some support in the evidence gathered here.
Chapter 4 The Francis Mango Value Chain in Haiti: Merging Export Orientation with Traditional Farming Patterns and Peasant Livelihoods

4.1 Chapter Objectives

This chapter focuses primarily on three of the six key criteria that constitute an ideal type ‘practical merger’ identified in chapter 1. This chapter pays particular attention to the survival of the peasantry in global markets (Criterion 1) livelihoods and food security (Criterion 2), especially in relation to the agroecological dynamics of the production system (criterion 3) and the importance of fair trade certification as a contributor to market stability (Criterion 4). Research questions explored in this chapter include: What is the current structure of the fair trade export mango production and value chain in relation to traditional farming activities? What is the contribution of fair trade income to the household level food security of participating farmers and what other benefits accrue to producer communities? What challenges currently exist within the value chain for increasing fair trade mango production to fulfill the criteria of a practical merger?

4.2 Introduction

Agriculture plays a dominant role in Haiti’s economy, with 58 percent of the country’s people directly involved. Agriculture in Haiti accounts for almost a quarter of the country’s GDP. Over 60 percent of the total land base (of 1.7 million hectares) is in agricultural production, most of it in small parcels; the average farm size is 1.5 hectares with most farms made up of a number of smaller units (Eitzinger et al., 2014).
Many mango varieties—some estimate over 150—are grown in Haiti, and during the harvest season, mangos are a common component of community food consumption. Mango trees have traditionally been incorporated into Haitian agricultural systems, with trees providing fruit, as well as shade and the protection of soil from tropical rain. In addition to their use as a seasonal food source and ecological contributions, one variety in particular, the Madame Francisque, or the “Francis mango”, is the second largest Haitian export crop by volume after cocoa beans and the third in dollar value per ton following cocoa beans and coffee (FAO, 2015). While Haiti was the sixth largest exporter of mangos in the world in the 1980s, today less than 20 percent of marketable fruit reaches international markets (USAID, 2013). These losses are due to poor harvesting, transport, and handling practices (Hyppolite et al., 2014) as well as lack of post-harvest processing facilities (Castañeda et al., 2011). Haiti holds approximately 2 percent of the US market for mangos (Castañeda et al, 2010), and export of mango annually nets more than ten million dollars to the Haitian economy (Hyppolite, 2014).

The demand for Francis mangos is rising in the United States from both consumers and retailers, especially in niche markets such as organic and fair trade (Interview, 04.29.15). While Haiti’s mango exports have not increased substantially in the last 20 years, Whole Foods Market is now the single biggest single buyer of fair trade and organic Francis mangos from Haiti, with a marketing campaign for “Whole Trade Mangos” based on a direct, seasonal connection to Haiti’s small-scale mango farmers (Whole Foods, 2013; 2014). In response to this rising demand and niche marketing, further supply chain integration and coordination, new demanding participation regulations, and overall tighter governance along the value chain are being proposed to ensure competitiveness into the
Mangos in Haiti are primarily produced in what are termed “backyard systems” rather than managed groves, with most producers possessing a small number of trees near their houses or distributed through disparate yet relatively proximate (less than a few kilometers apart) parcels of land (Hyppolite et al., 2014). Haiti is the only mango exporting country to utilize a backyard system, and mango sales to exporters are not limited by specific volume requirements. Smallholders are not required to achieve economies of scale typical of plantation style export agriculture. The Haitian mango sector thus relies on the continued involvement of smallholders despite some plans calling for greater efficiency via plantation expansion projects (Francis Mango Strategic Plan, 2010).

Furthermore, opportunities for participation in markets (both domestic and export focused) with existing resources (and without scale and volume output barriers) represent a key feature of small-scale Haitian agriculture more broadly.

Despite the protective role it provides for smallholders by offering the ability to participate without scale barriers and the ability to manage household production alongside a few trees dedicated to exports, proposals such as the Francis Mango Strategic Plan (2010) highlight the hypothesized efficiency increases of orchard models owned and managed by large landowners with investment capital and/or owned directly by export companies. While increased efficiency in terms of sourcing, distribution, quality control and lower rejection rates may in fact result from this change, such a future vision risks reducing producer autonomy and small producer market share, creating barriers to participation in the value chain, and transforming independent producers into contract suppliers or laborers on the larger plantations. This proposed rescaling of the industry from
the backyard system towards consolidated production systems also poses threats to producer inclusiveness. The question of how centralized production systems would impact the large number of independent and cooperatively organized suppliers remains unanswered. Even if small farmer participation in the value chain could be assured, the implementation of large, consolidated orchards risks a further reduction in value directly captured by the producer end of the supply chain. Some speculate that the large, consolidated orchard model could require the majority of farmers with mango production knowledge to act as wage laborers rather than as independent agriculturalists (Steckley and Weis, 2016).

This chapter presents a case study of the relationship between export-oriented production and household food security and livelihoods for fair trade/organic Haitian mango producers. This case study focuses on producers belonging to the Fédération Nationale des Associations de Producteurs pour la Commercialisation de la Mangue (FENAPCOM). This chapter begins by providing some background information on the structure of the export mango industry and some of the drivers for reorganization over the last decade. The study’s methods are then outlined. This chapter next presents the results of fieldwork, assessing how participation in the fair trade organic export contributes to survival of the peasantry (Criterion 1); helps meet livelihood and food security needs (Criterion 2); maintains agro-ecological production models (criterion 3); and assists with market stability (criterion 4) through higher, stable base prices, set contracts and premiums. This chapter explores producer experiences within the export-oriented mango value chain as part of an integrated food and livelihood provisioning system by critically evaluating the benefits of participation for producers and communities. The chapter
concludes by examining what types of challenges producers see as impeding efforts towards the full realization of some of these practical merger criteria.

4.3 The Structure of the Industry

Until 2009, most producers sold mangos in three main ways: 1) to nationally organized cooperatives who held certification for export 2) to “voltigeurs”, middlemen who buy from individuals for a lower price than offered by cooperatives to and then sell bulk (conventional) lots directly to exporters, or 3) for an even lower price to “Madam Saras”, entrepreneurial women who travel the region and purchase goods from farmers wholesale and then resell them in the local (mostly urban) markets (Castañeda et al., 2011).
Figure 4.1 Main Stakeholders of the Haitian Mango Industry (Hyppolite et al, 2014).

With these options, producers had choices about where to sell. There were no real scale barriers or volume requirements to participation in any of the three marketing options; however, for those interested in export markets, poor organization, as well as improper harvesting and handling techniques contributed to significant losses of export quality fruit between farms and exporter post harvest processing facilities (Hyppolite et al, 2014). Financial needs often caused farmers to harvest whole trees before the fruit was fully mature or to sell the fruit of trees in advance to middlemen (Castañeda et al., 2011). Overall, as a result of poor handling, unreliable transportation and immediate cash needs, rejection rates at exporters were high and thus the potential economic benefits of the Francis mango export value chain were not reaching most producers.
In 2008-2009, the economic potential of increased efficiency in the Francis mango value chain was the focus of two USAID intervention projects (Watershed Initiative for National Natural Environmental Resources, 2010; Market Chain Enhancement Program, 2008), and in the following years, the subject of a number of contractor and technical reports aimed at future projections and strategic planning (Francis mango Strategic Plan, 2010; IDB, 2010; MARDNR, 2010, Pierreval, 2012; Taiwan ICDF, 2012). Enhancing potential income for rural producers contributing to overall poverty reduction in rural areas was in this context provided as a rationale for market reorganization along more efficient lines. This increasing attention on streamlining the value chain and opening up new international markets was further bolstered by ‘new’ redevelopment agendas following the earthquake of 2010. Interest in reshaping the value chain was given a “post disaster policy push” (Steckley and Weis, 2016) and took shape in the form of a highly publicized PPP entitled the Haiti Hope Project (HHP) which will be discussed in chapter 5.

In order to accomplish the goals of improving incomes through access to high value niche markets, third party certifications needed to be implemented for some producers to access these new markets. The value chain also needed to be streamlined and reorganized in order for smallholders to manage certifications, and maintain quality control in order to realize the increased economic benefits of certified products. Vorley et al (2012) note that many value chain interventions that seek to “make markets work for the poor” see the integration of producers into formal organizations as imperative to collective bargaining power. These formal organizations are often seen as the primary means to increase the scale and scope of production to reach high value markets. Reorganizing or “upgrading” existing producer organization, often with the help of an NGO, is the first step
in many such interventions (Vorley et al., 2012). To achieve this end in the case of the HHP, Producer Business Groups (PBGs) commonly referred to as “cells” were created with the assistance of the NGO Technoserve (TNS) by recruiting mango growers from regions of high productivity. These groups were offered training in harvesting, handling and processing as well as training in governance and certification requirements so they could work more effectively with local growers. The PBGs were also offered financial loan assistance for business expansion, guaranteed market access and offered first year’s certification costs in some cases (Interview, 04.29.15). The PBG structure shares similarities with what Trebbin and Hassler (2012) identify as “producer companies”. Producer companies represent a more profit-driven form of organization that often “emerge in response to new markets and regulatory environments” (p. 415). They are also posited to contribute to empowerment by keeping decision-making, major assets and accountability within the hands of the group.

The HHP portion of the Francis mango value chain increased export market access for thousands of small-scale producers. A more in-depth exploration of the restructuring implications of the project implementation within Haiti’s larger agricultural development agenda (Steckley and Weis, 2016) and the unevenly distributed impacts of the HHP on producers belonging particularly to FENAPCOM groups will be covered in more detail in Chapter 5 of this dissertation. This chapter describes the production system, livelihood and marketing aspects of the FENAPCOM producers. Research questions explored in this chapter include: What is the current structure of the fair trade export mango production and value chain in relation to traditional farming activities? What is the contribution of fair trade income to the household level food security of participating farmers and other
benefits to producer communities? What challenges currently exist within the value chain for increasing fair trade mango production to fulfill the criteria of a practical merger?

4.4 Methods

Data for this chapter was collected during five field visits to Haiti between March 2014 and May 2015, in collaboration with four mango producer groups located in the corridor between the entry to the Artibonite Valley (Petit Riverie d’Artibonite just Southeast of St. Marc) and moving southeast into the Central Department (Mirebalais and Boucan Carré) (See Map 1). Although no official census data is available, USAID (2011) estimates that forty to fifty percent of total Francis mango production (certified and conventional) in 2011 came from the areas covered in this case study.

The four groups represented in the case study are members of the Fédération Nationale des Associations de Producteurs pour la Commercialisation de la Mangue (FENAPCOM). Established officially in 2005 and representing approximately 15,000 smallholders as of 2008, FENAPCOM members aggregate products through a series of marketing and organizational groups with representation in five of the seven departments in the country. While the number of groups from inception in 2005 until its height in 2010 reached a total of 23, as of 2015, only 12-16 groups were still commercially active at the time of this study (personal communication, 2015). The four FENAPCOM groups included in this study ranged in membership from 85 individuals (GHRABA) to over 750 registered producers (APD3). FENAPCOM was the first farmer organization in the country to secure the fair trade labeling organization certification (FLO-CERT) (2008) and
USDA organic certification (2009) for their participating groups. FENAPCOM is a registered organization, with a board of directors consisting of five executive members in 2016.

Individual producers sell to their catchment area group and then groups sell bulk lots of mangos to FENAPCOM. FENAPCOM then sells fair trade organic mangos exclusively to one export company- Perry Exporters Ltd. based in the capital of Port-au-Prince. The number of mango exporters in Haiti has declined from ten in 2008 to seven as of 2010 (Francis mango Strategic Plan, 2010). Perry Exporters now acts as the sole buyer and exporter of USDA Certified Organic and fair trade Francis mangos in Haiti. Perry Exporters Ltd. is connected to Tropic Trade, a United States import company that then distributes FT/Organic mangos directly to Whole Foods Market as well as a number of smaller, niche market retailers (Personal communication, 2014).

The four FENAPCOM groups included in the case study were chosen in collaboration with key informants based on their proximity to one another (<100 km apart) in an area of high mango production and registered with exporters and thus commercially active groups. One of these groups is an all woman’s producer group (AFASDAH) while the other three have an average of over 30-35 percent female producers (Personal communication, 2014; 2015).

These four producer groups are the units of an “intrinsic case study” (Stake, 1978), where units are chosen because the particular traits are interesting in and of themselves. These four groups were chosen because they include members of the FENAPCOM executive who are also active mango producers, because they represent the different group sizes (less than 100 to over 800 members) and differing histories of engagement with the
exporting of Francis mangos. Participant observation was carried out at multiple field sites during two harvest seasons, including mango harvesting, transport, washing, preliminary post-harvest selection and bulk loading for transport to the exporters. I attended nine meetings in total with the participating producer groups. These meetings related to training, planning, and pre-season concerns. Official minutes from the 2015 and 2016 general assembly meetings of official FENAPCOM correspondences with their exporter-partner were also examined.

Concurrently, a survey was delivered to 149 producers from the four FENAPCOM groups (Table 4.1). The final analysis included 147 surveys. The surveys were a mix of Likert-scale, short answer, and multiple-choice type questions (see Appendix 1). Surveys were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify means and ranges of responses. Categorical questions (Yes/Somewhat/No) were analyzed as nominal data. Key words from open-ended responses were also counted and recorded. Two of my key informants assisted with data collection through successive rounds of clarifications and follow-up questions.

Table 4.1 FENAPCOM Survey Participants by Producer Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APD3</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>M= 47 F=30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHRABA</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>M= 14 F=7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAPPCOM</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>M= 24 F= 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFASDAH</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>M= 0 F= 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 The 149 producers who were surveyed were recruited and surveys completed with the assistance of key informants, as explained in Section 3.7.1. Two surveys were incomplete and thus were excluded from analysis.
4.5 Results: Characterizing Small-scale Mango Production Systems

Despite a small number of large plantations scattered throughout the country which contribute an estimated 20-25 percent of Haiti’s total mangos and export market value (Interview, 04.29.15), the Francis mango value chain relies on the production and supply networks of tens of thousands of smallholders linked throughout the country. Smallholders are defined here as having fewer than 20 productive trees (the country-wide average is 5-10), each of which may yield 10-20 dozen fruits per season. Large-scale mango growers are classified as those tending over 100 trees. The biggest reported holding is 250 trees and is in the Mirebalais area (USAID, 2014); others estimate that “a few producers” have plots with over 1000 trees (Interview, 04.29.15). Estimates vary widely on the total number of active commercial mango producers in Haiti, from around 40,000 (Interview, 04.29.15) to 150,000 (USAID, 2014) rising to a high of 230,000 (Haiti National Strategy Team, 2005). The total number of productive mango trees throughout the country is estimated at over two million trees (USAID, 2014). While certified FT/Organic mangos represent a growing niche market for the country, currently less than 10 percent of the total Francis mango exports in the country are certified (Personal correspondence, April 2015). The other 90 percent of Francis mango exports (approximately 1.8 million in 2015) are exported into conventional markets in the United States (Interview, 09.18.15).

In Haiti, 90 percent of peasants have access to some land through a variety of means though many do not hold formal land title (Mintz, 2007; MARDNR, 2010 cited in Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). Nearly 90 percent of the 147 export-oriented mango small-scale farmers surveyed in my case reported to own at least one of the parcels of land used for agricultural purposes including mango trees (88 percent). Participants in the
FENAPCOM groups are smallholders reporting an average of 2.49 separate plots per family farm unit, with a mean farm size of combined plots of 0.67 ha\(^3\). Farms are reported to be just over a kilometer (mean 1.25 km) away from producers’ residences.

\(^3\) It is important to note that farm size is not a barrier to membership in a FENAPCOM group as is the case with other Producer Business Groups (PBGs). The HHP originally required PBG members to hold 1.5 ha but then halved that requirement (.75 ha) due to recruitment challenges as of 2013 (Steckley and Weiss, 2016).
### Table 4.2 Household Food Production Characteristics (n=142)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of separate ‘gardens’ (mean)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of garden 1 (hectares, mean)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of garden 2 (hectares, mean)</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of total holdings (hectares, mean)</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from home (km, mean)</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years growing household food crops (mean)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of crops produced for household consumption and domestic markets</td>
<td>4.79 (Range 3-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including mangos) (mean)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of agricultural chemicals on mixed plots that contain mango</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trees (percent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider their farms ‘mixed farm’ operations (percent)</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated number of hours per week devoted to subsistence/household</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agriculture (mean)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.3 Mango Production Characteristics (n=142)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of years in mango production (mean)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated additional hours worked during 5-6 week mango season (mean)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median number of mango trees currently in production</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango harvest for export (percent of total harvest, mean)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango harvest for local market (percent of total harvest, mean)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango harvest for ‘other’ or own consumption (percent of total harvest,</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield per season (mean, in dozen)</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to sell to local market (percent)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to sell to export market (percent)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average income per season (n=82)</td>
<td>4213.70 GDES ($95 USD in 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price increase at collection base (2008-2014)</td>
<td>10.3 percent increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
No participants reported access to water for agricultural purposes, indicating that the total sample was reliant on rain fed agriculture. While 93 percent of the participants reported their soil quality as “good” (55 percent) or “fair” (38 percent), only 7 percent of survey respondents (n=10) indicated that they had “enough land to produce all the food they needed.” According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (1995), a typical Haitian family would necessitate between 2.5 to 3 hectares of arable land to make a living. Close to 60 percent of land-owners have less than one hectare and about 83 percent possess less than 3 hectares (Jadotte, 2007). No participants were self-reliant in terms of seed acquisition for food crops. Participants were equally reliant on their own seed production sourcing from local markets. Haiti has a very low rate of fertilizer use (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015) and no participants in my sample reported the use of agricultural chemicals on their gardens that included mango trees. Conforming with certification requirements has meant that many mixed farm plots that include mango trees, or have mango trees in the vicinity, are chemical free.\(^4\)

Survey results also show that 89 percent (n=132) of producers consider their farms “mixed farm” operations. Mixed farms in this study include those growing multiple crops simultaneously as well as in seasonal cycles. Coello et al (2014) report that the average Haitian farm cultivates about 4.7 crops in seasonal cycles. This corresponds with the mean (4.79) reported by survey participants from this case study. The main crops identified in our survey include corn, peanuts, pitimi (millet), various types of beans, potatoes, bananas, manioc, citrus fruits, papayas and mangos. Nearly 90 percent of producers reported

\(^4\) The desire for, and limitations surrounding the use of agricultural chemicals on other farm plots without mangos and which were not certified was not queried in this study.
“personal food needs” as the primary motivation for what to grow followed by a smaller number adding “local market demands” as their secondary motivation. Only 4 percent of survey participants indicated that a “buyer driven contract” dictated their choices about what to grow. The estimated hours of labor for agricultural activities in general (mean of 22 hours per week) represent a predominate focus on mixed farm operations, while only an additional 12 hours per week is reported to occur during the short Francis mango harvest season (4-6 weeks). These 12 hours per week are understood to be inclusive of harvesting and transport time.

Finally, all producers surveyed reported Francis mangos as their only export-oriented crop (n=147). A total of 95 percent of surveyed producers reported that they would prefer to sell mangos for export rather than in domestic markets, noting “better price” as the dominant reason, followed by “more reliable market”. 55 percent of the sampled producers also sold other varieties of mangos in domestic markets during the respective seasons. Given the choice, producers desire the linkages to international markets for Francis mangos, despite local markets being available.

4.5.1 Survival of the Peasantry Within Global Markets (Criterion 1)

In the context of the Francis mango in Haiti, the survival of the peasantry is directly connected to an export industry that creates opportunities for smallholders to participate as well as allows smallholders to continue to maintain traditional and subsistence agricultural activities. Smallholders, with or without fair trade certification, dominate the export-oriented mango market in Haiti. This section characterizes the role of smallholders in the mango value chain, highlighting the co-existence of traditional household and domestic agricultural activities.
The presence of mixed farms in this sample reporting nearly five staple crops on average including mangos highlights that household and domestic market food production is active alongside increased mango production for export. Despite some critiques of the HHP’s push to promote agro-exports in the face of declining food security (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015; Steckley and Weis, 2016), the HHP director noted mangos as a “strategic asset”:

These are trees that they [producers] have in their backyard that they are already doing intercropping with […]. Mango is but one source of income for these people and I would call it a “strategic asset” for them because mango comes at a time when certain bills are due. They need to sell the mangos to buy beans for the upcoming season, the season after the rainy season. It’s something that they view as a valuable asset and we’ve seen that with farmers starting to plant new mango trees on their own (Interview, 04.29.15).

While 94 percent of producers (n=139) reported wanting more mango trees, and 85 percent said they would “be willing to plant mango trees on land used for other crops,” only 22 percent (n=36) of producers reported actually converting or leasing land for expanded mango operations over the last five years, planting a mean of 17 new trees per year.

Establishing new mango trees for future revenue typically requires some capital investment. This investment could include leasing or purchasing additional land. This may also involve the concurrent and complicated process of pursuing secure/official tenure as a means to protect the investment into the future. The investment also requires the purchase of new seedlings from established nurseries (a more commonly observed and reported
practice than direct seed germination by farmers themselves) or efforts at ‘griffage’ [grafting]. Investments in grafting result in fruit in 2-3 years compared to five years for newly planted seedlings (Organization for the Rehabilitation of the Environment, 2016). The hiring of extra labor during initial planting, for harvesting and processing may also require small amounts of capital. While the potential for greater economic returns exists, investments such as these also come with associated risks. Typical fair trade/organic contracts have prices locked in for a three-year term, while newly planted mango trees take between 5-7 years to reach productivity and 15+ years to reach the peak of their harvest maturity. Making financial investments only in mango trees instead of more general farm investments is noted as “a risky proposition” because of the fragility of mango blossoms depending on seasonal and climatic variations as well as the shifting niche market demands of international markets (Steckley and Weiss, 2016). However, the harvesting of mangos for export and domestic markets from existing, mature trees requires little more than added family and/or hired labor (one or two people are utilized primarily as pickers during harvest time) and market(s) to sell the harvest. My observations revealed that mangos are washed at the collection bases as volumes come in, mostly by women and girls who are paid per dozen. No participants noted having difficulties finding labor to harvest or prepare fruit at collection bases.

The option (and desire) to sell Francis mangos for export (and especially into mediated, niche markets such as fair trade and organic) is thus an important contributor to

5 Although some claim grafting ensures the best quality fruit and grafting can happen onto mature trees of other mango varieties, the fruit of which has no international commercial value (ORE, 2016) seedling planted trees typically live longer than grafted ones, are more vigorous and grow slightly larger (FAO, 2002).
the survival of the peasantry. Francis mangos are a low cost/high benefit crop that does not undermine the productive capacity of existing mixed farm operations. Seen in this light, the survival of the peasantry is enhanced through strategic and voluntary participation in capitalist, export markets rather than via resistance to them. Export markets with fair trade certification (and corporate buyers) bring with them higher prices and three-year stable contracts. Certified Francis mangos for export may in fact help hold some small producers to the land via the immediate added revenue and future potential revenue they inspire. While certainly not the only solution to declining farm incomes or overall productivity, this market may help stem the urbanization trends observed in Haiti as farmers leave the agricultural sector for lack of its economic viability (Zannotti, 2009).

4.5.2 Livelihoods and Food Security (Criterion 2)

Most Haitian producers are well acquainted with having a portion of their agriculture market-oriented as a means to meet livelihood needs. The fair trade organic Francis mango value chain is integrated into the mixed production and marketing system of many rural producers. As such, this case offers an opportunity to query further the potentials and limitations of a particular export-oriented value chain specifically in relation to food sovereignty principles as part of the practical mergers criteria. These principles concern the interests of smallholders in the construction of “alternative economies” and those favoring democratic choice and understanding livelihood promotion strategies (Agarwal, 2014; Ofstehage, 2012; Soper, 2015) via a balance between domestic food production and equitable, international trade relationships.
Trouillot (1990) suggests that the reorganized plantation system in post-revolutionary Haiti was one that combined peasants working cash crop fields alongside household plots for consumption and to satisfy domestic markets. This meant that Haiti has a long history with an agricultural model that is partly domestic and partly market oriented (Trouillot, 1990). Coello et al (2014) notes that 84.3 percent of households in Haiti growing food crops sell part of what they grow, with 50 percent of those households growing at least one specific export crop. The Haitian peasantry are not necessarily subsistence farmers—they are, according to Smith (2001) small-scale producers who are engaged in production for household and markets, both domestic and international, and are also dependent on a range of food imports (Smith, 2001). Mazzeo points out that peasant livelihoods in Haiti are ‘market oriented’ and “…cash generated from crop sales is an important component for ensuring household food security” (Mazzeo, 2009, p. 127). Some empirical work even suggests that households in Haiti that grow at least some cash crops are more likely to be non-poor and more likely to be food secure (Coello et al., 2014). Haitian GDP has nearly doubled since 1990 to $813 USD per capita (World Bank, 2015). While some mango producers in my survey (n=12) generated large revenues ($240-280 USD range per annum), and the highest grossing producer reported 27,000 GDES (approximately 550 $USD), the mean annual income was $95 USD (from total mango sales for those producers who reported (n=82). This speaks to the amount of export quality losses, as those producers who provided an estimate to the number of dozen per season (n=134) reported a median of 167 dozen per season (mean 273) which should result in higher annual revenues. Nevertheless, average revenues from mango exports contribute
approximately 12 percent of the estimated average income of producers who responded to this question when set against general GDP per capita figures.

As shown in table 4.3, most participants have been producing Francis mangos for many years (mean=15 years, median 10 years) with only 14 percent (n=20) of growers noting they began production within the last 5 years (2010 onwards). This suggests that most growers did not start producing to capitalize on newly developed niche market opportunities post 2010. Producers in my sample also had higher than the national average of 5-10 trees, reporting a mean of 17 trees (median 8 trees). Participants also reported a mean age of 18 years for these trees (median 11 years). The age of trees is an important factor consider beyond the number of trees. This is due to the fact that a tree’s productivity increases substantially with age. A 10-20 year old tree may produce 200-300 fruits per year. At twice the age, reports suggest that the crop will be doubled (FAO, 2002). Thus, a smaller number of more mature trees may in fact yield higher output volumes overall. Participants noted that the revenues from their trees make an important seasonal contribution to household income. The consistently noted uses for export mango revenue were “purchase of additional foodstuffs” (n=130), “school” (n=107) and “business investment” (n=100), followed by “health” (n=96), “personal needs” (n= 93) and “donations (church or otherwise)” (n=90).

Food security concerns in Haiti received renewed attention following the food price spikes of the 2008 global food crisis (Shamsie, 2012). While Haiti imported only about 10 percent of its food needs in the 1970s, imports now hover around 60 percent and the country spends nearly 80 percent of its overall export revenues to fund these imports (Dupuy, 2010). In many cases, the household situation is a microcosm of this larger trend,
as individual revenues from cash crops can make a contribution to household food security through increased purchasing power. However, nationwide trends regarding food security are still “alarming” and have promoted concerns about the focus on export mangos alongside the instability of domestic food security patterns (Shamsie, 2012).

While overall food insecurity has been dropping since 2008 (FAO, 2010), nearly a third of the population—3 million as of 2013—is still considered food insecure (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, December 2014 cited in WFP brief, 2015). In fact, despite being agriculturalists with access to land and seeds, rural producers often face disproportionate amounts of food insecurity due to lack of capital and access during lean months and in times of food crisis or acute food shortages.

Table 4.4 expands the discussion of livelihoods in terms of the benefits of participation in the fair trade/organic mango value chain in relation to impacts on household food security. Survey participants reported on average 35 percent of their food coming from their own production efforts, 36 percent coming from ‘community’ [i.e. their village or neighbors], and the outstanding food deficit coming from ‘local or regional markets’. These local or regional markets were on average 4.25 km away. While 67 percent of producers said that selling mangos for export does take away from mangos that could be eaten, 60 percent said that their overall level of food security had changed for the better since participating in the mango program. One village producer, when asked whether selling all his Francis mangos takes away from mangos that could be eaten responded, “yes of course, but I need the money more” (personal communication, 04.09.15).

The Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) is an evaluation tool based
on nine questions concerning food access, availability, portioning, and food preferences over the preceding month. Using this tool, the mean score for the 132 participants who responded to questions surrounding food security was a “moderately food insecure” rating of 1.89 (with 1 being “rare” concern, 2 being “somewhat” concerned, and 3 being “often” concerned). This represents a mean score slightly above the median score of 1.5.

Levels of self-reported food insecurity rose slightly with questions regarding ‘number of daily meals’ (“In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat fewer meals in a day because there was not enough food?”) and ‘portioning’ (“In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat a smaller meal than you felt you needed because there was not enough food?”). The highest levels of concern (self-reported as “somewhat” or “often”) revolved around food preference questions and the need to eat meals of “a limited variety” or eat things that were “not desired” due to lack of resources to procure other foods.

Over 95 percent of producers reported “a family member going to sleep hungry” or “going a whole day and night without food” as “rare”. However, 82 percent of participants reported that answers would differ at different times of the year. March and August were noted as the two months wherein hunger and concern about consistent access would most likely be greater. These months correspond with the month directly preceding the mango season (March) and the month(s) following the end of sales (July/August).
Table 4.4 Self-Reported Food Security (n=132)

| Source of foods- own production (mean percent) | 35  |
| Source of foods- local/regional market (mean percent) | 32  |
| Source of foods- community (mean percent) | 35  |
| Distance to local/regional market (mean kilometers) | 4.25 |
| Does selling mangos for export take away from mangos that you could be eating? (percent Yes) | 67  |
| In the past four weeks, did you worry that you or your family would not have enough food? (percent) | 97 (yes) 3 (no) |
| HFIAS overall food security score (1=rare, 2=sometimes, 3=often) (Mean) | 1.9 |
| Would the answers to the food security questions be different at different times of the year? (percent) | 82 (yes) 18 (no) |
| March (pre mango season) (percent) | 37  |
| July (tail end of mango season) (percent) | 79  |
| August (one to two months post mango season) (percent) | 27  |
| Would you say that your overall level of food security has changed for the better since you began participating in the fair trade mango program? (percent Yes/Somewhat/No) | 60 (yes) 40 (somewhat) 0 (no) |

Further to this discussion of impacts of the export mango chain on the livelihood and food security needs of mango producers, the significance of a strategy that emphasized exports as a general strategy can be considered in relation to evidence indicating that Haiti exported UDS $38.74 million worth of commodities against its USD $538 million in imports between 2009-2011 (MARNDR, 2013). The cost of food imports versus total export revenues shows a sizable shortfall in the benefits of import substitution funded by exports. About 40 percent of households were undernourished (3.8 million people), and 30 percent of children suffered from chronic malnutrition (USAID, 2011a). While the daily caloric intake has been rising since the 1990s and reached its highest point in 2010, daily average Haitian caloric intake has fallen since then and is still below the daily minimum recommended by the World Health Organization. In 2015 average dietary supply
adequacy, which measures the national food supply in terms of calories, hovers around 88 percent for the country as a whole (Diop-Faye, 2015). The per capita food supply has been unstable over the last 25 years and has been a contributing factor to these nutrition and food security challenges.

