

# Promoting Human Rights Across Sectors and Regions

Markets Innovation



## PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS WITH THE RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

**The Rainforest Alliance and its partners share a commitment to addressing risks that jeopardize the rights and wellbeing of farmers and workers in key commodities and regions. With Rainforest Alliance support, many of our partners are leading the way in human rights *due diligence*. Together, we are identifying risks and actively pursuing mitigation and remediation strategies aligned with international norms, mandates, and company sourcing goals.**

However, for many companies, having the right tools and resources to effectively monitor and address human rights risks can be a challenge. Without the proper means and expertise, it can be a struggle to identify, address, and prevent these problems.

*According to the International Labour Organization, 11% of the world's [25 million victims](#) of forced labor, and 70% of the [160 million children](#) in child labor are in the agricultural sector.*

With more than 30 years of experience and expertise, across 70 countries and six key commodities, the Rainforest Alliance is ready to help your company do its part to respect human rights. From developing local capacity to flag and address risks, to co-developing interventions with the communities we aim to assist, the Rainforest Alliance knows how to deliver meaningful impacts.

## THE CHALLENGE

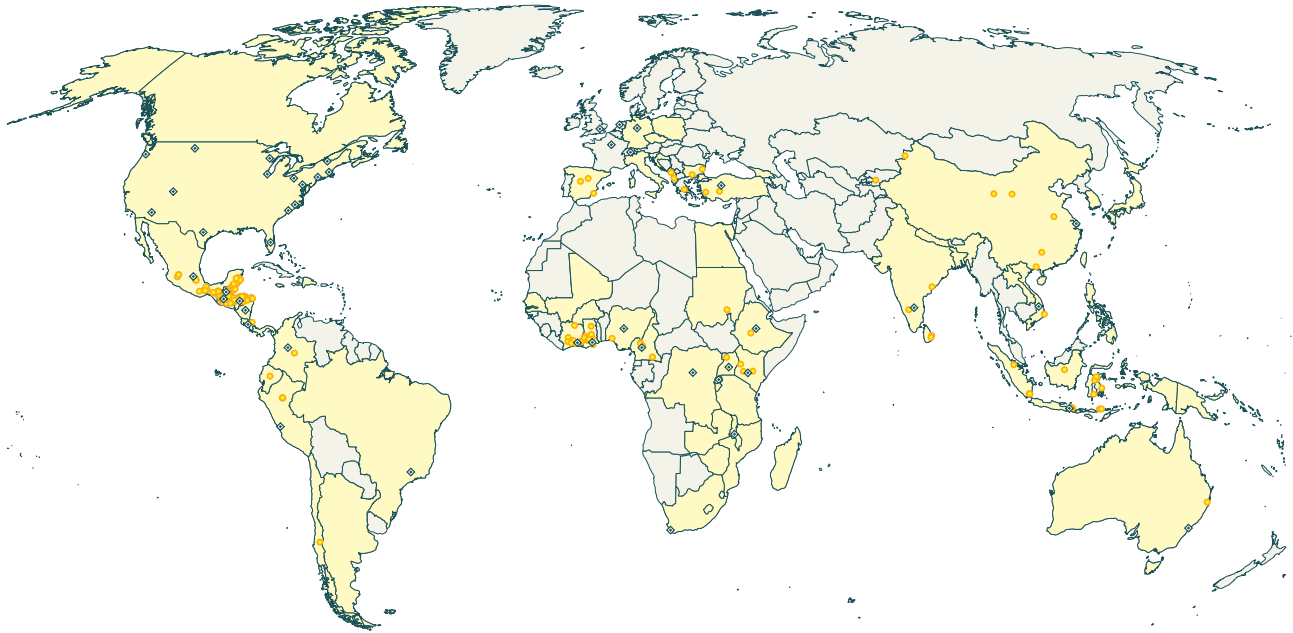
Human rights violations are a critical issue within the agricultural sector. Women and youth face considerable violations, such as denial of land ownership rights, equal opportunities and pay, and, in some cases, the right to work in a safe environment free from gender-based violence and sexual harassment. Limited opportunities for youth to gain meaningful employment and experience only serves to perpetuate generational poverty and ongoing cycles of human rights violations.

