IISD’s SSI Review on Standards and Poverty Reduction

Global Dialogue @ IISD’s Trade + Sustainability Hub

**Session Information**

**Date and time**  
Friday 3 December 2021, 13:30-14:45 CET

**Host organization(s) name(s)**  
International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) & United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)/United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS)

**Final event title**  
Sustainability Standards & Smallholder Farmers: Opportunities to address poverty through trade

**Event description**  
COVID-19 has slowed progress toward the SDGs by increasing poverty worldwide with severe effects on smallholder farmers — especially in developing and least-developed countries. This underlines the need for a resilient, sustainable trading system that promotes progress toward the SDGs.

Voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) are instruments to influence how global value chains operate, to strengthen farmer market access and achievement of sustainable development outcomes.

This session will examine VSSs as a collective multi-stakeholder approach toward sustainable trade. It will explore:

- How can voluntary sustainability standards (VSSs) reduce poverty for small-scale farmers in the wake of COVID-19?
- What determines if small-scale farmers can access VSS-compliant markets?
- How can governments support positive sustainable development impacts for smallholder farmers through VSS?

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**Agenda**

Section 1. Opening  
(5 min)  
- Welcome and introductory remarks (5 min) by IISD (Cristina Larrea)

Section 2. Sustainability Standards & Smallholder Farmers: Opportunities to address poverty through trade
(15 min)
• Presentation by Sara Elder (IISD) on the findings of the IISD SSI Review on Standards and Poverty Reduction

Section 3. Commentary and Dialogue with Authors
(30 min – 5 min each)
• Commentators provide their viewpoint:
  o Commentator 1: Hon. Christophe Bazivamo, Deputy Secretary General, East African Community
  o Commentator 2: Norbert Tuyishime, Program Officer, Eastern Africa Farmers Association (EAFF)
  o Commentator 3: Henk Gilhuis, Manager Research & Impacts, Rainforest Alliance
  o Commentator 4: Marike de Pena, Managing Director of Banelino
  o Commentator 5: Private Sector Actor TBC
• Lead author (Sara) opens dialogue with Commentators and invites Co-Authors to engage and comment

Section 4. Q & A
(15 min)
• Q & A from the audience

Section 6. Concluding remarks
(5 min)
• Closing remarks (Santiago Fernandez de Cordoba, UNCTAD)
• Closing remarks (Cristina Larrea, IISD)