

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

The Sector Partnerships Program



Many of the social and environmental challenges linked to cocoa, coffee, and tea are so deeply entrenched that tackling them requires a sector-wide approach. Our Sector Partnerships Program fosters closer collaboration across these sectors in nine priority countries around the globe. The program includes efforts to empower women farmers in Nicaragua, stop deforestation in Ghana, and help rural communities adapt to climate change in Malawi. Our commitment is to amplify the voices of farmers—especially smallholders and women who are often excluded from decision making.

CERTIFICATION AND BEYOND

Over the last 30 years, the Rainforest Alliance has built leading certification programs with practical systems to better connect farmers to markets and enable all actors in the supply chain to move towards more sustainable sourcing. But there are challenges that certification alone cannot address.

Through the Sector Partnerships Program, we take a sector-wide approach. To that end, we support strengthening of the advocacy capacity of local farmer associations, labor unions, and NGOs so they can work more effectively with companies and governments to influence policies and drive change from the ground up.

SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY

We are building on the strong foundations of certification by extending our work with others across the sector, particularly civil society – from farmer associations to NGOs. They play an important role in driving change, as they represent the interests of their members and local populations, and advocate on their behalf. They address sensitive issues thanks to their knowledge of and connection with actors in the local context. To date, we support more than 100 projects that aim at organizational strengthening, developing better advocacy strategies and skills and creating evidence for effective policy influencing.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Earning a living wage is a human right. Through collaboration with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC), the SP Program has supported knowledge sharing on how to calculate a living wage. Together, we have successfully advocated for the International Labour Organization (ILO) to adopt the GLWC methodology and develop a toolkit for governments wanting help to calculate the cost of living, to indicate an appropriate living wage. This is a crucial step in **bringing minimum wages closer to living wages**. When countries worldwide start using method, the impact will be... incalculable!

In Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Uganda, farming communities that participate in the SP pilot projects have reported **a reduction of child labor cases** (which they can see through their monitoring systems set up during the projects). This reduction was made possible thanks to strong commitment, collaboration and investments of diverse local communities and organizations. We have learned that when local authorities, farmer groups, communities, and civil society organizations work together and play their part, they can create real change in the lives of children: farms engage children in safe and age-appropriate work, schools and communities are more child-friendly, and families support education.

Taï National Park in Côte d'Ivoire is the last remaining primary rainforest in West Africa. Since 2018, we partner with sustainability organization IMPACTUM to hold briefings and consultations with the government, local NGOs, and local communities on the **national forestry code**. The code now allows cocoa farmers—many of whom live on the edge of the park, as well as those in Cavally and Goin Debe forest reserves—to own the trees on their property. This means farmers are more willing to plant trees that can bring them extra income through the sales of fruit or timber. These new trees protect cocoa trees from excessive sun, build resilience against drought, and generally improve local ecosystem health. Together with our partners we developed an inclusive and practical system that can be set up for farmers to register as official owners of their trees, and we're advocating for the government to implement it. At the same time, in the areas around forest reserves we involve communities in local governance as well as forest and natural resource management, so that they can better advocate for their needs.

THREE COMMODITIES

Coffee • Cocoa • Tea

SIX THEMES

- Sustainable productivity
- Living wage
- Child labor
- Climate change adaptation and water management
- Inclusion of smallholder interests and farmer group strengthening
- Gender equality

OUR PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

- Direct lobby and advocacy, awareness raising
- Research, pilots, sharing best practices
- Building capacity of civil society organizations
- Strengthening multi-stakeholder platforms
- Supporting commodity specific curriculum development
- Improving in-house tools and training

“When we present our projects at conferences, company representatives often come to us and say they want to work on tackling challenges such as child labor and deforestation too. It takes leadership from a company to say: “This is a problem. We need to do something about it.” But when that happens, it inspires others to do the same.”

MARIECKE VAN DER GLAS

SP Program Manager at the Rainforest Alliance

NINE COUNTRIES



“Thanks to the SP lobby and advocacy training, we now have tools, methods and confidence to advocate with the government more efficiently. We have managed to build a good dialogue not only with local but also national government.”

BU AGUNG WIDI

Founder and Director of Kalimajari (Indonesian NGO supporting cocoa farmers)

THE SP PROGRAM IN NUMBERS

- 42** laws, policies, and sector programs influenced in 2019
- 50** advocacy initiatives
- 44** strengthened Civil Society Organizations
- 14** strengthened multi-stakeholder platforms and coalitions
- 137** partners
- 123** projects



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

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RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

Join the alliance at rainforest-alliance.org