Current levels of food insecurity and individual caloric shortfalls in the country may not be attributed fully to the import/export nexus as declining domestic production could also be a contributing factor (MARNDR, 2013). However, the export-oriented, open market system has had reduced domestic production volumes and thus has impacted national food security (Dupuy, 2010) as evidenced by the removal of protective rice tariffs in the mid-1990s (Cohen, 2013) as well other crops such as chicken, wheat and sugar (McGuigan, 2006). Furthermore, food price fluctuations have been quite pronounced throughout the country (FAO, 2015). Price fluctuations in domestic markets for staple goods can have a drastic impact on household food security and societal stability, as was evidenced by the 2008 food price crisis and the responses in Haiti (Gauthier, 2008). Lowering of tariffs in the 1990s coupled with ongoing US food aid affected farmers by supporting cheaper food imports instead of investment in strengthening domestic production systems (Hauge, 2017; Adelman, 2010; Farmer, 2012).

4.5.3 Marketing Stability (Criterion 4)

Fair trade certification aims to provide price stability on multi-year contracts (Paul, 2005) and the multi-year contracts offered to Francis mango producers through fair trade certification stand in contrast to international price volatility. According to FENAPCOM, until the mid-1990s, the Francis mango did not have a high value in the international
marketplace and was sold for a very low price (between 3 and 9 GDES a dozen or approximately 10 to 25 US cents per dozen in 2014 currency conversion rates) (Fairtrade USA, 2011). Such low prices are far from the norm now, given the mango’s rise to popularity in the United States (Pay, 2009) and its inclusion into the fair trade system. When asked whether the producers received “a good price”, Israel Louis commented: “The Francis mango is only a variety of Haiti so you don’t have the chance to make an international price comparison” (Interview, 04.19.15). Perry exporters (2016) claim “…the Francis mango remains the most expensive variety in supermarkets in the United States” (FENAPCOM planning document, 2016). Fair trade prices for Mexican and Philippine mangos (two large exporting countries) are also made based on weight (kg) rather than dozens (13 fruits). Haiti is the only county with fair trade mangos that count and price by the dozen rather than by the kilogram (Fairtrade International, 2017). This difference in how the product is priced is also a unique situation to Haiti when compared to the other countries producing fair trade mangos. In spite of this challenges with making international price comparisons, current prices to producers of $1.60 per fair trade dozen represent a major difference compared to the mid 1990’s. As shown in Table 4.5, the current fair trade prices have also increased (10.3 percent gain between 2008-2013) and thus highlight not just the stability in year over year price, but the economic potential of increased fair trade certified exports. However, as detailed below, the benefits of even higher prices stem mostly from the fair trade attachment to organic certification ($1.75 USD per dozen).

An additional contributor to market and economic stability is the fair trade premium that not only offsets year over year price volatility, but also contributes to evening out incomes throughout the year for mango producers. In addition to a higher unit
price, producers belonging to the fair trade value chain receive a premium on top of the base price. The base price is the payment they receive at the group collection center upon delivery of their mangos. The premium is then usually delivered in September which falls at a strategic time during the “lean months” (Baro, 2002) following the end of the mango season. Fair trade premiums of 45 percent included in the base price from 2009-2014 are also among the highest in the world for participating fair trade mangos countries (Fair trade Minimum Price Table, 2017). However, the impact of the individual portion of this premium is directly connected to volume of sales. As a result of no scale barriers to participation and each producer’s output being highly variable, the fair trade premium impacts are wide ranging on an individual basis. One group’s premium report (2014) indicates a range for annual individual producer premium benefits from $2 USD to $103 USD. This wide range limits the possibility of using mean premium benefits (mean= $23 USD) to make general claims about the individual premium making an added economic contribution. However, this same group, with approximately 250 producers reporting, showed 55,933 GDES (approximately $1220 USD) in collective premiums for the same year (2014). Furthermore, FENAPCOM as an organization received $12,000 USD in social premiums in 2010 alone (Baur, 2011). This suggests that there is some collective financial capacity generated via the group premiums.

In summary, when fair trade is combined with USDA Organic certification, it facilitates increased market access, stable, multi-year contracts, branding in the United States, nets slightly higher economic returns per dozen, and delivers collective benefits in terms of group premiums. The fair trade system also facilitates collective marketing (in this case study via FENAPCOM or an HHP cell) that increases the bargaining power and
collective volume output of smallholders. This collective marketing structure and representation, and often times tied into established direct relations with trading partners also contributes to market stability (criterion 4).

4.6 Fair Trade Philosophy

Data from this study suggests, however, that the fair trade philosophy is not a significant incentive of value chain participation on its own. While the community investment may benefit some, only 52 percent of respondents indicated knowledge of the community investment made through the fair trade premium despite reporting being certified for an average of 6 years. Furthermore, only 33 percent of participants indicated they “directly benefit” from community investment of fair trade premiums and less than half (58 producers) listed a specific example of the investment (responses noted “road” “tools” or “cleaning” as the most common). However, the fair trade certification can be valuable for downstream actors (retailers) in terms of the price differential that can be generated by this labeling. Only 46 percent of surveyed producers considered their knowledge of the certification standards to be “good”, while 54 percent claimed they had “some” (44 percent) or “poor” (9 percent) knowledge of international standards. Only 23 percent reported receiving their premium at the agreed upon time and these challenges with the timing of fair trade premiums were also noted as a concern in official FENAPCOM correspondence with Perry Exporters (FENAPCOM planning document, 2016). Only 13 percent of producers surveyed considered the fair trade system and (its resultant premium benefits) to be “fair”. Knowledge asymmetries may contribute to these trends, as only 21 percent reported their knowledge of the supply chain post harvest as “good” and no producers claimed to know the retail value of one certified mango in a
United States retail store, with estimates from those who provided them (n= 75) ranging from $1 USD all the way to $10 USD with a mean estimated unit price of $3.5 USD.

Overall, data suggests that producers are attracted to fair trade certification for the higher unit prices, niche market access, guaranteed marketing contracts (and thus a greater degree of market stability) provided by the certification rather than a deep connection to the transformative ideals of fair trade or a belief in the fair system per se.

Table 4.5 Fair Trade Participation, Knowledge and Investments

| Price increase at collection base (percent 2008-2014) | 10.3 |
| Producers certified FT (percent) | 92 |
| Number of years certified (mean) | 6 |
| Knowledge of certification standards | Good 46 |
| | Somewhat 44 |
| | Poor 9 |
| Fair trade premium received at agreed upon time (percent) | 23 |
| Knowledge of community investment? (percent) | 52 |
| | Yes 33 |
| | Somewhat 39 |
| Direct benefit from community investment (number) | Yes 33 |
| | Somewhat 39 |
| No 23 |

4.7 Discussion

The results discussed above highlight an observable revenue stream coming from the participation in the fair trade/organic Francis mango value chain. The small amount of export income and the resultant higher unit prices from fair trade and organic (when compared to conventional exports) comes with low overhead costs in terms of maintenance and labor. Furthermore, the certification system structure injects revenue into households at three key times throughout the year (May/September/December) based on higher base prices at collection centers (May) and then premium payment schedules for those holding dual certification (fair trade/Certified organic).
In addition, the presence of mixed farm, agro-ecological type systems (criteria 3) and efforts at household and domestic market food production appear to be stable, and only limited (if any) shifts towards the creation of farming systems dominated by export-oriented mango production were observed in this sample. Data from this study suggests that the scale at which certification is being enacted in Haiti is a tool for stable, niche market access with slightly higher prices attached and offers the opportunity for some local community investments, rather than a system designed to create significant transformation of labor practices, large scale poverty-reducing economic contributions, and large-scale community development initiatives. Finally, while producers in this sample were still moderately food insecure, revenue from export mangos are making a small contribution to enhancing household food security. Furthermore, the majority of producers would opt for continued participation (and possible expansion of their operations) voluntarily if resources (such as land, labor and capital) allowed. The desire for continued participation and expansion is apparent despite some inherent challenges within the value chain, challenges that will be outlined briefly in the final section of this chapter.

4.8 Technical Challenges to the Practical Merger

This chapter now turns its attention to the challenges inherent in the value chain that impedes progress towards an ideal type practical merger. However, rather than seeing these challenges as simply ‘inefficiencies’ as they have been characterized in other discourse that could be dealt with by ‘adjustments’ along the chain (Francis Mango Strategic Plan, 2010), this section contends that many of these challenges take the form of pervasive “structural constraints” that have political, economic and social limitations
(Agarwal, 2014). Addressing such structural constraints require deeper investment (of economic, political and social capital) into specific areas of the value chain. These areas include, but are not limited to: a) post-harvest losses of export quality fruit due to poor infrastructure, transport, harvesting methods and value chain coordination b) ease of access to financial resources, including contracts, for the growth and expansion of individual operations, c) the impact of mango industry development plans involving vertical and horizontal integration. The proposed reorganization that disproportionately emphasizes only these factors without attention to other practical merger criteria risks excluding small producers (criterion 1), reifying the market power and participation asymmetries in the value chain (criteria 4 and criterion 5) between upstream actors (producers and laborers) and downstream actors (exporters and retailers), and restricting producer autonomy and market share (criterion 5 and criterion 6). This latter issue will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

Poor value chain infrastructure nevertheless remains a significant obstacle to producers capturing the available economic value from export quality Francis mangos. Producers in this study reported 27 minutes as the average time to transport mangos from sites of production to the collection bases (range = 5 min to 65 minutes). In addition, only 5 percent of producers surveyed said they had “motorized transport” of any kind. The other 95 percent of producers in my sample rely on human or animal transportation methods, which have been shown in other studies to damage fruit and contribute to higher rate of rejection (Hyppolite et al., 2014), as well as pose potential physical health hazards to the laborers hauling 40-50 kilograms loads on their backs. While the use of cutting poles was also shown in one study to reduce rejection rates by keeping the stem attached during
harvesting and thus limiting “latex burn” on the fruit (Hyppolite et al., 2014), cutting poles were not used by any harvesters seen throughout the course of this fieldwork in 2014 and 2015. Furthermore, only two of the groups included in this survey had access to physical structures where they could undertake post-harvest activities such as counting, grading, washing, and storage. The other two groups collected and processed mangos in open areas under tarps or under the shade of trees, risking further damages via exposure to the elements. Mangos rejected for the export market can be sold for around a 70 percent price reduction in local markets, around 10 gourdes (20 cents) a dozen (as of 2011). Many more of these rejected mangos are eaten and others simply wasted.

Investment as individuals or collectively in the value chain also remains a limiting factor to individual business growth and expansion. Only 5 percent of producers reported access to credit to expand their mango production operations via their local group or as a result of FENAPCOM membership. While access to credit is promoted as a key part of the HHP program, only 28 percent (n=41) of participants reported actually accessing credit via their connection to the TNS/HHP program. Overall, all types of agricultural credit are very difficult to access in Haiti (Interview, 09.18.15), and if accessed, the terms are unfavorable. Interest rates on bank loans in rural areas can range from 28-48 percent per annum depending on the institution. The Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Development (MARNDR) acknowledges this issue in their three-year agriculture development plan, noting that “…few activities in agriculture are able to withstand these rates outside of commercial activities with rapid capital turnover” (2013, p. 41).

In addition to lack of credit opportunities for expansion, short-term selling and pricing contracts (3 years maximum) in circumstances where it takes 7-10 years to achieve
mature productive trees make investment in new trees a long-term and somewhat risky proposition. While many producers have moved away from selling to middle men and now sell to TNS cells and/or local FENAPCOM groups, immediate cash needs by some producers still lead them to sell harvests prematurely or for lower prices to “voltigeurs” (middle men) who pay right away, but pay according to one producer “about 60 percent less per case [of 300] than APD3 [a FENAPCOM group] would” (personal communication, 04.18.15).

Finally, there is the issue of scaling up and future plans for transforming the industry. While agro-export-oriented companies and plantation expansion projects could increase efficiency by centralizing sourcing methods, they also pose a threat to the participation of smallholders as independent agriculturalists. Such plans would inevitably transform at least a percentage of producers into agricultural laborers on company-owned orchards or create technically ‘independent’ producers but have them beholden to demanding contracts (Steckley and Weis, 2016). The fact that there is “not agreement” between government, NGO’s and small-scale producers and their associations (Interview, 04.29.15) on the future direction of the value chain’s sourcing methods and proposed expansion plans makes planning and investment uncertain. This uncertainty is a particular concern for resource-limited farmers in their attempts to plan for the future years. The issue of the changing relationship between scaling up and access to participation remains a significant technical challenge to the supply chain [continuing] to deliver benefits, however small, to its constituents.
4.9 Conclusion

The Francis mango is a valuable resource to thousands of Haitian smallholders, with the certified organic and fair trade portion(s) of the value chain offering better economic returns. Recent efforts to increase the efficiency of the value chain via a number of intervention projects have been met with mixed reviews and the direct and indirect impacts of these interventions and their impacts of power, participation and producer autonomy have not been studied sufficiently. These concerns will be taken up in the following chapter.

This chapter explored the impacts of the fair trade and organic mango value chain on small producers and their livelihoods, arguing that participation in this export value chain is still primarily oriented towards ensuring the survival of the peasantry (Criterion 1). Furthermore, participation is both desired and voluntary and does not undermine the resources needed or reduce the means to secure livelihoods and food security (Criterion 2). Participation in the export mango value chain provides a needed revenue stream for small producers. Survey data and observations also demonstrate that production systems in this sample are primarily mixed farming operations employing agro-ecological techniques (Criterion 3). The positive economic contributions from fair trade income and the type of contracts that the certification system brings offer greater market stability (criterion 4). This stability plays a role in enhancing household food security, providing income for additional household goods as well as providing additional rural development opportunities to producer communities. However, this chapter has also highlighted a number of challenges that impeded ideal type practical mergers from taking place. Until such challenges are addressed through participatory planning techniques to ensure small
producer participation, and targeted investment, the fair trade and organic mango value chain does not conform to an ideal type practical merger for small producers. Nevertheless, if the above criteria (1, 2, 3, 4) can be protected for all participants and the missing criteria (5, 6) become topics of serious policy discussion with direct avenues provided for producer engagement with these issues, this value chain will continue to serve an important role for FENAPCOM producers in the years to come.
Chapter 5 The Sour Side of the Mango: Remaking the Market in Haiti’s
Francis Mango Value Chain

5.1 Chapter Objectives

This chapter focuses on three of the six key criteria for ‘practical mergers’ identified in chapter 2. Utilizing ethnographic detail, this chapter gives in depth attention to issues of participation in and policy and governance (criterion 5). This chapter also highlights an intervention influencing market stability (criterion 4) and equity and rights (criterion 6) with regards to producer marginalization and the equitable access to resources. This chapter sets out to explore the ways in which an international value chain intervention affected a group of fair trade producers belonging to FENAPCOM during the years 2010-2015. In the context of the fair trade mango supply chain in Haiti, such an exploration requires critically examining power and structural dynamics within the value chain. These dynamics include how market share is divided, the level of participation and inclusion among producers and other supply chain participants, the distribution of supportive resources, the autonomy and agency of producers, and the governance of the supply chain operations. The specific research questions explored in this chapter include:

What have been the restructuring impacts of the Haiti Hope Project (HHP) on FENAPCOM producers over the last five years? How have issues of participation and governance in the value chain been affected? How has the HHP influenced the market share and market stability and impacted FENAPCOM’s and their producers’ context specific understandings of equity and rights within the value chain?
5.2 Introduction

Following the devastating earthquake in 2010, agricultural development has been promoted as a central pillar of Haiti’s long-term efforts to reduce poverty and hunger. Many agricultural development strategies have focused on the continued expansion of export promotion, supported by frameworks articulated by the World Bank (2005; 2008), the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture (2010), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB, 2010) the Multilateral Investment Fund (IDB, 2010) and USAID. However, such emphases given to export promotion strategies are not new. Since the 1980s, Haiti has embraced a liberalization plan with heavy emphasis on agricultural restructuring and export potential. While some donors are beginning to question what has been promoted as a “food security through trade” paradigm (Otero, 2014 cited in Shamsie, 2012), most International Development Institutions (IDIs) continue to believe that market forces alongside increased liberalization and private investment, will bring an increase in overall GDP leading to greater levels of overall food security and poverty reduction (Shamsie, 2012; Fukuda-Parr, 2009).

International organizations, including some with ties to Haiti’s government, have encouraged farmers to adopt new technologies and higher yielding agricultural practices (Dolisca and Jolly, 2008) via a range of public and private agricultural development projects (Arraiz et al, 2015). The Haitian Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development (MARNDR) three-year agricultural revitalization plan, released in 2013, identifies the need for private-led solutions to development and poverty reduction: “While it is essential that the state invest more in agriculture, it is also vital to attract private capital to boost the overall development and reverse impoverishment in the
The Haiti Hope Project (HHP) was prominent among the major agricultural development projects intended to help smallholder farmers gain increased access to export markets. The HHP model follows a growing interest in public-private partnership mechanisms to assist struggling agricultural value chains. The HHP represented an example of a public private partnership that was an “implementation ready” value chain for development (Neilson, 2014).

This five-year, 9.5 million USD Public-Private Partnership (PPP) involved the Coca-Cola Company, MARDNR, USAID, the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF), the Clinton-Bush Haiti Fund (CBHF), and Technoserve (TNS). The HHP aimed to implement a new version of the Francis mango value chain. The HHP was established with an objective of doubling the income of 25,000 mango farmers via increased output and direct access to high value markets in North America such as Whole Foods (TNS, 2010. The idea for HHP originated from a conversation between Muhtar Kent, chairman and CEO of The Coca-Cola Company, and Luis Alberto Moreno, IDB president, at the 2010 World Economic Forum, two weeks after the earthquake (Coca-Cola Company, 2013).

In opposition to the export-oriented model of agricultural development championed by the Ministry of Agriculture and the international private sector actors, some farmers’ associations and peasant leaders such as those of the Moveman Peyizan Papaye (MPP) have advanced a food sovereignty type framework for increasing self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

6 Interviews with FENAPCOM executive members suggest that FENAPCOM producers and executives were not sure or in agreement about the project’s origins, with some people saying, “they [TNS] just arrived in the country”, “we invited them” or “I think American John invited them”. This lack of consistent knowledge about the project origins contributes to skepticism from some groups about TNS’s position and motivations.
democratic control (Shamsie, 2012; Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). The concept of food sovereignty, introduced by *La Via Campesina* in 1996, is broadly defined as the right of local peoples to control their own food systems, including markets, ecological resources, food cultures, and production modes (Wittman, 2011; Via Campesina, 2002; 2007; 2009).

A food sovereignty perspective concerns itself with food system conditions beyond economic growth and argues that privileging market mechanisms at the expense of other concerns risks undermining food security (McMichael, 2009; McMichael and Schneider, 2011). Such a perspective is well-suited to an examination of the Haitian agricultural sector given its decades-long history involving the hollowing out of domestic food production support systems, declining food self-sufficiency, and the corresponding turn towards export-led growth (Shamsie, 2009; 2012; Steckley and Shamsie, 2015; Steckley and Weis, 2016).

Food sovereignty is attentive to the often overlooked impacts of food system restructuring such as inequity and declining ecological integrity, as well as to the processes of marginalization, gender inequality (Desmarais, 2003; Patel et al., 2007), declining farmer autonomy (Stock et al., 2014), and changes to democratic/inclusive food governance (Agarwal, 2014). These variables also share common elements with broader concepts like equity, sustainability, and the realization of human rights and empowerment—concepts that are now taken into consideration when examining what counts as success in development programs (Currie-Alder, 2016). While some Haitian peasants are working on increasing food self-sufficiency and strengthening domestic value chains and markets as a key part of developing a sustainable and democratic food system (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015), national and international plans and agricultural investment
and development policies continue to prioritize export-oriented agriculture and private investment as the panacea for Haiti’s agricultural development challenges (MARNDR, 2013; Shamsie, 2009; 2012). Accordingly, these development plans continue to overlook key pathways and policies in pursuit of food sovereignty (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015).

Inclusion in the Practical Merger criteria of these dimensions that are emphasized by food sovereignty discourse provides a comprehensive framework for considering the impact of an initiative such as the HHP. On the one hand, support for *certain* criteria nested within a discourse of profitability and efficiency (e.g. support for smallholders; assistance with livelihoods and food security through export cash income; and market stability through set contracts) that is not matched by attention to *other* criteria that considers matters such as direct participation and producer autonomy can foster a reliance on supports that may not be sustainable in the longer term. On the other hand, consideration of impacts with respect to all Practical Merger criteria provides a way to systematically assess effectiveness and impact.

Little evidence from Haiti predicts success for programs patterned on the orientation of HHP to promote a “trickling down” of benefits from increasing access to export markets to actually deliver on their promises of increased food security and poverty reduction. A reliance on large-scale, conventional export agriculture has not been shown to significantly reduce hunger or malnutrition through increased incomes (McGuigan, 2006; Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). In fact, hunger and malnutrition have grown in the last two decades (Verney, 2007), despite a focus during this period on export markets as the primary growth and development strategy. The benefits that are secured from traditional exports via mainstream channels are unequally distributed. Kendall and Petracco (2009)
points out that over the last 35 years in the Caribbean region, large producers/commercial farms, traders and middlepersons, large companies, and multi-national firms have captured most of export profits (Kendall and Petracco, 2009). While some local business elites have made gains from an export-led development strategy and trade liberalization in Haiti (McGuigan, 2006), some would argue that significant economic benefits to small farmers directly have not been fully realized (Kendall and Petracco, 2009). Even the expected benefits of lower prices for urban consumers brought by import substitution policies have been fleeting and marginal (McGuigan, 2006).

Nevertheless, the strategy of connecting small farmers to international markets and promoting global growth as the pathway to development still persists (Swinnen and Maertens, 2007). The use of private sector value chain interventions as part of the toolkit for promoting business and reducing poverty is prevalent (Neilson, 2014; Humphrey and Navas-Aleman, 2010). While some have argued that the World Bank’s Value Chain programs still predominantly favor the corporate food regime rather than the small, agro-ecological farmers they are intended to support (Neilson, 2014) and others claim that value chains are ‘deployed’ as tools of power relations, debt creation and control (McMichael, 2013) there is evidence to suggest that value chain organization led by the private sector can, in some circumstances, contribute positively to economic growth and poverty reduction. This can happen via a reduction in household risks and an increase in access to inputs and capital, especially in places where the state has withdrawn from managing value chains and providing services (Neilson, 2014; Swinnen and Maertens, 2007).

Jansen (2015) points out that many marginal rural producers wish to become economically productive agriculturalists, and engaging with international markets is often
necessary to achieve this goal. Burnett and Murphy (2014) argue that for millions of producers around the world, “…livelihoods are dependent on export markets and despite many inherent challenges, those involved do not necessarily want to exit international markets” (p. 2). Agarwal (2014) also argues in favor of respecting “individual, democratic choice” when it comes to examining any tensions between the personal goals of households and the political goals of the idealized, collective food sovereignty movement (Agarwal, 2014; Steckley and Weis, 2016). Entering cash crop markets to increase livelihood outcomes involves complex decision making processes based on local conditions and interpretations of profit, rewards, risks and benefits. (Agarwal, 2014; Burnett and Murphy, 2014; Jansen, 2015; Louis, 2015; Martiniello, 2015).

There are many ways to view the debate surrounding smallholders’ choice to participate in export markets. Paying attention to questions such as those posed by Li’s (2015) who asks, “…under what conditions can a stable [and sustainable] food and cash crop regime be put in place?” (p. 208) or Mannon (2005) in querying ways in which participation can attempt to avoid risk as much as possible while inspiring continued participation in such value chains. Overall, the question of how small-scale producers can organize and balance their rights and desires to participate in export-oriented markets (sometimes corporately led) to supplement their traditional agricultural activities in a way that benefits them on their own terms remains unresolved in the food sovereignty debates. Research to address these concerns should accordingly explore how inclusive export-oriented value chains are, as well as how private sector interventions in the value chain impact the existing producer communities and dynamics in both positive and negative ways. This chapter begins to investigate these complex questions about the
(re)marketization of the Francis mango value chain via the HHP.

### 5.3 Markets and Market Making

Through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), public actors attempt to align private sector interests with public policy goals (Poulton and Macartney, 2012), especially where smallholders’ market access to high value fruit and vegetable supply chains are limited (Narrod et al, 2009). PPPs are also employed in situations where supply chain inefficiencies need to be tackled, or where deeper integration into global value chains is a key strategy on the path towards development objectives (Neilson, 2014; Spielman et al., 2010). In addition to sharing in the costs, risks and benefits of agricultural development projects, PPPs can also kick start market incentives that may then attract further investment of private capital into agricultural chains (Spielman et al., 2010). Public private partnerships can offer valuable services and knowledge flows. For example, Ouma et al (2013) argues

Cooperation between companies and smallholder farmers has been considered to be a key model for unleashing the positive forces of the market, providing smallholders with access to credit, extension services and technological knowledge in order to access and achieve competitiveness in global agricultural markets (p. 229).

However, the benefits of PPPs must be weighed against the costs (Kraak et al., 2011; Spielman et al., 2010) specifically costs around governance and restructuring initiatives in the interest of overall efficiency. In many cases, PPP interventions must reorganize smallholders to reduce transaction costs associated with a higher number of smaller suppliers (Cavatassi et al., 2011; Markelova, 2009), to increase vertical integration
and thus reduce the overall number of suppliers (Seville et al., 2011; Vagneron et al., 2009) or to meet new export and food safety regulations (Kraak et al., 2011; Narrod et al., 2009). This reorganization is often promoted as a means to increase and streamline market access and to improve direct economic rewards to smallholders. These types of restructuring activities are a key part of what Ouma (2013; 2015) terms “market (re)making”.

Ouma (2015; 2013), following pioneering work such as Callon (2007) and Caliskon and Callon (2010), builds on the theory of “marketization” or “market making”. Marketization challenges the tenet of neoclassical economics that markets simply exist as entities on their own, or can just be seamlessly tapped into by lead firms, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), or local farmers. Turning a noun into a verb (-ization) draws attention to the ways markets and economies are achieved, rather than taking them for granted as a static starting point or “pre-existing reality” (Caliskan and Callon, 2009). In Michael Callon’s work on the “anthropology of economization”, markets are conceptualized as socio-technical “agencements” (Callon 2007 italics in original), combining technical and material elements, including quality control systems, accounting, infrastructure, environmental factors, human capital, scientific knowledge, discourses and the political context of a specific location to shape the process of market making. This analytical approach emphasizes how markets are “calculative, collective devices that transform daily life” (Fourcade, 2007 cited in Ouma, 2015 p. 213), giving attention to the complex process of market making and market integration for smallholders as well as the resulting distribution of participation, risk, costs, and benefits.

Ouma’s (2013) work in Ghana focused on the implications of creating new markets
in what he terms the “frontier regions of agrarian capitalism”, locales where farmers have had limited exposure to the workings of international markets; however, the same socio-technical interplay may be present in an existing market’s evolution and restructuring. The re-making of global agrifood markets at particular “historical junctures” (Ouma, 2015, p. 30) is particularly relevant in the case of Haiti, given the attention placed on intervening in the Francis mango supply chain closely following the earthquake of 2010. While the profit potential of Haiti’s mango production has been of interest for Haitian industry and the international community since its peak in the 1980s, the 2010 earthquake prompted a renewed interest in reinvigorating the Francis mango chain toward export markets.

Political support for reconfiguring the mango chain exemplifies Steckley and Weis’ (2016) concept of a “post-disaster policy push” (p. 9) for profit under the guise of ongoing export led expansion and redevelopment. This political moment serves as a vital juncture for examining the relationship between market (re)making and which farmers are included in the benefits of export-oriented value chains. As Ouma (2015) notes:

[W]hat needs to be explored is when the market as a process turns political, that is, when its organization and operation are disputed and become a matter of controversy, and when not? (p. 155).

This research hypothesizes that the (re)making of markets towards an export-oriented model is not always destructive to producers’ participation or livelihoods. In light of this, a greater understanding of the process of how farmers become linked to markets (domestic or international) and what types of markets provide the most appropriate advantages and at what cost to certain groups is of key importance (Martiniello, 2015; Seville et al., 2011). Under what conditions might the remaking of markets, with a focus
on export-oriented agriculture, support food sovereignty?

5.4 Research Objectives

This chapter explores implications of ‘market (re)making’ that have accompanied the HHP. Existing private and public sector evaluations of the HPP have failed to consider “power constellations” (Ulrich, 2014) or what Nickow (2015) highlights as the structural and power dynamics that shape marginal producers’ access to benefits from the creation of an export-oriented value chain, especially in light of international capital and support (Nickow, 2015). In the context of the mango supply chain in Haiti, power and structural dynamics include how market share is divided, the level of participation and inclusion among producers and other supply chain participants, the distribution of supportive resources, the autonomy and agency of producers, and the governance of the supply chain operations. Applying the practical mergers conceptual framework, this chapter assesses the restructuring impacts of the HHP on established, local groups belonging to the fair trade/organic value chain over the last five years.

My research provides an opportunity to examine the observations of other recent work (Edmundson and Harvey, 2016; Arrias et al, 2015) that indicates how market (re)making in the HHP portion of the Francis mango value chain has increased market access for some small-scale producers and assisted with addressing some governance, certification, and organizational challenges within the supply chain. From this perspective, the HHP strategy of the continued inclusiveness of smallholders, despite other plans calling for greater efficiency via plantation type expansion projects (Steckley and Weis, 2016) can be seen as successful in promoting certain practical merger criteria, given the food sovereignty and fair trade focus on mechanisms to support the survival of the
peasantry within global markets (Criterion 1). In addition, the individual and collective
economic rewards to producers resulting from increased market access, training, and
certification has been seen to have also benefited many producers (Arraiz et al., 2015;
Edmondson and Harvey, 2016; Technoserve, 2016) in terms of livelihoods and food
security (Criterion 2). This evidence stands in contrast to scholars who posit that “the very
purpose of capitalist restructuring is to ‘de-peasantize’ the economy (Misra, 2017, p. 605).
Furthermore, data from the FAO (2017) also shows that total mango export volumes rose
between 2011-2013 in both volume (9224 metric tons up to 10,228 metric tons) and in
dollar value (from USD $11,511,000 up to $13,550,500) (FAO, 2017). This slightly higher
growth rate in exports (compared to 2007-2009) coincides with the early years of the
HHP’s operation.

