BUILDING SUSTAINABLE VALUE CHAINS

Trade for Sustainable Development
Sustainable development matters to everyone. It is at the core of ITC’s mission. This is why nine years ago we began the Trade for Sustainable Development Programme to promote sustainable value chains as a means to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries add value to their products and services.

The Trade and Sustainable Development Programme has responded to the increasing complexity of the sustainability landscape. A proliferation of regulations, standards, codes of conduct and other sustainability initiatives create challenges for consumers, multinationals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments, and particularly SMEs in the developing world.

By integrating ITC’s Trade and Environment portfolio into the Trade for Sustainable Development Programme in 2016, the team’s activities have expanded to environmental sustainability areas, such as climate change and biodiversity. Promoting climate resilience of export supply chains and sustainable trade in biodiversity-based products are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Goals (SDGs) and providing solutions for sustainable value chains.

Sustainability initiatives can provide new trade opportunities, mitigate environmental degradation and climate change impacts, improve compliance with social and labour standards, and boost overall competitiveness of SME exporters.

While the rising certification costs result in market inefficiencies, the private or voluntary nature of sustainability standards is a strength, fostering innovation and an agile response to imperatives such as climate change and workers’ rights.

These benefits will only be fully realized by investing financial and technical resources to formulate and implement sustainability strategies, ranging from compliance with standards to mitigation and adaptation to climate change. This is often more difficult for small producers in the developing world due to lack of technical knowledge and limited access to finance and technology.

This investment is however not an option; it is a major component of business. To meet the growing demand for goods and services that are framed by sustainability parameters, they must become a critical part of any SME’s business plan.

National governments and international organizations are moving ahead with international regulatory frameworks as well as sustainable public procurement commitments – as are many multinational corporations. But these commitments could become lost in the web of overlapping sustainability standards, codes and sourcing policies.

Our collective challenge is to harness the best of what sustainability initiatives offer, so that sustainable, inclusive trade becomes the norm, and not the exception.

I hope you will find the following information useful to understand the full breadth of the ITC Trade for Sustainable Development Programme and how its work, efforts and concrete projects can be an integral part of the sustainable development discourse.

We look forward to working with you.

Arancha González
Executive Director, International Trade Centre (ITC)
Trade for Sustainable Development Principles

Sustainability
Support and promote sustainable trade practices, with regards to social, environmental, economic and management, quality and ethics issues at stake in the production, processing and trading of goods and services.

Transparency
Contribute to efficiency in global supply chains by clear demonstration of openness to sharing good practices, and to foster transparency, trust and inclusiveness at all levels of global supply chains.

Harmonization
Build on existing resources and methodologies with a collaborative approach avoiding duplication that may provoke proliferation of standards, multiplication of audits or assessment methodologies.

UN Sustainable Development Goals
Act in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, otherwise known as the Global Goals, addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people.

By adhering to the ITC Trade for Sustainable Development principles, companies and institutions working with our programme are expected to embrace a set of core values to support sustainable trade.

We invite you to become a signatory today by completing the Letter of Endorsement of the T4SD Principles: http://bit.ly/T4SDprinciples
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SUSTAINABILITY MAP

A new online gateway to help businesses chart their path to more sustainable trade

Sustainability Map is developed by ITC’s Trade for Sustainable Development (T4SD) Programme as a free and user-friendly platform. It offers access to wide-ranging information for trade-related sustainability initiatives and standards.

Building on well-established online tools, such as Standards Map, the Sustainability Map offers new features such as the Sustainability Network. The online platform enables users, regardless of their position in the value chain, to better understand the sustainability initiatives landscape and to connect with business partners.

The Sustainability Map is part of ITC’s suite of Market Analysis Tools, with more than 630,000 registered users worldwide.

### Sustainability Standards

**Transparency on standards initiatives**

[www.sustainabilitymap.org/standards](http://www.sustainabilitymap.org/standards) (Also: www.standardsmap.org)

This website enables users to analyse standards-related data and self-assess their sustainability-related performance. The site currently covers more than 230 standards initiatives applicable to more than 80 sectors and 180 countries.

Practitioners from many sectors and backgrounds use the website to identify relevant standards, compare information through tables and charts, and run self-assessments of their performance against standards’ requirements.

At the end of the assessment, a diagnostic report details areas for improvement.

### Sustainability Network

**Connecting businesses along sustainable value chains**

[www.sustainabilitymap.org/network](http://www.sustainabilitymap.org/network)

This virtual marketplace allows users to share their business and sustainability profiles with buyers, traders, standards organizations, certification bodies, financiers and others.

