

A Farm-Gate Ledger and Two Windows

FIGURE 1

The mechanism on one page. Every term is either published in advance or recorded in a verified transaction. Beyond the Coffee Record

WHAT MUST BE RECORDED

Six verified records

Grower identity

Plot, against the registry

Market payment attaches to a verified sale. Renewal payment attaches to an approved record.

A recorded legal sale

Regional farm-gate price

Regional viability benchmark

Approved renewal record

WHEN A PAYMENT IS DUE

WINDOW 1 · RENEWAL

The grower stumps or replants.
Coffee income stops. The tree recovers.
Trigger: an approved renewal record.

payment =
verified area
× published rate × approved support period

WINDOW 2 · MARKET SHORTFALL

The farm-gate price falls below
the cost of staying in coffee.
Trigger: price below the benchmark.

shortfall = benchmark - price
payment =
shortfall × verified quantity × coverage rate

WHAT STOPS IT BEING STOLEN

Before payment

Buyer and seller records must match
Plot and identity must match the registry
Quantity capped at verified production history
Coverage rate set below full compensation

At payment

Paid directly into the grower's own account
No intermediary custody, no offset by buyers
The body that verifies does not authorize
The body that sets the benchmark does not pay

After payment

Random field testing of paid claims
Independent annual review and audit
Appeals, with published resolution statistics
Pre-announced stop conditions

WHAT THE PUBLIC GETS BACK

The ledger

Weekly farm-gate price series, by zone
The viability benchmark and its method
Payments by region and category
Audit findings and complaint statistics
Published before the harvest it governs, not after.

The point

Anyone can check the arithmetic: a cooperative,
a journalist, a researcher, the grower herself.
A mechanism whose numbers cannot be reproduced
by an outsider cannot be audited by one either.

WHY THIS IS NOT A LEAP

The state already does this, at the port

Daily benchmark setting at inception, 2020
Weekly minimum export registration price now
A contract below it does not register
Weekly minimum carried into domestic sales, 2023
QR-coded exporter certificates, 2025
Benchmark. Publish. Enforce. All of it exists.

The state does not do this, at the farm gate

No published farm-gate price series
No published regional viability benchmark
No published farmer-share methodology
No payment when the price falls below cost
No income bridge when the tree is cut back
The machinery is not missing. It is pointed the other way.

WHAT IT COSTS

Illustrative two-zone, two-season pilot, base case

408.28m birr ≈ 2.6m USD

Reported coffee export earnings, 2025/26

3.1bn USD

Per the Prime Minister's July 7, 2026 statement to Parliament.

The pilot as a share of it

0.08%