However, it is at this juncture that my research provides an opportunity to make a
departure into more critical territory. This case study will show that at the same time as
the aforementioned benefits have been realized- linking thousands of smallholders with
specific international markets and increasing the value chain’s efficiency-, the HHP seems
to have systematically reshaped the market share for peasant producer associations,
redefined the criteria for participation, reduced producer autonomy, and reified the power
of some producer groups at the expense of others. As the trade-offs of declining farmer
autonomy and lack of inclusion and participation for some smallholders in exchange for
market access call into the question the overall sustainability and “pro-poor” focus of the

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7 2010 was a particularly low output year due to the earthquake (January) and the resulting low volume
season directly following and during reconstruction (April). As such, data trends show a steady rise from
2007, then a significant drop in 2010, followed by what appears to be an abnormally large growth trend to
2011. However, taking the low volume harvest (just over 6200 metric tons) out of the equation, growth has
been a slow rise since 2008 up to 2013.
HHP as they have for other value chain collaborations (Vorley et al., 2012) an application of the “practical mergers” criteria allows a more comprehensive assessment of impact.

Before examining how small producers were affected by the introduction of HHP, however, in line with discussion of critical realist approaches to the examination of case studies that is discussed in Section 3.5, I set the scene for this empirical examination by first presenting a discussion of broader discourses concerning the position of small producers in Haiti and then summarizing recent data on trends in mango production before introducing how the HHP initiative was introduced.

5.5 Agriculture, Power, and Food Security in Haiti

In the late eighteenth century, the small French colony of Saint Domingue was one of the richest colonies in the world (Frankema and Masé, 2013). After three hundred years as a colony that switched between various colonial powers (Girard, 2010) the revolution of 1804 established a Haitian state and newly freed slaves secured land holdings. These citizens set up as independent agriculturalists in areas of limited government control breaking away from the sugar plantations driven and controlled by colonial interests. Although the new, independent Haitian elites wanted to re-introduce the workings of the plantation system, free agriculturalists wanted land for subsistence farming (Fatton, 2011). Many settled as landowners on abandoned parcels or those they purchased from the state (Fatton, 2006; Trouillot, 2016). This “counter plantation” model of smallholders working and controlling their own small parcels of land to grow food for household consumption emerged as a psychological and practical response to the long history of outside influences driving policies towards export cash crops utilizing the labor of peasants (Dubois, 2012).
Yet, in spite of revolution and smallholder agricultural efforts, the century following independence saw elite power directed at maintaining a new kind of agricultural system which was at odds with independent production. While not controlled explicitly by colonial interests, national elites created systems to capture profits from agricultural labor, increased taxation (Derby, 1994; Trouillot, 2016), and pushed for the reintroduction of the plantation system. This proposal included military labor control on large infrastructure projects in order to try and salvage a devastated economy (Fatton, 2006). It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that the transition from slavery-based plantations to independent free production was fully realized (Lundhal, 1980).

Despite the long transition to gain independence from the end of the 19th century through the 1930s, both Haiti and the Dominican Republic focused their attention on large scale sugar production (Derby, 1994) and some coffee exports, organized under the order of domestic elites and corporate interests. The 1940s and 1950s saw national governments begin to devalue food self-reliance and promise that rising food imports could be paid for with the profits of a diversified economy with a focus on industrialization and to a lesser extent, export-oriented agriculture (Shamsie, 2012; Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). Throughout the mid-twentieth century, export crop prices dropped, environmental degradation due to large scale monocultures became a concern, and many Caribbean nations including Haiti shifted their economic focus from a reliance on large scale export crops into mining and manufacturing services (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). The successive Duvalier dictatorship years (1957-1986) and the manufacturing focus taking place in urban areas left a small portion of the government budget for rural development, including agriculture (Gros, 2010; Shamsie, 2012). By 1971, Haitian rulers, supported by
foreign advice, dismissed the rural agricultural sector’s crucial contribution to the economy and saw cheap labor as the primary means to development and increased wealth (Trouillot, 1990).

Throughout the later 1970s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank supported industrialization in Haiti and other Caribbean countries. Agricultural development strategies followed a modernization model of increasing agro-chemical use and mechanization (Steckley and Shamsie, 2015). While it had been a traditional policy of Haiti to protect local industries through taxes and tariffs (Gros, 2010) during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the international financial community continued to push for further opening of trade (Cohen, 2013). Structural adjustment programs consumed what little support was left for staple foods, agricultural credit, extension services, and necessary farm inputs for small farmers (McGowan, 1997). This turn in the 1980s witnessed a drastic shift away from provisioning for domestic markets and towards trading surplus food, championing the logics of free trade, ‘comparative advantage’ and international aid as the pathways to increased food security and poverty reduction. By the late 1980s, Haiti was no longer a major exporter of any agricultural products (Gros, 2010), self-sufficiency was decreasing and imports were rising.

Based on the International Monetary Fund’s structural adjustment policies, most countries in the Caribbean were encouraged to import foodstuffs from developed countries while producing non-traditional fruit and vegetable exports for developed countries (Shamsie, 2012). Such encouragement, combined with the idea that industrialization, separate from agricultural development, was the road to modernization and poverty reduction (Kay, 2009) meant that the rural agriculture sector continued to suffer lack of
investment and was successively weakened by both national and international policy. The push towards incentivizing export industries and reduction in import tariffs as part of donors’ conditions of structural adjustment programs (McGowan, 1997) contributed to further hollowing of the agricultural sector (MARND, 2013; Shamsie, 2012).

For example, rice import tariffs were lowered nearly 60 percent by the Haitian government after pressure from United States in the mid-1990s, which reduced the price for consumers but destroyed the comparative advantage for local rice producers (Cohen, 2013). Additional tariff reductions of 25-40 percent were also seen in other key commodities such as wheat, poultry, and sugar (McGuigan, 2006) impacting the competitiveness of these sectors as well. Additional factors contributed to the declining viability of the agricultural sector. The loss of agricultural land due to poor soil erosion management, clearing of forest cover, and insufficient fallow periods (Smucker et al, 2005; McClintock, 2004) have impacted the productive land base. Furthermore, the lagging economic returns to small-scale agriculturalists in general have been a key contributor to increasing rates of rural to urban migration (Zannotti, 2009).

Haiti exported USD $38.74 million worth of agricultural commodities against its USD $538 million in food imports between 2009-2011 (MARND, 2013). Laroche-Dupraz and Postolle (2012) argue that long-term food security cannot rely on dependency on food imports, but must be built on the development of domestic production. In contrast, the USDA Caribbean Basin Exporter Guide (2014) reports “huge opportunities” for the United States to capitalize on the needed for food imports by Caribbean nations due to their “insufficient arable land, scant water resources available on some islands, no economies of scale, and a limited food-processing sector” (p. 3). The report notes that
following a decade of positive growth trends from 2003-2013, exports of agricultural commodities to Caribbean nations in 2014 alone is forecast to be worth nearly one billion dollars.

In spite of this history and these challenges, agriculture continues to play a dominant role in Haiti’s economy, with 58 percent of the country’s people directly involved (Eitzinger et al., 2014). While agriculture’s contribution to overall GDP has dropped from nearly 50 percent in the 1980s (e Janvry, 2010; Gros, 2010), agriculture in Haiti today accounts for almost a quarter of the country’s GDP. Over 60 percent of the total land base (1.7 million hectares) is in production, most of it in small parcels; the average farm size is reported as 1.5 hectares with most farms comprised of a number of smaller units (Eitzinger et al., 2014). In addition, Haiti has one of the lowest rates of fertilizer use in the world, and 90 percent of peasants have access to some land, though a small, but officially unknown percent are reported to hold formal land title (Mintz, 2007; MARDNR, 2010 cited in Steckley and Shamsie, 2015).

Though agriculture represents a crucial part of both the country’s economy and workforce, investment in the sector does not reflect this importance. Direct investments in peasant agriculture in Haiti accounted for less than one percent of the US$550 million in donations and loans given in the mid-1990s (McGowan, 1997) and just four percent of the government budget was directed to agriculture in the first half of the 2000s (Cohen, 2013). The lack of investment, particularly in rural areas, has been shown to contribute directly to overall agricultural productivity declines due to damaged infrastructure such as irrigation and poor transport linkages to markets (McClintock, 2004). Most farmers operate at a subsistence level (Adelman, 2010; Bargout and Raizada, 2013; Baro, 2002; Dolisca et al.,
2009) but many farmers do not produce sufficient food to satisfy household consumption, and overall domestic production falls well short of national consumption (Dolisca et al., 2009; Mazzeo, 2009). Some attribute this problem to inherent challenges with soil fertility and poor nutrient management which affect overall productivity (Bargout and Raizada, 2013; MARNDR, 2010). Others see these shortfalls as a failure to take up new varieties or technologies (Adelman, 2010; Dolisca et al., 2009) such as improved seed varieties, fertilizers, and irrigation infrastructure (MARNDR, 2010). Still others point to mismanaged and misdirected investment and resources from both governments and donors as key drivers of the lack of agricultural development policies (Adelman, 2010; Dupuy, 2010). The Haitian Ministry of Agriculture acknowledges that research activities, field visits and technical assistance to farmers and associations are “insufficient” and “a gap between the mission and available resources” is apparent (MARNDR, 2010, p. 52). Some suggest that the problem goes much deeper. O’Conner et al (2014) blame the emerging “audit culture” which international development organizations use as a type of governance tool to shape inclusion/exclusion and success/failure with regards to projects and outcomes. The emphasis on following specific frameworks to meeting specific indicators and benchmarks for organizations and departments to be ‘worthy’ of ongoing project funds is also reshaping government and civil society’s capacity (O’Connor et al., 2014). A version of this type of audit culture, focused on efficiency and productivity as qualifying mango production as worthy is apparent within the HHP framing. This will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

5.6 Mango Production in Haiti

Haiti has been exporting mangos to the US since 1976; however, when the USA
put new phytosanitary regulations in place in 2007, only one variety, the Francis mango, maintained its export potential due to its ability to withstand the hot water treatment required by those new regulations (Hyppolite, 2013; Hyppolite et al., 2014) While Haiti was the sixth largest exporter of mangos in the world in the 1980s, today only about 20 percent of marketable fruit reaches international markets (Hyppolite et al., 201; USAID, 2011a). Losses of export quality fruit between harvesting and exporting can reach 70-80 percent because of poor harvesting, transport and handling practices. Even so, Haiti holds approximately 2 percent of the US market for mangos and that export of mangos annually nets more than ten million dollars to the Haitian economy (Hyppolite, 2013; Hyppolite et al., 2014). Mangos are the second largest Haitian export crop by volume after cocoa beans and the third in dollar value per tonne following cocoa beans and coffee (FAO, 2014).

The Francis mango value chain relies on the complex production and supply networks of tens of thousands of smallholders linked throughout the country who produce in backyard systems rather than managed groves. Until 2009, most producers sold mangos through nationally organized cooperatives, for a lower price to “voltigeurs,” middlemen who would then sell bulk lots directly to exporters, or to Madam Saras who travel and purchase from farmers and then distribute in the local market. Poor organization, harvesting practices and handling techniques, and unreliable transportation contributed to significant losses of export quality fruit (Hyppolite et al, 2014; Hyppolite, 2013). The economic potential of increased efficiency in the Francis mango value chain was a key part of the impetus for market (re)making manifested in the HHP proposal. However, the formalizing of a ‘new’ market structure takes place through multiple processes. For example, as Dorward (2009) notes:
Formal markets can reach poor producers in two ways. The first mechanism is active, whereby a producer or producer organization will seek to supply products or labor in a new supply chain. The second is involuntary, occurring when an existing market that a farmer has been supplying – usually a domestic market [although not always] – starts to modernize and restructure, and adopt new conditions of market participation. There is debate around the active mechanism centering on inclusion. The debate regarding the involuntary mechanism is mainly about exclusion. Both mechanisms, however, present producers with options to ‘step up’ (to formal markets), ‘hang in’ (to informal markets) or ‘step out’ (cited in Seville, 2011, p. 7).

Dorward’s (2009) distinction between producers “stepping up”, “hanging in” or “stepping out” is relevant in the case of the HHP strategy for remaking the market. The HHP highlights “the tension between local inclusion and expert knowledge”, a tension that is historically embedded in many Haitian development projects (O'Connor et al., 2014). As such, this chapter examines the power dynamics of market participation and inclusion and brings a critical lens to the systematic linkages between market remaking and exclusion.

5.7 The Haiti Hope Project: The Francis Mango to the Rescue

The Haiti Hope Project (2010-2015) aimed to increase the incomes of 25,000 smallholder mango farmers by helping them with increased market access. In order to accomplish this goal, third party certifications needed to be implemented for some producers to reach export markets and the value chain needed to be streamlined and reorganized in order for smallholders to reduce losses and maintain quality control to
realize the increased economic benefits of certified products. Producer Business Groups (PBG’s) referred to as “cells” were created with the assistance of Techno-Serve (TNS) by recruiting mango growers from regions of high productivity. These groups were offered training in proper harvesting, handling, processing, governance, and certification; offered financial loan assistance for business expansion; assistance in market access; and offered support with certification requirements, including first year’s costs in some cases (Interview, 04.29.15,).

Until the mid-1990s, the Francis mango did not have much value in the marketplace and was sold for a very low price—between 3 and 9 gourdes a dozen—according to FENAPCOM (Fair trade USA, 2011). Current prices of 45-60 GDES per dozen represent a major rise and highlight the economic potential of increased exports. Although Haiti’s mango exports have not increased substantially in the last 20 years (IDB, 2010), the Feed the Future report (2012) predicted “an additional $20 million could be generated in export revenue from mangoes and cocoa after five years” (FTF, 2012, p.24), and the USAID-sponsored National Mango Forum Meeting in 2009 set a goal of exporting five million cases of USDA certified mangos, up from 2.5 million, by 2015 (Francis mango Strategic Plan, 2010). Such claims prompt questions about both the locus of value creation and the allocation of resulting supply chain benefits (Vagneron et al., 2009; Vagneron and Roquigny, 2011).

In spite of such concerns, the announcement of the HHP value chain intervention produced a wave of positive media attention in American newspapers and blogs. Reports claimed that that development, poverty alleviation, and the strengthening of the economy can be done “one mango at a time” (Collier and Warnholz, 2010) or that “access to credit
frees Haitian farmers to sell and invest on their own terms” (USAID, 2011) promoting a free market economy. “Haiti is open for business” proclaimed The Economist (2012). “The Haiti Hope Project exemplifies the innovative role that partnerships with the private sector can play in the reconstruction of Haiti,” said former President Bill Clinton in 2010 (cited in Adelman, 2010). Other articles and donor statements implied that the fruit could in fact be a metaphorical tool of reconstruction in its own right, suggesting mangos can be used “to build a better Haiti” (Mercury Corps, 2010). The slogan “Support Haiti--Buy Mangos” used by Whole Foods Market suggests that shopping there and choosing their Whole Trade Mangos ™ over others enables shoppers to contribute directly to the redevelopment of Haiti.

The HHP’s stated goals as a value chain intervention were aligned with many of the practical mergers criteria introduced in chapter 2 (criteria 1, 2, 4 in particular). However, the HHP did not have an explicit focus on producer participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) or an explicit focus on the preservation of equity and rights (criterion 6). In light of this, my evaluation of marketization in the HPP project highlights the importance of examining equity, power, participation, and marginalization, in addition to the economic impacts of implementing best practices, securing international market contracts and progressive certification schemes like fair trade. The latent impacts of the Haiti Hope Project during the process of (re)making the mango supply chain offer insight for evaluating smallholders’ opportunities for participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) as well as the impacts on market stability (criterion 4) as they relate to the identification of practical mergers present in export-oriented value chains.
5.7 Methods

Established officially in 2005 and representing approximately 15,000 smallholders across the country as of 2008, FENAPCOM members aggregate products through a series of marketing and organizational groups with representation in five of the seven departments in the country. While the number of groups from inception in 2005 until the height in 2010 reached a total of 23, as of 2015, only 12-16 groups were still commercially active at the time of this study (personal communication, 2015). Data for this paper was collected during five separate field visits to Haiti between March 2014 and May 2015. Field work conducted with four FENAPCOM groups located in the corridor between the start of the Artibonite Valley (Petit Riverie d’Artibonite just Southeast of St. Marc) and covered locations moving Southeastwards into the Central Department (Mirebalais/Boucan Carré)

The four FENAPCOM groups that I included in this study ranged in membership from 85 individuals (GHRABA) to over 700 registered producers (APD3). Participants had been members of their FENAPCOM group for an average of 7.5 years and 42 percent of my survey participants reported to be active members in a HHP cell alongside membership with a FENAPCOM group. Data as it relates to the process activities and results of the HHP was collected primarily via public document review and aided by key informant interviews.

5.8 Results

As of April 2014, the Haiti Hope Project had registered 27,000 existing mango producers into more than 270 small cooperatives that aggregate and market mangos. These
small cooperatives are known as Producer Business Groups (PBGs). The number of producers recruited from existing cooperatives (FENAPCOM) or those that were recruited into PBGs from independent production (selling to middlemen or Madam Saras) were not available in this report. By 2015, a reported 297 Producer PBGs or “cells” were active with 40-60 members on average per group (Interview, 04.29.15). The TNS project summary also suggests that 46 percent of enrolled farmers are women, following Technoserve’s stated goal of creating equal gender participation opportunities (TNS brief, 2014).

Between 2010 and 2015, the HHP employed over one hundred local individuals to provide agricultural extension services, training, business development skills, and basic technical assistance to small producers. Coca-Cola reported 2300 individual training sessions on production and processing as of 2013, and USAID (2014) reports that exports have increased by 175 percent for participating farmers. According to an International Development Bank report, the HHP and its training programs have shown increases in the planting of new Francis mango trees on existing farms and increases in the adoption of agricultural practices that are intended to reduce post-harvest losses (Arrias et al, 2015). The HHP has also had an effect on commercialization choices, influencing more farmers to seek certification and sell on the international market. Farmers can now sell bulk lots to PBGs directly, rather than to middlepersons or sell to PBGs by the dozen, rather than by selling a tree or a whole plot as had been the dominant practice of the past for many producers. From 2013 to the end of the program, TNS reported:

The project helped over 262 Producer Business Groups sell 2,523 metric tons since 2013. The total export value (FOB) of sales from project-assisted farmers since 2011 is estimated at $7.49 million. In 2015, 94 percent of groups earned a
profit while paying their members industry-beating prices. They did this without any subsidy – just business acumen (TNS, 2016).

According to the HHP director in 2015, the “success rate” of the new PBGs is high primarily because of their business-oriented structure:

All of them [the PBGs] are run like individual businesses. They all have business plans and 85 percent of them are economically successful, season after season turning a profit. They are able to aggregate the volumes, pay farmers premium prices because they have all been trained in how to properly harvest, how to properly handle, how to wash it properly […] and like I said, I think the biggest metric we are using for sustainability is: are they profitable yet and we’ve seen of those 297, 85 percent are profitable (Interview, 04.29.15).

While debate could ensue about whether or not “being profitable” is an appropriate metric for sustainability and whether this ‘profit’ is equivalent to a livelihood, TNS sees 85 percent of 27,000 farmers making profit each season, at least in its initial phase, as a positive outcome.8

While Donovan and Poole (2013) point out that there is currently no consensus on how to measure the total poverty impacts of a value chain development program, TNS reports and briefs throughout the project showcase positive impacts of private sector

8. Note that 297 PBG’s were in existence during this interview in April 2015, while post-project documents 16 months later report only 262 groups. This gap suggests that there were 35 groups that dissolved for unknown reasons between April 2015 and December 2016. In light of the ‘profit as sustainability’ metric, some might have failed to produce profit and thus were not included in the final analysis. This raised the statistical estimate from 85 percent profitable in 2015 to 94 percent profitable in the post program reports in 2016.
capital investment in terms of its ability to help provide technical assistance, increase the adoption of best practices in mango handling, empowering farmers and thus helping to capitalize mango business expansion. TNS (2014) reports that:

[The HHP is] introducing modern production practices, increasing transparency in sales transactions, improving access to finance, facilitating marketing and transport, and professionalizing harvesting and other services led by traders […] Farmers now see their mango trees as a business, and traders are evolving into well-managed professional enterprises

The HHP director suggested that their program evaluation criteria include and prioritize both the economic successes (profitability) and the social impacts, including “increases in farmers confidence and the roles they are [now] playing in their communities” (Interview, 04.29.15). However, public documents of the HHP program tend to champion a discourse that advocates the HHPs role in providing much needed ‘industry transformation’ involving more “business like” practices, emphasizing transparency, professionalism and advocating “modernization” and “growth”.

5.8.1 Inclusion and Collaboration In Remaking of the Value Chain

The objective is to develop a sustainable and inclusive value chain business model that increases the income of at least 15,000 smallholder mango farmers, creates employment and enhances fresh and processed mango exports […] expected outcomes include: (a) the creation of groups of partnering producers or the strengthening of existing organizations […] TNS will work with existing cooperatives to enhance
their business model and provide additional services to their members [...]. Many of the existing cooperatives are however fairly well organized and would form a good basis for PBGs.

(Multi-lateral Investment Fund Report, 2010, p. 5-10 italics mine)

The Multilateral Investment Fund Report (2010) utilizes frequent language concerning cooperation, inclusion, and strengthening existing organizations already involved in the mango value chain. The donors of this fund, including the Inter-American Development Bank and the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund contributed just over 3.5 million USD, in the form of a grant, to the HHP project.

Before TNS’s arrival in 2010, 15,000 producers were organized into groups under the FENAPCOM banner. They were in charge of their own governance, production, and marketing. They were the first producer association to secure fair trade certification with Fair trade USA (2008) and later, USDA Certified Organic status (2009). FENAPCOM members participate in a direct trading relationship with the country’s only exporter of certified organic mangos, Perry Exporters Ltd. 2008-2009 was the first ‘official’ year of the fair trade mango program for FENAPCOM and by 2010 there were “around 2000 FENAPCOM producers” who were certified by fair trade (Schmerler, 2011). During and up to this time 10 FENAPCOM groups and their associated members controlled nearly 100 percent of the fair trade organic market share in Haiti (personal communication, 2015), which at that time amounted to about 2 percent of the total mangos exported (Francis mango Strategic Plan, 2010). Prices reached $1.45 USD per dozen for fair trade/conventional and $1.60 USD per dozen fair trade organic. The fair trade premiums of
45 percent from 2009-2014 are also among the highest in the world for participating fair trade mango countries (Fairtrade Minimum Price Table, 2015), with some estimates suggesting that an additional $12,000 USD in social premiums were disbursed to FENAPCOM members in 2010 (Fair trade USA, 2012). While a small, certified market share overall, this 2 percent still represented a significant niche market for FENAPCOM producers. FENAPCOM’s control of most of the market share continued from 2008 until the start of the 2012 season (Interview,12.14.16), which was the second official season of the HHP.

FENAPCOM mango producers’ willingness to work with the HHP philosophy of change is influenced by factors including farmer motivations, immediate needs, and available resources as well the shared identity formed through group affiliation. Schewe (2013) employs the theory of “negotiated decision making” which sees producers “…simultaneously moderating and renegotiating a variety of often-conflicting motivations and constraints shaped by their existing practices, ideology, market pressures, social networks, and commodity chain position” (p. 256). While the application of her theory was to producers’ choices between a range of agri-food certifiers and thus standards, many of the same factors play into producers’ decisions to “work within the HHP philosophy of change” and market mangos to a local group or to a new PBG.

For example, participants often made reference to what are commonly understood as pull factors, or what Ouma (2015) calls “strategic market devices” (p. 100). These include HPP providing access to funding/credit, certification assistance, harvest and post-harvest training, and crates for transporting mangos from sites of production to collection bases. These incentives were influential in pulling in some independent producers and
pulling in some FENAPCOM producers to join and sell at least some of their harvest to a TNS cell rather than continuing to sell all their harvest to a group belonging FENAPCOM. TNS also funds about 80 local employees (Interview, 04.29.15) who offered coordination, consulting, access to extension services, business development strategies, training, crates for harvesting, assistance with contracts, and at the beginning subsidized FT certification costs. The original program budget (IDB, 2010, Annex II, detailed budget) also shows a total of $961,255 USD over five years for “driver, marketing, and office rental and set up” (IDB, 2010). In contrast, FENAPCOM has no official building for operations, no paid employees and very limited financial resources to provide training and technical assistance beyond their local groups. In the case of the HHP, these pull factors and benefits have been enough to incentivize some producers into the program (Steckley and Weis, 2016).

Finally, TNS also helps some small producers who belong to their PBGs access credit from local financial institutions. Survey data from my study shows that 54 FENAPCOM producers received either a “grant” or “credit” from their TNS connections, whereas only 22 FENAPCOM producers reported receiving any financial support from either FENAPCOM or their local producer group. As one producer and group executive noted:

The TNS program gives a lot of opportunities, but to have this opportunity you are obliged to join a TNS cell […] The producers accept this because TNS offers some advantages, but if you don’t sell some of your mangos to the TNS cell, you lose those benefits. But, [I think] they just participate to receive these benefits, these advantages (Interview, 05.02.15)

Vannier’s (2008) study of the relationship between peasant groups and NGO
delivery of development projects in Haiti suggests that while the projects are sold as products to peasants as if they are groups of consumers, “…peasants will ‘use’ the project according to their own politically and culturally charged contexts” (p. 9). Participation in TNS sponsored groups just to receive inputs and services could be considered what Bingen et al (2004) call “shallow membership”, creating more of a passive relationship where strong ideas of “commitment or involvement do not [generally] apply” (Bingen et al, 2003, p. 414). Bingen et al (2003) also showcases the challenges with new group creation, especially those groups characterized by such “shallow membership”, suggesting that they are often “…loose groupings of farmers created principally (and opportunistically) to gain access to production credit and supplies; they rarely continue when the donors shift their funding and program priorities (p. 407).

Email correspondence in April 2014 with the former HHP director suggested that since 2010-2011, the new PBGs had begun to capture market share and by 2014 had secured 80 percent of the market share for fair trade and organic mango exports due to what he referred to simply as their “different structure” (personal communication, 2014). Using descriptive data from my fieldwork, this “different structure” can be interpreted as the emphasis placed on meeting traceability requirements, increased attention paid to profitability as one measure for group success and the implementation of best practices as shown by evidence of decreasing reject rates. While these elements of this “different structure” have proven positive to many producers, having to conform to new standards can be a challenge for small producers without such a vision for how their activities ought be organized, or those without access to the resources and support available. Furthermore,
terms such as “highly competitive” and “profitable” used within original project proposals (IDB, 2010) and “the profitability question”, “market efficiency” and “competitive” used within HHP discourse were not at all common in my conversations with FENAPCOM members. If participation in a given value chain requires that producers adopt a unified vision of motivations, this can limit farmers’ autonomy and choice and may restrict their ability to participate. According to Ouma (2015):

Another way to think about the disconnections that accompany export-oriented marketization processes is through the notion of “displacement”. As nature, people, and things are incorporated into new market arrangements, agencies not compatible with the rules of the game are dispelled, objects framed as unworthy are denied market access […] and local modalities of valuation have to give way to the standards, quasi-standards, and collecting statements circulating in global agrifood markets (Ouma, 2015, p. 211 italics mine).

This begs the question as to whether the TNS groups were part of a larger market creation plan that set out to incorporate all producers or were developed with the goal of displacing existing producer groups. Concerns raised during the FENAPCOM general assembly (2015) note that:

FENAPCOM participants are questioning the numerous irregularities lurking around the program for the marketing and Bio-fair certification conducted by Technoserve in Haiti for more than 3 years […] The TNS program, after its installation comes to weaken associations already certified fair trade in the Flo-cert certification system for the benefit of
cells formed following the will of the Technoserve program (FENAPCOM generally assembly minutes, 2015 italics in original).

While it might be a stretch to claim that the HHP is an extension of the larger historical trend of international and national elites making profits from the peasantry, similar processes of marginalizing the peasantry, yet requiring their essential contribution as producers and laborers (Fatton, 2006; Trouillot, 1990) can be seen when a critical lens is used to view the current development program. Despite the discourse of cooperation with existing mango producing groups that was promoted by the HHP program overviews (2010) and the HHP director’s sentiments that efforts in 2010-2013 were really focused on “working with the independent producers” (Interview, 04.29.15), interviews with FENAPCOM members suggest that the reality on the ground just one year into the project was different. The following is an excerpt from a conversation I had with a FENAPCOM group leader in 2014.

In 2009, I had a visit here, at my base, from the Technoserve Program Director. She was very excited to learn about the supply chain and to work with the FENAPCOM groups. Then after only one season of working with us, they [stopped working with our group]… they just changed the plan.

*Why did they tell you they changed the plan [which was to work closely with your group]*?

They didn’t tell me. They just changed their plan [to work with and collaborate with our group]. I don’t know why. (Interview, 11.24.14)
Another interviewee said that TNS worked with their group in the first year (2010-2011), implying this was because of “TNS’s strategic reasons”:

[...] mostly because they wanted to know about the value chain, they wanted to learn. But after they [TNS] had learned and trained a few FENAPCOM producers to work for them [for their PBGs] they [TNS] disengaged with the [FENAPCOM] group (Interview, 05.02.15).

In contrast to the extensive list of support services that PBGs are poised to receive (including but not limited to support services for their formation; training on productivity measures and business skills; support for tree replanting; access to credits for inputs; partnerships with research institutions for processing and exploring farm level value added processing activities; training to help farmers with other income generating activities; and “...other needs through a performance based scheme of up to 20 awards of less than $10,000 each to the best performing PBGs” (IDB, p. 5-6), respondents from another FENAPCOM group which existed before 2010 noted that TNS has given their group “almost nothing” during their time in Haiti.

