



Summary of expert meeting on the VSS Perception Assessment Toolkit

March 28th, 2019

Objectives of the meeting

To brainstorm the benefits and shortcomings of the structure, architecture, usefulness, and adaptability of the VSS perception toolkit

Themes discussed

- *Rationale of the toolkit*: to develop a holistic tool that is able to aggregate a constellation of priorities across diverse stakeholders within a value chain, that ultimately affects how farmers adopt VSS and perceive its benefits. Deconstructing the specific sustainability priorities across all actors, provides a pathway to achieving the national SDGs.
- *Architecture and structure*: which covered the multi-stage sampling procedure, the flow and ordering of the questionnaire, the indexation and spider diagram illustrating the perceptions; and the content of the questions within the questionnaire
- *Usability and adaptability*: usefulness to policy makers and adaptability of the toolkit across food sectors and products
- *Web Interface*

Key takeaways

- 1.1. Overall, the toolkit was considered useful as: local guidance and local verification; to inform partnerships between different stakeholders; helps identify knowledge and capacity gaps across a spectrum of users; and complements other toolkits such as FAO-SAFA.
 - 1.1.1. Clearly state 2-3 key objectives the VSS aims to achieve
 - 1.1.2. Develop a theory of change
 - 1.1.3. Account for the full gamut and degrees of standards and certification schemes
- 1.2. Architecture and structure:
 - 1.2.1. *Sampling and qualitative data collection*: concrete guide on sampling to ensure precision, validity and representativeness of multi-stage procedures applied on value chains; comprehensive guide/script for interviews to ask non-deterministic questions and ensure minimum interlocutor bias
 - 1.2.2. *Questionnaire categories*: Re-think categories of farmers to be interviewed, looking beyond certified and non-certified
 - 1.2.3. *CoP visualization*: Re-think the content and number of dimensions within the spider diagram visualization; re-consider the format of the visualization by looking for alternates to the spider chart
- 1.3. Users
 - 1.3.1. Separate documents that explain specific benefits of the VSS perception toolkit for policy, civil society, governments and smallholder associations
- 1.4. Web tool and toolkit support services:
 - 1.4.1. Explicit separation and a clear roadmap of various documentation on the tool, this needs to highlight the rationale and benefits to users; guides to data collection and sampling; guide to usage of structured questionnaires; and guide to data analysis with a template
 - 1.4.2. Ability to adapt the questionnaires to different users- by enabling division between fundamental Versus advisory questions
 - 1.4.3. Setting up an online support committee to help during the implementation of the toolkit; as well as a monitoring committee to ensure reliability to results



Next Steps

- Please send any thoughts or additional points, as well as other research you think we should read to cecilia.heuser@unctad.org.
- *Your feedback in the updated toolkit:* we are working to incorporate your suggestions and comments to a new version of the toolkit. We will share the reviewed toolkit with you for comments and further thoughts as soon as possible.

List of Participants

Name	Organization
Francesca Nugnes	IISD
Peter Huber	Max Havelaar, Switzerland
Santiago Fernandez de Cordoba	UNCTAD
Mathieu Lamolle	ITC
Gianna Lazzarini	FiBL
Lorena Jaramillo	UNCTAD
Aimee Hampel	ADB
Hannah Strandberg	Unige
Stacey Mills	UN Environment
Steve Wiggins	ODI
Jesse Giavina	UN Environment
Yanchun Zhang	UNCTAD
Leonela Santana Boado	UNCTAD
Aarti Krishnan	ODI / University of Manchester