The marketplace creates a better environment for business engagement with value chain partners by enabling farmers, processors and manufacturers to share diagnostic reports with buyers looking to source sustainable products and services.
Sustainability Community

Linking communities committed to sustainable production and trade
www.sustainabilitymap.org/community (Also: www.sustainabilityxchange.org)

The Sustainability Community is focused on driving sustainable agricultural value chains and trade. This website is also available at www.sustainabilityxchange.org. It was designed to empower trainers, businesses, standards organizations, NGOs and governments. The Community component of Sustainability Map sources knowledge from SustainabilityXchange, an established platform which provides users with access to capacity-building information and contacts for sustainable agriculture, forestry and aquaculture.

The one-stop shop of accessible information, the Sustainability Community is composed of five services:

- Library
- Community forum
- Directory of experts and institutions
- Events calendar
- News & jobs

Sustainability Trends

Market data for more informed sustainability decisions
www.sustainabilitymap.org/trends

Sustainability Trends provides greater access to information on sustainable markets. Regularly updated, this component of Sustainability Map offers a comprehensive overview of production-related market information on some of the major sustainability-related standards.

It provides insights into the growing global market share of certified/verified products, in sectors such as bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, forestry, palm oil, soybeans, sugarcane and tea.

T4SD Database

A common language for standards initiatives

A credible, central and neutral repository, the T4SD database is the foundation of the Sustainability Map. It enables comparisons between standards initiatives, their processes and requirements.

A common language translates the standards information into more than 1,000 data fields split into two main categories: requirements and processes.

ITC collects information on standards and conducts quality control in cooperation with standards organizations and independent experts. Each relevant organization (or its designated experts) updates the information annually. ITC ensures continuous improvement of the database and referencing of new standards.
The Standards component of Sustainability Map builds on the established online portal, Standards Map. It offers comprehensive, verified and transparent information on standards for environmental protection, worker and labour rights, economic development, quality and food safety, as well as business ethics.

**Standards Map helps users to:**
- Engage in sustainable production and trade;
- Review and analyse various standards’ requirements and processes;
- Learn about potential certification costs and benefits;
- Access step-by-step guidance on how to comply with requirements;
- Evaluate additional efforts to be in compliance;
- Monitor progress over time using self-assessment diagnostic reports.

**Assess performance**

Run a self-assessment to evaluate compliance against any set of standards and their specific requirements, using an online questionnaire.

A diagnostic report charts the organization’s roadmap to sustainable trade. It provides a detailed analysis of areas for improvement and can be shared online with partners.

**Key features**

- An interactive and user-friendly web-based platform;
- Free access, as part of ITC’s global public goods policy;
- Four modules help users navigate through and analyse standards information.

**Learn more about standards**

Identify, compare and assess over 230 standards, codes of conduct, protocols and best practices.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Users %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>India</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>Viet Nam</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
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*Visitors who accessed the website at least one time. Users accessing the website multiple times are counted as one visit.*

Source: Standards Map Google Analytics, March 2017
1. Creating a user profile

Users of the Sustainability Network, which include farmers, producers, processors and manufacturers, can benefit from the services of the Sustainability Network by creating basic sustainability profiles. These profiles include information about their business, production and trading activities. User sustainability profiles can be created through multiple entry points:

- Directly on the Sustainability Network website (online);
- By obtaining an invitation from a user’s business partner, to join their own sustainability network (online);
- By being included in the network by partners collecting the necessary data in the field (offline).

2. Sustainability Business Profile

Users can enhance their basic profile by adding more information about their production and business practices. This could include a statement of existing compliance with any sustainability standards, or a self-assessment of the capacity for future compliance with selected standards.

The self-assessment questionnaire can be completed online from the website, or offline. Once completed, the system informs businesses about their current commitment levels measured against requirements set forth by standards initiatives. It also generates a gap analysis, pointing out the areas where the business may need to improve sustainability practices.

3. User dashboard

Sustainability Business Profiles are centralized in a secured and private user dashboard. The dashboard enables users to:

- Keep track of their sustainability assessment and any progress they wish to record;
- Connect and share information with others on the Sustainability Network;
- Decide what to share publicly, and when;
- Request a Global Location Number (GLN), issued by the Global Standard 1 (GS1) to link to GS1-enabled traceability systems.

Users of the Sustainability Network always have full ownership of their data. The Network operates in a fully secured environment.
Smallholders and SMEs: Understanding compliance, boosting visibility

Sharing their profile on the Sustainability Network enables producers to link up to traders, international buyers and others in the global value chain that prioritize sustainable sourcing. Those on the demand side of the value chain contact specific businesses based on their Sustainability Business Profiles.

