

## **Institutional Trust and Farmers' Perceptions of Cotton Policy in Hauts-Bassins, Burkina Faso**

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**Abstract:** This paper investigates the determinants of cotton producers' perceptions of cotton policy in the Hauts-Bassins region, the main cotton-producing area of Burkina Faso. In light of a persistent decline in production since 2014, the study seeks to understand how farmers evaluate the policies implemented by cotton companies and how these perceptions influence their level of engagement. The analysis is based on data collected from 369 producers in the municipality of Léna, located within the SOFITEX zone. Farmers' perceptions are measured as an ordinal variable (poor, good, very good) and analyzed using an ordered logistic regression model. Results indicate that four variables significantly shape producers' perceptions: age, cotton farming experience, total farm size, and trust in cotton sector authorities. While age, land size, and trust are positively associated with more favorable perceptions, farming experience exerts a negative effect. The findings highlight a deep mistrust among producers toward cotton sector authorities, who are perceived as disconnected from their concerns. The study recommends more participatory governance, improved institutional communication, and greater involvement of smallholders in decision-making processes to strengthen support for cotton policies

**Keywords:** Cotton Policy, Farmers' Perceptions, Institutional Trust, Agricultural Governance, Burkina Faso

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