

Promoting decent work in supply chains of the agrifood sector of Hass Avocado in Colombia: A Colombian MNE case study

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Abstract: Thanks to the production massification in the world coupled with the increase in global production chains, it is urgent to review from different points of view, perspectives and sectors how supply chains adopt strategies to promote and encourage fair, equitable and decent labour guarantees. this article addresses the case of the MNE Avofruit S.A.S. BIC - Cartama, currently the principal exporter of Hass avocado in Colombia, which promotes through different strategies adopted by its corporate governance, decent work in its supply chain, as well as in that of its allies. To contextualize the reality in the productive sector, an analysis of sources in which there is data related to employment in the Colombian countryside, in addition to interviews with the staff of the company analyzed as a case study who provide information for the documentation and analysis of the case. The findings reveal that this company, being a reference in the sector, is promoting decent work in its supply chain and that of its allies, as well as encouraging fairer guarantees in the Colombian agricultural sector, becoming an example to follow for other products in the agroindustry sector.

Keywords: Collaborative networks, Decent work, Dynamic capabilities ecosystem, Emerging market, Labour conditions, Social innovation.

1. Introduction

The International Labour Organization (2017) stresses that decent work synthesises the aspirations of people during their working lives, as it can mean increased job opportunities and access to productive employment with a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for individuals to express their opinions, organise themselves and participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and equal opportunities and treatment for all, women and men. Similarly, and in the particular case of the countryside, the labour insertion of young people should be taken into account by accessing economic resources that allow for technical or professional training, thus improving salary and professional development aspirations and avoiding a brain drain and massive migration to the main cities (Restrepo, 2021).

Agriculture, and even more agri-food industry, are economic activities that generate and contribute significantly to the employment rate in rural areas of emerging economies (Tangarife, 2016); therefore, the study, observation and approximation of the measurement of decent work promoted by these activities gains relevance and interest in the field of study of decent work. However, it is not easy to observe in a clean way aggregate information about work in rural areas (Martínez, 1992). The surveys carried out by the Departamento Nacional de Estadísticas (DANE) do not have the capacity to collect the particularities of rural workers, their seasonality and temporality, and the multiplicity of activities in which they spend their time. Moreover, rural income is measured in the same way as urban income (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2015).

The review of surveys and studies on some indicators to approximate the dimensions that account for the measurement of decent work would only allow for a partial, limited and strictly descriptive observation of decent work in rural areas (Martínez, 1992). These descriptions are valuable and allow a first approach to the identification of gaps and obstacles that require attention and action by the institutional policies of emerging economies.

A more in-depth and comprehensive approach to decent work in rural areas of emerging economies and specifically associated with food agribusiness activities can be obtained through the use of case study methodology (Selviaridis & Spring, 2021; Voss, Tsikriktsis y Frohlich, 2002; Yin, 2018).

The case study of the agri-food industry company and MNE Avofruit S.A.S. BIC¹ - Cartama (hereafter Cartama) is proposed to address and come closer to answering the question of how the dynamic capabilities of an organization and the collaborative networks it possesses have an impact on ensuring decent work in its supply chain.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Decent Work

The definition of decent work was originally conceived as a concept by the International Labour Organization (hereafter ILO) in order to promote respect for the rights and interests of employees worldwide and in terms of freedom, equality, security and human dignity (International Labour Organization - ILO, 2002). Promoting this type of concept by this international body seeks primarily to reduce the growing gaps of social and economic inequality, instability and precariousness at work. Similarly, researching and analysing decent work seeks to broaden knowledge about the impacts it has on the development of individuals in a decent work environment, which is supported by human resource management in organizations, incorporating employee wellbeing in their good practices and providing decent employment conditions and opportunities for human capital development. (Cooke et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2020).

Like the ILO, the United Nations - UN promotes and encourages decent work in countries and their respective business fabrics. An example of this is the guidelines set out in the 2030 agenda where several of the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs are aligned with this type of initiative, especially SDG 8 which is the goal of decent work and economic development. (United Nations, n.d.).

Furthermore, and according to the agenda proposed by the ILO, there are four fundamental strategic pillars that promote the adoption of decent work at the global level: 1) respect for fundamental principles and rights at work; 2) job creation; 3) extension and improvement of social protection in the labour market; and 4) promotion of tripartite agreements (employers - employees and government) on interests and social dialogue. (Cooke et al., 2019; Sengenberger, 2001). Likewise, and as a framework that supports the measurements made to ensure decent work, the ILO proposes ten key elements, which together with what Tangarife (2016) and the ILO (2016) have proposed, correlate with the ILO's work on decent work. International Labour Office (2002) These correlate with the four pillars mentioned above and also with the SDGs proposed by the United Nations (see Table 1):

BIC companies - Sociedades de Beneficio e Interés Colectivo which are companies that base their business on the creation of economic, social ¹ and environmental value. (Ministerio de Comercio de Colombia & Confecámaras, 2021)

Table 1.