These challenges are deeply intertwined; addressing them requires identifying how poverty, inequality, climate change, land degradation, and deforestation all intersect and interact with one another. With this in mind, the Rainforest Alliance leverages its expertise and global reach to develop integrated, holistic strategies that deliver solutions at the source.

**FIGURE 1**

The Rainforest Alliance is committed to promoting human rights in key sourcing regions. Our work focuses on [gender equality](#), youth inclusion, and addressing [forced](#) and [child labor](#).

○ countries with Rainforest Alliance Certified farms    ● Rainforest Alliance project sites    ◆ staff (offices and remote)



Our six key commodities:



## OUR SOLUTION AND BENEFITS

Whether a company is seeking assistance in addressing challenges specific to its supply chains, or is looking to support wider level impacts in sourcing regions, they can find an experienced partner in the Rainforest Alliance. Via three strategic pathways, we support companies in developing interventions that are aligned with international norms on human rights due diligence, and which meet their human rights goals:

- Rainforest Alliance Certification
- Tailored Supply Chain Services
- Landscapes and Communities

Each pathway has a unique and robust strategy for addressing human rights, developed by our internal experts and with external consultation. Our solutions are holistic, adaptable, and capture the complex relationships between environmental, economic, and social challenges.

Strategies are also tailored to meet sectoral and regional needs, as exhibited by our work to address forced labor in the [coffee sector](#), child labor in the [cocoa sector](#), gender equality in the [flower sector](#), and youth inclusion in [forestry management](#).

Companies can elect to pursue one, multiple, or all of our pathways to address these critical challenges. The Rainforest Alliance is in a unique position to leverage experience and partnerships to bring solutions and resources to mitigating a number of known human rights concerns. Regardless of how many pathways you select, your company can benefit from:

- **Risk reduction and stability** – With supply chain networks spanning across countries and continents, it is easy for companies to struggle to identify human rights risks before it is too late. The Rainforest Alliance equips our partners with the oversight mechanisms, support

strategies, and remediation tools needed to help prevent, identify, and address human rights violations.

- **Legal compliance** – The body of national and international laws that require corporate due diligence for human rights is growing. Partnering with the Rainforest Alliance ensures that your company is fully up to speed with the ever-changing regulatory field.
- **Opportunity creation** – Women and youth are vital to the future of agriculture and forestry, and directly supporting them through risk reduction activities and interventions builds trust while creating opportunities throughout supply chains.
- **Assistance with advocacy** – Advocating for marginalized communities requires identifying and engaging with key stakeholders—something no individual company can pursue alone. From engaging with trade unions to address workers' rights, to building sector coalitions and platforms, the Rainforest Alliance knows how to influence decision makers to support policies that promote sector transformation.
- **Stand out as a leader** – When you partner with the Rainforest Alliance, your company is not only reducing its reputational risk, but also sending a clear message to consumers and investors that protecting human rights is a critical part of your sustainability program.

For many of our partners, their sustainability journey begins with certification, so let's start there.

### Rainforest Alliance Certification

With clear requirements on, and resources for, promoting gender equality, youth inclusion, labor rights, and working conditions, Rainforest Alliance Certification offers a starting place for many companies to implement human rights due diligence and safeguard against abuses within their supply chains.

Recognizing that prohibition without prevention and remediation drives human rights abuses underground, the Rainforest Alliance 2020 [Sustainable Agriculture Standard \(SAS\)](#)<sup>1</sup> has expanded to include an “[assess and address](#)” approach for both farmers and first processors. Under this requirement, certificate holders—i.e., farmers, farm groups, and first processors—must create internal committees for addressing human rights risks. The committees are guided by the following tools and resources:

1. **Risk mapping** – To identify and track risks of potential forced labor and child labor, the Rainforest Alliance developed and maintains [risk maps](#) across key commodities and regions (see Figure 2).
2. **Risk assessment and mitigation** – Certificate holders must complete a risk self-assessment using the [Rainforest Alliance Farm Risk Assessment Tool](#). This tool is designed to help farmers identify risks, and provides

<sup>1</sup> The new Rainforest Alliance standard also includes new reporting requirements, including the reporting of worker type (seasonal or permanent) and oversight of labor providers (brokers and recruiters). [Learn more](#) about the updated Rainforest Alliance standard.