Buyers and retailers: Sustainable supply chain management

Buyers and retailers access the Sustainability Network to engage with their value chains. They invite existing or potential suppliers and business partners – future Sustainability Network users – to connect in the Sustainability Network. With this functionality, the Network creates an easy-to-navigate environment to exchange information on sustainability practices and, ultimately, to do business.

Decision-makers: Data analytics

The Sustainability Network gives buyers, retailers, standards organizations and policymakers access to unique sustainability information and intelligence. Aggregate analytics can be generated focusing on particular product groups or areas by using geographical data. It helps them make decisions tailored to solving various sustainability-related issues and challenges.
Sustainability Community

Linking communities committed to sustainable production and trade

A platform to develop sustainable value chains in agriculture, forestry and aquaculture

The Sustainability Community or SustainabilityXchange, facilitates interaction among upstream value chain operators and technical assistance providers. This platform helps improve performance and increase participation of producers from developing countries and emerging markets in certified sustainable trade.

This free platform was implemented with a range of partners to exchange information, resources and experiences.

A one-stop shop

The platform empowers trainers, businesses and standards organizations, NGOs and governments to find high-quality capacity-building materials and reliable service providers. Users get access to:

- Relevant documentation: Library
  Guidelines, training materials, guides, handouts, and research on quality management systems, specific sustainability initiatives and general good practices.

- Experts, service providers and organizations: Directory
  Easy-to-search profiles of experts and service providers with specific skill sets in sustainable agriculture and trade.

- Exchange of experiences: Community Forum
  Practitioners from various regions and backgrounds can ask questions and directly share know-how through moderated or spontaneous e-discussions.

- Capacity development: Events Calendar
  Training, workshops, seminars and conferences around the world – to be searched and shared.

- Newsfeed from the field: News and Jobs
  Carefully curated latest news and job opportunities are submitted by SustainabilityXchange users in the sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry sectors.

SustainabilityXchange was made possible thanks to:

- Hivos, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), 4C Association, UTZ Certified and the Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH).

- ITC developed the platform in close collaboration with Fair and Sustainable Advisory Services, Fair Access to Quality and Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation.
Community Forum

5–6 moderated e-discussions each year and an open forum to use for issue-specific community of practice discussions

Events calendar

Dozens of new capacity-building events each month and an open forum to use for additional visibility of sustainability-related events

Library

1,100+ materials from more than 200 resources and growing every day

Directory

210+ expert profiles representing over 100 organizations and growing every day

News & Jobs

2,000 news sources news updated every day, dozens of new job postings every month

www.sustainabilitymap.org/community
www.sustainabilityxchange.org
Sustainability Trends responds to the general lack of harmonized and verified information on the evolution of the global market share of certified/verified products. Information on annual market trends and aggregated statistics in several commodity groups is presented using interactive charts and graphs. Sustainability Trends offers global production-related data by surveyed commodity or standards initiatives.

**Market data on voluntary standards at your fingertips**

Sustainability Trends provides access to information on the evolving market of the forestry sector and eight sustainably produced agricultural commodities – bananas, cocoa, coffee, cotton, palm oil, soybeans, sugarcane and tea.

Sustainability Trends is the only online portal that offers market information about 14 major sustainability standards in a comprehensive manner.

**Open and accessible data on market trends**

Information has been collected by three implementing partners: Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) and ITC. The work is supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

Data has been collected in a collaborative manner with each of the 14 standards initiatives in a harmonized methodology against a set of eight indicators that focus on:

- Crop production;
- Production sold under a voluntary sustainability standard (VSS) label;
- Area cultivated;
- Numbers of producers and other operator types.

In the future, the three partners aim to expand the set of indicators against which information is being collected, and plan to broaden the scope of the products, sectors and sustainability standards.

**Key features**

- Information presented in interactive charts and graphs;
- Quality data collected in a harmonized way, provided by standards initiatives;
- Free access, as part of ITC’s global public goods policy.
Sustainability Trends helps:

- SME producers and exporters to be aware of market opportunities and potential;
- Traders, buyers and retailers to better understand the scale of global production;
- Policymakers and analysts, NGOs and donors to make better decisions about policy interventions and programme design.

Sustainability Trends partners

The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), the International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) and the International Trade Centre (ITC). The project is supported by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO).

www.sustainabilitymap.org/trends
ITC has developed the T4SD Global Database to analyse very diverse standards initiatives. ITC collects, reviews and categorizes the requirements and processes of standards information.

This database is built upon some 1,000 data points, developed with technical partners and over 200 standard organizations. It is revised annually to accommodate more sectors and requirements.
Robust data management protocols

The T4SD Global Database is based on a rigorous methodology to ensure global, comprehensive and neutral information on standards.