Analytical dimensions of decent work and their relationship to the SDGs.

Decent work analytical dimension	Strategic Pillar	ODS
1. Employment opportunities	1+2	SDG 8
2. Social dialogue and representation of employers and workers.	1+4	
3. Decent working time	1+3	
4. Reconciliation of work, family and personal life.		
5. Work that should be abolished		
6. Safe working environment		
7. Adequate income and productive work		
8. Equal opportunities and equal treatment in employment	1+2+3	SDG 5
9. Job stability and security		SDG 10
10. Social security	1+3	SDG 3

Source: Own elaboration with information from Tangarife (2016).

Finally, it is important to note that the ILO guidelines are universal, i.e. they are applicable to all working people regardless of sector, not only to salaried individuals, but also to self-employed or independent workers, homeworkers, people working in the informal sector and voluntary work. Furthermore, these rules are globally applicable, which means that they can be replicated in all countries regardless of their state of economic development (Sengenberger, 2001).

2.2. *Dynamic Capabilities Ecosystem (DC Ecosystem) enabled Decent Work*

Organizations are complex and dynamic systems that require an almost unique combination of resources and capabilities to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage over time and a clear positioning in the market in which they operate (Senge & Sterman, 1992; Sunder & Ganesh, 2020). Therefore, clearly understanding that dynamic capabilities (hereinafter DC) and, seen from a holistic perspective, allow the organization to better perform and position itself, it must be recognised that the multiple combination of these (organizational and supply chain), will provide companies with tools that allow them to integrate improvements to their processes that result in the development of competitive advantages, but also mean the development and strengthening of their DC (Sunder & Ganesh, 2020).

It is important then, to clearly define that DC contributes to organizations meeting their proposed strategic objectives, based on the strategic reconfiguration of their tangible and intangible resources and thus seeking to adapt to changing environments through the development of competitive advantages and core competencies (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Teece & Pisano, 1994; Wernerfelt, 1984).

One of the main supply chain dynamic capabilities(hereafter SDCC) is collaboration, which can be developed by organizations vertically or horizontally, including different actors across and along their supply chain and adopted as a practice to ensure the sustainability of the supply chain (León-Bravo et al., 2017). Collaboration is conceived as the interaction between supply chains which share common objectives, can be intra- or inter-organizational and involves communication between people who ensure the achievement of strategies and goals, as well as the appropriation, absorption and management of the knowledge generated (Barratt, 2004; León-Bravo et al., 2017; Ramanathan et al., 2014).

One of the targets mentioned in SDG 8 is related to the promotion of policies that encourage the development of sustainable productive activities, the creation of jobs with decent working conditions, encouraging entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, as well as promoting the formalisation and growth of start-ups in emerging markets, as well as micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, with access to credit and financial benefits (United Nations, n.d.). According to the above, those organizations that promote decent working conditions have dynamic capabilities such as innovation and learning that encourage the training and professional growth of their workforce.

Thus, sustainable supply chains must guarantee and work on issues that guarantee the working conditions of their workers, humanising the actions taken for the development of the activities carried out in the supply chain, as well as the actors involved in the execution of operations and the context in general (Soundararajan et al., 2021). This is even more so if we analyse it from the perspective of emerging markets and a sector such as the agri-food sector where there are so many social inequalities such as child labour, gender inequality and few guarantees for the labour force (International Labour Office, 2002).

In the case of Latin America, and even more so in the agri-food sector where a large part of producers are small and medium-sized, there is greater informality in organizational processes (mainly micro and small, as well as family farming), as well as a lack of training on issues that would allow them to develop and strengthen a DC ecosystem that supports organizational growth. Aligned with this, the poverty evidenced in rural areas is largely associated with low productivity, scarce resources and limited quality, as well as restricted access to public resources. This is due to the fact that the majority of crops are of a family type, but a smaller proportion are owned by those who harvest them, encouraging workers in the agricultural sector to carry out work on their own account and with their unpaid family members, and encouraging non-formality and access to decent work in this type of production chain (FAO, 2015; FAO & CEPAL, 2020).

Finally, and in view of the above, it is of utmost importance to highlight the symbiotic relationship between an DC ecosystem and a competent workforce that supports its development and strengthening, but also, thanks to the benefits achieved through the organization's possession of an DC ecosystem, guarantees decent working conditions not only in its supply chain, but also transversally in its organization and value chain.

2.3. Transformative/Social Innovation and Collaborative Networks replicating Decent Work

A supply chain is a network of organizations or individuals that procures materials, transforms them into intermediate or finished products and distributes these products to customers (Aguiñaga & Leal, 2021). Global supply chains are managed differently in developed countries, where they tend to concentrate on high-value, capital-intensive activities, while developing countries tend to concentrate on lower-value, labour-intensive activities. This has implications for wages throughout the chain, mainly in terms of job quality. This quality does not automatically improve as economic sectors benefit from the profits they generate, as they base their strengths on a global competition scheme based on quality, cost, volumes and delivery times, in addition to intense competition among suppliers, all of which puts downward pressure on wages, working conditions and respect for the fundamental rights of workers participating in these chains (International Labour Organization, 2002). The above suggests that in the specific case of the agricultural sector, actions should be taken to develop process or product innovations that lead to adding value to the product in order to strengthen the production chain and generate greater economic returns along the value chain.

