

## The Sustainable Commodity Assistance Network - SCAN

### Why SCAN?

Sustainable agriculture has become a mainstream issue. Demand for sustainable food products is growing rapidly and **there is an ever-increasing understanding that the environmental, social and economic impacts of agriculture are directly effecting human development from food security to climate change.** To address this growth, we must face the scale of the challenge, while also avoiding marginalizing smallholders with market demands beyond their capacity.

The challenge can best be addressed by leveraging the resources, experiences and skills of organizations and groups working to promote sustainable agriculture, building upon existing programs and infrastructure. Given the vulnerable position of smallholders and their critical role in sustainable development, the required cooperation and collaboration must focus on building the farming and management capacity of smallholder groups to achieve long-term sustainability. Fundamentally, support must be based on the prioritized needs of smallholders, and delivered in a manner that is accessible and effectively transfers knowledge.

To address the needs of producer groups, and foster cooperation and collaboration between standards programs, support must focus on generic and pre-competitive issues - while supporting producers' access to differentiated and higher-value markets, when possible. In order to promote this level of cooperation and collaboration, a neutral facilitator is required that can bring key players together. This facilitation, and indeed the entire process, must be efficient, transparent and able to demonstrate and measure positive outcomes and impact.

SCAN is based on these precepts and has been developed to address this critical need.



*'SCAN's global platform represents an unprecedented level of cooperation amongst key service providers including standards bodies, technical assistance groups, research institutions and industry players.'*

## How does SCAN work?

For the first time, 20 international organizations have joined forces to create a network to support smallholders through directed technical assistance on sustainable farm and business management. This cooperation works at both the international and national level. At the international level, SCAN Partners work together to identify key support areas, share information and tools and guide the overall process.

SCAN Partners have identified the following priority support areas:

- Good Agricultural Practices and Sustainable Practices
- Organizational Development
- Financial Literacy and Risk Management
- Quality Management Systems and Traceability
- Market Information (access and use)

At the national level, SCAN Partners and key local actors (both public and private) form a support platform. National platforms are designed to conduct needs assessments; adapt and develop tools and curriculum; train trainers; and deliver technical assistance. Needs assessments are then conducted at the producer level, where customized programs are developed and implemented based on the prioritized needs.

The experience at the national level feeds into, and strengthens, SCAN at the inter-national level. Results are presented to key decision-makers to promote supportive international policy.

## Overview of the SCAN Process:



*“Led by the Sustainable Commodity Initiative (SCI) and funded by HIVOS and Solidaridad, SCAN has established the support of twenty international founding partners.”*

## Who are the SCAN partners?

Organization	Type	Examples of specific member contributions to SCAN
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)	Standard-setter-Organic	Soil management, organic practices
Fairtrade (FLO)	Standard-setter	Sustainable business and organizational development
Solidaridad/Coffee Support Network	Support services	Generic training on sustainable business and farm management
CABI International	Research/Technical assistance	Integrated Crop Management/Climate Change
ISEAL Alliance	Umbrella org for Standard-setters	Cooperation and efficiency in Standards Programs
TWIN Trading	Support services	Business and organizational development
Rainforest Alliance	Standard-setter	Sustainable farm, business management and conservation
SNV	Support services	Business enterprise development
CIRAD	Research/Support services	Sustainable crop and farm management
Utz Certified	Standard-setter	Sustainable farm, business management and traceability
4C Association	Standard-setter	Baseline sustainable farm and business management
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)	IGO support services	Engagement with producer country governments on sustainable development strategies
World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)	Technical Assistance	Agroforestry, land management and market access
Social Accountability/SA 8000	Standard-setter	Labor issues and business development
HIVOS	Technical support/Funder	Quality Management Systems and needs identification
Finance Alliance for Sustainable Trade (FAST)	Trade alliance of social lending institutions	Financial literacy training and other financial services
Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI Platform)	Industry platform	Private sector expertise; group development; production and trade
Tropical Commodity Coalition	Support services (Info/Coms/ Advocacy)	Communication, advocacy and cooperation
Sustainable Commodity Initiative (UNCTAD/IISD)	Support services/Policy development	Program development; coordination (SCAN Secretariat); policy linkages

### What are SCAN's current activities?

SCAN recently completed a pilot phase of its program in 4 countries (Peru, Vietnam, Tanzania and Honduras) through support from HIVOS and co-financing from Solidaridad (as well as in-kind support from various SCAN representatives). Based upon the needs assessments conducted in each country, implementation plans are currently being conducted. In each country, efforts are being made to consolidate and strengthen the SCAN platforms, with direct support from Solidaridad's Coffee Support Network. In **Peru**, roll-out activities are being undertaken on tool development and training related to Group Certification, Internal Control Systems (ICS) and Best Practices in Agriculture. In **Vietnam** the training focuses on Organizational Development. While in **Tanzania** the focus will be on simplifying and applying Quality Management Systems. (SCAN Honduras, due to political upheaval, is currently on hold). To date these activities have focused on the coffee sector.

### What are SCAN's plans for the future?

SCAN is seeking funding for further generic tool and curriculum development in all of the five key support areas identified. This includes validating and applying tools and training through activities aimed at training trainers and the direct application of technical assistance at the producer level, based on specific needs assessments. SCAN is working closely with the ISEAL Alliance to link with their broader "scaling up of impacts" program and has formed a partnership with UNDP's Green Commodities Facility to support the establishment of sustainable sectors in developing countries.

A summary of the 4 country-level needs assessments will soon be published by UNCTAD. As well, UNCTAD and the SCI are promoting the establishment of the UN Forum on Sustainability Standards, a high-level forum coordinated by UNEP, FAO, ITC, UNIDO and UNCTAD/SCI to inform policy makers about sustainability standards and how to understand them within a sustainable development perspective. SCAN's activities are designed as a fundamental element to inform that process and help promote supportive international and national policy.

Currently SCAN is concentrating on the **coffee** sector. Strong interest and opportunities have been presented in the **cocoa, tea** and **banana** sectors as well. The SCAN Secretariat will continue to engage with other sectors, while concentrating on the roll-out and implementation process in coffee, as a solid basis for supporting these other sectors.

*SCAN is a project of  
the Sustainable  
Commodity  
Initiative,  
coordinated by IISD  
and UNCTAD.*



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