

WILMAR SMALL GROWERS SUPPORT COLOMBIA (WISSCo)
Summary, 21th October 2018

1. Introduction

Through an alliance between Wilmar Europe and the Sustainable Trade Platform – Solidaridad, WISSCo a sustainability training programme was developed in Colombia, with the aim to strengthen sustainable practices in 11 mills and 261 independent oil palm small growers¹ from the Region of *Los Llanos Orientales*. This region was selected because a) it has an important threat of expansion in the future, b) growers are mainly independent coming from the cattle ranching agroindustry with limited information on oil palm production, and c) these independent small producers didn't have sustainability trainings before.

The mills that participate in this programme were: Unipalma, Hacienda La Cabaña, Entrepalmas, Guaicaramo, Aceites Manuelita, Alianza del Humea, Oleaginosas San Marcos, Agropecuaria Santa Maria, Extractora Sur del Casanare, Palmeras Santana y Palmeras del Llano. The group targeted for this training has a total area of 26,000 hectares belonging to mills and palm fruit producers.

NES Naturaleza was the company hired for the facilitation of the WISSCo Program

2. Methodology and Training topics

This programme was structured to ensure not only the understanding of shared sustainability knowledge but also the adoption of the training content in the oil palm production. The sustainability fundamentals under the Wilmar No Deforestation, No Peat and No Exploitation (NDPE) policy framework were reinforced by playful dynamics during interactive training sessions; the participants had to draw for example the most important conservation values on their properties.



¹ Small growers have between 50 and 500 hectares, where smallholders between 1 and 50 hectares

The WISSCo programme was executed between August 2017 and August 2018. Every quarter trainers travelled for one week to each of the mills in the area of Los Llanos Orientales, to train the defined oil palm small growers. Over the two years in total 63 training sessions were hosted².

WISSCo included six training topics of which two were carried out during 2017, and four during 2018. The training sessions, called "Training of Small Growers" (TOSG), covered the following detailed items:

1. **TOSG1 - Wilmar Policy and ABC of Sustainability:** Contextualized the producers with the different sustainability request from the European market, with emphasis on certain topics such as No Deforestation, No Peat development and No Exploitation of people.
2. **TOSG2 - Good environmental practices and protection of the ecosystem:** It created awareness of the significance of ecosystems and its different elements, and therewith stipulated the importance of protection of biodiversity. This subject is of great value given the different threats that exist in the region due to the expansion of palm cultivation in that area.
3. **TOSG3 - Social responsibility:** Established the importance of respecting the rights of workers and communities. It emphasized the importance of fair treatment, and having happy and committed people at work.
4. **TOSG4 - Business Management:** Created awareness of the difference between having a farm and having a business. Reinforced the idea of entrepreneurship and what it means from a decision-making perspective if the objective is to maintain a sustainable business in the medium and long term.
5. **TOSG5 - Importance of Information:** Emphasis was placed on the importance of crop record keeping, not only for accounting but also for the performance and evolution of the palm business. This provides an opportunity for continuous improvement and to achieve significant savings; an essential aspect in a period of low prices globally.
6. **TOSG 6 - Reinforcing Sustainability:** As a closing session, the different training topics were summarized and their importance in the sustainability a business was reinforced. Secondly, the necessity of compliance with international sustainability requirements was stipulated again.

3. Baseline

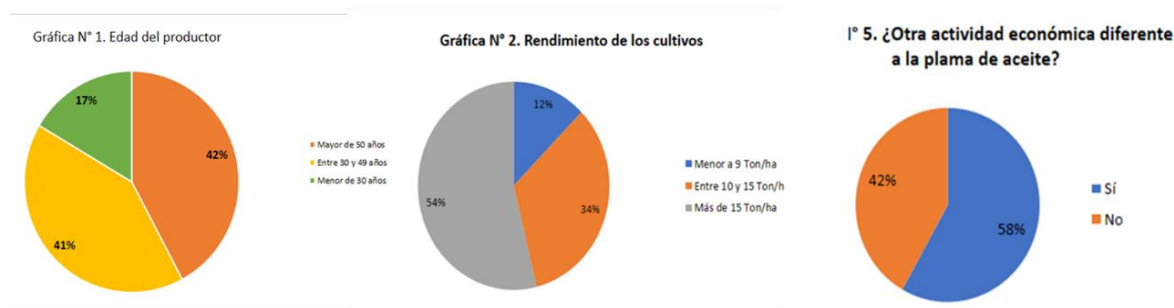
At the beginning of the program, a baseline survey was conducted with 109 people who were asked about demographic, social and productivity aspects related to their plantation. The respondents have 9,500 hectares planted after the cut-off date 2005, which RSPO defined for land use change. This represents 55% of the total area of small growers targeted initially in the programme and could be potentially at risk of breaching sustainability requirements.

Every of the 109 producers had identified some type of pest in their plantation. In addition 42% of the total surveyed were people older than 50 years, who are likely to be less familiar with sustainability standards.

Additionally, more than 54% of the surveyed producers had a yield of more than 15 tons of FFB (approx. 3 ton CPO) per hectare, per year. Likewise, 42% of the producers had another source of income different from oil

² 11 mills, 6 topics: some training sessions were combined.

palm. Therefore, it can be concluded that these producers were not 100% dedicated to the plantation, which may be reflected in a lack of knowledge of, and priority for sustainable practices in their palm oil businesses.



4. Training Participation

As mentioned, the goal of the WISSCo programme was to train 261 producers in the area of *los Llanos Orientales* of Colombia. This number was exceeded by 267%, since 691 individuals were beneficiaries of the WISSCo program. However, of these, only 117 participated in three or more training sessions, which is only 45% of the initial target.