In social partner initiatives, also called social governance, trade unions, companies, employers' organizations and other civil society organizations engage in a process to define and implement joint governance schemes, often through cross-border social dialogue as opposed to private governance mechanisms, which are adopted unilaterally by companies, governance instead requires negotiation between workers and employers. Workers are represented by trade unions in collective bargaining at the workplace, sectoral or national level. Some multinational companies and global union federations have negotiated framework agreements (IFAs) to improve industrial relations in global supply chains. Some employers, trade unions and NGOs have engaged in multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSIs) as a

means of formalising collaborative approaches to supply chain governance (International Labour Organization, 2017).

A great methodology for achieving local development, and thus decent work, is through collaborative networking. If development is to be sustainable, it must be owned by local actors. Local economic development promotes the empowerment of local actors to take ownership of development activities through a defined process of participation, exchange of ideas, coordination of initiatives, and investment of time and resources (Di Meglio, 2007)

Table 2.
Local development and decent work.

Local Development and Decent Work	
Labour market and human development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial training systems for human talent in accordance with the needs • Employment mediation • Promoting decent work • Strengthening the role of women • Commitment to employment and income distribution
Social and institutional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society participation • Public-private partnership • Territorial networking • Coordination of sectoral programmes • Promoting entrepreneurial culture and innovation
Environmentally sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing the local environment and cultural heritage • Environmental impact assessment
Territorial economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial promotion of MSMEs • Basic infrastructure provision • Local supply of services for the development of MSMEs • Territorial innovation systems (R&D&I)

Source: Own elaboration with information from (Albuquerque, 2007).

The Table 2 show what have to work the local governments to promote decent work. Albuquerque (2007), mentions that some of the fundamental elements of local economic development are: the construction of the territorial offer of business development services, the creation of a territorial research and development system for the promotion of local innovations (R&D+i), the provision of basic infrastructures and ensuring access to financial resources for local enterprises, among others, the components of the local labour market and human development (among which the promotion of decent work occupies a central place) have to be considered, in order to orient the supply of human resources training according to local needs, to ensure employment intermediation services and education, nutrition and health services, to include the gender dimension and strengthen the role of women in the labour market, and to incorporate, in short, a clear commitment to employment and income distribution. All this can only be achieved through collaborative networks.

3. Research Method

In order to understand the phenomenon of decent work in agri-food supply chains in emerging markets such as Colombia, as well as to answer to a large extent the proposed research question: ***how do the dynamic capabilities of an organization and the collaborative networks it possesses have an impact on***

ensuring decent work in its supply chain? A mixed approach has been adopted, since the aim is to review general statistics on working conditions in rural areas and the Colombian agricultural sector, as well as the impact of these on the fulfilment of decent work in agri-food supply chains. On the other hand, and from a qualitative approach, it is selected to address the phenomenon in the light of the case study methodology for two specific reasons:

1. Case study research is widely used by researchers for the understanding and exploration of contemporary phenomena, in addition to answering questions (how - why - in what way) that arise through the analysis of the phenomenon, while greatly valuing findings from the real context, opinions of actors and the experiences of referents in a specific environment (e.g., the case study, the case study, the case study, and the case study) (Selviaridis & Spring, 2021; Voss, Tsiriklis y Frohlich, 2002; Yin, 2018).
Due to the scarcity of empirical research on the relationship between DC ecosystem and collaborative networks and decent work in supply chains in the specific case of agri-food chains, the case study methodology allowed us to develop an analysis and discernment of the impact of having an DC ecosystem and well managed collaborative networks to ensure and promote decent work in supply chains in the agricultural sector.
2. Despite the fact that a statistical analysis is carried out (from a quantitative perspective) of databases that reflect information about working conditions in the Colombian agricultural sector and that quantitative methods could contribute to the construction of models or theories (Ketokivi & Choi, 2014), the case study allows us to learn about the particularities of the phenomenon analysed, which serve as a basis for the structuring of models and proposals that generate value for the specific sector analysed, so as to encourage the creation of a DC ecosystem and the management of collaborative networks based on the triad of sustainability (People - Profit - Planet), seeking to promote decent work in agri-food supply chains in the productive sector.

3.1. Case Design and Sampling

For the development of the case, a holistic single-case study design was applied. (Yin, 2018) thanks to the invaluable contribution that the analysis of the Cartama case has for the Hass avocado production sector in Colombia, with two particular characteristics: 1) **unusual** due to the great and exponential development that the company has had in recent years compared to its competition in the sector, and 2) **revealing** because it shows the particularities given in this productive sector and even more so in the labour guarantees given in the Hass avocado production chains, in addition to providing descriptive information that is revealing for the proposed research.