1. ITC’s T4SD team loads the information into the database using official documents provided by the standard organization. The data entry takes place through an online Data Entry Tool (DET), which facilitates the entry and further review of standards’ information.

2. An independent expert knowledgeable on the standard initiative completes the quality control review of the information entered by ITC.

3. The standard organization reviews the information entered by ITC team and reviewed by the independent expert. The review takes place through the DET, which enables the T4SD team to track and review the suggested changes made by the standard organization.

4. The suggested changes made by the standard organization are reviewed and discussed with ITC team. Any changes made by the standard organization need to be supplemented with evidence taken from their official documents.

5. Once information has been approved by all parties, it is displayed on Standards Map.

6. Data is continuously updated with a full review taking place annually. Changes can be made throughout the year in case standard organizations make changes to their standards or need to update information in the system.
**Publications**

**Contributing to the knowledge base**

Based on demand, T4SD contributes to or develops various unique research projects related to both the trade-related environment aspects and sustainability standards initiatives. The publications, which include market studies, guides and reports, are typically collaborative efforts with renowned research institutes and experts.

T4SD publications provide practical advice as well as concise analysis for better-informed decision-making. Research activities to date included supplier sourcing guides and impact reports, as well as contributions to policy papers and market studies.

**Capacity building**

**Empowering stakeholders to engage in sustainable production and trade**

Producers and exporters need support to measure their capacity to understand and meet standards and other market requirements applicable to their products. The aim is to strengthen their sustainability and international competitiveness. The training programme consist of in-the-field training workshops and e-learning modules.

**Customized platforms and special projects**

**Leveraging the repository of standards information to deliver value chain solutions**

Customized platforms help our partners create synergies, saving time and resources. They are demand-driven interventions that address specific needs of project partners in their value chains. The equivalency tool for flower growers, for example, assesses floriculture-related sustainability standards against a set of international references.

Special projects include developing tailored supply chain management tools. An example is a portal developed with the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform. The portal enables farmers to assess and communicate sustainable agriculture practices to their customers in the food and beverages industry, including some of the largest buyers and retailers. Other examples include partnerships for development results, for example the Python Conservation Partnership with Kering and IUCN, “Chocothon” with Google Food Lab and Business School of Lausanne, and others.

T4SD works to improve transparency on sustainable trade and markets by providing a set of complementary services tailored to partners’ needs. In addition to its global web-based platforms, T4SD offers customized and generic capacity-building courses, tailored special projects and platforms. It also contributes to a broad spectrum of research projects.
Publications

Contributing to the knowledge base

Publications and research projects include:

- Developing a knowledge bank of sustainability standards;
- Contributing to ITC and other publications;
- Providing impact and market data on sustainability and climate resilience in agricultural and natural resource value chains to ITC beneficiaries;
- Participating in practitioner and academic debates.

**Social and Environmental Standards: Contributing to More Sustainable Value Chains (2016)**

The joint ITC-European University Institute report aims to uncover what makes standards more accessible to producers. It shows how the institutional design of standards and their governance structure can make standards more accessible to producers through cost sharing, assistance and transparency. The report also shows how country-level characteristics affect the number of standards available.

The report concludes with recommendations on how standard-setting organizations and value chain players can foster inclusiveness and sustainable development. It provides guidance for policymakers on how to support the integration of their SMEs and small farmers into sustainable value chains.

**Influencing Sustainable Sourcing Decisions in Agri-Food Supply Chains (2016)**

The paper presents research findings on how to influence sustainable sourcing decisions in agri-food supply chains. It also provides insights into the role of intermediaries.

**Sustainable Sourcing of Agricultural Raw Materials – A Practitioner’s Guide (2013)**

This guide sets out the issues companies need to consider when planning and implementing a sustainable sourcing strategy, with particular focus on developing sustainable supply chains. The guide illustrates the main challenges in developing sustainable supply chain. It also develops a set of actions and strategic responses to support businesses to deal with sustainability issues along the supply chain. This is a joint publication with a range of collaborating partners.

**Literature Reviews (2011–2012)**

- The Impact of Private Standards on Value Chains
- The Impact of Private Standards on Developing Country Producers
- The Interplay of Public and Private Standards
- Best Practices – When Private Standards Work
Publications

Contributing to the knowledge base

Climate resilient agriculture

**Climate Change and the Agri-Food Trade (2015)**

Climate change is reducing the competitiveness of agricultural exports from developing countries as far apart as Peru and Uganda, according to this ITC survey of agri-food exporters in these countries. Among the study’s recommendations: an international climate platform to share best practices and reliable climate information; targeted training in climate-smart agriculture and sustainable certification; financing for sustainable practices and infrastructure; better public-private networks and partnerships to attract support to manage climate risks.