One group reported receiving some crates for carrying mangos and drums for washing mangos in the first year, but nothing after that (Interview, 05.02.15). TNS recruiters were sanctioned to walk within a 90-minute radius of their home in order to promote the project (Arrias et al, 2015). Conversations with other FENAPCOM leaders suggested that the HHP drew hundreds of active producers away from exclusively supplying local FENAPCOM groups in order to have these producers supply their newly developed PBGs. One FENAPCOM producer told me in a hushed voice during a
community gathering in the public space:

Everybody has respect for APD3 [the FENAPCOM producer group in that area]. But when TNS came to this area, they walked all around and talked to the producers. They were saying, “don’t sell there, sell to us” (personal communication, 04.30.15)

One group, GHRABA, included 179 producers who sold all their harvest directly to a FENAPCOM group in the 2010-2011 season. Group records in 2014 showed just 76 producers officially registered with GHRABA. One TNS affiliate and extension agent reported the creation of 34 new HHP cells, each with 25 producers, in the Desarmes area alone (Interview, 04.18.15). Other groups noted similar trends regarding declining number of producers registered to sell exclusively to their local group. Although exact numbers were unavailable in one group, executives estimated that “almost all” of their members now work concurrently with new cells that have sprung up in the same, or proximate regions. As Ouma (2015) reminds us, “we should not forget that the work of enrollment [in a particular market making project] may result in unity but not in equality” (p. 128 italics in original). However, such trends were not always the case. A Technoserve case study on credit opportunities noted that KOPCOM, a FENAPCOM affiliated group with over 1000 members only had 100 members (10 percent) registered with the HHP when they were employed as a test group for a micro-loan program (TNS, 2015). However, based on fieldwork with the four groups included in this study, the HHP’s efforts to recruit producers for their program, the loss of members from pre-existing local group membership and thus their collective output volumes, was noticeable and a concerning trend for many group leaders.
One producer told me “[Some groups] are very mad, they don’t even want to talk about Technoserve”. Another producer suggested that TNS was “trying to break FENAPCOM” and that “[TNS] don’t want the [FENAPCOM] groups to work and that’s a big problem”. This producer went onto note that “[TNS wants to control all the mangos in Haiti, but FENAPCOM comes with their mangos” (Interview, 04.16.15). One producer noted the way in which he believes TNS ensures that some FENAPCOM producers cannot meet the new regulatory standards for participation: “TNS offered a training session about the [updated] certification standards, but we weren’t invited” (Interview, 04.22.15). Steckley’s (2016) observations from midway through the project (2013) supported these sentiments, suggesting that in addition to mango farmers’ strong desire for autonomy, their risk aversion, and their often unfulfilled realization of profits, many farmers also reported being “suspicious” of TNS’s intentions and viewed the contract terms as potentially “exploitative” (Steckley and Weis, 2016). Edmonds (2013) points out that in many cases, the omnipresence of NGO’s in Haiti “ignores structural policies and embedded power relations” and “…works to reduce the level of political consciousness and solidarity of the community by placing the people into competition for access to scarce resources and services” (Edmonds, 2013, p. 6).

Given the history, activity, and knowledge base of these local groups, questions emerged about why the funding for the HHP project was not aimed directly at strengthening, training, and assisting the long-standing, existing groups rather than invested in the creation of new ones. In response, the current HHP program director commented:

We started off working with the existing groups and then realized that—and I
don’t think this is a new thing—if you have a certain structure in place you have to do a lot of unlearning first to actually change behavior so the existing groups were not getting the reject rates down, were not ready or willing to start doing traceability all the way to the farmer level […] we did invest and continue to invest in these groups. The challenge has been, we work when there is, what’s the word in English, ‘voluntary’ [in kreyol]- you have to have a […] people have to be willing to work with our groups and within our philosophy of change […] And I think with the established groups its always a challenge to get them to unlearn a lot of the practices that they have developed over decades and then to take a new approach (Interview, 04.29.15)

Many FENAPCOM executives felt that their groups had limited ability to be involved in directly discussing the conditions and structure of the Haiti Hope Project (criterion 5). One producer said “They [TNS] just arrived in the country”, and another said he did not know how they got here [in Haiti]. Overall, many of the FENAPCOM executives felt that the HHP was designed, and then carried out, without much input from producers. This recurring sentiment stands in marked contrast to the MARDNR report (2010), which noted that:

Farmers organized into associations or cooperatives operate as true partners in development programs and projects which can build, as it has been witnessed in the last few years, the beginning of professionalization in sub-sectors that respond to real concerns of farmers. These organization structures will always be implicated in the planning, financing, execution, and evaluation of activities of those programs and projects (MARDNR, 2010, p. 58 italics mine).
In spite of the discourse of pre-project policy documents, the leaders of FENAPCOM groups I spoke with claimed they not been consulted with regards to the planning or evaluation stages of the HHP. Evidence from older agricultural development projects in Haiti, shows that target groups of interventions are often included as test subjects but not involved in substantial planning of the next phases of interventions (Edmonds, 2013; Jaffe, 1997). Such trends follow Hospes and Clancy’s (2014) observations that in some value chains cases, “…social inclusion as a policy discourse may exist in parallel to social exclusion in practice” (p. 23). While the HHP director claimed that they were seeing a lot of new PBGs getting farmers together, empowering themselves with leadership structures and coordination skills and that this was resulting in increased revenues and competitiveness (Interview, 04.29.15), FENAPCOM members were not consulted with regards to participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) specifically as it relates to the HHP. These missed opportunities for participation and engagement are a key component of an ideal type practical merger.

FEPAPCOM key informants that I interviewed in 2014-2016 suggested that HHP was a project that could have utilized external capital and resources to strengthen and support existing local groups and their national associations directly as well as investment in the necessary value chain infrastructure. They could have done this via financial assistance, and/or via governance and supply chain management training programs. In fact, McMichael (2013) contends that given small-scale farmer’s position at “the bottom of the value chain they require specific support to avoid marginalization” (p. 676). However, over the last five years the HHP has delivered a stratified and contested version of collaboration, inclusion and support. According to one producer and group leader “TNS
threw out the [FENAPCOM] groups after [they] created new groups from nothing. They
don’t need them anymore. He [TNS] thinks he’s the god for that” (Interview, 04.16.15)
The HHP trained and developed brand new groups, recruiting some active FENAPCOM
group producers (as well as those involved in independent production) rather than directly
investing resources in training and/or retraining existing FENAPCOM groups.

5.8.2 Market Marginalization

The Haiti National Strategy Team (2005) noted that any export promotion strategy
must be accompanied by the development of rural financial systems to provide credit for
producers to invest and grow (HNST, 2005). However, agricultural credit is difficult to
access in Haiti because many producers lack collateral, assets or official bank and pay
statements. Where credit can be accessed via microloan schemes interest rates of 20-70
percent have been reported (MARDNR, 2013). One producer told me “it’s very difficult
for all farmers in Haiti to access credit in Haiti. Without credit you can’t grow, you can’t
advance” (Interview, 09.21.15). The technical requirements for applying for loans are
often a barrier to resource poor producers who lack collateral and official documentation to
show employment or stable, recurring income. However, TNS states that more than 9,352
farmers received over $3.25 million in disbursements since the start of the HHP (TNS,
2016). Loan amounts ranged from USD $45- USD $115 on three to four month loan
cycles, with $115 being the loan ceiling for an individual borrower (TNS, 2014).

In spite of this, the majority of Francis mango producers without TNS affiliation
within my study sample lacked reliable access to credit to further their business
development. TNS reports that Sogesol, a local credit institution and partner on the project
makes credit available “to those who meet the requirements”. Original requirements were a piece of ID and an applicant between the ages of 18-65. However, by 2012, these requirements involved producers officially joining a HHP sponsored PBG (TNS, 2014). In the FENAPCOM-affiliated groups receiving financing, it took the form of a “pre-season advance” that came from the buyer (Perry Exporters Ltd) to the group rather than through producer’s access to loans from local financial institutions. The distribution of this advance payment in the case of FENAPCOM groups was also highly stratified, with one group receiving an advance of 100,000 GDES ($2150 USD) while the other received 5000 GDES ($108 USD). While the number of members in the first group was higher, membership is not 20 times higher as the distribution of advances indicates. One of the groups I spoke with reported receiving no advance at all and noted this as “a big problem for getting the season started” (Interview, 2015). Producers expect payment upon their delivery of mangos to the local base and the groups themselves lack the pre-season capital to pay producers before being paid for the collective lots delivered to the exporters. FENAPCOM groups do not have the financial capacity to carry funds forward from previous years. In official correspondence with Perry Exporters (2016), APD3 reported losing over 1000 dozen mangos as rejects at the exporter yet only being paid for 70 dozen, and only receiving 20 GDES per dozen for those (35% of the normal price). GRHABA is reporting a significant deficit due to export quality reject rates in 2014 and 2015 (Interview, 12.12.16). Most FENAPCOM groups and their individual producers are also resource poor and this limited access to resources is a challenge for collective investment and individual business development. Such a situation does not arise in capitalized PBGs with access to credit for advances and investments. The requirements of accessing
financing surely incentivized some producers to join PBG’s and this credit enhanced the possibility of business expansion and thus market power for HHP-backed PBGs versus FENAPCOM groups. The access to financial resources (with strings attached via official HHP group membership) demonstrates another example of the unequal power relations inherent in the different groups within the supply chain. However, lack of access to financial resources was not the only reason for FENAPCOM’s decline in market share.

The former HHP program director noted that there are additional reasons beyond the business-oriented structure and the development of the new PBG’s that FENAPCOM’s supplier power has declined since over the last few years:

FENAPCOM since 2013 no longer has any formal role in mango marketing, and all but three members (APD3, GRAHBA, KOPKOM) have essentially collapsed from a commercial standpoint. The federation, like many of the non-mango-selling members, was always controlled by a handful of leaders for personal gain […] As the groups became progressively more political, they neglected their commercial activities, and lost control of the market. I expect this year they will compose less than 20 percent of Fair trade sales (Email Correspondence, 04.15.14).

Some FENAPCOM members refuted the above statement with one producer noting specifically that this wasn’t the case, and suggesting that there was a distinct separation between FENAPCOM’s political goals and their desire to market mangos (Personal communication, 04.26.15). However, despite the differing opinions coming from TNS and FENAPCOM members on the reasons for the decline in market share, FENAPCOM’s decline in market share is a reality. FENAPCOM executives acknowledged that many of
the original groups were struggling with their group process in terms of governance, financial organization and traceability (requirements for fair trade and organic certification), and thus failing to meet supply demands and certification requirements. Minutes from the FENAPCOM general assembly in 2015 confirmed this noting that:

The federation [FENAPCOM] has failed on some commercial commitments since losing the [fair trade] certification FLO-Cert in March 2014 due to non-payment. Nevertheless many member associations are still standing in the Bio-Equitable trade, APD-3 RAPCOM, GRAHBA, APDCL, COEPDA, KFSE, KOPKOMFG” (FENAPCOM general assembly minutes, 2015).

While FENAPCOM groups may not have a significant role in fair trade and organic mango marketing—a role that had as of 2014/2015 been largely overtaken by active HHP cells—it is unclear whether this decline was due solely to their own internal struggles or external forces such as lack of resources and marginalization, or a combination of both. Nevertheless, the active FENAPCOM groups noted in the minutes above still represent a significant force of production of fair-trade certified mangos. The national FENAPCOM cooperative and their groups sell tens of thousands of dozen mangos to the exporter every season. While acknowledging their challenges, the idea of the organization as a whole collapsing from a commercial standpoint was challenged by many FENAPCOM members.

Finally, plans calling for further vertical integration and consolidation among producer groups, other supply chain actors, and exporters as a means to increase market power have been proposed for the future. The long-term goal, according to the pre-project Multilateral Investment Fund report (2010), was to turn PBGs into larger units called Market Service Centers (MSC’s). According to the IDB report (2010)
The MSCs will be set up by multiple PBGs that come together to build a physical plant to serve as a hub for the region. MSCs will improve producer income by increasing purchasing power, strengthening negotiating power and providing additional services beyond the PBGs. As self-sustaining commercial entities operating at scale, managed by professional staff and owned by farmers, MSCs are ultimately expected to evolve into service providers that can fulfill the role initially played by TNS and other NGO partners (p. 9-10).

The proposed MSCs would eventually act as purchasing agents complete with post-harvest infrastructure, capital, facilities, and greater direct routes to exporters, essentially leveraging greater market share through vertical integration. Vertical integration and significant consolidation in buyer-driven supply chains mean that global actors such as supermarkets or international distributors can potentially exert control over the value distribution throughout the chain—including the level of participation and barriers to participation, as well as quality standards and regulations—without actually owning any of the production or processing stages (Vagneron et al., 2009). In fact, some reports suggest that ‘private sector partners’ are now in control of the PBG’s activities post-TNS (Edmondson and Harvey, 2016). This sentiment is similar to the way in which McMichael (2013) sees some types of value chains, which are directed at benefiting farmers directly, using price relations and profit to distribute economic gains among downstream supply chain actors.

The demand for Francis mangos is rising in the United States from both consumers and retailers, especially in the niche market sectors of fair trade and organic (Interview, 04.29.15). With small producers unable to keep pace, Trebbin (2014) points out that
retailers, and in this case, private sector partners, may need to exert tighter control on value chains, suggesting that such network relations can become what Gereffi et al (2005) term as ‘captive’ or ‘hierarchy’ forms of value chain governance. In the case of Haiti, the HHP director suggested that each PBG “…has to operate like a business, they have a business plan, they have to work at making the changes and they have to be willing to work with us” (Interview, 04.29.15). Ouma’s (2015) findings about the implications of market (re)making in his case study were also consistent with a discourse of change:

Farmers need to be “performers” and become “compliant” with global food safety and quality standards. They need to change their farming routines and be “committed” if they want to be part of “the quality assurance world.” They have to change their “mindsets” if they want to be part of “modern supply chains,” and those who cannot adjust have no place (Ouma, 2015, p. 211).

The HHP has thus become a market competitor rather than a collaborator to existing independent local producers and to existing national associations. This (re)making of the market has occurred by helping capitalize certain producer groups and focusing on increasing the market power (Murphy, 2006; Porter, 1999) of their PBGs. The strategic plan for the value chain itself expresses the motivations for how the organization of future activities should proceed. “The trees are there, but the entire value chain must be motivated by quality production and profit” (USAID Francis Mango Strategic Plan, 2010) while TNS metrics of “profitability as sustainability” suggest that economic motivations will be the driving force to keep producers organized, active and investing. In addition, the HHP has been pushing for a business-oriented expansion model that increases risk and potentially limits the expansion of household food production in favor of marginal returns
via mango exports (Steckley and Weis, 2016). Despite acknowledging that the PBG’s have become ‘market competitors’ to other groups, the TNS program director was clear in his view that the HHP was out to help all farmers increase their competitiveness and capture more value:

We [TNS] don’t view it as ‘are we backing independents or are we backing PBG’s’”, we think there is room in the market for both actors and they are probably going after different types of… different channels themselves. And we do have, I think its about 10 independent grower groups, not the PBG’s that we’ve brought on line in the organic and fair trade program because they have been able to participate in the trainings, they’ve been able to reduce their reject rates, they’ve been able to implement the best practices that are necessary for them to reach that high value chain (Interview 04.29.15).

One key informant claimed that APD3 has been selling fair trade organic mangos into the US market since 2006. This predates the emergence of FENAPCOM as a national umbrella association in 2008. Despite APD3’s history involving smallholders governing a niche market value chain, the Francis mango value chain was not popularized in the international media until the arrival of the HHP after the 2010 earthquake. As was noted:

I think TNS created the new groups [cells] to show the US the value chain the way they want it to look. They want to show it as a new program, a new project, but it is not a new program (Interview, 09.19.15).

Despite the restructuring impacts of the HHP, the executive members of FENAPCOM were hopeful about future prospects for their organization:

FENAPCOM was here before TNS came to Haiti. FENAPCOM is strong and
after TNS leaves Haiti, FENAPCOM will still be here […] FENAPCOM tries to resist the TNS mango program. We are now going around inviting the cells to join us. I hope that in three years we can, what’s the word, ‘recuperate’ those producers into FENAPCOM (Interview, 05.01.15)

Follow up fieldwork in 2016 revealed that in fact this ‘recuperation’ is underway. One executive member noted “TNS wanted to put FENAPCOM outside the mango program […] it wasn’t in their interest to have us [FENAPCOM] organize” (Interview, 12.16.16). He went on to note: “TNS was against us [FENAPCOM]. Now they [the producers] have more freedom to move”. What this informant refers to as “freedom to move” is desire for producer autonomy, a desire for FENAPCOM to become more organized and influential and a desire to have FENAPCOM work hard to regain their pre-HHP position within the market.

5.9 The Value Chain Post-HHP

The five-year funding for the HHP project expired at the end of December 2015. The Multi-Lateral Investment Fund and Technoserve budget included $215,000 of total project costs ($7,663,410) for impact evaluation (IDB report, 2010, Annex B, p 33) to be conducted during the project and 12 months following the end of the project’s funding cycle. A project overview on the TNS website included the following statement (TNS, 2016):

The project ensured that the knowledge, skills and systems created by the project will continue long after its completion in December 2015.

By taking steps such as transitioning Producer Business Group support
to exporters and training Ministry of Agriculture staff on traceability, the project handed over management to ensure the industry continues to grow for years to come (TNS, 2016)

When asked in early 2015 whether or not the PBGs would be able to operate effectively and successfully after the TNS support services and financing that accompanied the project are finished, one TNS affiliate said he thought the older ones will, but of the newer ones, he really could not be sure. He claimed it will depend on the capacity of the individual producers within the cells (Interview, 04, 18.15). When asked the same question, the HHP program director suggested that some cells are strong and will continue, while others may “restructure”, and that this was mainly dependent on the capacity of the group and their willingness to embrace the new techniques, put in the effort and working together (Interview, 04.29.15).

Regarding the ability of TNS cells to support themselves, follow up interviews with FENAPCOM key informants from December 2016, nearly a year after the program finished, reported that a large number of TNS cells were no longer active due to their inability “to do the business” (Interview, 12.16.16). For example, APD3 reported to have 14 TNS cells in their catchment area at the height of the TNS program (2014) but reported that only four are active. GRHABA reported 4 cells in their catchment area in 2013/2014, but thought that there were no active cells in their area (as of 2016).

The exit of TNS has been good for some FENAPCOM groups in terms of volume, market share and governance. Estimates from APD3 for the 2016 season showed an 80 percent increase in the overall number of mangos exported, approximately 4000 dozen compared to 2200 in 2014 (Interview, 12.14.16). If such trends continue in the coming
season, FENAPCOM is well positioned to regain some of their lost market share. While the executives admit that FENAPCOM is not without its challenges (FENAPCOM general assembly minutes, 2015; 2016), the trends in increased sales volumes offer hope that FENAPCOM may be able to bring some producers back under the banner of a nationally organized, farmer-led organization and continue to work through some of their ongoing commercialization and governance challenges.

While many small-scale producers are treated as “passive recipients of interventions” (Seville et al., 2011), who ought to simply be grateful for the chance to be part of new markets or seen as “objects to be transformed rather than agents of transformation themselves” (Ouma et al., 2013), it is clear that the desire for participation in value chain design and evaluation, as well as increased levels of participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) is important to FENAPCOM groups. As the FENAPCOM assembly minutes (2015) note:

All considerations [that] have been made to this point in this general meeting are to assess the wholesale situation of the fair trade system of mango in Haiti. And our concern is that there is no ground built to discuss issues with the partners concerned (FENAPCOM general assembly minutes, 2015 italics mine).

5.10 Conclusion

The involvement of the HHP in the Haitian Francis mango value chain and its focus on (re)making the market (Ouma et al., 2013; Ouma, 2015) has aided thousands of mango growers. The HHP supported the dominant smallholder production model (2010-2015) and thus supported the survival of the peasantry within global markets (criterion 1).
The HHP also attempted to increase livelihoods and food security needs (criterion 2) via higher export revenues, specifically in niche market avenues such as fair trade and organic. This objective has been pursued through assisting some producers with particular skills and resources in order for them to be able to access more organized channels to high value, stable markets (criterion 4). However, at the same time, the project has produced inequality in terms of inclusion, market power, and autonomy for FENAPCOM producer groups. FENAPCOM’s ability to participate in the design and evaluation of value chain interventions such as the HHP, retain market share, negotiate directly with exporter partners, and its ability to leverage capital for business expansion and supply chain growth is structurally constrained by a number of both internal and external forces.

Internal forces at work include some groups’ challenges with implementing traceability (Interview, 04.16.15), lack of best practices training options and thus failure to meet some commercial commitments. Additional internal forces include a lack of financial capital to invest in individual producers and regional groups, as well as FENAPCOM producers being pulled away into newly developed PBGs thus decreasing FENAPCOM revenues and premiums that are based on volume. Ethnographic evidence from this case study highlights that FENAPCOM is still struggling with many of the challenging dimensions of inclusion into integrated, global value chains. However, external forces are also impacting FENAPCOM producers and the organization as a whole. These external forces include the introduction of new qualification dimensions brought on by the HHP value chain intervention, plans to shift the production model, as well as a host of other technical and relational challenges (i.e. poor transport and post harvest infrastructure, limited investment in value chain infrastructure, limited supplier power due to the structure
of the industry). Many of these external forces and challenges impacting the value chain were detailed in chapter 4.

The evidence presented here shows that a highly capitalized international program, a program that could have utilized its capital and resources to strengthen, support, and grow one of the struggling local and national associations directly, was over its five-year duration limited in its direct cooperation and inclusion with existing FENAPCOM groups. The contribution of resources was not made available to all actors. Instead, resources came with “strings attached” and qualification procedures for inclusion, essentially prejudicing the options that would be favored. This resulted in restricted avenues for producer participation in policy and governance (criterion 5). Furthermore, through their intervention in the value chain, the HHP PBGs have strategically altered the balance of market power, redefined the criteria for participation, and produced market competitors rather than collaborators. Given the resources made available to HHP cells to better control grading and quality on farm and thus reduce reject rates at the exporters, HHP cells were given a type of ‘privileged access’ to the one exporter dealing with fair trade and organic mangos. While FENAPCOM members were still able to market directly to the exporter without joining a PBG (the HHP was not able to restrict this) the exporter’s limited ability to purchase all fair trade mangos at the same time, has impacted the market share of FENAPCOM groups. However, despite the impacts brought on by the HHP as a value chain intervention, key informant interviews suggest that FENAPCOM as an organization will continue to champion the realization of equity and rights for small scale Haitian mango producers (criterion 6) and that the fair trade mango value chain itself will continue to contribute towards livelihoods and food security needs (criterion 2).
Chapter 6 *Soberanía Alimentaria* for Small-scale Ecuadorian Banana Producers: UROCAL’s Food Sovereignty Processes and Export-oriented Supply Chains

6.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter focuses on all six criteria for ‘practical mergers’ identified in chapter one. This case study draws data from representatives, employees and key informant producers of a small-scale banana producer association in the south of Ecuador. This chapter touches upon the survival of the peasantry (criterion 1); livelihoods and food security (criterion 2); agro-ecology (criterion 3) as both a ‘means to markets’ as well as a philosophy to support the ecological and human health in a primarily monoculture dominated agricultural zone. I examine the contribution of fair trade to market stability (criterion 4) and the role of support and solidarity networks as provisioning consistent opportunities for participation in policy and governance (criterion 5). I also broadly examine equity and rights (criterion 6) in the context of Ecuador’s recent institutionalization of food sovereignty as well as the historical, social movement struggles for land, producer sovereignty and market access championed by Ecuadorian civil society and NGO’s. The specific research questions explored in this chapter are: how do trade relations in export banana production via fair trade and organic certification relate to the implementation and actualization of food sovereignty principles? What mechanisms can a social movement organization use to merge market-oriented goals with larger struggles for equity and stability in international banana supply chains? What does food sovereignty look like for small-scale Ecuadorian banana producers?
6.2 Introduction

Ecuador, like other countries in the Latin American region experiencing intensified integration into the global economy, has been part of a group of economies highly dependent on an agro-export model (Garcia, 2012) with government investment traditionally directed mainly towards medium- and large-scale commercial agriculture (Cole et al., 2011; Villalba, 2013). Cocoa, bananas, coffee, and shrimp are the leading export food commodities (FAO, 2015) produced predominantly via monoculture systems. The economic gain from exporting these products has contributed to increasing overall GDP (FAO, 2016), but through processes promoting the consolidation of large agro-export business (Valverde, 2014) and an aggravation of inequalities within agricultural society (Garcia, 2013; 2014; SIPAE, 2013).

The expansion of the export agriculture sector and large-scale production regimes has also been the driver for significant land use changes throughout the country (Borbor-Cordova et al., 2006), including substantial deforestation and soil depletion especially in the first years of the banana boom (1930-1945) (Wunder, 2005). In a similar fashion, the expansion of export-oriented aquaculture along key areas of the southern coast has also resulted in the transformation of natural mangroves and wetlands into shrimp farms (Rivera-Ferre, 2009). This trend of global integration has been characterized by Breilh and Tilleria (2009) as a process that has undermined the health and wellbeing of Ecuadorians and their natural landscapes.

Beyond physical land use changes, downstream environmental impacts are one of the most significant issues facing Ecuadorian agriculture. Pesticide use at 6 kg/ha ranks fifth in the world (FAO, 2013), and more than 90 percent of agricultural production uses
agrochemicals and fertilizers. Recent estimates suggest that agrochemicals represent between 30 and 40 percent of total agricultural production input costs (Borbó-Cordova et al., 2006; Cole et al., 2011), with some banana-specific estimates for conventional systems placing that number at nearly 50 percent (Iriarte et al., 2014). The human health consequences of this heavy pesticide use in northern Ecuador have been reported as high rates of pesticide poisonings (Cole et al., 2011) while among southern banana producers, dangerous pesticide exposure levels have also been documented (Brisbois et al, 2017; Brisbois, 2016; Brisbois, 2011; Brown, 2013; Mena-Vásconez et al., 2016; Svanès and Aronsson, 2013). The impacts on watersheds due to fertilizers and pesticide runoff is also a concern, and the positive relationship between areas of high agro-export based production and depleting soil quality and river health has been demonstrated (Borbó-Cordova et al., 2006; Cheung, 2011). Furthermore, water rights disagreements, such as those observed in the “food or flowers” debates (Mena-Vásconez et al., 2016) are also a pressing concern for many smallholder farmers, particularly in northern regions, who are increasingly transitioning to new forms of commercial and entrepreneurial agriculture. This switch to more intensive models of production is putting strain on limited environmental resources including land, labor and water (Mena-Vásconez et al., 2016).

In addition to the direct and indirect large-scale environmental health impacts associated with how food is produced, there are also human health impacts associated with changes in eating patterns in Ecuador (Breilh, 2014; Sherwood et al, 2013). These changes in food consumption patterns, including the move toward processed and fast food, and pesticide contamination in many traditional foods are contributing to rising rates of obesity and other chronic, non-communicable diseases (Sherwood et al., 2013).
In response to concerns over negative impacts of the global agro-industrial food system model at the local level—and as a way to assert its national interests against neoliberal pressures—in 2008 Ecuador officially recognized “La Soberanía Alimentaria” (Food sovereignty) as part of its national constitution pursuant to a broad consultative process that endorsed this adoption. Ecuador’s ongoing food sovereignty debates are rooted in the country’s policies of agricultural modernization dating back 50 years (Peña, 2008 cited in Sherwood et al, 2013). Through a series of policy work and practical battles over the last 25 years, the issue of food sovereignty has moved from social movement organizations and peasant groups to the wider reaches of Ecuadorian society (Clark, 2015; Giunta, 2014; Sherwood et al., 2013).

Pursuit of food sovereignty at the state level in Ecuador has been pushed by a number of factors. These include the state’s need to respond to demands of regional social movements and civil society groups most notably surrounding the Correa government’s promise to deliver an agrarian revolution (Clark, 2015). The proposed revolution was designed to give increased power to peasant producers and ensure access to land and water for them (Giunta, 2014). Civil society and peasant movement demands for food sovereignty have been primarily in response to manifestations of the neo-liberal turn, especially in the case of the increasing industrialization of agriculture (Peña, 2016). The adoption of the Buen Vivir (living well) concept embraced as a guiding concept is closely aligned with the “return of the state” in terms of regulation of the economy (Clark, 2015). According to Giunta (2014) “Within this innovative model [Buen Vivir] of conceiving the world and social reproduction, food sovereignty becomes the framework used to change the agri-food model, placing the agrarian issue out of the hegemonic discourse of
modernization and productivity” (p. 1214).

The institutionalizing of food sovereignty in Ecuador has also been driven by concerns at the consumer level. Over the last ten years, increasing public knowledge about the societal health costs of chemical laden production regimes in Ecuador has reoriented agricultural planning from strictly productivist criteria towards consideration of agro-ecology and food sovereignty. Such shifts have seen health and environmental costs moving up as priorities for both civil society groups and government (Sherwood et al., 2013). This public awareness was the driving force behind the creation of the “Ley Orgánica del Régimen de la Soberanía Alimentaria” in 2009 [Food Sovereignty Law]. This law also enabled the introduction of an innovative point of purchase labeling nutrition scheme as well as some public procurement initiatives directed at increasing consumer awareness of the importance of local production and healthy food. The law also advocates consuming national products and the champions the provisioning of healthy diets in certain institutions such as schools (Personal communications; 2014, 2015).

The official codifying of food sovereignty principles represents at minimum the promise to offer state-level support to promote some food system changes at the production and consumption levels. The perceived legitimacy that accompanies this institutionalization and state recognition is a valuable advancement, since according to Peña (2013), in the constitution, “…food sovereignty emerges as a right, a strategy, and an obligation from the State” (2013, p. 6). This state-wide recognition of the food sovereignty agenda has been an important symbolic act for social movements and peasant organizations (Clark, 2015) who for many years have been advocating a restructuring of the food system along more equitable and sustainable lines. According to Clark (2015),
With the institutionalization of FS in the Constitution and the subsequent adoption of the *Ley Orgánica de Soberanía Alimentaria* (LORSA) in 2009, FS was now official state policy and *campesino* organizations focused largely on official participation through state channels (p. 10).

Despite the symbolic power and official recognition being invoked, the civil society and state interactions required to enact food sovereignty pathways and projects have not always been mutually beneficial (Clark, 2015; Roman-Alcalá, 2016). While Peña’s (2016) work displayed the participatory process which was used to develop and codify proposed food sovereignty laws in the early years (2010-2012) via the *Conferencia Plurinacional e Intercultural de Soberanía Alimentaria* (COPISA), Giunta (2014) shows there is still a large gap between social movements winning “…innovative normative frameworks and rights […] and the limitations on their institutionalization, formalization, and implementation as they bump up against the power structure that marks the agri-food system” (p.1202). In addition to social movements clashing against government and the corporate agri-food system structures, Henderson (2016) also shows the challenges inherent in a “homogenizing” food sovereignty discourse. He cautions against a discourse that involves assembling what are often divergent movements with different needs and interests, for example, domestic oriented producers in the highlands, and export focused coastal producers, and assuming their identity as a shared class.

In spite of the efforts to use a legal framework in Ecuador to push for the “…restructuring [of] the politics that govern food” (Giunta, 2014), the incorporation of food sovereignty into the legal and policy realm will be at best “a slow and complex implementation” (Valverde, 2014 p. 42). Others have shown that it has not been translated
into any real change in Ecuador, particularly for many marginalized communities. This lack of change has been observed in the case of urban consumers in terms of their still-limited access to healthy food options and for other populations such as Afro-Ecuadorian and Indigenous groups who lack the access to productive resources to ensure adequate food supply (Valverde, 2014). Similar limitations can be noted in a lack of clarity around what food sovereignty means for small-scale, export-oriented producers trying to work outside the conventional production model as much as possible or those in export production who are economically marginalized.