### SIDEBAR



### The Rainforest Alliance Certified Seal

When you see a product with our Rainforest Alliance Certified seal, you know that the certified crop or ingredient was produced using methods that support the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic, and environmental. Independent, third-party auditors—critical to the integrity of any certification program—evaluate farmers against requirements in all three areas before awarding or renewing certification.

corresponding mitigation measures that farmers can implement.

3. **Monitoring tool** – Once mitigation measures are put in place, certificate holders can opt to utilize the [Assess and Address Monitoring Guidance Tool](#). This outlines key questions tailored to different risk levels and farm characteristics (e.g., size, location, worker population).
4. **Remediation Protocol** – In cases where a breach of human rights has been identified, certificate holders must act in accordance with the [Remediation Protocol](#).

Farmers and farm groups are also required to implement a [grievance mechanism](#) where workers and community members can report complaints for resolution, and to provide trainings for smallholder farmers and workers on several human rights topics, including gender equality.

Many of our partners seek to design and deliver impactful interventions that build on this foundation. For those looking to engage in additional interventions beyond certification, the Rainforest Alliance's Tailored Supply Chain Services is here to help.

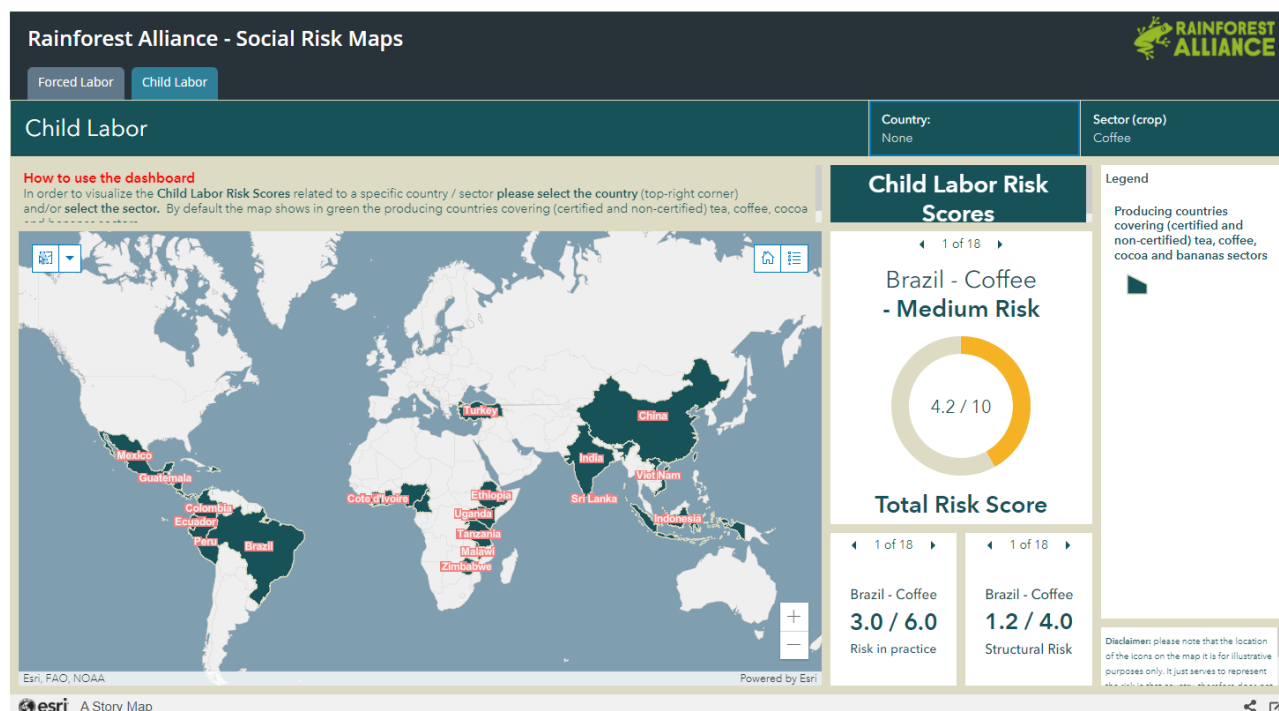
### Tailored Supply Chain Services

Our Tailored Supply Chain Services team works one-on-one with companies to identify where and how they can improve their sourcing practices and interventions. This