Thanks to interviews with Cartama's administrative and managerial staff, as well as the study of material provided by the company analysed as a case study (databases - sustainability report and various documents) and secondary sources, a review of its DC ecosystem and the management carried out with its collaborative networks (producers and associations) to ensure decent work in its production chain and value chain is carried out.

Open access databases, regional and sectoral reports from the Medellín Chamber of Commerce and other sources that provided relevant background information for the agro-industry were used as secondary sources to obtain a context and overview of the labour conditions in the Colombian agricultural sector, and even more so for comparison with the Hass avocado production sector and the particular case study in Cartama.

3.1.1. Overall Information About Sustainability Practices of Cartama

As can be seen in Cartama's Sustainability Report 2020, it is a company committed to sustainability seen from the concept of the Triple Bottom Line (People, Profit and Planet) that works on social, environmental and economic issues ensuring that sustainability is present in each of its operations. To this end, Cartama has worked consistently on two fronts without neglecting the third, namely the environmental and social fronts. Below is a description of the actions carried out from this company in these areas and aligned with the SDG of the UN set out in the 2030 Agenda (Avofruit S.A.S, 2021).

3.1.2. From an Environmental Perspective

- Identification of the environmental impacts generated, mitigating or reducing their impact through solutions formulated by its employees, taking advantage of the ingenuity and great talent of its staff.
- **SDG 12 - Responsible Production and Consumption** and **SDG13 - Climate Action**: Preserve the forests of its productive units, mainly taking care of water sources and ensuring the conservation of native species. Cartama has protective strips thanks to reforestation plans to improve and preserve water sources. More than 1,140 hectares of native forest have been conserved, equivalent to approximately 30% of the gross area.
- **Implement bee keeping**: According to a study conducted by the National University of Colombia "many people are interested in creating Apis Mellifera reservoirs, because of their ability to increase the yield of Hass avocado fruits by 96%". One of the reasons for implementing this practice is that bees contribute to human food security, so it is key to protect them and promote their sustainability in the most natural way possible (Agribusiness, 2021).
- Strengthening the relationship between academia and business as based on the Triple Helix creating with universities a series of ecological inventories were created for the sustainable management of the agro-ecosystems in the Hass avocado orchards which was carried out in the Alto Bonito, La Pradera, Playa Rica and Teresita production units, the following findings were obtained:
 - 26 species of mammals.
 - 29 species of herps (amphibians, salamanders and reptiles).
 - 145 bird species.
 - About 557 varieties of insects.
 - 113 species of flora, among which several are in danger of extinction. (Avofruit S.A.S, 2021)
- **SDG 7 - Clean energy**: solar panels are installed in its packing plant, as well as in some production units in order to use renewable energy (Avofruit S.A.S, 2021). Currently, around 26,000 Kwh/month are produced, aiming to achieve an electrical autonomy of 60% (Restrepo, 2021).

3.1.3. From a Social Perspective

- **SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth**: Cartama offers formal and decent employment to its entire workforce, which is made up of more than 636 employees. This also contributes to **SDG 1 - End Poverty**. Cartama currently has more than 1,400 employees who are guaranteed a salary higher than the current minimum monthly wage (Cartama salary²), as well as an Employees' Fund that supports the needs of its employees and to which Cartama makes employer contributions, stimulating savings, access to financing at rates lower than 1% for free investment, education, health and housing (Restrepo, 2021).
- **SDG 10 - Reducing inequalities**: Avofruit seeks to dignify the work of farmers through advice and technical support, in order to promote, formalise and certify their businesses, as well as to train them in social management issues and specific campaigns to reduce the gender gap, such as the initiative planned for 2022, which seeks to affect young rural women to prevent early teenage pregnancy (Restrepo, 2021).
- Cartama provides financial support in different training and welfare plans for its employees, who are called "collaborators", in order to strengthen the development of their talents, skills and potential.
- Knowledge transfer to the different actors (key relationships) in society through the **Cartama Educa** programme, which began with the construction of ecological inventories in the social

Cartama salary is equal to the Colombian minimum monthly salary in force plus 5%.²

appropriation of knowledge component. This is also fully aligned with **SDG 4 - Quality Education**. By 2021, a programme was launched with the CESDE Educational Institution to provide technical agricultural training in the regions where Cartama is present, as well as the validation of agricultural experts (growers and harvesters) (Restrepo, 2021).

- **SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation:** related to environmental issues, Cartama seeks to encourage the rational use of water resources, using a minimum amount of water in irrigation activities. They also support aqueducts and users in the areas where they are present to improve technical conditions in water management and have protective strips with reforestation plans and delimited to improve and preserve water sources.
- Finally, Cartama develops different activities in the communities where they operate, establishing positive links with different stakeholders through:
 - Delivery of gifts in the productive units during the Christmas season.
 - Deliveries of school kits
 - Aid to the child development centre Dulce Despertar,
 - Native tree planting days with the community.
 - Delivery of bicycles in the Proantioquia project "**Cartama sostenible**".