In terms of revisions to dominant production regimes, the ‘rural inclusive businesses’ initiative pushed by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Agriculture aim to overcome the marginalization of export producers by linking these small producers with agro-industry and large distribution chains. However, these newly formed linkages do not automatically involve a fundamental shift in modes of production or challenge the consolidation of corporate power and profit (Giunta, 2014), which is an important aim of food sovereignty. Clark’s recent work (2017) also points out that Ecuador’s food sovereignty policy and laws have not lived up to the demands and visions of the active and engaged social movements who fought for its institutionalization in the early years. He claims that many programs and policies that bring small producers into global markets without addressing underlying rural challenges and power dynamics of agro-industry in the country follow more of a “neo-developmentalist” model, rather than the more radical vision of food sovereignty and its implications championed by the early grassroots movements based on indigenous and peasant leadership (Clark, 2017). Echoing this, Villalba (2013) notes that in spite of the rhetoric, many government policies continue to
back traditional export monocultures, with little progress being made toward restructuring
the unequal dynamics of land ownership and unsustainable production models—two key
drivers which would help shift agricultural systems towards greater levels of sovereignty
(Villalba, 2013). As Valverde (2014) notes:

The great risk is that food sovereignty is reduced to a cliché, a phrase, a label,
which is placed in the door [of a] bureaucratic office, or on the cover of an
official document, but under guard always the same policies (Translated, p. 42).

The challenges associated with creating and upholding specific policies that
address the broad ranges of changes which the food sovereignty agenda envisions in
the context of competing strategies to food security, various interpretations of food
sovereignty, and the ‘paradox of the state’—as both provisioning and restricting—
further complicates the institutionalization process (Godek, 2015). Despite Peña’s
(2016) optimism that the food sovereignty movement is “working from the inside to
influence the food sovereignty legal framework” (p. 233), other work highlights the
challenges concerning institutionalizing the food sovereignty movement and
associated policies in a practical and equitable sense across multiple scales,
geographies, classes, and production models (Godek, 2015; Henderson, 2016;
Guinta, 2014; Villalba, 2013). My study identifies both the positive advances and
the shortcomings of merging an institutionalizing discourse of food sovereignty with
the practical realities of small producer communities and organizations in the fair
trade organic banana sector.
6.3 Research Objectives

This case study explores how practical mergers are experienced for agricultural producers working in a context of institutionalized food sovereignty who participate in fair trade/organic export markets. How can food sovereignty processes, combined with fair trade certification, help create more sustainable and equitable conditions of production for producers involved in export markets? This dissertation as a whole examines the debates around the viability and effectiveness of practical mergers taking place between food sovereignty and fair trade. This chapter pushes the debate further by taking up Edelman’s (2014) call to action that “there has not been enough attention to the sorts of institutions [and organizations] that are needed to help small farmers secure more equitable, stable and democratic positions within trading networks” (p. 916). My research investigates such questions as: how does the process of seeking more equitable and sustainable trade relations in export banana production (via fair trade, and organic certifications) relate to the implementation and actualization of food sovereignty principles? What mechanisms can a social movement organization use to merge market-oriented goals with larger struggles for equity and stability in international banana supply chains?

In focusing attention on the organizational/institutional role in providing more “stable, equitable and democratic positions within trading networks” (Edelman et al., 2014, p. 916), additional questions emerge. Beginning with the hypothesis that fair trade constitutes an important reinforcing process on the pathway towards food sovereignty, a key question is whether or not such tools and programs (fair trade/certified organic in particular) are simply part of larger “neo-liberal agricultural or rural development
schemes” (Ghimires, 2005, p. 2) that ‘merge’ development ideals with status quo principles (Sylla, 2014). Do they simply ‘subordinate smallholders’ to global processes of capital (Breilh, 2011 cited in Clark, 2017) or, can such linkages and initiatives under the banner of food sovereignty actually help to challenge existing power relations and production regime structures, working towards the goal of food system transformation (Wittman, 2015)? To simplify: are the ‘alternative’ banana value chains built and supported by the social movement cooperative under study in this chapter “reformist” in their attempts to mitigate global capitalism’s excess through regulation and redistribution (via becoming niche market alternative chains with third party certification)? Or are these banana chains alternative, concerned about the encroachment of the market in public life? What potentials and limitations exist for redesigning banana chains to meet this goal? Much like Vorley et al (2012) who observed mergers between ‘rights based’ and ‘market based’ development policies, and Wright (2010) who sees the potential of symbiotic approaches (working outside and within the state) as possible, beneficial and pragmatic in their attempts to inspire transformation, the question of what kinds of mergers are possible for banana value chains is taken up in this chapter.

The case study discussed in this chapter highlights a case of practical mergers between market-oriented production and food sovereignty principles. UROCAL supports and encourages producers’ participation in international trade but implements a variety of mechanisms to support small-scale producer livelihoods, build solidarity, assist with rural development initiatives, and encourage agroforestry and environmental protection. They use participation, storytelling and solidarity to reproduce these mechanisms over space and time. Export-oriented banana value
chains may seem an unlikely example of a positive hybridization between food sovereignty aims and ongoing global integration, and the specific chains highlighted in this case study are not without their critics and challenges. However, there is some evidence in support of positive, organizational efforts and specific mechanisms on the path toward food sovereignty in practice.

6.4 UROCAL and Food Sovereignty in Ecuador

The Union Regional de Organizaciones Campesinas del Litoral (UROCAL) emerged in 1974 in the context of agrarian reform and the land rights movement in Ecuador (García, 2013; Peña, 2016). UROCAL is a regional umbrella association and NGO that provides marketing and technical support to its nine constituent producer groups. UROCAL was an early adopter of food sovereignty ideals through its participation in the Confederation Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indígenas y Negras (FENOCIN) and FENOCIN’s association with La Vía Campesina. Although the term “food sovereignty” was not part of its official mandate, UROCAL was part of the social and political mobilization of the concept prior to the constitutional assembly and participatory initiatives that named and brought food sovereignty into the Ecuadorian constitution.

This chapter argues that UROCAL, which is based in the Southern city of Machala, the self-proclaimed ‘banana capital of the world’, consciously constructs its participation in alternative banana value chains using three complementary processes. These three processes seek to generate food sovereign, fair trade value chains for local banana producers. UROCAL provides an example for analyzing the feasibility of operationalizing
a practical merger between fair trade and food sovereignty as it relates to small-scale, export-oriented banana producers.

The first process involves the promotion and strong support for agro-ecological/agro-forestry techniques (criterion 3). Production methods based on agroforestry seek to protect human health and environmental sustainability at both the production unit level and the community level. These practices are supported in organizational discourse, through agricultural extension services provided by UROCAL’s in-house técnicos [technicians], and via collaboration with the regional Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganaderia, Acuacultura y Pesca (MAGAP). The outcome of this mechanism is that 90 percent of UROCAL-affiliated producers are using agroforestry methods. While the producers advocate and adopt such methods as a matter of principle, these methods also facilitate easier compliance with market-based organic standards (or the transition to such standards) and thus assist with stable prices and niche market access.

UROCAL also offers mechanisms of participation, solidarity and assistance networks across multiple levels (criteria 5). UROCAL facilitates group meetings with opportunities for producers to voice concerns and ideas, UROCAL pursues linkages to larger networks and associations (BANAVIS for example), as well as alternative markets and local market assistance. These mechanisms help inspire solidarity and re-affirm the value of small-scale production on a continual basis.

Finally, third-party certification(s), in this case both certified organic and fair trade, assist producers with market stability (criteria 4). This market stability is gained by niche, market access, increased economic rewards per box, direct trading relationships with supportive partners, and the potential for rural development/investment via fair trade
social/environmental premiums. Fair trade certification provides UROCAL’s producers collective access to technical production assistance and business assistance. These benefits are consistent with those found in other studies of fair trade banana initiatives in the region (Rueben et al, 2011; Melo and Wolf, 2007).

The synergy of these three mechanisms and the outcomes they produce shape export-oriented banana chains that align with some of the core values of food sovereignty: an effective example of a practical merger. As this case study will make clear, how and in what ways food sovereignty can be, or is, merged with export value chains is different from the broader institutionalization rhetoric on the subject of food sovereignty coming from the Ecuadorian government. But rather than seeing these processes towards food sovereignty as ‘incomplete’ or a weak version of the larger aims of the movement, this work argues that these processes hold potential to reshape small segments of the banana industry over time.

The establishment of the food sovereignty law in Ecuador was a result of a historical, iterative process between social movement organizations and their demands, and responsive state policy. Although state policy has not addressed all concerns raised by civil society, many civil society actors have become engaged in policy areas related to food sovereignty. UROCAL works both alongside the state-centric discourse of food sovereignty (education, supporting labeling initiatives, promotion of buying national products) and via UROCAL’s own Food Sovereignty program. UROCAL’s Food Sovereignty program is an internationally funded core development and outreach program for its members mainly focused on providing support mechanisms for increasing household food self-sufficiency through home gardens, diversifying market opportunities.
for producer families via regional ferias [farmers markets], and working on education campaigns promoting healthy food choices.

One UROCAL producer defined food sovereignty as a simply a “propuesta gobierno [a government proposal]” (Interview 12.05.15) and another stated that “La Soberanía Alimentaria es una gran fantasía [food sovereignty is a big fantasy]” (Interview, 12.12.15). While it may not correspond directly to the peasant movement origin of the concept (Clark, 2017), UROCAL’s Food Sovereignty program coupled with their Fair Trade program supports the survival of the peasantry (criterion 1) through their engagement with stable, alternative markets (criterion 4) and rewards producers economically for the continuation of agroecological production models (criterion 3). UROCAL’s specific food sovereignty program has translated some of the core food sovereignty ideals into practical initiatives. These initiatives include supporting banana producer families with home garden production, seed saving, creating local marketing opportunities for a diverse range of products and educational campaigns to encourage buying local and making healthy, clean food choices. However, these outreach programs are primarily focused on increasing ‘self-sufficiency’ and thus lacks the larger political agenda of the food sovereignty movement, sharing more in common with conventional understandings of food security. Nevertheless, as will be shown in this case study, the translation of big ideals into small initiatives has helped bring some of the constitutional ideas and discourse into the practical realm.
6.5 Banana Production in Ecuador

The banana is one of the world’s most highly traded commodities and Ecuador is the world leader in export production, controlling 35 percent of the world trade (Iriarte et al., 2014). With 61 percent ($1.9 billion in 2011) of its total agricultural GDP from the banana sector and 95 percent of all production destined for overseas markets (Vega, 2011) bananas play a key role in the economy of Ecuador. Exports have risen by nearly 4 million metric tons during the period 1990-2012 (FAO, 2015). In Ecuador 165,000 ha—nearly 0.9 percent of Ecuador’s land area—are used for banana cultivation (Elbehri et al, 2016). The majority of the country’s production takes place on the coastal lowlands in the three southern provinces of Los Ríos, Guayas, and El Oro. Government and private sector investments in the production regime are calculated at nearly US$ 4 billion among area planted, infrastructure, packing facilities, and ports plus an additional 800 million in “associated industries”, such as cardboard boxing, plastics, supplies, aerial fumigation, research facilities, domestic transportation, and other activities within the larger supply chain as of 2010 (Vega, 2011).

The introduction of large-scale banana production to Ecuador’s southern regions following the decline of the cacao industry in the 1930s transformed the southern coastal plains socially, economically, environmentally, and politically. United Fruit’s (now the Chiquita Company) acquisition of the 100,000 hectare Hacienda Tenguel following the collapse of the cacao industry (1880s-1922) and the subsequent birth of the banana industry (1930-present) brought migrant labor from distant regions of the country, built roads and railways, and developed hard and soft infrastructure to support the new industrial directions (Striffler, 2001). The legacy of this investment/transformation and the
ultimately failed experiment in multi-national control of an export banana enclave did have lasting impacts on both the social structure and landscape dynamics of the region. The southern coast of Ecuador can be seen as a reminder of peasant resistance and rejection of multi-national control. Yet at the same time, this region is a constant symbol of the entrenched nature of the industrialized banana complex. Contract farming for distant multi-national corporations has come to dominate this southern coastal region. The resulting social, economic, and environmental impacts, both positive and negative, remain today. While the banana industry is clearly an economic powerhouse for the country, increasing attention is being directed to the myriad of negative impacts of banana production.

The negative environmental and worker health impacts of the conventional model of banana production throughout the world are well-studied (Brisbois, 2017; Brisbois et al, 2016; Brisbois, 2011; Brown, 2013; Melo and Wolf, 2007; Striffler, 1999; Svanes and Aronsson, 2013; Trauger and Murphy, 2013) as are the social impacts on workers, most notably surrounding workers’ rights and working conditions (Brown, 2013; Fridell, 2011; Melo and Wolf, 2007; Striffler, 1999; Trauger and Murphy, 2013; Vagneron and Roquigny, 2011). Ecuador is no exception to these multi- scalar impacts. In fact, some authors claim “today’s banana value chain has been characterized as an environmental and social drawback, despite its economic efficiency” (Elbehri et al, 2016).

The banana supply chain in Ecuador is a vertically integrated chain, with multi-national companies controlling most of the production, associated industries, processing stages, and even retailing. It is estimated that only 12 percent of profits from conventional chains remain in the country where the bananas are produced (Lee et al., 2012). While
some have argued that fair trade delivers a greater share of profits directly to producers, others critics have pointed out imbalances in income distribution throughout fair trade supply chains (Melo and Hollander, 2013; Vagneron and Roquigny, 2011), noting the high proportion of value captured by exporters, labeling organizations, and retailers (Sylla, 2014). Others point out the reliance on international, and often multi-national, capital to launch and sustain eco-certification schemes (Melo and Hollander, 2013; Melo and Wolf, 2007).

In spite of these critiques, third party-certification programs including certified organic and fair trade, can contribute to fundamental shifts toward sustainability in the banana sector overall. For example, the total carbon footprint (CF) in the production stage of conventional bananas is significantly higher than those of fair trade and Certified Organic (Iriarte et al., 2014; Roibás et al., 2015). Alongside this, there is evidence that fair trade and organic production in Ecuador does marginally improve direct and indirect returns to workers when compared to small farms of the same size (Velasstegui-Paez, 2014; Cordova, Monteros and Palacios, 2014; Rueben et al, 2008).

Whatever the actual outcomes, the number of fair trade and certified organic operations in the country is steadily growing. In El Oro province where this case study is based, there are a reported 6500 hectares of organic bananas and 1300 hectares of fair trade, producing a total of 35,689 metric tons of certified Bananas (Arichabala, 2014). All certified operations together represented approximately 15 percent of Ecuador’s banana trade as of 2013 (ProEcuador, 2013). Many of these initiatives are promoted as offering some solutions to the social, economic, and environmental challenges associated with large-scale agro-industrial banana production. Despite the positive growth trends, the vast
majority of production in southern Ecuador remains conventional, monoculture, and heavily consolidated in the hands of small to medium-sized, local elite land owners with MNC contracts, contracts which allow them to invest, expand, and increase market share. The ability of small producers to compete and maintain relevance under such conditions requires a particular set of supporting mechanisms.

The southern coastal plain of Ecuador is one of the most productive agricultural zones in the world (Striffler, 2001). Nearly all the bananas produced in Ecuador are located in three provinces in the lowlands of the Pacific coast – El Oro, Guayas, and Los Ríos (Pro-Ecuador, 2013). My study area touched on areas of all three of these provinces (See map, Figure 3.1). Countrywide data shows that nearly 80 percent of banana producers in the country are small-scale (less than 30 hectares); however, medium and large-scale farms produce nearly three-quarters of the country’s total bananas.

### Table 6.1 Production Structure of Banana in Ecuador

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Producer</th>
<th>percent Producers</th>
<th>percent Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (0 to 30 hectares)</td>
<td>79 percent</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (30 to 100 hectares)</td>
<td>16 percent</td>
<td>36 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (larger than 100 hectares)</td>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>38 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Fuente: Catastro del Banano 2013, MAGAP Elaborado por: Dirección de Inteligencia Comercial e Inversiones, PRO ECUADOR*

Banana production provides the highest economic returns per hectare when compared to the other top ten Ecuadorian agricultural crops (Wunder, 2005). Banana cultivation accounts for 10 percent of the total agricultural area in the country and occupies
over 165,000 ha (MAGAP, 2013 cited in Elbehri et al, 2016). The sector is also a significant contributor to employment. Pro Ecuador (2013) reports that the banana sector employs over a tenth of Ecuador’s population directly or indirectly tied to the banana sector via the associated industries throughout the country (ProEcuador, 2013). Direct participation in the production side of the banana industry typically happens in one of three ways. It can happen via farmers working as laborers on conventional farms. It may also present as farmers as owner/operators of small(er) scale conventional farms working as contract farmers for distant multi-nationals. It can also take the form of owners/operators of small-scale, agro-ecological, and certified farms linked to niche market supply chains via regional cooperatives. In some cases, livelihood needs may necessitate a combination of these options.

6.6 UROCAL: Who Are They and What Do They Do?

Beginning in the 1970s, a wave of political peasant movements emerged in Ecuador inspired by concerns over the country’s structural adjustment, agriculture modernization policies, and the resulting modes of production that were coming to dominate the country (Sherwood et al., 2013). One such movement with a rich history is UROCAL. The Union Regional De Organizaciones Campesinas del Litoral (UROCAL) was formed in 1974 in the context of agrarian reform and the land rights movement in Ecuador.

Given UROCAL’s development during the ‘second wave’ of agrarian reform (1970-1985), the issue of land access, which had at one time been the primary concern for landless peasants, had given way to struggles calling for state resources to support a
predominantly landed peasantry. This peasantry called for assistance with the production and commercialization of agricultural crops in their zone and associated rural development projects. As such, UROCAL’s key role in the early years became one of helping secure access to state credit and development project funding. According to Striffler (2001) deeply attached to UROCAL’s emergence is the ongoing “struggle against exploitative market relations embodied in the system of middlemen” (p.184). Without the land question, it was this struggle, the struggle for equity and access to markets, by which they sought to “unite the peasantry” with a common aim (p. 184). This particular struggle in southern Ecuador was inherently connected to larger resistance movements also present in other countries in the region. Many of these movements, UROCAL included, challenged the neo-liberal economic regime and its associated policies that were concentrating wealth in the forms of capital and land in the hands local and foreign elites and driving the marginalization of rural producers and their communities (Veltmeyer, 2005 cited in Ghimire, 2005). However, UROCAL is not just a producer reaction to “economic” relations and even “micro” power relations, but very much connected to anti-imperialist resistance (e.g. at a macro scale) that influenced its leadership, all the while providing very practical orientations to the circumstances being faced.

UROCAL experienced an ebb and flow of membership and public support in its early years (Striffler, 2001) and recent years have seen a decline of total membership numbers as well. However, its current efforts to support primarily small producers with credit and extension services and engage in direct trading relationships with European and American companies via certified niche markets is an extension of this historical struggle against social exclusion in markets in favor of more equitable trade relationships for small
producers. UROCAL is a regional umbrella organization supporting various small and medium sized producer associations spread throughout the three provinces in which they are active. UROCAL operates a fair trade Banana program, a fair trade Cacao program and a Food Sovereignty and Security program.

The fair trade banana and cacao programs are both export oriented programs that assist small-scale producers with the production and commercialization of certified bananas and cacao. Producers in these programs have access to technical assistance to assist with production and certification requirements. UROCAL has program managers for each who organize the logistics of supplies, international contracts and port-based export relations. The fair trade Banano and Fair trade Cacao programs are linked with three main export/import companies. Of these three export relationships, BANAFAIR, based in Germany received 58 percent of their exports in 2015, Del-Monte held 22 percent, and Eco-life bought 20 percent of UROCAL’s total 196,524 boxes of FT/Organic Bananas (UROCAL, 2015).

UROCAL’s third main program, Food sovereignty and Security, has been funded (up until the end of 2014) by a German NGO “Bread for the World™”. This program focuses mainly on assisting the families of banana and cacao producers to cultivate additional crops for limited domestic markets. These crops are used to supplement family income on farm and support the consumption of a larger portion of “healthier products” within the family. A number of strong groups of women producers have formed over the years and they have found outlets for crops beyond banana and cacao at weekly local

markets in Machala and as a far away as the city of Cuenca in the highlands of Azuay province (3 hours). This program also championed the development of a brick and mortar storefront “El Arbolito” [the little tree] in Machala to provide a local outlet for marketing and purchasing agro-ecological products. UROCAL’s Food Sovereignty program also has an educational component, helping teach and empower consumers to make purchasing choices that support local, agroecological farms whenever possible. This program represents a tangible example of a support network for the families and communities involved in export-oriented production.

Through these three programs, UROCAL’s formal and informal relationships span international commercial imperatives, state sponsored government programs, localized grassroots mobilizations and struggles, and household level projects. UROCAL is a regional body able to hold certifications (Global Gap, Certified Organic, Fair trade), provide access to credit, and deliver program planning and coordination services to their members. In addition to the three major programs (Programa Banano, Programa Cacao, Programa Soberanía y Seguridad Alimentaria), UROCAL and its members are engaged in a number of complementary activities. These additional activities include micro lending services, women and children’s empowerment, training and technical assistance, assistance with local marketing opportunities, supporting public procurement programs, as well as ongoing educational and promotional activities.

UROCAL (2015) lists a total of nine grassroots producer associations under its umbrella with a total of 272 active members (See Table 5.1). With an average of only 6-8
hectares each\textsuperscript{10}, these members are collectively farming a total of 869 hectares of cacao and 1047 hectares of bananas. The three largest groups; Assoc. Agricola La Florida, Assoc. Productores Nuevo Mundo, and the Unión de Casacay, account for more than 70 percent of the total hectares in cacao and more than 90 percent of the total hectares in bananas (Garcia, 2014, p. 292). The three largest partner suppliers for fair trade and organic bananas are Nuevo Mundo, La Florida, and Liberdad/Asoprolifo (UROCAL, 2015).

Table 6.2 Provincial Supplier Organizations affiliated with UROCAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Total Partners</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Productores Agrícolas La Florida</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Productores Organicos y Limpios de Productos Tropicales Nuevo Mundo</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Productores de Cacao Unión de Casacay</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Productores Agrícolas “12 de Octubre”</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Trabajadores Agrícolas Independientes “Rio Gala”</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Productores Agropecuarios “Costa Azul”</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Productores Agropecuarios “10 de Febrero”</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación Nuevo Porvenir de El Oro</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asociación de Producción Agricola Libertad Florida y Palmas Asoproliflo</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UROCAL (2015)

\textsuperscript{10} Some larger holdings in the Assoc. Nuevo Mundo are between 12-23 ha (UROCAL, 2015) yet are still classified as 'small-scale' (<30 ha) in terms of Ecuadorian banana production classification schemes (ProEcuador, 2013).
6.7 Analyzing Practical Mergers on the Ground

To examine how UROCAL’s attention to the practical mergers criteria can assist agricultural producers who participate in export markets, this study applied a realist review orientation that focuses on appreciating context, mechanism, and outcome at different scales. Critical realism pays particular attention to the processes and the drivers of these processes when it comes to examining relationships and causality, rather than simply observing the outcomes of observed relationships (Maxwell, 2010; 2004). As such, analyzing the processes that UROCAL emphasizes and how these processes assist with initiatives that line up the ideals of both fair trade and food sovereignty follows this logic.

Data for this chapter was gathered during five field visits to southern Ecuador from 2013-2015, during a multi-year, cross-national research partnership. During my initial visit to Machala in February 2013, I worked at the UROCAL office, visited seven different agro-ecological banana farms and participated in packing and washing activities. I engaged in extensive conversations with two key informants from UROCAL representing the certification initiatives, technical assistance, and quality control to gain a better understanding of the modes of production used by the producers belonging to the association. Following this initial round of fieldwork, I engaged with Ministry of Agriculture statistics and a range of literature to gain a deeper understanding of the scope and scale of banana production within Ecuador.

In November of 2014 with project partners from the Universidad Andina Simon Bolívar and the University of British Columbia in Machala, we developed an extensive list of variables of interest, engaged in two planning meetings, and visited three more agro-ecological farms as well as one medium-sized conventional farm to understand some of the
variations in production dynamics. We also conducted two exploratory interviews with UROCAL program managers. A targeted literature review and preliminary analysis of important themes in these interviews assisted with the theoretical development of this work and helped with the creation of interview guides and survey questions focusing on some of the variables of interest for this particular study, probing the possible intersection of trade and food sovereignty principles.

During my third extended visit from November 2015 to January 2016, I came to the UROCAL office daily. With the assistance of key informants in the organization, I assembled a core list of participants based on their involvement in the particular programs of interest—fair trade banana and the food sovereignty program. Once interviews had begun, I expanded my potential list through snowball sampling and reached out to these other actors. In total, I conducted seven semi-structured key informant interviews with the president of the association, and the directors of the three distinct programs respectively, two board members, as well as those linked to core programs. These interviews focused on the historical development of the programs and the main objectives of each, the role of fair trade in the program’s successes, and the services offered by UROCAL programs to producers. These interviews lasted between 20 and 60 minutes each. I conducted additional group interviews with members of two of the dominant producer associations (n=2) under the UROCAL banner, as well interviews with members of the UROCAL food sovereignty projects (n=2). While not random, this sample is broadly representative of the range of key actors, perspectives, and expertise regarding the export and food sovereignty programs of UROCAL. In addition, I oversaw 12 structured interviews with producers belonging to the association. These were analyzed with a combination of content analysis
and descriptive statistics. I also attended two of UROCAL’s producer meetings, one in the town of Shumiral and the other the 2015 national assembly in Machala. Attendance at these meetings gave insight into the key role of UROCAL in building solidarity between producers as well as the mechanisms for dissent and producer participation. Finally, I examined program records, newspaper articles, photographs, presentations and promotional materials created by the organization with the goal of understanding the context-specific balance and discourse of the social, political, and economic goals of UROCAL’s operations.

Data analysis involved the use of Nvivo software. In-depth interviews transcribed verbatim in Spanish were added to the program. Each interview (n=14) was originally analyzed with themes inspired by Ecuadorian researcher Jamie Breilh’s 4 S framework (2013) that puts forth a holistic, multi-dimensional framing of health. This theoretical framework highlights the interplay between four key concepts: sovereignty, solidarity, sustainability and (bio)security and the relationships between them in examining the long term (re)productive capacity of individual production units and the proximate surrounding communities (Breilh, 2013; 2014; Spiegel, Breilh and Yassi, 2015).

Drawing from this 4-S framework, themes surrounding solidarity, sovereignty (specifically food), sustainability and fair trade/organic certifications were included in my initial coding. Additional emergent nodes were then added that highlighted markets, barriers to participation, community, support mechanisms from various levels, organizational structures, and participation. Each interview was block coded according to this thematic structure. The themes of agro-forestry/environmental sustainability, solidary/support and networks, and fair trade/certifications were then selected as these
broad themes linked to many of the practical merger criteria identified in chapter 2. Transcripts coded for these themes were examined a second time.

These three mechanisms contribute directly to all six elements of the practical mergers framework. The survival of the peasantry (criterion 1) is managed via small-producer’s access to stable, niche markets (criterion 4) with higher economic returns and these returns contribute to livelihood and food security needs (criterion 2). In addition, this case highlights the key role of agroecology (criterion 3) in ensuring the productive capacity and ecological health of small banana farms (and surrounding communities in a region dominated by large, agro-industrial production models). Finally, the importance placed on multi-scalar networks of support and solidary contribute to opportunities (whether realized or not) for greater levels of participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) and assist with the larger struggles for equity and rights (criterion 6) in the face of increasing agribusiness concentration and consolidation in the banana sector.

6.8  Results: Implementing Food Sovereignty Mechanisms

6.8.1  Promoting Agro-ecological Methods

At the level of the individual production units themselves, agroecology is one key way to improve the environmental sustainability and impacts on human health within the agro-export context. An agro-ecological production system is one that is bio-diverse, resilient, and energy efficient in terms of its use of inputs and overall management strategy. In addition to its technical applications, agro-ecology also attempts to transform production systems to favor and empower small farmers, creating avenues for valuing, applying, and sharing local knowledge and innovations (Levidow et al., 2015). Agro-ecology can also
support the development of national and domestic markets linked to sustainable production (Altieri, 2009; Altieri and Toledo, 2011).

Of a total of 272 individual members, over 90 percent of UROCAL producers are agroforestry producers. UROCAL defines agroforestry producers as those who are grouping different types of crops such as cacao, bananas, fruit and forest species together in the same plot (Personal correspondence, Feb, 2014). The most typical crops mixed in with bananas and cacao included plantains, oranges, mandarins, orjitos [baby bananas] and pineapple. Short cycle vegetables such as onions and herbs were also reported in my interviews as being cultivated in adjacent household plots. One producer noted that some farms in his area also included a variety of small animals such as ducks and hens for eggs and meat for domestic markets and household consumption (Interview, 11.05.15). However, UROCAL does not specifically highlight the rejection of fossil fuel-reliant production systems in favor of those that strive for social and ecological justice as part of their definition of an agroforestry system. For UROCAL, agroforestry is understood as a type of production system involving inter-cropping, natural disease management, water conservation strategies, and striving for on-farm nutrient creation. The majority of UROCAL producers believe in the productive value of this system. This system stands in opposition to conventional banana plantations that involve monoculture plants, heavy pesticide and water applications, and the majority of inputs from off farm (Personal communications, 2013; 2014; 2015). Despite agro-forestry’s environmental benefits, there are costs associated with the use of agroforestry methods in a system dominated by output volumes.
The total output per hectare for agro-forestry banana producers is lower by around 30 percent due to the wider spacing of plants (Personal communications; 2014, 2015). This is confirmed by studies that report 1200-1400 banana plants per hectare for conventional farms, whereas only 800-1000 per hectare for agro-ecological systems. This difference leads to an average output of 35 boxes per hectare on farms using conventional methods versus 22 boxes per hectare on farms of similar sizes using agroecological methods (Velastegui-Paez, 2014). This difference in per hectare output is primarily due to the need for intercropping and shade cover. Technicians and producers acknowledge the overall lower levels of output of bananas per hectare associated with agro-forestry systems. One técnico [technician] who works with UROCAL noted:

La Florida's farms and Libertad’s are a different world. They are agroforestry, they are mountain producers, the productivities are much smaller than those of [conventional] producers here in El Oro and the ones in Guayas. They are totally different (Interview, 12.19.15).

Another interviewee from the food sovereignty program highlighted the importance of agro-ecological methods despite the costs:

We must collaborate with food sovereignty and we are trying. That is why we [banana producers] do not have large quantities, because we always try to maintain the ecosystem. We do not have only monoculture. [Our producers have], cacao, bananas, citruses. That is why we cannot have 10,000 or 20,000 boxes per week, because we respect the environment (Interview, 12.12.15).