**FIGURE 2**

Child and forced labor sector risk map developed by the Rainforest Alliance.



includes exploring innovative ways of addressing human rights issues with our partners. From desk-based research to field-level partnerships, our experts can:

- **Map your sustainability journey with Corporate Advisory.** Our Corporate Advisory team ensures that your sourcing policies and practices are in line with global best practice, such as the principles, guidance, and definitions of the Accountability Framework.<sup>2</sup>
- **Assess the situation through risk mapping and supplier engagement.** Our team directly engages with your suppliers to identify their needs, flag local and regional risks within your supply chains, and guide your next steps.
- **Co-develop and facilitate interventions through Field-Based Partnerships (FBP).** The FBP team facilitates the identification and implementation of interventions that drive continuous improvement and bring you closer to your responsible sourcing goals.
- **Track your progress through Supply Chain Monitoring and Evaluations (M&E).** Our M&E team tracks your activities to understand what interventions are working and where additional assistance is needed.
- **Communicate progress,** internally and externally, and identify next steps.

<sup>2</sup> The [Accountability Framework](#) offers companies in the agricultural and forestry sectors a roadmap to achieve their ethical supply chain commitments. Companies committed to eliminating deforestation, land conversion, and human rights violations can rely on the Rainforest Alliance's expertise to develop sourcing policies in line with the Accountability Framework's core principles and guidance.

To see what these services look like in practice, below are some of the collaborations that our Tailored Services team is currently engaged in:

*Embedding Human Rights in Sourcing Policies with Corrie MacColl*

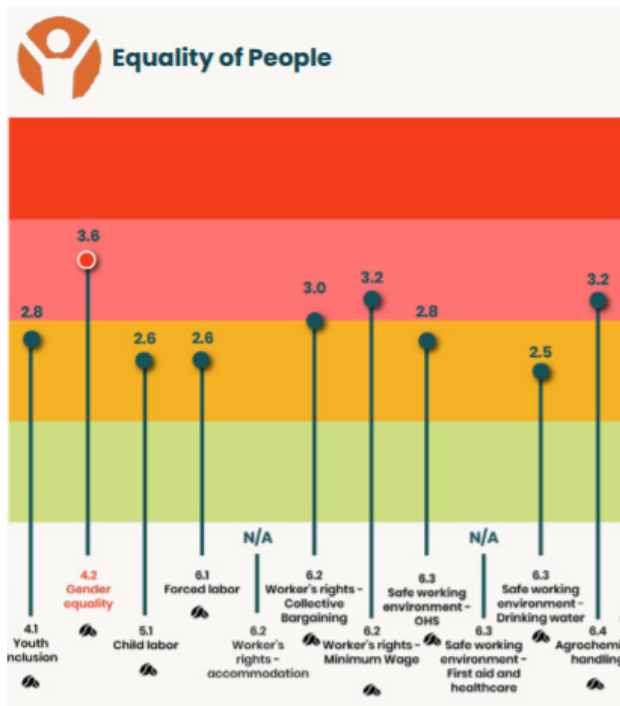
The Rainforest Alliance contributed to Corrie MacColl's mission to source rubber sustainably and responsibly by co-developing their sourcing policy. The policy outlines



*Tea pluckers sort tea leaves on a Rainforest Alliance Certified farm in Kenya. Photo by Caroline Irby.*

**FIGURE 3**

JDE's risks related to human rights are visualized within the Origin Issue Assessments.



clear commitments to upholding and respecting the rights of workers, farmers, and farming communities.

#### *Improving Risk Identification Measures with a Chocolate Company*

The Rainforest Alliance has partnered with a chocolate company to pilot Direct Worker Reporting (DWR), or "worker voice" systems. Workers utilize mobile phones to complete

survey questions designed to flag potential human rights concerns so that they can be mitigated or remediated.

#### *M&E and Assessing Child Labor Root Causes in Guatemala*

In 2020, we partnered with Nespresso to investigate root causes of child labor and child work in the Guatemalan coffee sector. Farmers and local stakeholders were surveyed to identify the cultural, economic, and local security concerns that affect children's participation in coffee farming activities. These results then guided the development of preventative trainings, worker record-keeping systems, and temporary child-care programs during school holidays when children are at greatest risk. We continue to seek ways to further collaborate with our partners and strengthen these programs to ensure children are safe and protected from child labor.

