

**Fair Trade Book: A real issue for tomorrow.
Co-publishing, transfer of copyrights and other solidarity partnerships**

**Workshop of the International Assembly of independent publishers
To strengthen and keep bibliodiversity alive**

14 - 17 June 2013 – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Background

Co-publishing projects, which are at the centre of the Alliance's activities and reflexions since its beginnings, promote a better diffusion of works and ideas, while providing an opportunity for cost sharing between publishers. These professional partnerships, based on trust and collective work methods, also represent a mutual exchange of knowledge that promotes an increased professionalization of publishers.

After 10 years of practices and experiences, a report is in order: how many solidarity co-publishing projects were launched in a decade, and in how many countries? What are the financial implications of these projects?

To punctuate this workshop with concrete examples, [the “Terres solidaires” collection](#) (pan-African solidarity co-publishing) serves as a pilot case study, but other projects developed in or outside of the Alliance will feed into the discussion. Participants will reflect on ways of developing new partnerships while strengthening these projects' collective dimension. It will also propose some **strategies to facilitate cooperation with regards to copyrights transfers** (North-South, and mainly South-North and South-South) and will consider the digital data.

From these exchanges, participants will develop a “good editorial practices” guide. This guide could lead to the drafting of a charter that would accompany [the Alliance's Fair Trade Book logo](#).

To deepen discussions and enable practical exchanges between language networks, Guido INDIJ (Director of la marca editora publishing in Argentina) will discuss **the reflections and projects led in the Spanish-language network over the years in terms of publishing partnerships**.

Finally, and since most co-publishing and translation projects come from encounter between people, a considerable amount of time will be dedicated to a project fair. This “mini Frankfurt” will provide the opportunity for publishers to propose works for copyrights transfers or co-publishing to their colleagues. These projects could be supported (logistically, legally or financially) by the Alliance in the near future.

Objectives of the workshop

- Report on publishing partnerships (and particularly co-publishing projects) in the Alliance over the past 10 years; perspectives and improvements towards a better co-publishing process;
- Support the implementation of new solidarity publishing projects;
- Establish a Guide and/or a charter of “good” publishing practices to accompany the “Fair Trade Book” logo;
- Strengthen and establish inter professional partnerships.

1/ Make solidarity co-publishing projects... Some good reasons...

Through experience and practice sharing, publishers have shown interest, in some instances, in developing solidarity co-publishing projects... We hereby list the motives and objectives mentioned by publishers:

- Diversify publications list and build an offer policy;
- Defend authors and/or important texts; use co-publishing as a guaranty for quality texts (as several publishers commit together on one text);
- Acquire a reputation and legitimacy at the national level for book chain's actors, amongst other: at an international level, for authors, foreign publishers, institutions;
- Share financial costs (copyrights purchase, translation, copyright transfer, printing, promotion, etc.); take the risk of undertaking a project that would have been more difficult – perhaps even impossible – to achieve alone;
- Promote translations in particular (co-publishing projects enable translation cost sharing, often too expensive for one publisher);
- Promote African languages projects; co-publishing can enable transborder projects in one African language;
- Make books more accessible to the readership (through an equalisation system of retail price: fair sharing of publishing costs in relation to the book's retail price in each zone and display of prices on the back cover);
- Share knowledge and professional practices;
- Simplify and facilitate North-South relations, but also relations between independent publishers and publishers belonging to these groups;
- Propose alternatives to book donation practices, perhaps even to book donation itself (book donation structures can buy pan-African co-publishing projects instead of sending books published in the North);
- Affiliation to a publishers network and strengthening of relations between publishers, on the international level.

2 / First elements for the guide on “good” publishing practices

***NB:** Recommendations, advices and proposals presented below are extracts from discussions and exchanges formulated by publishers at the workshop. Publishers have reviewed all collective publishing project steps, from the contract with the author – or the copyrights holder – to publication. Publishers have thus highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of each step (improvements needed, techniques to avoid backlog, proposals for future projects, etc.). These reflexions and exchanges have often been developed into more global issues, going beyond the strict framework of solidarity publishing, while being representative of the publishers' practices. The Guide is complemented by a toolbox, which is under development.*

It must be noted that the elements below are a first draft of the Guide, and will be reworked, completed and developed by publishers who participated at the workshop but also by publishers from other language networks of the Alliance. What we present here is therefore neither comprehensive nor final.