All of the above is positive internally in the way it produces and organises its own operations, but Cartama goes further by auditing its supply chain, which is why for years it has been auditing it backwards, requiring its suppliers (known as Allies) to also comply with high standards that guarantee good practices in both the environmental and social areas. Each of the certifications that Avofruit S.A.S. has and what each of these certifications is looking for are mentioned below:

- **SMETA:** The Sedex Affiliates Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) is one of the world's leading and most widely used ethical audit formats. It is an audit procedure that brings together good practice in an ethical audit technique. The SMETA methodology uses the ETI code and local laws as an assessment tool. It includes four modules and they are:
 - Health and safety
 - Labour standards
 - Environment (optional)
 - Business ethics (optional)

Through this certification, Cartama seeks that its allies guarantee the quality and guarantees of their jobs, this certification requires that its allies have at least 15 people who are guaranteed decent work (Patiño, 2021).

- **BASC (Business Alliance for Secure Commerce):** Manages ethical international trade with the prevention of illicit activities: drug trafficking, terrorism, theft, money laundering, corruption, fraud and bribery. Cartama has had this certification since 2017, guaranteeing safe trade through security standards applied to the global supply chain.
- **RAINFOREST ALLIANCE:** Rainforest is an international organization committed to creating a world where people and nature thrive in harmony. Rainforest Alliance certification allows access to specialised buyers, allowing for increased income from the sale of the product and new market opportunities. With the implementation of the standard, new knowledge on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), new technologies in avocado production, advice for optimal production and marketing of products is acquired. Certification increases farm efficiency, reduces the use of agricultural inputs and improves resource management. In implementation, workers benefit from a clean, safe and more dignified workplace where their rights are respected, they are trained to carry out their work duties, personal protection in hazardous and irrigation activities, fair treatment and wages. By obtaining the seal, the image of the product will improve internationally, attracting buyers, consumers and new market opportunities. The Rainforest Alliance seal assures buyers and consumers that the product they are purchasing has been grown and harvested according to environmentally and socially responsible practices (Aranzazu, 2020). This certification is only based on data that emphasises a commitment to continuous improvement,

sustainability training and clear benefits for farmers. The indicators that are reviewed to evidence compliance focus on the following:

- **Forests:** The programmes promoted under this certification promote best practices to protect standing forests by preventing the expansion of farmland into forests; promoting healthy trees, soils and waterways; and protecting native forests.
- **Climate:** Standing forests are a powerful natural climate solution. They promote responsible land management methods that increase carbon storage and avoid deforestation, which fuels greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Human rights:** Certification promotes the rights of rural people. It provides sound strategies to assess and address child labour, forced labour, working conditions, low wages, gender inequality and violation of indigenous land rights.
- **Livelihoods:** Improving sustainable livelihood opportunities for smallholder farmers and forest communities is the most effective way to lift rural people out of poverty, and certification has been shown to generate measurable economic benefits for farmers and forest communities around the world.

Cartama has had this certification since 2017, but it also supports its allied producers in achieving this certification.

- **GLOBAL G.A.P.:** With this quality seal Cartama guarantees that its agricultural production processes and those of its certified partners are safe and sustainable, and that they guarantee the entire chain of custody of the product. Only in 2020 was the first Global GAP chain of custody certification obtained for the Cartama S.A.S. plant.

In addition to the above, by 2021 the company manages to become one of the few certified B companies in Colombia, thanks to the four (4) key elements enacted by this certification, these are:

- Purpose: they are motivated by creating a positive impact on society and the environment.
- Legal requirement: They extend their fiduciary duty of shareholders and managers to include non-financial interests.
- Certification: Commitment to improve their management and transparency standards
- Interdependence: They are part of a community.

Cartama solves social and environmental problems through the standardisation of good practices and processes in its own production units and those of its allies.

- **B Company:** by 2021, the company manages to become one of the few certified **B Companies**. For this certification, companies voluntarily choose to meet rigorous standards for social and environmental performance and transparency. They extend their fiduciary mandate to legally commit to creating benefits for both shareholders and other stakeholders. They are creating jobs with dignity and meaning, and also, promoting thriving communities and protecting nature (Correa, 2019).
- **BRC FOOD:** Global food safety standard that provides guidelines for our product to meet the standards of safety, authenticity, legality and security, thus ensuring that there is no impact on the safety of the final consumer. In 2020 Catama achieved grade A in this certification (Avofruit S.A.S, 2021)

3.1.4. *The Reality of the Avocado Production Sector and Supply Chains in Colombia*

At the avocado level, this item has become for Colombia, not only the second fruit agriculture sector in terms of planted area, behind bananas, registering in 2019 a significant growth in planted hectares (108,819 hectares), but also reports that of these hectares, only 71.27% are in productive age (63. In this way, avocado ranks fourth in terms of planted plants, with a total of 2,005,122 plants, of which only 56.88% were in productive age by 2019 (unlike the other Colombian fruit crops such as banana, orange,

banana, mango, tangerine lime and guava, whose average number of productive plants is around 77.51%). Table 3 below shows the productive evolution of avocado plantations in Colombia.