**Mitigating Climate Change in the Tea Sector (2014)**

This is ITC’s first training guide helping tea farmers and factories lower their emissions and reduce energy costs. Created with the Ethical Tea Partnership, the Rainforest Alliance and FLOCERT using a Kenya Tea Development Agency factory as a pilot case, it shows how climate change is having an impact on tea quantity and quality. This step-by-step manual provides an overview of climate change in the tea sector; outlines options for tea factory managers and farm extension officers; and outlines carbon footprint measurement.

Biodiversity-based products and natural resources

**Trade in Quinoa: Impact on the Welfare of Peruvian Communities (2016)**

Buying quinoa contributes to better livelihoods for rural Peruvian communities, according to this ITC study. It provides much-needed data on the impact of changing market prices on the welfare of rural households in the altiplano of Peru. The findings inform policymakers about the benefits of the trade and challenges still facing smallholders, following conflicting media reports on the impact of higher quinoa prices. Among the Aid-for-Trade policy recommendations are incentives for better storage facilities, establishment of markets for ecosystem services and support for market differentiation strategies for biodiverse, organic quinoa produced by smallholders.


Amid global concern about biodiversity loss and the surge in illegal trade of threatened species, international policy has turned its attention to trade restrictions, enforcement measures and demand-reduction strategies. This analytical framework recommends that policy decisions should balance factors related to the species and its habitat; governance and institutional settings; supply-chain structure; and markets. These factors include species resilience, distribution and accessibility; property rights and policies such as CITES listings, quotas and bans; production costs, intermediaries, monopolies and stockpiling; and market demand elasticity and size.
Training in the field – Colombia

The training programme is based on T4SD web platforms and tailored capacity-building activities provided by ITC experts in the field. An example is a joint programme with Swisscontact, which began in March 2015. It is empowering cocoa producers in Colombia on certification related to standards such as Fairtrade, UTZ and the Rainforest Alliance.

The project has brought together associations of small-scale farmers to help create Basic Guidelines for Sustainable Cocoa (Lineamientos Básicos para un Cacao Sostenible, LBCS) for both producers and organizations. Producers can perform self-assessments to understand areas to improve before starting an official certification process.

Self-assessment of cocoa farmers and cocoa organizations can be done online with a customized portal using the ITC Standards Map tool for the cocoa sector: www.standardsmap.org/lbcs.

A unique feature is that profiles of cocoa farmers and organizations can be automatically linked to the basic requirements of self-assessment for sustainable cocoa (LBCS and other standards).

‘The workshop is a top need in building SME capacity to be independent, with self-assessment on standards.’

Ung Vanna, WOT - Natural Khmer Moringa, Cambodia

‘The tools reduce hours of research time and facilitate decision-making.’

Xoco Fine Cocoa Company, Honduras
Another project was implemented in 2013 in Peru to strengthen SMEs’ and smallholder producers’ competitiveness and sustainability of biodiversity-based products, such as Andean grains or fine cocoa.

Project partners are the Peru Export and Tourism Promotion Board (Promperú), the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation and the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism.

The project combines a different range of activities such as technical support for the implementation of organic and improved agricultural practices, and the establishment of quality control systems as a way to increase the sectors’ capacity to meet sustainability and quality market requirements.

SMEs and cooperatives receive support to improve their marketing and branding strategies based on their sustainability approach as well as to obtain international and sustainability certifications.

Finally, T4SD facilitates business-to-business meetings between its beneficiaries and international buyers in order to create direct market linkages.

**T4SD Training Approach**

**Strengthened Agriculture Practices**
- Trainings on climate-resilient and organic practices
- Trainings on harvest and post-harvest treatment

**Improved Compliance with Sustainability Standards**
- Trainings for SMEs and cooperatives on certification criteria based on T4SD web-tools
- Technical assistance on how to meet voluntary standard requirements.

**Increased Product Differentiation**
- Tailored coaching sessions on branding, marketing and sustainable packaging of final products.

**Creation of Market Linkages**
- Facilitation of business meetings between beneficiaries and international buyers

Nine cooperatives producing Andean grains received trainings on improved agricultural practices and organic farming (representing 1500+ smallholder farmers)

Eight cooperatives producing cocoa received trainings on harvest and post-harvest treatment practices (representing 3600+ smallholder farmers)

Sales of around $2,615,000 from the participation of beneficiaries in trade fairs supported by ITC
E-learning

ITC has developed several free online courses to inform users about sustainability initiatives and to help them understand the various characteristics of voluntary standards relevant to smallholders and SMEs.