While yields are lower than in conventional systems, agro-forestry systems have been shown to reduce heat and conserving water through extra biomass (Archibalda,
Soil fertility and carbon storage has also been shown to improve through agro-forestry practices on banana farms (Zake et al., 2015). In addition, soil fertility begins to decline on conventional farms after 3-5 years of production, and abandonment of low productivity farms and/or heavy chemical applications has become the mainstay of most banana production in Ecuador (Elbehri et al., 2016). On the other hand, agro-forestry practices focus on nutrient recycling and often see longer time frames of consistent output. Given that nearly 45 percent of the costs of production on large conventional banana farms are made up of fossil fuels and fertilizer use (Iriarte et al., 2014; Roibás et al., 2015), agro-ecological systems that are not reliant on high levels of inputs may also reduce the overall costs of production per hectare. Finally, mixed farm systems often support the production of companion crops such as oranges, plantains, and cacao meaning, that lower yields of the primary product, export quality bananas, may be offset by yields and marketing of additional crops.

Other participants spoke about the ability of agro-forestry systems, or “associated production systems” as some producers referred to them, to protect the health of workers who spend extended periods of time on them. The MAGAP agricultural extension agent who prefers to work with UROCAL’s agro-ecological producers expressed this sentiment.

That is, with organic producers [to work as a technician with them], I also feel protected, from contamination. Because in the conventional [system] they use pure chemicals. Pure chemicals. Here there are associated farms [within UROCAL]. In conventional farms ... they are monocultures (Interview, 12.19.15).
Agroforestry as a principle or philosophy in practice does not translate to direct economic advantages in the banana market due to yield reductions. However, in the case of communities like La Florida, the closest conventional plantations are many kilometers away. These communities have historically shared a vision of agro-forestry and “clean” farming systems in the interest of protecting the environment and ensuring community health (Personal correspondences, 2014; 2015). Now that these farms are certified organic and fair trade certified, the regulations provide a type of “certification perimeter” that helps protect communities from the worst impacts of conventional farms, including water runoff pollution and pesticide drift from aerial spraying. While agro-forestry systems are primarily protective of the environment at the farm level, a dedicated cluster of agro-forestry systems can play a much larger role in environmental and human health protection at the community level.

In addition to protecting the health to workers and surrounding communities, a number of interviewees suggested that the only chance of economic survival for small producers (fewer than 10 hectares) is to adopt certifications in order to access guaranteed niche markets and access stable prices that cover the basic cost of production (Group interview, 12.16.15). As of 2015, all certifications that the associations hold (Global GAP, fair trade and certified organic) are now officially organized under UROCAL (UROCAL, 2015).

Securing ecological certification for niche market access and economic survival for small farmers can be a difficult and time intensive endeavor for small-scale conventional producers. However, numerous respondents noted that UROCAL producers have been agro-ecological for many years. UROCAL data shows that 92 percent of producers
consider themselves agro-forestry producers (UROCAL, 2015), and thus complying with certification standards from a production and practices standpoint is not particularly onerous for these producers. Given that so many producers were already practicing agro-forestry, certifying farms that already comply with the general philosophy of certified organic and the environmental dimensions of fair trade (the encouragement of environmentally friendly production systems) could be seen as opportunistic in terms of market access. As one producer noted:

*Interviewer: So, if all the farms here are agroecological farms already, why pay for the certifications?*

Interviewee: To get into the market

*Interviewer: Only to access the market?*

Interviewee: For the market, sure. If you have certification, you can sell. If not, you can’t sell. There are other rules that are called GlobalG.A.P. Standards, which have now lately come stinging the little ones [small producers]. Before that, these rules did not exist. (Interview, 12.08.15).

Another interviewee noted that the dual certifications worked together to provide a market platform desired by small producers to receive stable prices that cover the costs of production.

*Interviewer: What is more important, organic certification or fair trade certification?*

Interviewee: For us, we need both because without at least one of the two we cannot export [for the best price] (Interview, 12.12.15).

UROCAL’s support for agroforestry models serves a larger goal beyond the
protection of the proximal environment and the ease of acquiring certifications. Some authors note that agro-forestry systems combined with rural development initiatives funded by certification premiums (fair trade and organic) follow what Hart et al. (2015) suggests is a trend toward combining agricultural models with other land uses to make whole systems more “multi-functional”. This idea involves merging primary agricultural goods, in this case bananas, with the provision of other valuable ecosystem services such as protection of water resources and forest areas. These efforts are then supported by collective producer movements as drivers in defining and shaping farming and landscape systems. Such combinations have proven to benefit livelihoods and communities (Hart et al., 2015). Combining the specific principles of agro-ecological production models with social and political dimensions can help position agro-ecological modes of production as part of the larger struggle for alternatives to the agricultural modernization agenda (Levidow et al., 2014). UROCAL’s history of *producción limpia* [clean production] and its focus on supporting agro-ecological systems in the interest of protecting the environment and health of rural communities follows with this larger agenda of seeking alternatives to agro-industrial models of production and marketing. In addition, such multi-functional and integrated landscape models follow along with the larger Andean ideals of “*Buen Vivir*” [living well] in their emphasis on healthy and thriving communities (Villalba, 2013).

UROCAL’s Food Sovereignty program assisting the families of banana and cacao producers grow mixed crops for domestic markets, as another example of multi-functionality and agroecology in action. These crops are used to supplement family income on farm and to enable consumption of a larger portion of “healthier products” within the family. The Food Sovereignty program’s emphasis on clean production is also paramount.
Agro-ecological/agro-forestry systems are an important part of UROCAL’s strategy for the protection of human and environmental health. The women’s groups working on community garden production for household consumption and for sale in the local *ferias* [farmers markets] farm organically and market their products as such. Such strategies are fully in line with the food sovereignty pillar of “working with nature”. Overall, agro-forestry systems provide a mechanism for UROCAL banana producers, their families, and their larger communities on the road to sustainable production systems. The continued maintenance of such systems is a key element of food sovereignty.

### 6.8.2 Providing and Facilitating Multi-Scalar Support Systems and Networks

In addition to UROCAL’s direct relationship of support with its nine producer associations, UROCAL’s formal and informal relationships span international commercial imperatives, state-sponsored government programs, localized grassroots mobilizations and struggles, and household-level projects. The table below outlines these various relationships and partnerships.
Table 6.3 UROCAL Relationships with other Organizations by Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Association/Organization</th>
<th>Formal/Informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>BANAFAIR (German NGO)</td>
<td>Formal- exporter/funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ECOLIFE (USA NGO)</td>
<td>Formal- exporter/funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEL MONTE (USA Company)</td>
<td>Formal- exporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bread for the World (NGO, Germany)</td>
<td>Formal- funder/supporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FENOCIN (Federacion Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas, Indigenas y Negras)</td>
<td>Informal- solidarity/shared interests in equity, food sovereignty and human and workers rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CEDOCUT (Ecuadorian Confederation of Unitary Class Organizations of Workers)</td>
<td>Informal- trade union center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BANAVID (Bananas for Life)</td>
<td>Formal- participating member of 11 associations working to support both organic and conventional small-scale banana producers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>Nine individual producer associations (see table 1)</td>
<td>Formal- suppliers/shared certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>BANAVID regional</td>
<td>Formal- Regional group of small-scale banana producers (conventional and Organic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Groups at the community level (food sovereignty program partners, others)</td>
<td>Informal- working on public procurement, food education, increasing local market opportunities, assistance with seed saving and household gardens in producer communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Map making activity with key informants from UROCAL (Nov 2015).

The importance placed on *apoyo* [support] both from outside and within the organization is a key part of the organization’s success. The official food sovereignty program as well as the development of the retail store stocking local products “*El Arbolito*” [the little tree] were financed through UROCAL’s relationship with the German NGO BANAFAIR and its “*Pan por el mundo* [bread for the world] program until 2014. For the organization itself, the emphasis on support for its producer families, and helping producers achieve “a better life” is a top priority:

[For our [Banafair] international partners [what is more important] is that the producer lives better. And they want to see that every day they improve their production] (Group presentation, 12.17.15)
The importance placed on group solidarity is also a key feature of UROCAL’s identity. Solidarity ... how do I explain that? That is a principle with a high value in this case, that should be paramount in all organizations. This should be paramount and not only here in UROCAL. Even in the internal regulations that each association has. In a moment when a partner is going through a difficult situation, there is solidarity there, is that not right? We will help morally and economically, too. We must be supportive of one another because we are a group, right? (Interview, 12.12.15).

When asked about examples of and mechanisms for building solidarity, another producer noted:

The fair trade premium, from our fair trade partner, is distributed for the benefit of the farm and the producers. This is evenly distributed. For example, all producers from the smallest to the largest are helped, they are all considered. [Small or larger] they are all considered as one more member of the association. It has nothing to do with the amount [they] produce. So, in that way we try to build solidarity with everyone. [In UROCAL] there is never discrimination of that he is a small producer. UROCAL always welcomes everyone with the same situation (Group Interview, 12.12.15).

UROCAL producers from interviews also reported the ability to participate openly in their association meetings. As one group executive and producer noted:

Yes, [that type of participation] is always done ... it is normal, for example for 4, 6, [or] 8 people talk more than the rest but they are always treated fairly: "Companion, please you also have to give an opinion". I mean, we
try to keep that rhythm, why? Because that is what the socio-activity is all about, that all [can] give their opinion [...] So they do not say, "No, no, I really did not say anything because I did not want to say it, because it gave me a little fear, or a little shame." We always say: "Speak please". Here we try to give place to the things we are dealing with (Group interview, 12.12.15).

Many producers also noted the importance of their long-standing relationship with UROCAL. When asked about why they chose to join UROCAL instead of another banana association in the region, interview respondents noted friendship/partnership with the group, the group’s vocal support for small producers, and the stability and history of the organization as the main reasons for initial and continued membership. Furthermore, at monthly member meetings and yearly general assemblies members recount the history and evolution of UROCAL as a means to build a shared sense of history and solidarity.

President Joaquin Vasquez shares the following sentiment with the group:

That is to say, they work on the pillars of how to do things well, so that we are sustainable and that all that growing and doing well is everything we have. Let it be a well-done thing, a product of our work, of our effort, of our unity, of our product, of development in terms of our reinforcement (Group presentation, 12.12.15).

Another producer from the group Libertad noted the importance of hearing the history and purpose of UROCAL:

The important thing, that is, in my case, [I want] to know who started this fight, a very good fight. Because the poor have always been discriminated
against. It was [originally] a struggle to have one hectare, two hectares of land ... for example, it was always the rich, the millionaires who were landowners here, right? So, because of that you have to know how UROCAL started and what ideology they had from the beginning and they continue to have it at the moment, to know where and why (Interview, 12.12.15).

Finally, the larger goals of solidarity-building and support mechanisms are represented as being at the core of UROCAL’s identity. These sentiments were expressed by Joaquin Vasquez at one of the small community meetings in the town of Shumiral. Shumiral is primarily a cacao producer community with a rich history of being at the center of land reform struggles in the region.

So when we are all making history, what are we doing? When we are making history we are uniting, organizing, struggling to improve living conditions, and we cannot forget that we have a history, a birth, a growth and today we face new challenges in production, in commerce, in politics. (Group meeting, 11.31.15).

6.8.3 Third Party Certifications (Fair trade and certified organic)

Under the fair trade label in southern Ecuador, the price paid per box of bananas is USD 7.00 (including premium, while for conventional bananas the producer price is USD $5.50. This represented a 27 percent price increase per box for those certified by fair trade as of 2014 (Velasquez-Paez, 2014). As of January 1st, 2016, the fair trade minimum price
is now USD $6.40 (plus a $1 USD premium per box). There are a number of additional avenues beyond the higher box prices where fair trade has been shown to benefit producers.

The first avenue for benefit is through the fair trade premium, an additional sum beyond the higher unit price paid out to farmers on a yearly basis. The premium is often invested in education and healthcare, farm improvements to increase yield and quality, or processing facilities to increase income. As many projects funded by the premium are communal, the broader community outside the producer organization can benefit from fair trade as well (Fairtrade International, 2015). In Ecuador, the most common areas of premium investment are health, education, housing, co-financed agricultural projects, and business development. One Ecuadorian survey showed that 78 percent of fair trade banana workers reported that their overall health and nutrition had improved in the last three years (FAO, 2012). Rueben et al (2011) report that the El Guabo Banana Association in southern Ecuador has received $6,170,169 in fair trade premiums alone between 2004-2011, 80 percent of which is invested in social and environmental programs (Rueben et al, 2011). Recent work with UROCAL’s fair trade banana producers confirms that producers see the certification program as providing both direct and indirect benefits to them (Velaspegui-Paez, 2014; Cordova, Moneros and Palacios, 2014). In my interviews and conversations, many individual farmers claimed to know about the fair trade investments in their communities and many reported some benefit from the technical and extension services provided by a portion of the fair trade returns. These individual benefits in productivity also contribute to the association as a whole and thus overall premiums increase. This raises the question of whether the utilization of market generated profits to
further improve the livelihoods of communities is a goal that is compatible with the food sovereignty movement. As one UROCAL technician noted:

Now, the FLO [Fairtrade Labeling Organization] certificate ... that's where the social good is related, is not it? Each producer benefits all those who are working, working with the producer, whether the individual worker or family. It integrates the family because it has a benefit for this ... Fair trade, right? Because we are talking about an additional dollar per box that in this case goes to the benefit of not only the producer. Through the producer the profit goes into social good (Interview, 12.04.15).

UROCAL’s connection to the fair trade program provides an important revenue stream both to individual producers and to rural communities in which certified producer associations are based. Table 6.4 shows premium distributions in 2015.

Table 6.4 UROCAL Fair Trade Premium Distribution Table (2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMS</th>
<th>BANAFAIR</th>
<th>ECOLIFE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>16,589.19</td>
<td>5,636.31</td>
<td>22,225.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity Improvement</td>
<td>45,651.72</td>
<td>15,567.58</td>
<td>61,219.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>16,262.91</td>
<td>5,512.29</td>
<td>21,775.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>11,494.50</td>
<td>3,922.90</td>
<td>15,417.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social development</td>
<td>11,168.22</td>
<td>3,798.88</td>
<td>14,967.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Strengthening</td>
<td>5,257.83</td>
<td>1,775.42</td>
<td>7,033.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Monitoring</td>
<td>5,257.83</td>
<td>1,775.42</td>
<td>7,033.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>3,262.80</td>
<td>1,240.20</td>
<td>4,503.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (USD)</strong></td>
<td><strong>114,945.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>39,229.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>154,174.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4 shows a total of $154,174.00 USD in fair trade premiums distributed by UROCAL for the year 2015, divided into eight different categories. While less than 35
percent ($37,192.50) of the total yearly premiums ($154,174) is directed to the environmental and social directives which underpin the fair trade philosophy, this extra capital represents a significant opportunity for social and environmental rural development initiatives in the participating communities (La Florida, Libertad). In these places, schools and health clinics have been funded in part from the premium. The provision of ongoing extension services and technical assistance to increase production and assist with supply chain efficiency are also a service provided by premium payments (UROCAL, 2015).

Despite UROCAL’s collective fair trade premium revenue and the investments made with it, some of the producers themselves were vocally critical of the fair trade administration (Interview 4, Interview 11) and organization of the larger fair trade system. One in particular was also critical of the use of a significant portion of the premium returns for administration, certification costs, and what would fall under the “institutional strengthening” category ($33,986.90). However, most of the producers and UROCAL staff I spoke with felt that it was a necessary certification for accessing stable market (criterion 4) opportunities. As one producer noted:

I believe that if they simplified the certifications it would be easier to operate, but the fact is, we live in a world of markets where the certifications already do the business (Interview, 12.12.15).

Seen in this light, beyond the additional higher box price ($1USD more) fair trade is seen as a key mechanism for “doing the business” (i.e. market access), and ensuring price stability in volatile world banana market. According to Banastat (2017) “The
[Ecuadorian] Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP), through Ministerial Agreement 265, set at $ 6.26 the minimum official price for the [conventional] banana box from 41.5 to 43 pounds, type 22XU. This price will be *stable-ish* from January 1 to December 31, 2017 (Banastat, 2017 italics mine). An FAO report on the world banana economy (1985-2002) claims that:

The Ecuadorian banana market for export could be considered a monopsony, whereby a few intermediaries buy fruit from a large number of weakly organized small farms. The government sets a minimum price paid to producer, but this is not always respected. Prices are negotiated differently depending on the nature of the buyer, be it a Transnational Company (TNCs), a large national exporter or a small national exporter (Arias et al, 2003).

As such, a national, legal minimum price is not a guarantee of market or price stability. The following figure exemplifies this type of price fluctuation as it relates to Ecuadorian banana pricing over a two-year period.
In contrast, the minimum fair trade price of $ USD 6.40 (plus the $1.00 per box fair trade premium) is stable on three-year contracts. When organic certification is added, the FT minimum prices increases from $6.40 to $9.05 (Fair trade minimum price table, 2017). According to FairTrade International (2017)

the minimum price represents a formal safety net that protects producers from being forced to sell their products at too low a price when the market price is below the FMP. It is therefore the lowest possible price that the Fairtrade payer may pay to the producer. When the relevant market price for a product is higher than the Fairtrade minimum price, then at least the market price must be paid. (Fairtrade International, 2017).
However, in most cases buyers where the market price is higher than the fair trade minimum price, buyers pay the higher market price. In this way, the fair trade minimum price provides a level of baseline certainty so that producers are less affected by global banana price volatility. Fair trade contracts are guaranteed regardless of conventional price fluctuations (Paul, 2005). This is not the case in the conventional market where minimum prices can drop below the cost of production for extended periods of time and buyers are only required to pay the price listed at the time of purchase. As demonstrated by Figure 6.2 below, constant price fluctuations have characterized the banana trade from Central and South America over the last 30 years (IndexMundi, 2017).

![Bananas Monthly Price - US Dollars per Metric Ton](image)

**Figure 6-2 Bananas: Central American and Ecuador, FOB USD per metric ton (1987-2017)**

Source: IndexMundi, 2017.
Despite the price being as a “formal safety net”, there are other concerns related to supply and demand that fair trade cannot control. One of these has to do with phenomenon of “limited actual fair trade sales”, where a producer can be certified for all their products but be forced to sell some of their output at a lower price through conventional channels due to the lack of the fair trade market demand (de Janvry et al, 2011 cited in Dammert and Mohan, 2014). One member of UROCAL’s board of directors noted this dynamic and connected it to the inability of fair trade to provide “the solution” to the challenges facing UROCAL’s small-scale banana producers.:

Selling boxes to fair trade is not the solution […] But what is the solution? And to have a stability, stability in the organization that you are and in the association, stability that you have your sale safe all year round. Sometimes the sale is total, [but sometimes] it is not. Why? Because sometimes we still have only a little market. [For example] This week I think we're going to have five [containers], so that's just not enough. If a producer asks for 130, they give him 100. But anyway with those 100 boxes anyway he defends himself, he and his family defend themselves. So, I'm telling you, [Fair trade] is important for stability. You have stability, you have a fixed economy but neither do you have a life of luxury. To live with dignity as we are accustomed in Ecuador to live dignified with one’s complete food, one’s work right there on the farm, working with one’s family, having one’s children reach for education that's what the [goal is] (Interview, 12.19.15).
Fairtrade International (2017) reports that “Fairtrade bananas have a stable market thanks to socially-conscious consumers and companies” and that certified banana producer organizations and plantations sell “a high percentage (around 60 percent in 2013-2014) of their total production volume on Fairtrade terms”. While not total, this percentage does contribute to market stability and a degree of predictability. UROCAL’s direct relationship with its main international trading partner (BANAFAIR) accounts for nearly 60% of their yearly production and sales alone (UROCAL, 2015).

This case study suggests that fair trade certification (and the minimum price it brings) can act as one, partial, mechanism for stability. The minimum price, that is designed to cover the cost of production, is also a supportive mechanism to the survival of the peasantry within global markets (criterion 1) and provides economic benefits to small-scale banana producers in the south of the country. These benefits take the form of greater economic returns that increase livelihoods and food security (criterion 2), via individual price premiums and market stability (criterion 4) as well as the financial support for additional rural development initiatives paid for by the collective premiums. These findings support other work based in Ecuador that identifies what they term to be “marginal” economic and social benefits of the fair trade system (Rueben et al, 2008; 2011). While Clark (2017) and others suggest that such certification schemes, which fail to challenge the much larger issues facing small producers, have limited value because of this, my research suggests the need for deeper examination. The stability of the prices and the slightly higher returns to producers are reported as positive outcomes. The contention that “alternative” banana chains still involve the same stakeholders and typically involve a similar value distribution structure throughout the chain as their conventional counterparts
is, in many ways, a structural challenge beyond UROCAL’s capacity to directly address in any transformative way. However, it is the hope that such challenges inspire continued efforts towards what Bacon (2015) calls “the fight for a fairer trade” (p.912). A fairer trade may be one wherein some of the systemic administrative policies and skewed locus of value creation could be legitimately challenged in the true interest of more equitable trading relations for small farmers. However, the incremental changes brought about by third party certification schemes should be seen as a valuable contributing process on the path towards a food sovereignty that works for both the state rhetoric and the needs of small banana producers and their communities.

6.9 Discussion

The mechanisms of agro-ecological production, multi-scala solidary and support networks, and “mediated markets” (Wittman and Blesh, 2015) shored up by third-party certifications create outcomes that begin to align UROCAL’s fair trade banana value chains with some core food sovereignty principles. While these three mechanisms contribute to this overall goal, evidence from this case suggests that the direct outcomes of these particular mechanisms are not enough to produce an ideal type practical merger within banana value chains.

The “power asymmetries” and the “institutionally sanctioned categories of participation” inherent in many policy making processes (Brem-Wilson, 2015) tend to limit small-scale producers and their representative associations from inclusion in high-level policy making in Ecuador. However, UROCAL has played a key role in the struggle against dominant models of banana production in the region (Striffler, 2001), as well as
participated in collaborative work with early government initiatives to support rural development and land reform in the 1980s (García, 2013; Striffler, 2001). Today, UROCAL continues these efforts and continues to work closely with government-sponsored initiatives such as BANAVID [“bananas for life”]. However, UROCAL’s strategy for change is incremental and is primarily enacted via operating within a niche, alternative sector of the larger banana industry. The goal of this is to increase the standard of living of producers, provide a supportive environment for small producers and utilize certification as a means to allow them to remain as competitive as possible within the industry. Evidence shows that this strategy enables slightly more favorable conditions of participation to small producers. Such observations are consistent with Clark et al (2016), who argue that some innovative examples of agricultural production and marketing arrangements are on the rise in Ecuador. These include some non-state forms of certification for environmental sustainability and niche market access. He goes on to argue that the “broader context” of the country’s agricultural policy, despite food sovereignty as part of its national constitution, is generally “unfavorable” to small, campesino producers (p.316) whether in banana production or other agricultural sectors.

In addition, while the third party certification and its assistance with niche market access does generate marginally higher economic returns for producers and allow premiums for direct capital investment in select rural communities, the reality is that alternative banana chains still utilize the same infrastructure and distribution systems. This requires such chains to remain situated within the larger framework of the global banana industry (Elbehri et al., 2016). UROCAL is not a stranger to this fact. Despite some characterizations of alternative food networks as “anti-systemic” or “post capitalist social
behavior” (Clark, 2017), alternative banana chains still need to operate within the dominant international trading system and require the same set of value chain logistics. As Latorre et al (2015) note “Complex networks of vertical and horizontal integration interconnect TNCs with diffuse economic agents, including national firms and small-scale farmers, facilitating the appropriation of Ecuadorean value added” (p. 63). The resulting inequitable value distribution between upstream actors (producers) and downstream players (exporters, importers and retailers) in both conventional and alternative banana supply chains remains a significant barrier to the creation of value chains with favorable economic and democratic conditions of participation for small producers.

Finally, this case highlights the tension between the state-led discourse and policies on food sovereignty in Ecuador (Clark, 2015; 2017; Henderson, 2016; Giunta, 2014; Peña, 2016) as they relate to a key sector of Ecuador’s agricultural economy, the small-scale banana industry. What does a national discourse and constitutional framework for food sovereignty really mean for Ecuadorian banana producers who are, for better or worse, embedded in a highly capitalized, international buyer-driven supply chain with a history of exploitative relations of production and marketing? Coastal producers in a predominantly banana/cacao zone are unlikely to dramatically shift production to primarily household crops or what could be seen as uncompetitive mixed farms producing for domestic markets. As such, what types of food sovereignty policies could be implemented at the state level to support the creation of export banana value chains that respect the core pillars of the food sovereignty movement? What does a food sovereignty that merges market oriented needs with social movement desires look like in practice? UROCAL actors offered some provoking thoughts as to what this might look like. As president of
UROCAL Joaquin Vasquez notes:

We establish that we need to improve the living conditions of producers, any variable is important to meet this goal. If exporting products [is the means] because we are an exclusively exporting area, *agroexportadora*, we cannot topple the cocoa or banana to dedicate ourselves to produce only products of basic consumption. Because we would be left to intervene in something that is [im]practical for the culture of the region. We cannot go against history. We are part of the story and therefore we must rather improve this [agro-export] situation (Interview, 12.04.15).

I argue that is UROCAL is working diligently towards improvements to the current agro-export situation, a situation that UROCAL characterizes as being dominated by large, chemically intensive banana producing operations, inequitable labor relations, value distribution asymmetries and unstable contracts. These improvements are being made via the mechanisms UROCAL envisions and enacts for their members (agroecological production systems, networks of support and solidarity and the use of fair trade certification to maintain stable contracts with prices that attempt cover the cost of living). However, these things on their own are not enough to create an ideal type practical merger. A broader food sovereignty, one built on the idea of the merging of self-sufficiency and international trade was noted specifically by one producer:

Food sovereignty? […] food sovereignty is a government project where everything, that is, every home should take the idea of producing an onion, a tomato, a pepper in their yard. That is Food sovereignty. It is a state project that is not bad. [But it is also] where we can have, within Ecuador,
the business to be able to sell our production internationally [but also] to have that possibility of selling it to an internal market as well (Group interview, 12.12.15).

This statement suggests that it is possible and desirable for food sovereignty to be both a quest towards increasing household food production and self-sufficiency and a framework to provide more favorable and secure trading relations for producers involved in both domestic markets and in export-oriented value chains. The question is: through what mechanisms can such a two pronged approach be translated into complementary policies? As UROCAL president Joaquin Vasquez noted:

We must complement, because we can not only sell banana and cocoa and then buy everything. I feel that the producers themselves want land to produce what they can consume […] So rather, the question is how to combine, how things are complementary with each other, which are not contradictory and rather can be complementary (Interview, 12.04.15).

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the role of supporting organizations in ‘practically merging’ market based trade solutions with food sovereignty principles. This chapter has shown that UROCAL’s strategic use of certification mechanisms, agro-ecology processes and solidarity building activities for small farmers create certain outcomes that in turn help producers secure more favorable, although not ideal, conditions of participation in export-oriented markets. These mechanisms also directly and indirectly work towards preserving the ecological integrity of producer communities and maintaining the solidary and struggle
that is at the core of UROCAL’s historical identity. Furthermore, while still encountering and representing tensions between market-oriented solutions and social movement philosophies, these mechanisms directly and indirectly contribute to practical mergers.

However, in terms of the revolutionary power of such alternative export value chains and their contribution as a model of sustainable livelihoods and rural development, Garcia (2013) argues:

Agricultural cooperatives defined by social relations maintained with activist movements are explained by a dual role; on the one hand, the dynamic association [can respond] to the new demands of the economy; [whereas] individual farmers could not enter the market, lacking capital, infrastructure, finance, information about the functioning of markets, etc., making small peasant economies unviable. Together, they could deal with collective purchasing, production support programs, costs in purchasing equipment, supplies, etc. But [they] also had a political context that ran Latin America (p. 194).

This “political context” that Garcia (2013) speaks about included a number of active and engaged social and religious groups. These groups were pushing liberation ideologies and revolutionary politics throughout the country by championing strong workers’ collectives to tackle the conditions of rural poverty, and driving the recognitions of political unions.

Understanding the potentials and limitations of this dual role is valuable regarding the current tensions in the food sovereignty movement as it tries to articulate the conditions under which international trade arrangements are compatible with food sovereignty principles. Garcia’s (2013) extensive work on UROCAL’s history and
activities concludes by suggesting that there may be “no ideal model” for rural development in southern Ecuador considering the complexities that are both “economic and deeply political and historical” (p. 211). He does note that despite the challenges they faced, over the decades since its formation, UROCAL has “…carried out a series of social programs [which helped define them as] an organization that was [able to link] sometimes more successfully than others, agricultural production and marketing, to social and territorial sustainability” (p. 206). Furthermore, an organization like UROCAL is not only capable of acting as a cooperative-type representative organization, but as one that is reflective of its mission in line with its “social movement” character. UROCAL’s voice as ‘engaged intellectuals’ in assessing the value/potential of the merits and shortcomings of fair trade or other strategies towards food sovereignty has particular value. UROCAL’s voice should be considered alongside the voices and the insights of detached intellectuals/researchers who study and evaluate the role of fair trade and other mechanisms and processes towards food sovereignty in both theory and practice.

The findings of this case study also suggest that while not revolutionary or fully transformative in their aspirations for the banana sector, the individual producer associations in southern Ecuador are stronger for their affiliation with UROCAL as a representative of the struggles for market access and stability, production regime changes, and ecological sustainability within the banana sector. Based on this case study, UROCAL and its affiliated producers and partners should continue to practice agro-ecological methods of production in the interest of on-farm and community environmental sustainability; maintain their solidarity building practices and networks to open up avenues for greater participation in policy and governance; and continue to advocate for
incremental changes through their multi-scalar partnerships as key mechanisms on the pathway towards export-oriented banana chains that strive to generate outcomes which align with many of the practical merger criteria.
Chapter 7 Evaluating the Practical Mergers between Food Sovereignty and International Fair Trade in Export-oriented Fruit Supply Chains

7.1 Chapter Overview

Previous chapters in this dissertation have tested how a “practical mergers” orientation can be applied to examine the dynamics of export-oriented fruit value chains in two countries. This chapter returns to the practical mergers framework developed in chapter 2 to compare the results of these case studies and reflect on the overriding question of the dissertation: what core aspects of food sovereignty theory can be practically merged with fair trade certification to characterize more sustainable and equitable export-oriented value chains for small-scale producers.

This comparative analysis offers a chance to more deeply examine the relationship between food sovereignty ideals and participation in international trade supported by fair trade. This concluding chapter has two main objectives. First, this chapter examines and summarizes the results of case study work in both countries in relation to the practical mergers framework. Second, the chapter presents an analysis of the type and extent of food system transformation made possible by the value chains in these countries and the potentials and limitations of practical mergers in assisting with such transformations.