Table 3.
Avocado plantation production evolution.

Year	Planted area (hect)	Productive area age (hect)	Production (Tons)	Yield (Ton/hect)
2014	57.932	34.908	302.882	8.7
2015	58.784	37.917	274.330	7.2
2016	66.921	42.906	290.246	6.8
2017	71.140	41.068	308.165	7.5
2018	99.235	53.801	445.075	8.3
2019	108.819	63.534	535.021	8.4

Source: Own elaboration with information from (DANE, 2019).

Thus, avocado is not only positioned in 2019 as the fourth fruit production item at the level of production in tons (very close to orange) with a total of 535.584 tons, but also at the level of dispersed fruit trees (used in small farms) it is one of the fruits with the highest percentage of participation for sale, with 65.3% (which represents 34.7% for self-consumption), compared to others such as banana, orange, banana, mango and lemon, which have an average participation for sale of 45.56% (leaving 54.44% for self-consumption of the same producer). According to this information, it can be inferred that, as a higher percentage is for self-consumption, this type of productive units (family units) use more informal labour to collect their harvests, taking as their employees the same family members who are the ones who collect the fruit.

Similarly, and thanks to the growth in world consumption, exports and, most importantly, the increase in the area planted with Hass avocado in Colombia over the last five years, which represents a 126% growth, the production sector of this fruit, together with its supply and value chains, offers greater opportunities and possibilities for generating formal employment compared to other types of crops, transformative social innovation and development for rural areas where the product is grown (Revista Nacional de Agricultura, 2020). In addition, it is worth highlighting the wide availability of Hass avocado in Colombia for planting in different thermal floors, which facilitates harvesting windows in the 52 weeks of the year (Restrepo, 2021).

This is why the Cartama case study should not be seen only as a private company that registers a series of certifications that guarantee "labour dignity", but rather the results should be seen within a disruptive context, around dimensions of self-reference and self-organization, within a depressed but real labour environment in the Colombian agricultural sector, which has managed to promote the development of a new labour market (Yoris, 2017) within a depressed but real working environment of Colombian agriculture, which has managed to boost the capacity for associativity, managing to consolidate a corporation that respects the independence of producers, promoting and incentivising beyond the corporate imposition of 20th century management (Crissien, 2005; Ibañez & Castillo, 2010); all this through the continuous use of dynamic organizational and supply chain capabilities, developing "unintentionally, but willingly" a clear ecosystem of dynamic capabilities that drives as a living system (Crissien, 2005) the associativity of stakeholders, through clear influencing actions, which are interlinked with the knowledge economy (Naranjo, 2010) and that guarantee the concept of decent work not only for Cartama, but also for its Allies. In addition to this, it is worth mentioning that about 85% of the income generated by the production stays in the area of influence of the crop, which allows for social investment and transformative social innovation (Restrepo, 2021).

4. Analysis and Findings

4.1. Decent Work Analysis in Colombia and its Evolution

Martínez (1992) highlights the difficulties in measuring decent work in rural areas because the available information is scarce and weak: the surveys conducted by the National Administrative

Department of Statistics (DANE) are not able to take into account the particularities of rural workers, their seasonality and temporality, and the multiplicity of activities in which they spend their time. Moreover, rural income is measured in the same way as urban income (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2015). It is therefore necessary to carry out an exclusive survey of rural households, which allows the measurement of rural employment in a short period and also through a methodology that is more adjusted to the characteristics of rural work and the rural work process over a long period of time (calendar year), and which facilitates comparisons with data from surveys in urban areas, thus providing new parameters on the specificities of rural employment (Martínez, 1992).

In rural areas, different work activities stand out: agriculture, livestock, mining, fishing and hunting. The evolution of each of these activities has been displacing agriculture as one of the main activities through which work is obtained. This study reviews different indicators to approximate the description of decent work in rural areas of Colombia, associated with agricultural activities. In terms of employment generation, in the case of livestock farming for a 300-hectare farm there are three (3) workers, while in the case of Hass avocado cultivation for a crop of one (1) hectare there is one (1) worker (Restrepo, 2021).

The measurement of decent work cannot be achieved through a single indicator that adequately synthesises and describes the phenomenon of work under appropriate and relevant conditions. Its measurement requires a multidimensional process, which makes it complex to study, observe and characterize. Decent work induces the normative character as it can be achieved in a sequential manner, advancing in each of the dimensions presented.

4.2. Within-Case Analysis

In order to guarantee the promotion of decent work at all levels of the organization, i.e. through its third party producers (associations and individual producers) or allies as Cartama calls them and its own production structure and supply chain, the company seeks to accompany each of them in obtaining the various international certifications necessary and required to enter international markets, the company seeks to accompany each of them in obtaining the different international certifications necessary and required for entry into international markets and, thanks to these, in addition to good agricultural practices, it guarantees decent work for the workers of each of the exporting farms and guarantees that allow for the development of the person as the main resource of these crops (Restrepo, 2021; Uribe, 2021).