The courses are available online at ITC’s SME Academy. Participants who meet the requirements, which include completing a case study exercise, receive a Certificate of Completion in electronic format.

Module 1: Introduction to Standards and Sustainability

- Lecture 1: What are standards?
- Lecture 2: The world of standards – which standards are relevant to international trade?
- Lecture 3: Voluntary sustainability standards.
- Lecture 4: How does certification work? The key steps to becoming certified.
- Lecture 5: The benefits and costs of sustainability standards for your business.

This course introduces users to the basic concepts in relation to standards and sustainability from a business perspective.

Module 2: The Role of Standards in Sustainable Supply Chains

- Lecture 3: Conducting a Self-Assessment.

This course guides users through the business case of sustainability requirements in value chains and provides tutorials on ITC Standards Map.

‘Clear and fit-for-purpose presentations.’

‘Honestly, I was not aware of how important these standards are in the market. I am glad I did this course and it opened up my mind.’

‘This course has equipped me with skills to position myself as a leader in the area of voluntary standards for African agribusiness.’

Participants at the Introduction to Standards and Sustainability e-learning course, ITC SME Academy, August 2016
Customized Platforms

Leveraging the repository of standards information to deliver value chain solutions

www.standardsmap.org/fsi

The Floriculture Sustainability Initiative (FSI) unites more than 25 international organizations in the flower-growing sector and is supported by the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH). The objective of FSI members is to have 90% of their flowers and potted plants sustainably produced and traded by 2020.

ITC’s role is to contribute to the development of the FSI Equivalency Tool, which builds on the T4SD global database and assesses sustainability standards that operate in the floriculture sector against a set of international references.

www.standardsmap.org/bsci

The Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) is an initiative for companies committed to improving working conditions in factories and farms worldwide. It joined ITC to customize a self-assessment tool for producers to assess their social performance against BSCI requirements.

www.standardsmap.org/gscp

ITC and the Global Social Compliance Programme (GSCP) have a joint portal to analyse sustainability standards, codes of conduct and company audits against GSCP Reference Codes. Suppliers perform self-assessments against GSCP social and environmental reference codes.

www.standardsmap.org/aimprogress

AIM-PROGRESS reduces duplication of supplier assessments. Member companies have responsible sourcing programmes that may include site assessments (audits) of suppliers. To reduce audit duplication and costs, companies using the Mutual Recognition mechanism recognize supplier audits of other companies.

ITC and AIM-PROGRESS are developing a benchmarking tool that supports mutual recognition among companies.

www.standardsmap.org/blcs

Basic Criteria for Sustainable Cocoa (Lineamientos Básicos para un Cacao Sostenible – LBCS) is an online tool developed with the Swiss State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Swiss Foundation for International Development Cooperation, in the framework of the programme Promotion of Export and Production of Fine and Aromatic Cocoa of Colombia (Coexca). LBCS brings cocoa producers up to speed on sustainability issues.
In 2002, Nestlé, Unilever and Danone established the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform to facilitate sharing their knowledge and best practices to support the development and implementation of sustainable agriculture practices at a precompetitive level. Today, SAI Platform has over 70 active members operating in the global food value chain.

SAI Platform and ITC have developed an online Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA) tool that leverages the ITC Standards Map website and offers a unique platform. Users review and compare FSA against other standards, run self-assessments, monitor progress, save their reports into a private account and decide when to share results.

SAI Platform enables stakeholders to assess their farm sustainability using the online FSA platform, which allows users to:

- Review and compare FSA against other standards;
- Run a farm sustainability self-assessment and see results online;
- Aggregate the farm sustainability profiles across countries, commodities and supply chains;
- Monitor progress over time using an easy scoring mechanism for farmers that perform an FSA;
- Get a visual overview of the results;
- Save their reports into a private account and decide whether to share the results.

Aggregated data creates transparency regarding sustainable farming and improves communication throughout the global agriculture value chains.

The FSA Assessment is currently being used in 20 countries and is available in 19 languages.

www.fsatool.standardsmap.org
The ITC Climate Resilience Toolkit is designed for SMEs in developing countries, which face climate-induced risks and resource inefficiencies. The toolkit offers adaptation and mitigation measures to reduce these risks, increase resource efficiency and strengthen SME competitiveness.

It focuses on two main aspects of climate change:
- Adaptation to climate change impacts;
- Mitigation of climate change impacts.

These two components can be either implemented jointly or separately, based on SMEs’ priorities, needs and challenges in a particular country and/or sector.

