

Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains in Ethiopia (SUVASE)

In the birthplace of *coffee arabica* in Western Ethiopia, this project aims to improve the income of smallholder farmers and preserve the unique biodiversity.

Part of the Global Programme “Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains”

The global programme promotes sustainability in agricultural supply chains. It aims to make these fair, sustainable and free of deforestation. For this sake, the programme cooperates with market drivers in cotton, coffee, cocoa, natural rubber, palm oil and soy supply chains. Together with global companies, international standards organisations and national partners it implements project activities in eight partner countries (Uzbekistan, India, Colombia, Brazil, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Ecuador, Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso).

The challenge

Coffee is Ethiopia’s most important export commodity, accounting for about 25% of export revenues. Approximately 2 million smallholders sell coffee, which they harvest from wild coffee plants in the natural forest, from managed semi-forests or from agro-forestry gardens. The coffee forests are of high ecological value and shelter a rich genetic diversity of coffee arabica, especially in the region of western Ethiopia where coffee arabica originates. Yet, Ethiopia’s forests are being degraded at alarming rates with agricultural expansion and firewood collection among the main drivers of deforestation. To conserve the remaining natural forests and the valuable ecosystem services they provide, the local communities need to be able to sustain their livelihoods. However, the income of many smallholder coffee farmers is currently significantly below the income required to afford a decent standard of living.

Project name	Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains in Ethiopia (SUVASE)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Implementing organisation	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
Project region	Nono Sale, Didu, Alle and Becho districts in the Ilubabor zone of Ethiopia’s Oromia region
Lead executing agency	Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority (ECTA)
Duration	08/2020 – 03/2025
Financial volume	4.600.000 EUR

The global programme is part of the BMZ’s special initiative “ONE WORLD no Hunger” (SEWOH). The aim of German development cooperation is to generate income in rural regions, to create jobs and to improve food security. This makes an important contribution to combating the causes of migration. Conflicts, environmental destruction and disasters can trigger hunger – and vice versa. That is why investments in rural development, sustainable agriculture and food security are so important to stabilize regions. The programme will contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals on the right.

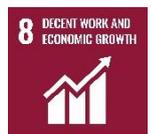


Photo left: Farmer preparing the coffee for drying

Photo right: Fresh coffee cherries



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Photo left: Coffee drying beds at cooperative

Photo right: Coffee forest where wild coffee is harvested

Our approach

The “Sustainability and Value Added in Agricultural Supply Chains in Ethiopia (SUVASE)” project considers coffee as its lead commodity. To improve the economic, social and environmental sustainability of Ethiopian coffee, SUVASE implements activities **from the shelf to the field**:

On the international level, SUVASE pursues the development of partnerships with the private sector to connect producers in Western Ethiopia with consumers who demand high-quality, sustainable coffee. This approach helps to ensure long-term sustainability beyond the project timeframe.

In processing and marketing, SUVASE strengthens the quality control capacities of producer organisations and promotes innovative solutions for value addition. This includes piloting the use of the Beyco Farmer App. This mobile application uses blockchain technology to track coffee transactions from production to export. Subsequently, fully traceable coffee can be marketed through an online market platform.

At the production level, the activities target 38 coffee cooperatives with more than 8.000 members. The project region in Western Ethiopia comprises the districts of Nono Sale, Didu, Alle und Becho. The high density and biodiversity of coffee forests in this area combined with the production practices, which do not rely on the use of pesticides and inorganic fertilizers, make the coffee from this area unique. To leverage this potential and to improve the economic, social and environmental sustainability of coffee, SUVASE trains producers and producer organisations and implements measures to strengthen the existing agricultural extension service. Other strategies to close the living income gap of smallholder farming households include income diversification and certification.

Map of the project region



This cartographic representation does not implicate a statement on the legal status of sovereign territories or boundaries.

Results

At the production level, more than 1.000 farmers have so far received access to improved drying beds. In combination with trainings on sustainable management practices, this is an important prerequisite to improve the coffee quality. Analyses of coffee samples from the supported cooperatives confirmed that significant quality improvements are achievable through the compliance to quality management protocols. Furthermore, SUVASE has increased the marketing capacities of the Sorgeba Union, the umbrella organisation of the supported cooperatives, which plays a key role in accessing the specialty coffee market and increasing smallholder farmers’ incomes. Through the registration of over 500 farming households and 300 coffee deliveries in the Beyco Farming App, first experiences were gained in creating traceability up to the farm-level. SUVASE has successfully established cooperations with governmental and research institutions and is building partnerships with the private sector to connect producers in the project region with consumers who demand high-quality, sustainable coffee.

Published by: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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 As at: June 2021

In cooperation with: Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority (ECTA)
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