#### *Identifying risks with Jacobs Douwe Egberts (JDE)*

To help JDE achieve its coffee-sourcing commitments, the Rainforest Alliance engages with JDE's suppliers to map risks, and conducts desk-based research to develop Origin Issue Assessments (OIA). The combination of risk maps and OIAs allows JDE to identify and address potential human rights risks within their supply chain, which has resulted in targeted interventions in Vietnam, Honduras, and Uganda.

Both Rainforest Alliance Certification and Tailored Services focus primarily on improving conditions at the production level (i.e., forests and farms). In addition, the Rainforest Alliance offers companies an opportunity to amplify their impact beyond their supply chain through landscape level interventions that combine advocacy with direct, communal support.

#### *Landscapes & Communities*

The Rainforest Alliance mobilizes its global network and leverages institutional funding to create opportunities for



Schoolchildren at the Nuevo Platanillo School, which serves the children of workers at the Finca El Platanillo coffee farm in Guatemala, as well as children in the larger community. Photo by Creagh Cross.





Students learn about forest management and have the opportunity to further their environmental studies through the *Nuestra Selva, Nuestro Futuro* initiative in Mexico.

companies to directly engage in sourcing regions. Many of our partners are already engaged in Landscape and Communities projects, such as those included in our [Integrated Landscape Management Program](#). See Table 1 for some of our most impactful human rights Landscapes and Communities projects.

## WORK WITH US

No organization can prevent and address human rights violations alone. It takes teamwork and collaboration, and the Rainforest Alliance offers a global network of experts ready to protect human rights within your supply chain and in the regions you source from. We are also able to guide the development of communications to promote the efforts and investments being made by our corporate partners that contribute directly to positive human rights outcomes. 🌱

Interested in learning more?  
Please contact [info@ra.org](mailto:info@ra.org).

**TABLE 1**

Activities and results of select human rights Landscapes and Communities projects.

Activities	Results
<p><b>“Project Guatemala” on Gender Equality</b> Through our partnership with Lidl and CARE, <a href="#">Project Guatemala</a> provided 92 women-run farms in Guatemala with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate risk assessments to guide planning</li> <li>• Trainings in climate-smart agricultural practices</li> <li>• Provision of technical assistance and coffee rust-resistant coffee plantlets</li> <li>• Business development assistance, tailored to women entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	<p>As a result of the support and trainings provided by Project Guatemala:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% of participating farms now have control systems for monitoring good agricultural practices and climate adaptations.</li> <li>• 40% of the cooperative’s total harvest came from participating women.</li> <li>• 60% of participating women have improved their business capacities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Youth Inclusion in Calakmul, Mexico</b> <a href="#">Nuestra Selva, Nuestro Futuro</a> provided youth in Calakmul, Mexico, with opportunities to gain work skills and engage with experts in forest management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 young people participated in <i>Nuestra Selva, Nuestro Futuro</i>.</li> <li>• 9 training sessions were provided, covering ecological knowledge, socio-emotional learning and group development, and field visits with forestry experts.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tackling Child Labor in Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Uganda</b> From 2015 to 2020, the Rainforest Alliance led projects to tackle child labor. The <a href="#">Sector Partnership Program</a> utilized and compared different community-based approaches to prevent, monitor, and remediate child labor among their members. These approaches included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building of local businesses, farmers, governments, and cooperatives</li> <li>• Creation of community-driven child labor monitoring and remediation systems</li> <li>• Tackling the root causes of child labor through awareness raising, village saving and loan schemes, improving education, and child protection</li> </ul>	<p>Several projects took place, and their accomplishments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child labor risk was lowered to 2-5% for households and the school drop-out rate is less than 10% through the <a href="#">Child Labor Free Zone Program</a> in Uganda.</li> <li>• The creation of child labor monitoring committees across <a href="#">218 communities in Ghana</a>. These committees helped identify and resolve 146 child labor cases and 400 child protection cases.</li> <li>• Awareness raising activities on women’s and children’s rights across 22 communities in Côte d’Ivoire. As a result, more women have gained leadership roles within these communities and child enrollment in schools increased.</li> </ul>





The Rainforest Alliance is creating a more sustainable world by using social and market forces to protect nature and improve the lives of farmers and forest communities.

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