

INA Stakeholder Meeting on 6. & 7. November 2023 in Berlin

PROTOCOL

Approximately 80 stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, science, and politics came together at the annual **INA Stakeholder meeting** in Berlin on **6 and 7 November 2023**. The meeting was organized in close collaboration by the Initiative for Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains (**INA**) together with the Global Project Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains (**GV AgriChains**), the Fund for the Promotion of Innovation in Agriculture (**i4Ag**) and the Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems (**SAFE**) project.

Aiming to **exchange, learn mutually** and **co-create**, with a special focus on the **perspective of producers' countries**, different agricultural supply chain actors shared their knowledge and experiences on the **regulatory frameworks** of due diligence and their **implementation**, as well as core **future topics**, including Climate Change, Digitalization, Just Transition, Living Wage/Income and Gender.

After 1,5 days of intensive dialogue, the following **key aspects** emerged throughout the meetings different formats.

Day 1, 6 November 2023

The meeting was opened with an overview of current key issues such as biodiversity, climate, people, gender, regulatory frameworks (i.e. EUDR), Due Diligence, Living Income and Living Wages, Just Transition and digitalisation. As EU-representative **Carla Montesi from EU-Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA)** thanked BMZ for its efforts to work together with the EU Commission in the global Team Europe Initiative (TEI) on deforestation-free Value Chains. She emphasized, that the private sector needs to step up now when it comes to sustainable and deforestation-free supply chains. To achieve impact with EUDR and CSDDD it is not enough for companies to do the tick-the-box approach, but to invest in the infrastructure to reach the goals- particularly in supply chains which rely heavily on stallholder farmers. Montesi mentioned the important role of initiatives such as the INA, GV Agrichains and i4Ag/SAFE in providing expertise on crucial topics such as traceability, deforestation-free value chains and living income.

The question "How to foster corporate due diligence in agricultural supply chains?" was discussed by speakers from the **Union for Ethical Biotrade (UEBT)**, **German Coffee Association** and **Equal Origins**. In their **keynote speeches**, they highlighted the importance of risk assessment tools, well-functioning grievance mechanisms particularly for smallholders, and a strong focus on gender equality through gender transformative approaches in all endeavours.

In a lively **panel discussion**, **smallholder representatives and partners from Colombia, Peru, Kenya, and the UK**, illustrated the power of digitalisation for producers. It became clear, that digitalisation holds great potentials for traceability and the establishment of transparent agricultural supply chains. However, it was also emphasized that most producers do not benefit enough from their collected data, hoping that the additional costs for traceability will pay off for

them in the end. To make traceability valuable for smallholders they need to actively participate in the digitalisation process.

The day was closed by a **speech** from **Lisa Kirfel-Rühle, BMZ**, on behalf of Dr Bärbel Kofler, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development. She emphasised the importance of agricultural supply chains in achieving the SDGs and the important role of multi-stakeholder partnerships to increase sustainability in agricultural supply chains, and to ensure that EU regulations have an impact and improve the working and living conditions of people in partner countries.

Following an acoustic concert by 17-year-old singer/songwriter Tobias Burger, the evening offered plentiful opportunities for networking with other stakeholders.

Day 2, 7 November 2023

The second day of the stakeholder meeting started with a **presentation** by **Olam International**, on the question how agricultural value chains must be shaped in the future from a climate perspective. While looking at the example of a joint Olam / i4AG project in the rice supply chain, it became clear, that innovations to mitigate climate changes will only be successful if they directly increase the smallholder's income.

The presentation was followed by a **World Café** where three stakeholders shared their solutions to tackle the challenges of climate change in agricultural supply chains. **KOFAR**, a Kenyan Company, presented a vegetative recycling waste system, to augment production quality and environmental sustainability to increase smallholders' resilience for climate change. The think tank **Climate&Company** emphasized the importance of including the financial sector to realise sustainability efforts in agricultural supply chains. The **Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP)** made very clear, that climate change adaption cannot be addressed in isolation. It needs to be driven by gender equality as women are disproportionally impacted by climate change, and by economics, as smallholders are constrained by limited incomes and are therefore unable to pilot new techniques to mitigate climate change.

In a **controversial fishbowl discussion**, participants had been invited to discuss the risk of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) to exclude smallholders from the supply chain. They also reflected on the question if the implementation of the due diligence regulations is too costly for small and medium-sized enterprises. Participants agreed, that for certain commodities it is easier for companies to source from large scale producers, rather than helping smallholders to comply with the new regulations. It became clear, that companies need to increase the dialogue with smallholders and support them to comply with the regulations, even if this results in higher costs for the enterprises. The need for long-term relationships with smallholder farmers had also been emphasized in a presentation by **Fairtrade Deutschland** and **Forum Fairer Handel**, who presented how Fairtrade enables their farmers to comply with the new EU regulations.

In the following several tools for leveraging sustainability in agricultural supply chains were presented, such as the platform 'Digital Integration of Agricultural Supply Chains Alliance

(DIASCA)' and the elan! A tool for fostering the implementation of deforestation-free supply chains amongst other. The day was closed by an **open space format**, where stakeholders had the chance to pitch or further develop their ideas for new projects and discuss possible collaborations and solutions.

In her **closing remarks**, **Lisa Kirfel-Rühle** encouraged the participants on behalf of BMZ to further actively engage in INA and other projects offered by BMZ through GIZ, as collaborative projects have the potential to spark positive innovations. She highlighted the importance of involving partner countries in the development of sustainable agricultural supply chains with gender equity and the inclusion of marginalised groups as key success factors. She expressed heartfelt gratitude to all participants, especially those who travelled from abroad to join the meeting in Berlin as their presence was highly valuable, bringing diverse perspectives and opinions to the productive discussions.