Characteristics of solidarity publishing projects

Co-publishing	classic	solidarity
Decision-making process	vertical	horizontal
Skills	isolated	mutualised
Duties distribution	equality	equity
Public price	open	adapted

Duties distribution/ collective organisation/ trust relations between publishers

- Distribute duties in an equitable way between co-publishers (achieve balance for each publisher to be an active stakeholder in the co-publishing project without the collective burdening the co-publishing process); for example, iconographic proposals can be delegated to the publisher responsible of layout or done collectively, in which case the co-publishing contract could mention this article as a commitment from each co-publisher;
- Think collectively and beforehand about a co-publishing project's promotion operations, insuring its visibility and success in commercial terms – see promotion section;
- Honour one's commitment (publishing calendar, co-publishing contract article, invoices payment, co-publishing promotion, etc.);
- Agree on a fair retail price; for the French network's co-publishing projects, the retail price is displayed on the back cover, insuring an accessible and unique price for readers. This price is calculated in order for each actors of the book chain to be paid fairly;
- Avoid compromising a co-publishing project: publishers compromising a co-publishing project (non payment, non respect of production delays, non respect of copyrights, etc.) cannot participate in new co-publishing projects as long as the previous issues are not solved.

Transfer of copyrights

In the case of North-South copyrights transfer – but also with the project of developing South-North copyrights transfer – it is necessary to amend exchanges terms to break away from the “humanitarian” logic and establish egalitarian trade relations.

In order to do this, publishers from the South have to:

- Develop a professional presence in book fairs;
- Occupy the media space, including the specialised press;
- Not hesitate to meet speakers by themselves;
- Apply for funds in support of North-South copyrights transfers to the French Institute;
- Raise awareness amongst French publishers and authors with regards to copyrights and North-South and South-North co-publishing projects – see [Call to Francophone authors, publishers and institutions for a solidarity publishing](#), carried out by the Alliance, amongst others;
- Develop a list of publishers from the South, presenting their publication list for markets in the North and to develop South-South projects (newsletter produced by Afrilivres, for instance);
- Organize workshops to know better how to sell and buy rights (these workshops could be organized by publishers collective like Afrilivres).

Printing

- Study each co-publishing project on an individual basis: it is necessary to consider printing costs and transport costs and to evaluate a more profitable solution – see toolbox;
- Experiment with digital publishing: several publishers from a same location could share the rent of a digital printing system (or a forwarding chain enabling the production of square back, hardcover, etc.) through the principle of machine rental with maintenance service included – negotiate and lobby to specialised businesses for implementations and developments in Africa;
- Develop a reflexion and experiment with printing on demand: several publishers from a same location can develop a print on demand system, linked to booksellers if possible, thus avoiding transport costs and enabling local printing. This system allows the implementation of new economic strategies for reprinting, republishing, etc.
- Consider ecological, ethical and other criteria, as well as financial and qualitative criteria: ecological criteria (printing on recycled paper or transport carbon footprint), ethical criteria (work conditions in printing industry, in China for instance), quality criteria (adaptation of co-publishing quality in relations to co-publishers' publishing policies).

Transport

- Raise awareness of public authorities to implement preferential tariffs for book transportation in Africa;
- Negotiate with airline companies (Air ASKY, for instance), with postal services, bus companies, etc. to secure preferential tariffs for the book industry in Africa – see toolbox.

Promotion/ diffusion

... towards African libraries, to promote and increase the African book's presence in African libraries:

- Send mails on new releases, POS advertising;
- Benefit from authors' travels to organise meetings and readings in bookshops;
- Use the opportunity afforded by the Caravane du Livre (AILF) to promote outputs and organise activities;
- Organise commercial operations between publishers and booksellers in national languages, with the support from NGOs, or through associations, etc.;
- Feed relays in the country through a collective publishing list of African books (Afrilivres publishing list) that could be diffused in the context of the Caravane;
- Update databases such as SudPlanète, the Caravane's publishing list database, Electre database for books diffused and distributed in France, bibliographical lists such as *Takam Tikou*, etc.;
- Exchange databases: Afrilivres database could be diffused more widely to booksellers.

