



## A solidarity label: the “Fair Trade Book”

The International Alliance of Independent Publishers’ co publishing programme ([www.alliance-editeurs.org](http://www.alliance-editeurs.org)) enables small publishers to mobilise around a collection or a publication, while doing an economy of scale, in a spirit of partnership that respects the distinctiveness of each party involved. Publishers from all continents have therefore united and created the “Fair Trade Book” initiative. As a result of a trade relationship based on costs sharing, trust and transparency, the book, which is at once a cultural, social and economic good, can be consumed in a fair way, without moderation.

With respect to some co publishing ventures, a compensation rule allows disadvantaged publishers to pay lower costs than other publishers. Because of this trade solidarity, “Fair Trade Book” sold for 15 Euros in France will be for instance sold for 8 Euros in Morocco and 5 Euros in Cameroon. According to fair trade principles, this trade partnership between publishers is based and developed on dialogue, transparency and respect. This partnership also enables producers from the South to trade their products at stable prices and for the benefit of local and national people.

As for other fair trade products, the “Fair Trade Book” does not necessarily imply a higher price for the consumer. The costs repartition based on geographic location means that we are able to charge an affordable price to consumers (readers) and to guarantee a fair repartition of the added-value amongst the various producers (publishers). The French, Belgian, Swiss and Canadian consumer, through his or her purchase of a “Fair Trade Book”, indirectly supports the purchase of the same book by a Benin or Malian reader, for a price adapted to his or her buying power. Books thus collectively produced by these independent publishers can be identified through the label the “Fair Trade Book”. The first title bearing this mention, “*La vie n’est pas une marchandise*” (“Life is Not a Merchandise”), by Vandana SHIVA, was published in the collection “Enjeux Planète” in 2004, a collection co published by 12 French-speaking independent publishers, committed to collectively promote fair trade agreements (<http://www.allianceediteurs.org/+enjeux-planete-+?lang=fr>).

Since then, dozens of solidarity co publishing projects have emerged, adorning the “Fair Trade Book” logo.