SMEs can build their capacity to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts through a learning approach that combines customized advisory services and online learning modules on how to ‘become a climate expert’:

- First, SMEs self-assess their capacities through an online assessment tool hosted by the ITC Standards Map platform. The assessment can be done either online or offline, ensuring accessibility for all SMEs.
- Second, SMEs receive customized advisory services by ITC trainers as well as participate in the online learning programme for which they will receive an ITC certificate upon completion.

What could increased climate resilience mean for SMEs?

Ensuring business continuity through reduced climate-induced risks and increased resource efficiency

Realizing cost savings through increased resource efficiency and reduced climate-induced losses

Creating competitive advantages through adaptation and mitigation measures

Creating business opportunities by developing new products and services

The ITC trainer toolbox has five main components:
- Climate risk assessment (adaptation specific) and/or a resource efficiency gap assessment (mitigation specific);
- A cost-benefit tool for the prioritization of adaptation and mitigation measures;
- Formulation of adaptation and mitigation strategies;
- Access to adequate technology, finance, expertise and markets to implement adaptation and mitigation strategies.

ITC facilitates access to green finance and adequate technology through its extensive network of financial intermediaries and technology providers.
Chocothon

The ‘Chocothon’ initiative aims to empower and connect cocoa farmers, and create new opportunities for them and other value chain stakeholders in the cocoa production, along with reducing supply chain disruption risks. Focused initially on Ghana, the ambition is to create and promote a shared-value sustainable cocoa supply chain platform. One of the main parts of the initiative is the organization of a ‘hackathon for chocolate’ or ‘Chocothon’ – an event in which IT software developers as well as graphic and interface designers collaborate intensively on software innovation projects.

The first phase of Chocothon was carried out in January 2017, with follow-up missions scheduled later in the year. At its core, the initiative pursues the following objectives:

- **Share knowledge**: Catalyze crowdsourcing commitments, share technical expertise and develop approaches to solving the identified obstacles to develop the shared-value platform. A practical example is a conference organized as part of the first phase of Chocothon, raising awareness of the main issues faced by the Ghanaian cocoa sector.

- **Connect stakeholders**: Bring all relevant actors together using technology innovations. This can include the development of global public online tools and low-tech offline applications that provide concrete solutions to the challenges in the cocoa supply chain, such as connecting upstream and downstream actors of the chain. The hackathon serves to deliver such solutions by competing teams of specialists.

- **Empower producers**: The initiative also helps farmers tackle the problems they face in cocoa production by delivering customized trainings, including the training-of-trainers workshops. These workshops train participants in the use of sustainability-related tools.

### The Chocothon Initiative

The initiative is a partnership between T4SD, the Google Food Lab, Business School Lausanne, Future Food Institute and the Crowdfooding platform. The Chocothon knowledge partners are Googlers Give Global Leadership Program, Google Accra, Nestlé and Barry Callebaut; media partners are Food Inspiration and Food Tech Connect.

chocothon.com
Fair Trade Tourism (FTT) is Secretariat to the Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa, which ITC supports to help establish mutual recognition between the various responsible tourism standards of southern Africa. As Secretariat to the Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance Africa, Fair Trade Tourism promotes the harmonization of sustainable tourism standards in Africa through use of the ITC Standards Map. Thanks to collaboration with ITC, there is increased cooperation between sustainable tourism certification schemes. We are improving their capacity to provide accessible and credible certification services to the tourism industry. ITC’s support has been valuable to expand the awareness and reach of sustainable tourism certification in Africa.

ITC and Swisscontact Colombia initiated a joint programme in 2015 to empower cocoa producers and raise awareness around basic sustainability issues required by international certifications. Partnerships have been established with local cocoa organizations (such as APROCASUR in Santa Rosa de Bolivar, Colombia), and technical experts working in the producer organizations that are closely connected to the cocoa farmers.

By using the self-assessment tool developed by ITC and Swisscontact Colombia, we will be able to bring cocoa producers step-by-step up to speed. Producers will be able to perform self-assessments that allow them to get a first diagnostic of areas in which they need to improve before starting an official certification process. The tool also provides visibility to potential buyers of what we are doing well in the area of sustainable practices. This will increase access, and our bargaining power in international markets.

The self-assessment of the cocoa farmers and the cocoa organizations against the Basic Criteria for a Sustainable Cocoa (Lineamientos Básicos para un Cacao Sostenible – LBCS) can be done online using the Standards Map tool customized for the cocoa sector.