... to authors:

- Involve authors in the promotion of co-publishing

Diversify commercial strategies:

- Implement alternative diffusion channels (as far as possible with bookshops willing to implement outside activities to appeal to another reading public, and together with traditional diffusion through bookshop): subscription through schools, universities, reading clubs, cultural services, literacy centres;
- Raise awareness for teachers and lecturers: some co-publication projects could be mainstreamed in school programmes reading lists or on the public libraries lists – consider this possibility before the publication via ministries, French teachers associations, etc.;
- Organise co-diffusions between publishers, from one country to the other, depending on opportunities

Communication on solidarity co-publishing to readers

- Display sell prices on the back cover;
- Remind the reader that the cheap sell price is a result of the solidarity process of co-publishing (“Fair Trade Book” logo on co-publishing project and explanation);
- Raise awareness amongst readers on the photocopying phenomenon.

The digital factor: beyond co-publishing, some advices...

- Anticipate the digital edition: page layout and graphic design of files must be conceptualised to accommodate an eventual ePub conversion. A skills transfer activity can be done in the context of the Digital Lab, or during meetings in the margins of the some fairs, for instance;
- Call upon financial support to convert files;
- Use existing digital tools: Google browser, other book enhancement tools (see Digital Lab and toolbox);
- Collaborate as often as possible with booksellers to conceptualise digital strategies.

The solidarity principle continues after the publication of the co-publishing project

- In the case of shortage, having the possibility of asking partners for restocking;
- No hesitate in soliciting the publisher holding rights for renewed copyrights transfer by asking for support from existing support programmes, guaranteeing an accessible retail price.

3/ Toolbox from French-speaking network co-publishing projects

To accompany the good practice Guide, a toolbox is being developed, enabling professionals to find practical examples and have useful resources on the following points:

- Existing supports;
- Contractualisation (copyrights transfer, co-publishing and translation contract template, including the digital factor);
- Provisional budget (examples of planning budgets with geographical zone, calculation of unit production costs, calculation of selling price);
- Taxation in countries: VAT rate of French-speaking countries, custom legislations, etc.
- Tools for files sharing on digital platforms (Dropbox, We transfer, etc.);
- Database of photography websites (Magnum, Picture Tank, Afriphotos, etc.);
- Printing: template of invoice from two reference works in several countries, enabling a comparison between most profitable solutions based on co-publishing projects;
- Transport: road map on intra-African transport modalities and outside of Africa;
- Promotion: digital tools available, database to be completed, specialised journals to approach, etc.

4 / Summary of recommendations targeting public authorities

Based on practical propositions from the Guide of good practices, a series of recommendations targeting public authorities can be drawn. As mentioned above, these are the first conclusions from the workshops, which will be completed and developed during the 2014 Cape Town meeting – meeting that will close the International Assembly of independent publishers.

- Promote local publishers in the context of calls for tender in terms of school markets (national preference as a selection criteria, facilitation and support for the compilation of files, invite foreign groups to establish partnerships with local professionals, etc.);
- Invite book donation operators to send less but better, by buying books locally, amongst others;
- Raise awareness amongst French publishers and authors concerning copyright transfers and North-South and South-North co-publishing projects – see [Call to francophone authors, publishers and institutions towards solidarity francophone publishing](#), carried out by the Alliance, amongst others;
- Create, develop and make co-publishing and translation support funds sustainable (see examples of existing funds, French Institute, CNL, etc.);
- Encourage and support professional trainings carried out by local professionals, thus enabling practical knowledge training (in partnership with Afrilivres, CAFED, local professional collectives, etc.);
- Promote and support the implementation of digital printing structures and print on demand machines (direct support to publishers collective for the purchase of the printing machine including the training of personnel and maintenance services);
- Establish preferential prices – perhaps even a certification – for book transportation in Africa and outside of Africa, by inviting postal services, bus companies, airline companies to adapt their fares (see lobbying done in Latin America, in France, etc.);
- Facilitate and support co-publishing promotion operations (invitations of authors, facilitation with media, organisation of literary days, etc.);
- Strengthen and encourage the creation of national collectives of publishers;

- Engage dialogue with national professional collectives to survey their needs, expectations and jointly develop a new national book policy;
- Exchange and mutualise resources of professional associations working in the book industry at an international level; organise meetings between these associations to identify coherent and sustainable common threads.

Next steps

1/ Finalise a Guide of good publishing practices => reviewed by participants at the Ouagadougou workshop, followed with translation and distribution to other networks to strengthen the document, and adaptation depending on geographical and linguistic zones => autumn 2013

2/ Drafting of meeting report – verbatim => 2014

3 / Follow up on copyrights transfer, co-publishing and translation projects emanating from the Projects Fair => 2013 and 2014

4/ Validation of the Guide and tool box by publishers and recommendations to public authorities => Cape Town meeting, 2014



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