7.2 Summary of Case Study Findings

7.2.1 Overview of Applying Practical Mergers Framework

The table below (Table 7.1) summarizes the data that was observed in the Haiti and
Ecuador case studies for the suite of “practical merger” criteria introduced in Table 2.5. I derived these criteria by examining fair trade principles and their standard performance indicators and the international food sovereignty pillars promoted in public declarations, and then proposing some indicators for evaluation. These criteria share conceptual congruencies and a common emphasis in the two alternative food framings on supporting small-scale producers; being conscious of environmental management; a focus on democratic governance; supporting sustainable economic livelihoods and promoting worker rights and gender equity.

The table below shows quantitative (e.g. number of hectares for average farm size) and qualitative (e.g. assessment of the intensity of barriers to entry) descriptors for the indicators corresponding to each “practical merger” criterion. A more in-depth narrative corresponding to each set of criteria indicators follows in Sections 7.2.3 to 7.2.8.
Table 7.1 Summary of Practical Merger Indicators by Case Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Indicators for Operationalization</th>
<th>Haiti</th>
<th>Ecuador</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Survival of the peasantry within global markets</td>
<td>• Average farm size, • Cost of entry into group • Barriers to participation • Access to market regardless of volume of production or farm size</td>
<td>• 1.5 ha • none • low/no technological requirement • inclusive via cooperative product pooling</td>
<td>• 2-10 ha (mean 7 ha) • none • low/technological requirements an advantage but not mandatory • inclusive via cooperative product pooling</td>
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<td>2. Livelihoods and Food Security</td>
<td>• Length of agricultural season and labor patterns • Total hours invested in local and/or export agriculture • Other crops produced • Self-reported food production + security • Source of foods • Export production volume</td>
<td>• 4-6 weeks total, seasonal • mean 22 hours per week +mean 12 hours during export season • prevalent HH food production, ‘moderately’ food insecure (average score) • own production (m=33 percent) • domestic/regional markets (67 percent) • 300,000 dozen (estimated, 2015)</td>
<td>• Year round (high season 22 weeks/low season 28 weeks) • Full time • Limited HH food production (&lt;10 percent) regional markets and supermarkets • mean export volume= 204, 038 boxes (2006-2011), 196, 524 (2015)</td>
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<td>3. Agroecology</td>
<td>• Number of crops produced • Use and source of inputs and agricultural chemicals • Mode of production (and relevant certifications) • Monoculture or mixed farm system</td>
<td>• household crops (m=4.7) • none • mixed farm operations (fair trade, certified organic)</td>
<td>• Additional companion crops (plantains, oranges) • Limited inputs, on-farm and via local distributors • agroforestry systems (fair trade, certified organic, global GAP).</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Marketing Stability</td>
<td>• Total income from exports and other marketed crops • Uses of income from export crops • Desire for participation in markets • Contract conditions (length, base price)</td>
<td>• Limited (&lt;$100 USD) per annum • Purchase of additional food stuffs, school, business investment, health services • Voluntary participation/strong desire (n=98) • 3 years, favorable base price</td>
<td>• Unknown • Voluntary participation/strong desire • 3 years, stable base price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Indicators for Operationalization</td>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
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| 5. Participation in governance and policy | • Type of group/role in group  
• List barriers to group membership  
• Method of participation Example(s) of influence of participation in policies/decisions  
• Solidarity and support networks | • dual role producer/executive  
• no barriers to group membership  
• group participation, democratic decision making at local level, monthly meetings, yearly FENAPCOM general assembly | • multiple roles involved: staff, technician, producer, executive  
• no barriers to group membership  
• group participation, democratic decision making, influence in regional agricultural affairs and some national programs, monthly association meetings, bi-annual UROCAL meetings |
| 6. Equity and rights | • Labor dynamics  
• Knowledge of FT standards (specifically labor regulations), Mechanism for protection of workers rights  
• Land tenure status (own, lease, sharecrop, hired labor)  
• Number of women in production and on executives | • family labor, minimal hired labor  
• average  
• no official mechanisms apart from FT standards  
• unknown official land tenure status, respondents claims to own/share  
• 40 percent women in executive roles, 30 percent in groups, one group an all women’s group | • family and hired, non-union labor  
• Association influence, limited trade union membership, FT standards,  
• majority own and lease additional land for expansion  
• 54 percent of UROCAL members are women (2014)  
14.5 percent of UROCAL females are trade union member. 7.5 percent are head of households in production (2012) |
7.2.2  **Criterion 1: The Survival of the Peasantry within Global Markets**

**Haiti**

In central Haiti, smallholders with mixed farm characterize the dominant production regime for the fair trade and certified organic Francis mango value chain. Producers have the ability to sell a range of volumes to access international markets via the pooling of product; and collective action assists in breaking down scale barriers associated with individual output volumes. Related technological challenges such as lack of infrastructure to prevent losses of export quality mangos remain prominent, as does the persistence of a single buyer/exporter for certified products (see Chapters 4/5). However, despite internal struggles between various producer groups and exporter partners (FENAPCOM planning document, 2016) as well as plans for scaling up and consolidating the industry (which may prove detrimental to the autonomy and independence of smallholders), there is no evidence that the participation of smallholders *in general* is restricted under the current production regime.

While there are some large-scale mango producing countries selling to US markets (for example Mexico and the Philippines), the Francis mango variety is only grown in Haiti. As such, the niche market access for this particular mango variety is controlled 100 percent by Haitian growers. Given that only a few large holdings (i.e. more than 250 trees) exist in the country, a network of smallholders spread throughout the country supplies all the Francis mangos for export. Furthermore, while representing less than 15 percent of total mango exports (estimated 300,000 dozen, FENAPCOM, 2015), fair trade and organic certification of the Francis mango assists a particular set of small producers with niche market entry. There are no fees associated with group membership and the majority of producers reported having access to land, whether as owners or via shared/community arrangements. The production of mangos does not require any
specific technology, although some technological advances in harvesting and transporting
techniques have been shown to help reduce rejection rates. However, mature mango trees do not
require any technical expertise per se to maintain and output volumes are primarily dependent on
the individual tree’s maturity as well as weather considerations. So, while there are international
certification requirements for marketing internationally including being officially registered with
a commercially active group and the completion of garden maps to conform to organic
regulatory procedures, FENAPCOM champions and effectively supports the survival of the
peasantry within global markets (criterion 1). Despite the presence of the HHP, which included
and excluded producers according to their qualification criteria based on “a member selection
scorecard” (IDB, 2010), FENAPCOM as an organization remained committed to supporting and
including all their producer members. In contrast to the HHP model of a minimum farm size of
.75 ha, down from 1.5 ha due to lower than expected recruitment as of 2013 (Steckley and
Weiss, 2016) FENAPCOM producers do not face any limitations to participation in the program
related to farm size or individual output volume. Furthermore, in contrast to the other
“preliminary tentative eligibility criteria” such as a minimum number of mango trees; an annual
income threshold; willingness to monitor and evaluate production and organization; and
willingness to attend training and receive technical assistance (IDB, 2010, p. 6), FENAPCOM
producers are free to participate in collective marketing regardless of the number of trees, land
tenure status, gender, overall income, or technological requirements.

Ecuador

In Ecuador, nearly 80 percent of banana producers in southern Ecuador are small-scale
(less than 30 hectares) (ProEcuador, 2013). Smallholders dominate UROCAL’s certified
production and marketing structure. Most UROCAL producers possess less than 10 hectares
(UROCAL, 2015) putting the majority of producers on the small(er) side of country wide definitions (<30 hectares). Other small to medium scale conventional producers exist in the region (such as those 14, 869 producers registered with the Centro Agricola Machala), and other small scale certified producers belong to other associations in the region (Asociación de Pequeños Productores Bananeros El Guabo for example). There are also medium to large-scale fair trade and certified organic banana operations operate in the same region as UROCAL’s smallholders. However, these operations are predominantly contract operations, with the majority (or all) of their production destined for large agro-export companies such as Chiquita and Dole.

UROCAL’s ability to compete in global markets is a product of its fair trade (and organic certification) orientation combined with its trading relationships with international partners. Rather than having to sell all their harvest via corporate contracts, UROCAL’s main direct market connection is with the German NGO and importer Banafair who receives 58 percent of its supply. Eco-life (22 percent) and Del Monte (20 percent) split the remaining 42 percent (UROCAL, 2015). The ability to negotiate and communicate within direct trading relationships and with a primary trading partner (BANAFAIR) supportive of the fair trade philosophy and livelihood needs of small scale banana producers allows UROCAL’s smallholders privileged access to niche markets regardless of the size and scale of their individual operations, demonstrating the value of some form of social organization to promote collective interests in line with Criterion 1. The combination of these producer driven direct trading relationships, fair trade and organic certification, plus a strong umbrella association who holds the collective certifications for producers, enables smallholders to compete, and thus ‘survive’ within global banana chains via these ‘alternative’ arrangements.
Similar to the case in Haiti, where the number of trees and output volumes has a wide range, the participation of smallholders without barriers to market access entry is strongly demonstrated by the ability of UROCAL’s constituent producers to sell a range of volumes to their regional associations and access international niche markets through pooling of product and through collective action. Furthermore, there are no monetary costs to the individual producer associated with membership in one of UROCAL’s partner producer associations. All UROCAL participants report access to land via ownership or lease agreements. Some farms have greater access to labor saving technology than others, things such as cablevias [cable ways], road access, very modern empacadoras [packing houses] and irrigation systems. However, these technological differences tend to result in more efficient production and processing systems and are not shown to act as a barrier to entry. Overall, data from this case study indicates that UROCAL’s inclusive production model of small-scale, fair trade, family farms supports the survival of the peasantry within global markets. Producers do not face any limitations to participation in the value chain related to farm size, individual product volume, land tenure status, gender, overall income or technological requirements.

7.2.3  Criterion 2: Livelihoods and Food Security

*Haiti*

In Haiti, all farmers surveyed reported mixed farm operations that produce a combination of seasonal goods for household consumption, domestic market opportunities and export grade mangos. The low maintenance nature of mature mango trees requires only harvesting and little to no necessary off-season work. This offers most, if not all producers, opportunities for involvement in a value chain that allows producers both time and land to cultivate mangos for
export as well as household and domestic market crops. In addition, while small ($96 USD dollars per annum on average based on my sample), the revenue from mango sales was reported to increase purchasing power via cash payments and producers reported the mango program, and this revenue however restricted, as valuable to enhancing food security. Cash payments from exports allow producer families to access a greater variety of goods that they do not produce or supplement their basic food needs where household production falls short in quantity or seasonality. Most mangos that are rejected from export via on farm selection are eaten or sold for a reduced price to neighbors or in domestic markets. Participants reported that only 5-10 percent of mangos were ‘thrown away’ or “wasted”. Even while missing out on the added revenue from export sales, rejected export quality mangos can also make a contribution to household food security during the season. Both my work and many others before have noted that the development of post-harvest processing facilities would greatly reduce export quality post-harvest losses as well as enhance the percentage of mangos consumed both during and in the months following the season. Such advances require effective technological investment and immediate plans to do not allow for such investments. However, at the current time the economic contribution of fair trade mango sales and the seasonal nature of production are both contributors to livelihoods and food security (criterion 2). This practical merger criterion recognizes the rights and desires of smallholders to be engaged in export markets (Soper, 2015; Agarwal, 2014) while at the same time recognizing the importance food sovereignty places on increasing household food production and the strengthening of producer engagement with domestic markets as a means to provide longer term food security not fully dependent on export revenues (“Food for People”).
**Ecuador**

While many farmers report having additional crops including oranges, plantains and cacao for sale and some report small household gardens operated by family members, household food production is low. Food security needs are met primarily through the purchase of foodstuffs in local markets and/or increasingly in supermarkets from income gained through the sale of fair trade bananas (and in some cases, fair trade cacao as well). Banana producers operate year round and invest time and labor into banana production in exchange for cash payments. Given that livelihood and food security needs are not being met through household food production systems alone, the stable and higher per unit prices and contracts offered by the fair trade system offer small scale banana producers a means to increase livelihood and food security needs (criterion 2). This cash income as a means to help meet food security needs is further supported by UROCAL’s food sovereignty program initiatives (increasing household production for producer families, and supporting domestic marketing opportunities in weekly ferias [markets] and a specific agroecologically oriented retail establishment, *El Arbolito*).

7.2.4 **Criterion 3: Agroecology**

**Haiti**

Haiti’s mixed farm operations utilize seasonal crop rotations alongside perennial goods such as fruit trees. Loss of topsoil through erosion and lack of fallow times given small plots sizes means depletion of nutrients and thus lower levels of productivity. However, less than 10 percent of survey respondents categorized their perceived soil quality as “poor”, with most noting “fair” or “good”. Small diverse, mixed farm plots that vary seasonally characterize
smallholder agricultural activities in the specific communities observed in this study. FENAPCOM producers do not utilize agricultural chemicals in small plot production or on mango trees. On mango trees, a chemical free production system is rewarded economically via the higher prices paid for certified organic mangos. In small household plots, the absence of chemicals could be related to organic standards and proximity to mango trees but may also be a result of capital constraints for investing in inputs. Regardless of the rationale for implementing such systems, perennial fruit trees, animal husbandry and seasonal crop rotations combine to maintain agroecological production practices in the areas under study. Data from this case is not able to determine whether fair trade is enabling the criterion of agroecology (criterion 3) more than it would have otherwise occurred. However, many of the producers involved in fair trade contracts are also certified organic and hence must conform to regulated production standards. The fair trade philosophy also encourages ‘low input production systems’ and ‘sustainable production’ (Fairtrade International, 2017).

**Ecuador**

UROCAL reports that over 85 percent of their associated producers practice agro-forestry on their banana farms with shade trees and a mix of Cacao and banana plants (UROCAL, 2015). Many farms produce much of their own inputs via composting of farm waste and strive towards production limpia [clean production] (Field visits, 2014, 2015). This stands in contrast to the application of fungicides and herbicides as the preferred strategy on larger conventional farms to deal with fungal diseases. Those producers belonging to UROCAL who do use agrochemicals use certified organic compounds and apply directly onto the base of plants rather than via aerial fumigation techniques that dominates on large(r) plantations. Overall, while the transition from conventional to agroforestry and/or certified organic results in lower output of bananas per
hectare for transition years especially, the overall sustainability of small farms is kept intact through agro-forestry practices including shade trees, water conservation techniques and recycling of nutrients on farm. In addition, many producers reported intercropping with cacao, plantains and citrus fruits. This diversity of production results in a wider variety of products overall, many of which are sold into domestic and different international markets. The small-scale, diversified banana production systems of UROCAL producers meet the agroecological approach (criterion 3) emphasized by the practical merger framework.

7.2.5 Criterion 4: Market Stability

Haiti

The fair trade system for Mangos in Haiti offers stable base prices on three-year contracts. The base price for fair trade mangos has risen 10.3 percent since 2008 and now stands at approximately 1.45 USD per dozen. This price point is 30 percent higher than selling conventional mangos into export markets and 45 percent higher than selling into local markets via intermediaries. Nearly all producers surveyed said they prefer to sell into export markets because of the “better price” (n=121) followed by “more reliable market” (n=39).

While the stability of the marketing structure is not fully guaranteed beyond three years and being locked into particular prices for three years may not take into account the changing value of the local currency against the USD, opportunities exist to negotiate for higher prices when contracts reach their end. FENAPCOM’s direct trading relations with Perry exporters, hold the potential to help smooth out potential price volatility as well as provide opportunities for direct dialogue about pricing strategies.
In addition, the ‘socially mediated’ nature of international fair trade relationships can contribute to market stability. Through group association, individual, small-scale producers become a collective force and cease to be disconnected, independent sellers within the international market. In the case studies presented here, small-scale producers have organizations such as FENAPCOM (or HHP cells) doing the collective marketing for them. In this case, producers in the fair trade value chain—whether belonging exclusively to FENAPCOM, exclusively to a PBG, or selling product to both, benefit from a representative association to assist with collective marketing.

Finally, while three-year contracts are not stable enough to fully negate the risks of waiting for new trees to mature and be productive (5-7 years) fewer farmers are “forced into emergency sales” (Naranjo, 2012, p. 241) (such as selling whole trees before maturity) when they need immediate cash as has been a trend in years past. Mango growers needs for liquid assets and their lack of information about pricing and market trends still contribute to unstable and opportunistic selling arrangements (TNS, 2014).

Finally, while data from this case study couldn’t show a generalizable benefit, it is possible that the small additional finances offered by the fair trade premium following the end of the mango season can contribute to greater stability in terms of advance planning. Furthermore, collective premiums also contribute to rural development and community initiatives that may prove beneficial to farmers needs in the future.

If peasant farmers are going to be involved in export mango production, aside from offering higher prices, the fair trade system contracts and the resultant relationships and benefits offers greater market stability for producers (criterion 4) when compared to independent production or those selling to wholesalers or middlemen.
**Ecuador**

UROCAL’s ability to offer stable base prices to their producers is a major pull factor for banana farmers. The base price offered via fair trade certification is typically tied to the cost of production, something which fluctuating prices on the international banana market often fail to achieve. The market stability and minimum prices offered by fair trade is an advantage when compared to the conventional prices of bananas on the open, global market.

Similar to the case in Haiti, the presence of a strong regional association (UROCAL) stands in contrast to the limited negotiating power of small producers selling via spot markets or through unfavorable multi-national contracts. UROCAL’s direct connection to a small number of international buyers, including one in particular (BANAFAIR) who explicitly share the fair trade philosophy, allows producers access to stable prices and stable markets with multi-year commitments, as well as direct avenues for dialogue surrounding market dynamics. The value of these types of multi-scalar networks and communication channels (both within producer groups, within UROCAL, and via UROCAL’s relations with various governmental or NGO stakeholders) were highlighted in chapter 6.

### 7.2.6 Criterion 5: Participation in Policy and Governance

**Haiti**

While local group meetings are common and quarterly association meetings are held, FENAPCOM and individual producer groups lack the ability to govern and influence policy with regards to the value chain beyond the local or regional level. Producers have little sway in the amending of new value chain arrangements, such as those brought in and designed by HHP staff. While FENAPCOM as an association does have open communication channels with Perry...
Exporters to discuss logistical challenges and yearly production plans (FENAPCOM planning document, 2016), producers lack opportunities, mechanisms and spaces for the creation of new policies and influence in the design of value chain arrangements (with government, NGO or private sector actors). In addition, the HPP international value chain intervention from 2010-2015 discussed in Chapter 5 resulted in some additional challenges (beyond the technical and relational challenges noted in chapter 4) that further restricted some producers’ ability to participate in export markets under favorable conditions. The HHP development attempted to “incentivize producers” with support services and the potential to create greater economic rewards as a result of increased efficiency and new value chain practices. However, the HHP represented a challenge to the more independent type of grassroots, local and regional governance being utilized by FENAPCOM and other peasant organizations. This development seemed to conform to a way that potential economic benefits of practical mergers were being coopted by a structure more in line with hegemonic global value chains. The discontinued support for the HHP has provided an opportunity for testing the ability of a locally grounded structure –FENAPCOM - to demonstrate the value of stronger participation in governance in re-asserting direction and building on the technical achievements made under the HHP program. Nevertheless, the existence of a single buyer for certified mangos and their limited capacity to purchase and process all the fair trade mangos restricts the bargaining and negotiating power of suppliers (FENAPCOM AGM, December 2015). In summary, producers in the Haitian mango value chain are restricted in their ability to construct beneficial and desired conditions of participation. Primarily international buyers in combination with the sole export purchaser govern value chain operations, quota and quality control logistics within the country (Hyppolite et al, 2014). As such, while day-to-day operations of producer groups can be discussed and
democratic participation in meetings is active, FENAPCOM and its associated groups lack the capacity to influence the governance and structure of the value chain in any meaningful way. Evidence suggests that at this point, a captive or hierarchy form of value chain governance—characterized by large downstream actors exerting control over operations (Gereffi et al, 2005; Trebbin, 2012) dominates the value chain. This lack of producer participation in policy and value chain governance structures (criterion 5) at the national/international level represents a shortcoming of this particular fair trade and organic mango value chain aligning with the ideal type practical merger criteria. In order for this value chain to fully align with food sovereignty ideals of democracy, representation, full participation as well as practical needs such as producer driven value chain governance, opportunities and spaces for the participation and voices of small producers represented by national associations will need to be strengthened.

**Ecuador**

In the case of UROCAL’s producers in southern Ecuador, democratic participation in association meetings and discussion of larger policy issues is a common occurrence. Group meetings and training sessions offer the opportunity for producers to speak freely about personal challenges, organizational issues, and to discuss the larger policy climate. Through UROCAL’s relations with other initiatives such as BANVID; a broader consortium of small-scale banana producers focused on public procurement and price stabilization, UROCAL has a possible avenue for discussing larger policy issues at the national level. However, both UROCAL and BANAVISD are still working to have a meaningful voice in the country’s larger policy issues around the transformation of banana value chains to more accurately reflect the interests and needs of small producers. UROCAL plays a clear role in local and regional governance (via
relations with MAGAP), has some connection with national policy discussions and national consortiums (via BANAdV) and has more ability to participate in the design of favorable value chains given their direct connection with very specific international buyers who stand in solidarity with the struggles facing small banana producers. However, both alternative and conventional banana chains are controlled by a similar set of companies and regulations at the national and international level (Elbehri et al., 2016). As such, the overall governance and participation issues with regards to policy or supply chain redesign represent a major shortcoming of even “alternative” banana chains (such as fair trade/organic) to fully align with food sovereignty ideals of democratic participation, representation, and producer influence in value chain governance. Similar to the conditions in Haiti, evidence from this case suggests that the participation in policy and governance (criterion 5) is not yet fully realized. This shortcoming limits the ability of producers to become fully active in the creation of representative and transformative policy at the national level.

7.2.7 **Criterion 6: Equity and Rights**

**Haiti**

The struggle for equity and rights is an underlying organizing principle of the food sovereignty movements and manifests itself in very particular arenas within fair trade (notably prices and labor regulations). The final criterion for examining a practical merger is a group structure and value chain that works to protect workers’ rights, fair wages and provides equal access for participants regardless of gender, product volume or land tenure status. Fair trade regulations articulate labor rights and worker standards while both fair trade and food sovereignty advocate and encourage the participation of women producers and in leadership
roles. In fact, the promotion of women’s rights is one of the “non-negotiable elements of food sovereignty” (Patel, 2012, p. 2). The emphasis on gender equity has also become a key objective of the fair trade system.

In the case of Haiti, worker wages are protected in theory by fair trade standards but in practice are commonly understood as context specific wage labor norms for piecework. For example, my survey data revealed that mango pickers typically earn an average of 7 GDES per dozen (12 cents US) and mango washers slightly less. All participants in my sample were growing and selling fair trade and organic mangos. However, my evaluation is that the standard picking rate and washing rate are similar across the conventional-certified divide. Key informants noted that day laborers on agricultural operations earn between 150 and 250 GDES (2.50 to 3 USD) per five to six-hour day (Personal communication, 2016).

The Fair Labor Association (2014) reports that “Haiti is one of many countries to establish a minimum wage that varies across employment sectors and with different daily rates established” (Fair Labor Association, p.1). According to the Minimum Wage Organization (2017), the country’s minimum wages vary according to the nature of the industry (piece work, export resale, servants, etc.). Wages range from 300 GDES (for piece work export companies) to 125 GDES for service work. Where agricultural wages fit into this variable, legal minimum wage framework is unknown. The use of unpaid family labor and children working to help producer families is a common occurrence on farms, although children are not employed as wage laborers. This is in line with fair trade labor standards around the protection of child exploitation on certified operations. My restricted experience with the lived realities of agriculturalists in Haiti limits my ability to evaluate the “fairness” of these wages. Overall, I estimate that these wages are in line with (or slightly higher) than the average hourly minimum wage (based on the length
of day, 5-6 hours versus 8) across sectors. However, I only observed local laborers working on small farms within their communities, rather than agricultural laborers who may have travelled within the country to work, those working on company owned farms, fruit plantations or in the more ‘industrial’ rice producing regions of the Artibonite valley.

Gender dynamics are also a key component of the criterion focused on equity and rights. Both the HHP and FENAPCOM encourage and support a high percentage of women involved in production and in leadership decisions. In my sample, a large number of female-headed farms exist as well as a significant number of females (mean 35 percent) represented on FENAPCOM’s board of directors. One group in this case study (AFASDAH) is an all woman group. In addition to selling mangos, this group runs a nursery for seedlings (mangos included) as well engages in food processing (drying and preserving) that they then commercialize. Observations from various group meetings also demonstrated that all participants who attend the meetings have equal access to group dialogue and decision making at the local level. The inclusion of women as leaders in export mango production as well as supporting their positions in leadership is an underlying philosophical principle of FENAPCOM. Overall, FENAPCOM leaders express strong desires for autonomy, equity and rights (criterion 6). In the context of this case study, the discourse of equity and rights are most notable as they pertain to the conditions involved in mango export contracts and relations as well as desires for autonomy and decision making. Efforts to preserve such ideals have become even more pronounced as specific goals in light of the restructuring brought on by the HHP.

Ecuador

In the case of UROCAL’s producers, standard wages for day laborers are set at 20 USD per day and 25 USD per day on packing days on both conventional and organic/fair trade farms
(UROCAL, 2015). Those who labor commonly work on both types of farms depending on the availability of work and demonstrate no overt preference for working on one type of farm over another despite the potential negative health impacts of working on conventional farms with agro-chemicals and aerial fumigation (Personal communications, 2014; 2015).

Regarding gender relations, UROCAL (2012) reports that many small-scale female banana producers are at a disadvantage when it comes to participation in partnerships and land tenure throughout the banana industry. This is due to the fact that land must be owned in a man's name and that legal registration as a banana producer is through a code and membership in an association, often times male-dominated. In addition, it is typical for male farmers to inherit land of higher quality and quantity while women who are housewives often inherit land or animals of lesser quality and quantity. However, UROCAL is working diligently to change this. As of 2012, UROCAL reported that 14.5 percent of its female members are trade union members and 7.5 percent of these are heads of households (UROCAL, 2012). Two years later, Garcia (2014) reported that 54 percent of UROCAL members were women. This overt struggle for solidarity and gender equity in production, association membership and leadership represents a major advantage for female producers in southern Ecuador.

Finally, UROCAL’s notable role in the historical struggles for equity and rights as related to labor, land, capital and market access in the region (Garcia, 2013; Striffler, 2001) has been a defining feature of the organization. Today, in addition to utilizing fair trade as a means to provide greater equity in terms of economic rewards and protect the rights of workers, many of UROCAL’s minor projects and programs (educational campaigns, women’s rights, micro-credit, technical assistance, local market support services) also continue to promote and advocate for equality and the rights of Ecuadorian agriculturalists.
7.3 Discussion: Practical Mergers of Export-oriented Value Chains and Food Sovereignty

In examining the guiding question of what core aspects of food sovereignty theory can be practically merged with market-based development agendas to create more sustainable and equitable export-oriented value chains for small-scale producers, this dissertation has argued that fair trade and food sovereignty take differing approaches to pursuing transformation of the capitalist food system. As illustrated in the case studies, the practical mergers framework helps highlight the value of a diversity of methods and approaches to transformation. Each approach operates in different (although not always opposing) realms and draws on different strategies and tactics in efforts toward what might be considered a shared goal. Both alternative framings are responding to what they each identify as constituting unjust relations and process. The identification of these unjust relations is the first step in developing practical models for transformation and sets out the framing guiding what will be addressed and how this will be pursued.

Taking into producers’ desire for continued participation in export markets alongside the theoretical interest to see all aspects of these value chains more closely aligned with the ideal type practical merger criteria (Chapter 2) we are left with two important questions. First, what can we learn from these case studies about the relationships between export-oriented value chains and food sovereignty principles? Second, what type(s) of transformation are these producer organizations and their participation in their respective value chains actually capable of creating?

Evidence from both cases highlight the ‘incomplete’ nature of these value chains when set against the ideal type practical merger criteria. Many of these shortcomings have to do with
negotiation power, market power, value chain design, governance and participation in policy creation supportive of smallholders and their trade relationships. Most of these issues fall within the realm of participation in policy and governance (criterion 5). This is not surprising given that the global, corporate food regime is heavily backed by international capital support (McMichael, 2013a). Efforts to control international value chains more tightly are often promoted in the name of efficiency and traceability, but also lead to greater concentration and consolidation within these value chains and hence higher profits for lead actors (Humphrey, 2006). Participation by small-scale producers in policy and value chain governance (criterion 5) might question the concentration and consolidation within value chains and the resulting value distribution asymmetries as they relate to the delivery of equity and rights (criterion 6). However, both criteria 5 and 6 are often overlooked during the design and roll out of value chain interventions and post-project evaluations.

Despite the structural constraints that limit influencing policy or value chain governance at a desired level and in ways that work for them, small producers still voluntarily choose to participate in export markets. However, many producers would opt for committing greater overall product output into the international supply chain (and hence greater economic returns) if the capital for investments in additional land, labor and other inputs were available. What can these apparent ‘incompatibilities’ tell us about the nuanced relationship between export-oriented supply chains and food sovereignty ideals?

First, such observations highlight the tensions between some of the discursive ideals of particular food sovereignty principles and the realities of small producers (Burnett, 2013; Burnett and Murphy, 2014). Questions emerge regarding the importance of participation in policy and governance when weighed against other technical matters (such as those ‘services’ offered by
inclusion into the HHP) that hold the potential to bring increased advantages including gaining income via niche market access and stable pricing/contracts. Furthermore, as Vorley et al (2012) note, one cannot assume that the idea of formalization, in both marketing structures and with regard to how policy participation *should* be enacted, is the most important step for smallholders. Vorley et al’s (2012) work goes on to contend that giving smallholders the space to articulate the ways in which they are making markets work for them is the most important step if the researcher or policy maker’s interest is truly about respecting voice and participation (Vorley et al., 2012). In fact, producer choices for participation in international markets, even in less than ideal conditions, may be influenced simply by more favorable conditions overall existing in this domain in comparison to what unstable local markets offer (Soper, 2015; Kerssen, 2015) - or as a result of producers’ ability to create a stable and balanced cash crop and household production system that meets their historical, environmental and socio-economic context (Li, 2015). Overall, how to respect individual producers’ decision rights for participation in certain types of trade relationships that may conflict with the larger ‘collective’ goals of the food sovereignty movement (Agarwal, 2014) or producer rights to opt into, or outright avoid formal value chain markets, which are promoted as the primary means to ‘modernize’ (Vorley et al., 2012) is a question that still requires deeper investigation (Brem-Wilson, 2015; Burnett and Murphy, 2014). The case studies that make up this dissertation begin to tackle this investigation.