In April 2016, the Trade for Sustainable Development Programme conducted a Training of Trainers workshop for 30 participants in Hanoi, focusing on ITC’s market analysis tools, sustainability standards and marketing strategies. Since then, approximately 15 courses have been replicated across Vietnam by the trained trainers in collaboration with Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the Foreign Trade University involving approximately 600 representatives from SMEs. Fifty percent of participants claimed that they found new import markets and clients; 44 percent claimed that they found new export markets and clients; 42 percent reported increases in exports; and 92 percent would recommend using the ITC tools to their networks and colleagues.
Donor Reflections

Monica Rubiolo
Head of Trade Promotion
Economic Cooperation
and Development
SECO

SECO is a proud and committed partner and sponsor of T4SD since the programme’s beginning in 2009. This is why we just renewed our partnership for the coming years until 2020 as part of our Transparency and Innovation of Sustainability Standards (TISS) programme, jointly implemented by ITC and ISEAL Alliance. With the TISS programme we highlight the fact that voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) are an effective and powerful tool to strengthen sustainability along global supply chains.

Guidance and transparency on VSS are needed to help all actors in the supply chain, from farmers in the developing world and intermediate processors and traders to the ultimate buyers such as retailers and brands. Informed decisions need to be made given the context of increased complexity and proliferation of VSS.

ITC’s T4SD Programme has successfully met this demand for increased transparency and has become a sought-after tool for various key stakeholders. Core to T4SD is its neutral position on VSS and its global public goods nature, which makes it possible to impact a wide range of actors in a positive way.

T4SD has demonstrated a keen ability to continually develop its tools and partnerships to respond to the dynamic developments in the VSS area. For example, T4SD is now working to become the leading market data repository on VSS. SECO is very happy to continue this exciting journey together with T4SD and we welcome more partners to join us.

Helmut Fischer
Head of Department
Sustainability Standards
BMZ

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has supported the T4SD Programme since its inception in 2009, and provided feasibility and scoping support as early as 2008. We are pleased to support this key programme of ITC. The programme provides needed transparency on voluntary sustainability standards and improves the decision-making abilities of a variety of users.

The programme is fully in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals in terms of poverty reduction, food security, gender equality and the sustainable management of environmental resources. T4SD’s innovative approach, the Standards Map, enables producers – especially SMEs – to increase their productivity. This results in generating more income, overcoming market access and creating a better understanding of the sustainability gaps in international supply chains.

The German government builds on T4SD data for its consumer information website, www.siegelklarheit.de, launched in February 2015 and the Compass Sustainability (website: http://oeffentlichebeschafung.kompass-nachhaltigkeit.de/) for public procurers. It was relaunched in April 2016, with the new German public procurement regulation coming into force. We would like to encourage other countries to engage in similar types of projects, taking advantage of the data of standard systems contained in the T4SD database.
The EU values the work of ITC’s T4SD project as a contribution to the implementation of our trade and development policy. T4SD’s work on sustainability standards, notably the support provided to producers in the developing world, provides an important contribution to those wishing to move up the value chain and respond to the demands of European consumers by providing products that meet various sustainability and ethical guidelines.

By providing this information for free to producers, as well as tailored face-to-face support, T4SD supports the use of market incentives to drive the adoption of positive social and environmental production practices in the countries with which we trade.

This is consistent with the EU trade and development policy, reshaped by the 2012 Communication on ‘Trade, Growth and Development’, which puts particular emphasis on the integration of sustainable development into the EU’s trade policy. This includes the recognition of the positive role of private-led sustainability schemes, such as fair and ethical trade, to foster inclusive growth and sustainable development in developing countries with which the EU trades. Through these, businesses of all sizes can play a role in promoting sustainable production, trade and consumption patterns.

The EU supports the uptake of fair and ethical trade by supporting activities such as T4SD, which provides free information to consumers and to producers in developing countries on sustainability schemes and the requirements for products to be allowed to display the related logos. These schemes typically concern labour conditions related to certain products or their environmental impact. Being part of such schemes can be an effective way for producers to differentiate their products, have greater bargaining power over them and gain price premiums.

We take the view that the key benefit of private sustainability schemes is the very fact that they are a market mechanism providing information on the sustainability of products, thereby allowing consumers to take action and make buying decisions according to their values and principles. This encourages businesses to adopt behaviours or adapt their production processes or sourcing to meet consumer expectations. It also allows for a fast and flexible reaction of consumers to new products entering the market.

Because of these strengths, the EU does not want to rank or regulate private-led sustainability schemes. We do not want to take decisions on behalf of consumers or to slow the process down while reviewing a standard, or its evaluation and monitoring procedures. However, it is important to ensure that consumers can understand the criteria underlying each scheme, which enables them to make these informed choices with the confidence that they are receiving accurate information. We therefore focus our energies on trying to improve the flow of information about sustainability standards and T4SD plays a key role in this regard.
The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations.

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