According to the information provided by Patiño (2021) about the statistics for 2020 of Avofruit S.A.S. BIC-Cartama and the amount of product supplied by its allies, Figure 1 below shows the current distribution of the allies and their share in kilograms during 2021, in addition to Table 4 which shows the fruit production of the Cartama Allies according to their share in kilograms for 2020.

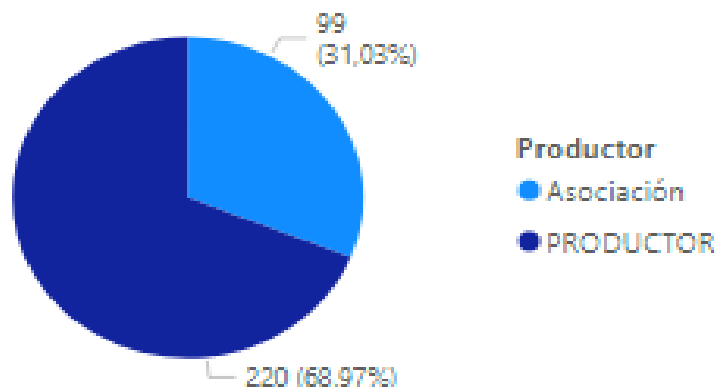


Figure 1.
Distribution of production and participation Cartama 2020 Allies.
Source: Own elaboration with information provided by Cartama (2021).

Table 4.
Production in Kilograms Cartama Allies.

	Association	Producer
Production per Hectare Average (Kg/H)	7301,92 kg/H	6496,23 kg/H
Trees per Hectare Average (Trees/H)	249,95 trees/H	280,78 trees/H

Source: Own elaboration with information provided by Cartama (2021).

As shown in Figure 1, and according to information provided about Cartama's exportable production at present, about 75% of the Hass avocado exported by the company is fruit delivered by its allies, which are an essential link in the opening of new markets, with approximately 25% of the fruit produced directly. Hence the work that Cartama has done in the support and loyalty of its allies through advice to achieve international certifications of each of the farms has been vital to ensure among other issues relevant to the production chain, ensuring decent work and optimal working conditions of employees of its allies, as well as their own at all levels of the organization (operational and administrative) which is reflected in the certification obtained in 2021 as a B company and the incorporation of all companies and business units of the Cartama Group to BIC companies (Restrepo, 2021).

This type of company is closely linked and aligned with what is proposed by transformative social innovation, which seeks to identify social needs, elements of inclusive innovation, as well as the implementation, execution and improvement of relationships and collaborations around society and sustainability, so its innovations are focused, among others, on combating poverty, ensuring the well-being and health of its employees and partners, quality education, promoting decent work and the reduction of inequalities, as well as sustainable communities and cities (Tortia et al., 2020).

Similarly, according to Figure 1, the associations represent 7.21% of the total number of hectares for Cartama, representing 14.19% of the total production in kilos, according to the 2020 results. However, if we analyse the average value per association and compare it with the average value per producer, we find that the Cartama Allied associations represent 14.87% of the average hectares per association, representing 25.91% of the total production.

Patiño (2021) mentions that the medium and large fruit growers who have become Cartama Allies are the most committed to complying with the guidelines established by Cartama in terms of sustainability and sustainability, thus seeking to guarantee access to decent work in their production chains. Likewise, the small and medium-sized associated growers seek to be able to comply with all the established guidelines despite some limitations, which is why they try to provide them with greater support in the certification process.

In addition to the above, Patiño (2021) argues that since it is so complex for the small producer to guarantee all the control points established by the organization for certification and management of resources (tangible and intangible, such as human resources, If the producer is interested in having his fruit exported through Cartama, he is accompanied from the beginning so that he understands the dynamics of the organization and integrates into it, guaranteeing the production of a **Social Fruit**³.

Given all of the above, Cartama is not only a benchmark in the Hass avocado production sector in Colombia in terms of good practices, including access to decent work, but also a model to be replicated in the different crops that are currently increasing their presence in international markets.

4.3. Cross-Case Analysis

As Restrepo (2021) mentions, the coffee production sector in Colombia and its formalisation practices are a benchmark for comparison, not only in terms of growth in the international presence of the fruit, but also in the development of the sector and the practices it implements to guarantee development that respects the environment, society and the desirable economic growth of the organization.

³ Social Fruit: Social Fruit is the name given to those crops that produce according to the guidelines established by the organization for the achievement of sustainable and sustainable development.

