

Abstract
RSPO Smallholders Task Force

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Now that the RSPO standard for schemed smallholders (2009) has been defined and 25000 schemed smallholder farmers awarded RSPO certificates. The various system elements needed for certifying groups of independent smallholders are established, there is a need to move to practical implementation on scale. The first important challenge in the next few years will be to initiate certification processes with smallholders, to draw the lessons learned from these processes and to make them available to other estate companies and to independent smallholder groups. The second major challenge with regard to smallholders for the RSPO is to change its strategy from preventing smallholder exclusion into creating meaningful opportunities, exploring modified, fair business models in which smallholders are more favoured. A third challenge is to build smallholder interests more structurally into the RSPO organization and into the incentive systems of the RSPO.

To address these challenges, this project has the following purpose: RSPO members utilize the RSPO system to develop and implement opportunities for smallholders by including, protecting and empowering these smallholders. The following expected results have been defined: 1. Smallholder certification needs, expectations and incentives are better understood by other palm oil stakeholders in the RSPO Taskforce and the findings are disseminated to them; 2. Capacity-building needs are identified and generic guidance is developed for scheme managers, group managers, certification bodies and intermediaries (NGOs, governments, trainers) who enable smallholders to become certified; 3. Linking and Learning platform on smallholder issues is in place; 4. Best practices in inclusive business models have been analyzed and promoted; 5. Smallholder structures in the RSPO organization are operational, including operational financial mechanisms to support smallholder certification costs.