Future work that explores the various processes and mechanisms for aligning international value chains with the transformative ideals of food sovereignty should especially focus attention on questions related to the relative value that participants place on creating a more democratic and active space for participation in policy and value chain governance. These research endeavors could build upon the practical merger criteria to explore *how much* producers
value each of the criteria in relation to each other, and to examine what types of environmental, political, historical, or socio-economic factors and conditions influence *how these relative values are accorded*. Exploring questions such as these would help round out understandings of the dynamic producer/association decision making process when it comes to the choice to opt in, or step out of international value chains. Furthermore, future work should also explore avenues for legitimizing the voice of small producers in value chain evaluations as well as national and international policy and regulatory creation. What does influence in these realms looks like for small producers? How do parts of this vision of influence change depending on context, product, and history among other variables? What elements remain constant?

Second, and on a very practical level, additional efforts, as demonstrated by the case studies presented in this dissertation, should focus on evaluations of these value chains to identify and address value distribution inequalities and to what extent an appropriate share of value chain profits directly accrue to primary producers. Both fair trade and food sovereignty are envisioned as protective mechanisms that seek to use different types of “mediated markets” (Wittman and Blesh, 2015) to create avenues for small producers to engage in stable, markets of their choosing and maintain their livelihoods via farming activities. Fair trade in particular was explicitly designed to counter some of the value distribution asymmetries present in conventional trading relationships by assuring the producer a greater share of the value chain profits (Jaffee, 2012). However, a skewed “locus of value creation” (King and Venturi, 2005), meaning the stage at which the most value is captured (despite the stage at which the most value is created), still persists even in fair trade supply chains (Vagneron, 2011), bananas in particular (Fairtrade International, 2017). Both the Francis mango value chain and fair trade/organic Ecuadorian bananas from small, agro-ecological producers are characterized by value distribution
assymetries. In the case of Ecuador, modest returns allow producers to meet the costs of production with a small annual profit, while downstream actors such as those controlling the exporting, shipping, fumigation, importing and retailing stages in the supply chain capture a much higher relative percentage of the value. In Haiti, survey evidence points to the fact that the revenue from fair trade mango sales and associated premiums is not sufficient to drive business expansion at the desired rate. Small-scale producers possess only a small number of mature trees and thus have limited resultant volumes. Furthermore, high rejection rates (40-70%) limit the amount of direct economic returns to small producers. Finally, the sole exporter can exert high levels of buyer power and quality control, and negotiates pricing with distant importers and with high-end retailers abroad.

The third idea that these two case studies emphasize is related to importance of groups, networks and solidarity as a crucial foundation of international trade relationships. Both UROCAL and FENAPCOM producers utilize strong groups/associations who express shared values as the primary means of support and encouragement. These groups are then able to represent producers at general assemblies. According to Raynolds et al (2004) “The strength of producer groups’ internal organization—their group identity, leadership, and organizational capacity—is central to Fair Trade success” (p. 1115). These groups also embody a historical record of shared struggles and collective solutions (UROCAL in particular). In some fair trade examples, groups are opportunistically and quickly created following the introduction of a market opportunity with the primary goal being to meet the certification requirements of forming official cooperatives. The gains made by the establishment of the HHP can be seen as an example of this. In some cases, this “shallow membership” (Bingen et al, 2004) can actually
weaken overall organizational capacity as groups may lack the larger shared goals of solidarity and support beyond shared marketing values. In other circumstances, cooperative formation itself for fair trade requirements has been the driver for strengthening the overall capacities of these producers (Valkila and Nygren, 2009) and some scholars suggest that organizational capacity building is the most valuable contribution that fair trade offers (more so than slightly higher economic returns) in terms of a sustainable development over time (Raynolds and Murray, 2004). Such strong, networked groups can act as “mobilizing structures” (Stevenson, Ruhf, Lezberg, and Clancy, 2009) that hold the potential to help create, and demand new models of participation and involvement. In this dissertation, both the organizations studied (FENAPCOM and UROCAL) have a historical track record of producer associations playing an important role for individual producers before the introduction of fair trade regulation.

In the case of Haiti, APD3, the largest producer group in FENAPCOM, has been in existence since 1997. This community group was formed to address shared infrastructure work projects (roads, buildings), provide an agricultural labor pool for community members and support each other at the household and individual level (food security, health assistance, familial changes such as funerals, school fees). APD3 was formed and active well before the boom of certified mangos reached central Haiti. Their shared identity as an important community institution in Hatte Jumelle has been well established for nearly two decades. As such, when the mango program was introduced, APD3 was well positioned to assist producers with meeting certification requirements, understand pricing structures, and provide assistance on necessary supply chain regulations and considerations. While a loss of market share was reported (2013-2015), APD3 survived the changes brought on by the HHP intervention. Since the departure of
the HHP (December, 2015), APD3 has increased its collective production output by nearly 80% (further details in chapter 5). Furthermore, given APD3’s history of engagement with the ‘early days’ (2007-2009) of fair trade certification as well as the extensive knowledge of the value chain which some members of their executive hold, APD3 has positioned itself as a leader in the efforts to ‘recuperate’ producers back into full time association with respective FENAPCOM groups. They continue to champion efforts for greater voice, representation and decision-making in existing, or future, value chain arrangements.

UROCAL and many of its core producer groups (Assoc. Shumiral and Assoc. La Florida for example) have been supporting small-scale peasant agriculturalists in southern Ecuador since the mid 1970s. Long-standing members of these communities were part of initial uprisings to occupy and cultivate land that large landowners attempted to take from them. Through the impacts of the agricultural liberalization and the land rights struggles in the region (Striffler, 2001) UROCAL brought together producer interests and was able to offer a stronger, unified voice representative of small-scale banana and cacao producers set against the paradigms of neo-liberalism and corresponding agricultural modernization. As a result of their tightly networked relations with international buyers who support similar values as those championed by UROCAL, UROCAL is positioned to resist the type of hegemonic pressure from international value chain interventions that may seek to undermine market share or the production of equity and rights (similar types of pressures faced by FENAPCOM following the introduction of the HHP). Producers in both cases noted the importance placed on strong producer associations as support mechanisms.

The first two objectives—the struggle for more active participation and governance input and challenging conventional value distribution asymmetries that exist even within alternative
trading arrangements—are not disconnected. One could hypothesize that the direct inclusion of producer voices in policy and value chain governance on their own terms (and in the ways that work for them) could act as a key component in the ability of said returns to be challenged and renegotiated based on changing environmental and social circumstances, global market prices, rising consumer prices abroad, and context specific producer needs and desires. Strong, representative groups who understand the local context and conditions of their producer members can play a key role in supporting these struggles in policy circles.

7.4 Imperfect Practical Mergers: What Type of Transformation Is This?

This study has been carried in the context of Wright’s (2010) framework on types of social transformation, which identifies three main avenues and their corresponding strategies. The first is termed ruptural, involving a breaking away from existing structures and institutions creating brand new systems in their place, seeking total or near total restructuring of previous patterns and institutions. The second category of envisioned transformation, metamorphic, is split into two types; interstitial and symbiotic. Interstitial models seek to develop new models outside the government “…in the niches, spaces and margins of capitalist society”. Symbiotic strategies, on the other hand, involve “…extending and deepening the institutional forms of popular social empowerment [which] simultaneously helps solve certain practical problems faced by dominant classes and elites” (Wright, 2010, p.212). Both interstitial and symbiotic strategies advocate a more moderate and ‘work within the system’ (or ‘ignore the system’ but don’t destroy the system) type of approach to transformation.

Both of the value chains evaluated in this dissertation would fall into the ‘metamorphic’ vision of food system transformation. Both value chains are embedded within the logic of the
dominant trading system and rely on private certification standards (fair trade in particular) to gain niche market access. Neither of the value chains examined here proposes a complete break from this system as evidence suggests that almost all smallholders in this study desire (or rely on) continued participation in export markets. Evidence presented in the previous chapters highlights the benefits that producers accrue from their involvement in international trade relationships. While both UROCAL and FENAPCOM believe in the value of greater association/producer input into value chain governance and policy making beyond their local spheres of influence, producers in both cases seem unwilling to exit these value chains despite their limited power in this realm. Nevertheless, within the discourse of the associations, reference to achieving more fundamental change is periodically invoked through the rhetoric of food sovereignty. This can more clearly be observed in the case of UROCAL in Ecuador, which explicitly employs food sovereignty terminology and more systematically pursued actions related to criteria 5 and 6.

In spite of the constraints facing the ability to influence policy, maintaining autonomy and a focus on the exercise of this may be very consequential for both groups in terms of having impact and retaining allegiances (by being attentive to, and able to provide for, small producer needs). For example, in the case of Haiti, the HHP was able to [temporarily] displace FENAPCOM as an influential force by seeming to be more able (with heavy ‘neoliberal’ subsidization) to meet small producer practical needs with what Ouma (2015) calls “strategic market devices” (p.100). Then after taking over market share and weakening alternative representation, HHP seemed to walk away, creating an opportunity for FENAPCOM to reassert itself. When “needs” were being met, however, the scope of activities and focus was very narrow and FENAPCOM members avoided any overt anti-hegemonic (e.g. ruptural) perspective
and actions. However, since the departure of the HHP, FENAPCOM members are poised to reposition themselves as both market leaders in fair trade production and as political actors.

In the case of Ecuador, UROCAL arguably nests more ‘ruptural, anti-hegemonic thinking’ in its underlying philosophy and consciously promotes and guards its independent, ‘alternative’ space via metamorphic type transformation strategies. By being attentive to everyday needs, throughout its long history of engagement in political struggles and aided by its solidarity-driven, multi-scalar support networks (including relationships with government and international NGO partners/funders), UROCAL guards and retains allegiances that may protect itself from the kind of displacement that HHP undertook.

At this point in the dissertation it is also worth considering the ways in which the actors in the value chain interact in relation to the Practical Merger criteria. For example, in the case of Haiti, evidence suggests that the HHP sidestepped/ignored a possible relationship to FENAPCOM. Was this because, as the former HHP director claimed, that FENAPCOM’s ‘political agenda’ caused them fail on their commercial commitments and thus prove themselves ‘unreliable trading partners’, or did the HHP sidestep this relationship because FENAPCOM desired to maintain their autonomy and act as a champion of locally organized, democratic participation, equity and rights (criterion 5 and 6) for their producers? Was this relationship ignored/sidestepped innocently in order to displace “other” less trustworthy options in the interest of an achievable solution, one that could be monitored and measured as ‘successful’ according to frameworks built into group structures right from the beginning? Or was FENAPCOM and its producers being consciously marginalized and sidestepped in a flagrant contempt for respecting the sovereignty they were trying to build and the autonomy they were trying to assert within the value chain?
There is evidence that many of the criteria for an ideal type practical merger—one that links fair trade relationships much more closely with food sovereignty principles—are demonstrated in the cases examined here. However, there is also ample evidence in the case studies here to suggest that not all aspects of the practical merger framework need be fully met for producers to desire participation in export-oriented value chains. Does this participation, without all criteria being met, undermine the pursuit of food sovereignty type ideals?

It is clear that there exists the desire from the associations and producers interviewed here to create opportunities to maintain or improve upon some of these criteria, specifically regarding threats from external forces (Chapter 5) to the survival of the peasantry within global markets (criterion 1) and market stability (criterion 4). There is also evidence from both cases to suggest that producers and their respective associations are seeking greater levels of, and/or more opportunities for participation in both value chain governance and larger policy concerns (criterion 5). However, the inability of producers and/or their respective associations to meaningfully participate in policy making and governance of their value chains beyond the local/regional level represents a shortcoming of these value chains conforming with larger food sovereignty ideals of legitimate democratic choice and participation in designing food systems that fully reflect producer desires (Agarwal, 2014).

7.5 What Type of Transformation is Possible?

The conclusion of this dissertation now turns to the final question: what type of transformation are these organizations and their participation in their respective value chains actually capable of creating?

Returning to Wright’s (2010) framework, these two case studies provide evidence of
modest and incremental changes of a metamorphic nature (Wright, 2010). Fair trade operates within the capitalist economy, even though it is often referred to as an alternative food system. As data from the banana and mango value chain case studies demonstrate, the alternative chains (especially beyond the immediate sites of production) are still negotiated and governed by many of the same actors as the conventional systems. They rely on mainstream distribution systems, international food safety regulations, conventional retailers and sometimes corporate branding strategies in order to reach a scale at which they can have a differentiated economic impact compared to their conventional counterparts. Despite early efforts at alternative trading to create a parallel trading system outside the confines of pure capitalism, the type of fair trade examined in this case studies is niche market capitalism. Fair trade—as it is currently envisioned and enacted—is a market based initiative and as such, can only transform within the framework offered by markets, either conventional or alternative. In this context, policy measures and practical technical interventions and related measures (e.g. access to credit) to promote the interests of small producers provide a policy platform where further incremental if not transformative changes can be negotiated and considered.

Despite this reliance on conventional structures, fair trade regulation of prices and markets as well as environmentally sustainable production regimes that prioritize ecosystem and human health via agro-ecological practices hold the great potential to support the survival of the peasantry within global markets (criterion 1) as small farmers are disposed of their land and concentration and consolidation within the agri-food sector is taking place at a rapid pace. The fair trade system also offers opportunities to contribute to rural livelihoods and food security (criterion 2) through greater purchasing power of producer families and via community investment, aka rural development initiatives paid for by the social and environmental premiums.
Finally, fair trade pricing, contract structures and often times more intimate and direct relations with trading partners does contribute to **market stability** (criterion 4) that should not be overlooked as a valuable feature for smallholders.

As many authors have shown, fair trade is working towards these goals. Some literature shows modest success, other work identifies little difference between fair trade supply chains and conventional trading structures. Yet as it is currently enacted, fair trade must meet these goals within the niche spaces or outer edges of the capitalist, conventional food system. As Fridell (2006) notes:

> As it stands, rather than presenting a radical challenge to conventional trade, the network appears to be assisting certain groups to enter the global capitalist market on better terms (p. 24).

However, as these case studies demonstrate, when the ‘better terms’ of fair trade systems are coupled with food sovereignty ideals, the boundaries of what could be considered fair require a deeper, more holistic analysis. Put another way; a **food sovereignty lens applied to a fair trade value chain highlights different dimensions of fairness and, equality**. Perhaps this observation follows along the lines of what Bacon (2015) envisions when he speaks about “…the fight for a fairer fair trade” (p.484). If the practical mergers framework can offer criteria for evaluating export supply chains in light of such a “fairer trade”, or perhaps even a “sovereign fair trade”, I contend that this shift in perspective on its own contributes to the possibility of transformation that is obscured when viewing fair trade as simply a market based system of transformation on its own. As Fridell (2006) goes on to note:

> While fair trade’s ability to challenge the global trading system directly is limited, [for certain advocates] its greatest potential is seen in its ability to raise awareness
among Northern consumers of global inequalities by revealing the conditions under which Southern goods are produced (p. 20).

This awareness can be a powerful force in helping create interstitial or symbiotic changes (Wright, 2010). While fair trade serves a valuable role in assisting with market access, market stability and capacity building, “the price, message, and market share remain significantly constrained by the imperatives of capitalism” (Fridell, 2006, p. 24). In light of this, perhaps rather than seeing fair trade as, or expecting fair trade to be, the driver of ruptural or metamorphic transformation within the food system, rupturing conventional understandings of the potentials and limitations of fair trade, or what fair trade ought encompass and what it is actually able to attain, is the first step towards designing a more comprehensive equitable trading system that works for willing small producers around the world.

7.5.1 Strengths and Limitations

As discussed in Chapter 1, while fair trade has a history of evaluation based on established indicators, these indicators applied for such purpose typically shop short of accounting for key matters such as land tenure issues as well as the differing, and possibly competing mechanisms, for how livelihoods and food security interact in differing contexts. Furthermore, fair trade indicators are challenged to take account of more subjective, process-related concepts such as the value of producer autonomy, inclusion in value chains, and what control and participation in policy and governance practices look like. These are things which are centrally important to food sovereignty yet are not represented in existing fair trade indicators. As such, to be comprehensive, an evaluative framework that accounts for existing fair trade principles and important food sovereignty pillars must include, highlight and operationalize these
key issues. By putting the principles and pillars of fair trade and food sovereignty side by side, this dissertation has identified six criteria where the two food system models intersect. In this dissertation, these six criteria contribute to an ideal type practical merger.

This comparative exercise of two case studies in Haiti and Ecuador has a number of limitations. First, this evaluation does not imply that all production modes and models in these areas could be characterized as part of a supply chain that seeks to conform to the idealized framework noted above. While the critical realist epistemology recognizes the value in single case studies and appreciates the emphasis placed on process causality and the resulting “casual explanation” (Maxwell, 2010; 2004), the results below come from a small sample of producers, key informants and association executives. The data gathering techniques were qualitative and ethnographic in nature and thus the claims made here are not meant to be generalizable to the respective industries as a whole. Furthermore, as the empirical chapters have shown, it is not a requirement that all six criteria be met in order for a particular value chain to attract or retain producers. Food sovereignty is attentive to the importance placed on individual choice in the context of farmer decision-making (Agarwal, 2014) and as such, many producers desire continued participation despite some challenges and barriers. The practical mergers framework also recognizes that producers may accord value to different criteria in different ways, and thus weigh the risks and rewards of export participation in light of these valuation systems and pragmatic considerations.

Secondly, this work acknowledges that fair trade and food sovereignty are not comparable systems as they share different visions for how participation ought to unfold within world food markets, and prioritize different mechanisms and strategies for food system transformation. This dissertation highlights circumstances where the two systems can be seen as
complementary and places where particular fair trade value chains exhibit practical mergers with food sovereignty principles. However, it also highlights the circumstances where the mechanisms and criteria fall short of producing ideal type practical mergers and/or places where the value chains in question do not, and quite possibly cannot, deliver on the idealized criteria.

Finally, the lack of a control group of non-fair trade certified producers in both case studies limits the power of claiming fair trade or food sovereignty ideals as the primary or only variables responsible for the creation or success prospects of practical mergers. Furthermore, much research has shown that the actual impacts of fair trade are variable and also subject to what is expected of fair trade and how its impacts are interpreted by those involved, rather than from objective data on indicator reports. As Arce (2015) claims:

There are significant differences between people’s experiences of fair trade within a community, as well as between communities and localities. Recent solidarity network politics happen against the backdrop of a debate about the orientation of fair trade: is the aim simply to penetrate mainstream trade or is it to recover the value of human welfare to reduce poverty, promote human rights, and promote sustainable crop production? Are the two necessarily mutually exclusive? (Arce, 2009, p. 1039).

Given these limitations, this dissertation cannot make claims about the fair trade systems as the as driving or inspiring all the practical merger criteria. However, my case study evidence does point to fair trade certification playing an important role in creating market stability (criterion 4) as well as contributing to livelihood and food security needs (criterion 5). These two criteria alone result in more favorable conditions of participation for the smallholders involved. No ‘exclusionary’ politics or “fracturing” of group solidarity (Arce, 2009) were noted within the two
fair trade organizations (FENAPCOM and UROCAL) studied in this dissertation. In fact, UROCAL has a long and deeply embedded history of invoking solidarity and support for small-scale Ecuadorian agriculturalists and FENAPCOM’s efforts to preserve solidarity in the face of external forces- most notably the HHP- exemplify the importance placed on inter-group cooperation and the importance placed on solidarity and assistance. Finally, evidence also suggests that food sovereignty informed practical merger criteria such as those focused on the survival of the peasantry within global markets (criterion 1), the championing of agro-ecological production systems (criterion 3) efforts towards more participation in governance and policy for small producers and their respective associations (criterion 5) and the emphasis placed on equity and rights (criterion 6) hold the potential to tackle some of the challenges smallholders face, and will continue to face, during their participation in global markets.

7.6 Conclusion

Using the framework developed from examining the intersections between fair trade and food sovereignty principles—what has been called the practical mergers framework throughout this dissertation—this chapter has summarized the results of two cases in relation to the six practical mergers criteria. This chapter then went on to note three key messages from this dissertation as they relate to the context specific relationships being forged between fair trade export-oriented value chains and food sovereignty principles. These are: challenges surrounding engaged participation and governance and the relative value of this criterion; the need to try and tackle value distribution asymmetries in alternative food chains; and the importance placed on groups with a strong historical connection to place and contextual knowledge of the struggles facing local smallholders. This chapter concluded by proposing some ideas about the types of
food system transformation that export-oriented value chains can actually provide and the importance placed on viewing ‘fair trade’ through a food sovereignty lens.
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Appendices

Survey for FENAPCOM producers

1. Background info

Household # (ex. 001) __________
Address (GPS point) ________________________________
Name of Interviewee ______________________________
Department/Region ______________
Male/ Female ______
Number of Adults in Household __________
Number of dependents ______ and ages of dependents ______________________________
Group/Cooperative Name (if applicable) ________________________________
Producer (Y/N) ________ member of group executive (Y/N) _______

2. Physical Resources

Number of Farms/Gardens in total ____________
| Size of each farm | Plot 1 | Plot 2 | Plot 3 | Plot 4 | Plot 5 |
garden (in hectares) |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

| Land Tenure (own, lease, share) |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

| Distance from Home |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

| Number of years in production (agriculture) |
|---------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

| Number of years in MANGO production |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

**3. Farm Characteristics**

Total number of crops produced yearly (over all plots) __________

List all crops produced

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Yield per acre/hectare of each crop (if known)_________________

Number of mango trees currently in active production (trees that fruit)______________

Average age of trees that are productive _________

Number of newly planted mango trees per year _______________ in total _________

Do you have any grafted mango trees? Y/N ___________ If so, how many? _________

Amount of new land acquired to produce mangos over the last five years ________

Was this new land “rented”, “purchased” or “leased” ________________________________

Amount of land previously in household crops converted to Mango production over the last five years ________________

Number of years growing household food crops ______________

4. Production Practices

Application of agricultural chemicals (Y/N)___________

- Kg/per hectare for pesticides (if applicable) ___________
- Access to pesticide training and PPE (if applicable) (Y/N) ___________
- Source of Agricultural Chemicals (if applicable) ____________________

Would you consider your farm a “mixed farm” operation? Yes ______ somewhat ______ no ______

Is the primary purpose of your farm to produce crops for: household consumption __________

selling at the local market _______ export (international) markets _________

5. Governance and Certification
Certified Organic (Y/N) ______________ number of years certified ____________

Fair Trade (Y/N) ______________ number of years certified ____________

Other Third Party Certification? (Y/N) ________ if so, which one?
____________________________ number of years certified ____________

Knowledge of national and international certification standards (good) ______ (somewhat) _____
(poor) ______

Are there ministries of agriculture policies specifically supporting the mango value chain?
(Y/N) ____________ if yes, an example:
_______________________________________________

Are there any specific ministry of agriculture programs supporting the mango value chain?
(Y/N) ____________ if yes, please provide an example
______________________________________________________________________________

Are there ministry of agriculture policies specifically governing/regulating the mango value chain?
(Y/N) ____________ if yes, an example:
_______________________________________________
6. Marketing and autonomy

How do you market your mangos? Individually ___________ group __________ other

___________

Export (percent) ______ Local market (percent) ________ Other ________ (percent)

Would you prefer to sell mangos locally or for export? Local ________ Export ___________

Why? Better Price ______ More reliable market ____ Easier to transport ____ (any others
reasons) _______________________

Do you sell ALL the mangos you produce every season? (Y/N) ______ If not, what percent,
on average, were not sold each year _______

Do you sell crops other than mangos locally (Y/N) _____ for export (Y/N) ___________

If yes, please list ______________________________________________________

How do you decide what to grow each year? Buyer driven contact___________ local market

demands _______ personal food needs __________

7. Investments and Assistance

Do you receive assistance from government/ministry of agriculture for mango production (Y/N)

_________

1. If so what form does that assistance take?
   (grant) ______
   (credit) _______
   (infrastructure/tools) ______
   (support/training) ______ number of times utilized each year __________
Do you receive assistance from the “Techno Serve Mango Program” (Y/N) _____________

1. Form of assistance
   (grant) (Y/N)_________
   (credit)_________
   infrastructure/tools
   support/training (Y/N)_________ number of times utilized each year ___________

Do you receive assistance from your national organization for mango production (Y/N) _________
   (grant) _______
   (credit) _______
   (infrastructure/tools) _____
   (support/training) _______ number of times utilized each year ___________

Do you receive assistance from your local group for mango production (Y/N) _________
   (grant) _______
   (credit) _______
   (infrastructure/tools) _____
   (support/training) _______ number of times utilized each year ___________

How would you rate your level of control over your ability to utilize funding?
High _______ Medium _____ low _______ none _______
How is the allocation of funding decided?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Does this funding come to the group or to the individual producer’s directly?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

8. Production Output

Average mango yield per season total (number of dozen) ________________

Length of sales season (# of weeks) ________________

Number of rejected export quality mangos (dozens per season _________)

Do you sell rejected mangos locally (Y/N) _________ (what percent of rejected are sold)

Do you eat rejected mangos at home (Y/N) _________ (what percent of rejected are eaten)

Do you throw rejected mangos away (Y/N) _________ (what percent are rejected are wasted)

Would you like to have more mango trees? (Y/N) ___________

Would you be willing to plant new mango trees on land currently used for other crops? (Y/N) ___________
9. Labor practices

Do you employ a picker for all your trees (Y/N) _____ some of your trees (Y/N) _____ none of your trees (Y/N) ______

1. Price paid to picker per dozen (if applicable) _________

On your farm, do you hire any other agricultural labor (besides picking)? (Y/N)

1. If yes, what role do they play? _____________________
2. Are they paid a wage or is there a non-financial arrangement (i.e sharing harvest, other trade arrangement) ___________________

Estimated number of hours per week worked in agriculture during the regular year by your family members ____________

Estimated number of additional hours per week worked by you and your family members throughout the mango season ____________

10. Economics

Desired level of household income per month ______________

Do you achieve this desired level of income through traditional agriculture? (Y/N) ______________

Do you achieve this desired level of income through local + export crops (Y/N) ______________

Do you achieve this desired level of income through agriculture + non-farm employment? (Y/N) ______
Payment for mangos received at agreed upon time (Y/N) ________ at agreed upon price (Y/N) ________

Average income per season from Francis Mango Production _______________

How much ability to you have to negotiate for better prices? Some _______ none ________

Do you know the retail value of one mango in American supermarkets? (Y/N) ________

Please provide your best guess _______________________

Do you currently sell any other mango varieties locally (Y/N and percent) ________ for
export? (Y/N and percent) __________

Price per dozen received at collection base (2014) __________

Price you received per dozen at the collection base over your past years in operation

2008 _______ 2009 __________ 2010 ________ 2011 _________ 2012 _______ 2013 __________

11. Certification knowledge and deliverables

Value of FT premium _______________________

FT premium received at agreed upon time (Y/N) __________

Do you feel that the 35 percent producer percentage of the FT premium is “fair”? (Yes) _____
(somewhat) ______ (no) ________

Knowledge of community investment of 15 percent FT premium (Y/N) __________

1. If yes, please provide an example of such an investment (i.e road, tools, ect..)

2. Do you personally benefit from the community investment project

Yes __________ somewhat __________ not at all __________
12. Reproductive resources

Do you have access to enough land to produce all the crops needed for your household food needs? (Y/N) ______

Access to water for agricultural production (Y/N)___________

Method of seed acquisition (own production Y/N _____ Local market ______ international donors ________)

How would you rate your soil fertility (Good) _______(Fair) _______(Poor) _________

13. Supply chain dynamics

Method of transport of mangos to base (person/animal/moto/machine) __________

Average time to transport mangos from site of production to collection base __________

Knowledge of supply chain dynamics post harvest? Good ___________ somewhat ______ poornumber

Level of control of supply chain post harvest? Good ___________ somewhat _______ poor ________
14. Household Food dynamics and Household Food Security

Consistent access to household consumption of common foods (Y/N) ______
Source of foods (own production ______ percent community ______ percent regional market ______ percent)
Distance to regional market _____________
Does selling mangos for export take away mangos that you could/would be eating? (Y/N) ______

Would you say that your participation in the export mango program has enabled you to have more consistent access (via increased income) to food for you and your family (yes) ______ (somewhat) ______ (no) ______

HFAIS FOOD SECURITY QUESTIONS

1. In the past four weeks, did you worry that your household would not have enough food? 0 =
No (skip to Q2)
1 = Yes

1.a. How often did this happen? 1 = Rarely (once or twice in the past four weeks) 2 =
Sometimes (three to ten times in the past four weeks) 3 = Often (more than ten times in the past four weeks)

No. Occurrence Questions
1. In the past four weeks, did you worry that your household would not have enough food?

2. In the past four weeks, were you or any household member not able to eat the kinds of foods you preferred because of a lack of resources?

3. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat a limited variety of foods due to a lack of resources?

4. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat some foods that you really did not want to eat because of a lack of resources to obtain other types of food?

5. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat a smaller meal than you felt you needed because there was not enough food?

6. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member have to eat fewer meals in a day because there was not enough food?

7. In the past four weeks, was there ever no food to eat of any kind in your household because of lack of resources to get food?

8. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?

9. In the past four weeks, did you or any household member go a whole day and night without eating anything because there was not enough food?

Household Food Insecurity Access Scale Indicator Guide, v.3

Additional Questions:

Would the answers to these questions differ at different times of the year (i.e. the lean months either after the mango season or just before? (Y/N) ________

If so, what month(s) of the year would you be most likely to experience greater levels of hunger

Jan ___ Feb ____ March ___ April ___ May ___ June ___ July ___ August ___ September ___

October ___ November ___ December ___

Would you say that your overall level of food security has changed since you began participating in the FT mango program? (Y/N) ________
5. Governance and participation

Member of local/national cooperative/group (Y/N) ___________________
- Member of this group for how many years ______________
- Number of group meetings per year ______________
- Ability to directly participate in group meetings/decision making (Y/N) __________
Do you feel that your group has influence in national/regional policy making (yes) ______
(somewhat) ______ (no) __________

Are you a member of a “Technoserve” (international) organized producer cell (Y/N) _____

1. Do you feel that Technoserve has influence in national/regional policy making (yes) ______
(somewhat) ______ (no) _______

Is group participation limited by any of the following barriers: gender (Y/N) ______ money
(Y/N) ______ location (Y/N) ________ technical infrastructure (Y/N) ________ other
(Y/N) ________________

Are there any barriers to group participation, either as a producer or on the executive? (Y/N)
_________________ if so, please provide an example

_____________________________________________

Please provide one benefit to you of group membership ______________________________
16. Health and safety dynamics

Would you consider the production/harvesting or transport of mangos risky to your physical wellbeing? (Yes) _____ (somewhat) _____ (no) _______

If yes, what part of the process would you consider risky to your physical health?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Access to affordable health services (Y/N) _____________

Number of times utilized per year (Y/N) ______________

Does group participation provide any health insurance? (Y/N) _________

Distance said health services _____________

17. Use of export income

Please list/check the use(s) of income from export mango sales

school ______
purchase of (additional foodstuffs) ________
health services ________
business investment/development ________
personal/other household needs ________