In this specific case, and thanks to the analysis of sources, it was possible to observe the following particularities in the guarantees of access to decent work in the coffee farming sector in Colombia:

- According to the study carried out by International Labour Organization (2020) for the year 2014, 89% of the coffee-growing population surveyed was affiliated to the health system, 91% of this percentage being subsidised and 9% contributory, which shows the informality of the sector, in addition to the fact that only 2% and 1% respectively were affiliated to these systems in terms of pensions and occupational risks.
- The wage setting methods commonly used in the sector for coffee harvesting are time-based wage setting or piece-rate wage setting, which are widely used for the payment of tasks such as harvesting and sowing. Gómez (2013) The ILO argues that the selection of one method or the other is due to different factors, mainly related to the type of work entrusted to the worker and his or her performance.
- When a piece-rate payment or result is defined, the aim is to assign it to tasks that can be easily accounted for, such as the amount of grain harvested, holes dug for planting new trees, watering plants, etc., which is closely linked to the physical performance and resistance of the workers, which is a factor that can be considered discriminatory in terms of gender equality (Gómez, 2013). This is a factor that can be considered discriminatory in terms of gender equality.
- This is not directly quantified in terms of productivity or units harvested, and this may be due to the high fluctuation of labour (supply - demand) during the coffee harvest, but it also seeks to get employees to work more days per week in order to obtain a living wage. In Colombia, this type of contract is covered under Art. 133 of the substantive labour code.
- The payment of items such as legal bonuses, overtime and overtime is not contemplated, which leads to a "cannibalisation" of the workforce in the sector (Gómez, 2013). This leads to a "cannibalisation" of the workforce in the sector.

Contrary to the above, the Hass avocado production sector in Colombia seeks to guarantee decent employment for agricultural workers. Thanks to the growth of exports to new markets for this fruit, together with the increase in land planted and suitable for harvesting, the sector will provide in the short and medium term the regeneration of formal employment as well as development for the regions where these crops are located (Revista Nacional de Agricultura, 2020).

According to Jorge Enrique Restrepo, Executive Director of Corpohass, the avocado is transforming regions through the generation of formal employment and with decent wage guarantees with quality, this is evidenced in issues such as seeing women working in the packing houses, schooling programmes for farming families, socio-cultural development of municipalities, among others (Revista Nacional de Agricultura, 2020).

5. Conclusions and Discussion

Based on the case study, it became evident how the achievement of decent work in collaborative and socially transformative environments is a reality in organizations such as Cartama, where they have developed a clear structure of collaborative networks with their allies based on a clear ecosystem of dynamic capabilities, both organizational and supply chain, which allows them to promote the materialisation of labour benefits and transformative social innovation through awareness, influence and incentives to their allies, regardless of the hostile context faced by the national labour environment and even more so in the agro-industrial sector to which Cartama belongs.

The case study provided evidence of the understanding and adoption of these dynamics by the company analysed and its quest to be a benchmark of value in the Hass avocado production sector in Colombia and farmers in general, because beyond the notion of shared value, it establishes fair relations with the small and medium-sized producers with which it is associated, allowing them access to factors (such as those described above) that they would not otherwise have. Thus, they ratify their commitment to the country's development through agro-industrial businesses that are intensive in knowledge and technology (Gómez et al, 2019).

In addition to the above, and thanks to the revised official DANE figures on employment in Colombia and contrasted with the future of the sector thanks to the estimated growth window for ten years of crops and fruit exports, the Hass avocado production sector in Colombia has a promising future in terms of employment generation and social transformations in the regions where the fruit is currently being grown, but also for the entire value chain, because thanks to these increases, the creation of labour links is guaranteed due to the need for skilled labour in all operations along the supply chain (from supplier to customer) (Revista Nacional de Agricultura, 2020).

Finally, it was found that Cartama has been carrying out important empowerment work with its partners, helping them to obtain certifications that at the same time allow them to develop learning curves not only in technical but also in excellent social and environmental practices, offering decent work to farmers, which are transforming the current contracting practices of other crops and sectors, demonstrating the possibility of being economically sustainable and at the same time fair, sharing value throughout the supply chain thanks to collaboration and development of social capital.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This paper proposes the dynamic capabilities and collaborative networks of an organization as facilitators of the generation of decent work. It also proposes decent work as a dynamic agent and generator of dynamic capabilities and collaborative networks in an organization. To demonstrate this assumption, which recognises links between different fields of knowledge (decent work, dynamic capabilities, transformative social innovation and collaborative networks), the case study methodology is used, complemented by the observation of time series of decent work indicators and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

However, the observation and recognition of the notions of decent work, dynamic capabilities, transformative social innovation and collaborative networks requires a process that considers multidimensional scenarios that are complex to study, observe and characterise. Hence, it is recognised that a single case study, while providing valuable and important information, is not sufficient to provide meaningful evidence to make generalisations about the proposed assumption with high reliability.

It is recommended that several representative case studies be carried out in order to provide findings and knowledge that allow for a deeper understanding of the field of knowledge where the constructs addressed are intercepted and to enrich these with quantitative modelling of aggregate information on decent work, as long as the principles of external and internal validity that should characterise the data used by this type of empirical methodologies are met.

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