Training session participation summary

MILL	PERSONS TRAINED	6 TRAININGS	5 TRAININGS	4 TRAININGS	3 TRAININGS	2 TRAININGS	1 TRAINING
Agropecuaria Santa María	186	2	0	2	9	28	145
Alianza del Humea	26	0	2	0	1	5	18
Entrepalmas	43	0	2	5	2	9	25
Extractora Sur del Casanare	148	5	6	12	16	21	88
Guaicaramo S.A	25	0	1	1	2	7	14
Hacienda la Cabaña	20	2	3	2	1	5	7
Manuelita	81	0	1	1	5	9	65
Oleaginosas San Marcos	42	0	0	1	3	4	34
Palmeras del Llano S.A.	56	0	1	3	6	21	25
Palmeras Santana	33	0	3	3	4	6	17
Unipalma	37	0	2	4	4	3	24
Total general	697	9	21	34	53	118	462

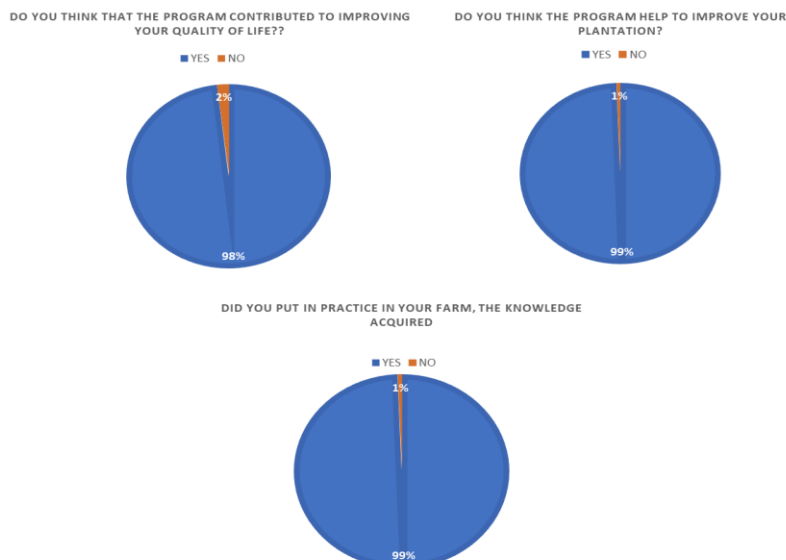
The attendance at the 63 training sessions was always more than 75% of the invited oil palm producers, with the exception of the last training, which was only 66% of the small growers expected. An important part of this percentage corresponds to people who were not initially registered into the programme but that were invited by the mills to disseminate the sustainable practices to a larger group.

Summary of WISSCo attendance 2007-2018

MILLS		TOTAL ASSISTANTS											
EXA	REGISTERED	TOSG 1	%	TOSG 2	%	TOSG 3	%	TOSG 4	%	TOSG 5	%	TOSG 6	%
Unipalma	18	17	94	10	56	7	39	13	72	7	39	14	78
Hacienda La Cabaña	12	11	92	12	100	8	67	4	33	9	75	11	92
Alianza del Humea	14	17	121	10	71	6	43	2	14	6	43	0	0
Oleaginosas San Marcos	7	14	200	11	157	11	157	7	100	5	71	7	100
Entrepalmas	15	15	100	11	73	15	100	10	67	14	93	14	93
Guaicaramo	18	10	56	12	67	9	50	5	28	3	17	4	22
Palmeras Santana	19	0	0	19	100	17	89	11	58	10	53	11	58
Palmeras del Llano	26	0	0	26	100	27	104	19	73	19	73	11	42
Manuelita	35	13	37	40	114	15	43	17	49	14	40	8	23
Extractora Sur Del Casanare	45	43	96	44	98	49	109	61	136	46	102	35	78
AgroSAN	52	23	44	30	58	32	62	42	81	65	125	56	108
TOTAL	261	163	75	225	86	196	75	191	73	198	76	171	66

5. Training results according to surveys

At the end of the two year programme we asked participants to complete surveys again. Of the total, 166 participants completed the surveys. From these, 99% of the producers indicated that the acquired knowledge is recently being applied on their farms and that it has helped them to improve results. Additionally, 98% stated that the knowledge acquired has actually helped them improve their quality of life, and 99% of the participants rated the programme as excellent or good.



In addition to the producer surveys, four surveys were held under the supervisor leaders of each mill. These supervisors are the persons in charge of the small grower producers supplying to their respective mill. The surveys included six questions, of which the main results are the following:

- Between 80% and 100% of the supervisors considered the training topics of great interest
- Between 90% and 100% indicated that the trainers were skilled on the training subject
- Between 90% and 100% considered that the playful dynamics were good or very good to reinforce the training topic
- 100% of the respondents considered that the time management by the trainers was good or very good

From the different testimonies taken during WISSCo we also noticed a change of mentality with the producers.



"We learned how to be kind to the environment, how to be social responsible and to keep our records up to date"



" We learned how to see the plantation not only as an activity but as a business"



"The training was very important because depending on all the data we collect in the business, it allows us to know what we have and where we are going "



"The training helped us to reinforce environmental and labor management and community engagement"

6. Additional deliverables of WISSCo

During the program, in total 5 booklets were provided to the attendees in order to reinforce the topics addressed in each training.

1. TOSG 1: Implementation of the WILMAR policy on non-deforestation, non-development in peat and non-exploitation of people or communities
2. TOSG 2: Good Environmental Practices and Ecosystem Conservation
3. TOSG 3: Social Responsibility
4. TOSG 4: Business Management
5. TOSG 5: Importance of information



In order to record the different activities of WISSCo, a programme [video](#) was made which also included different testimonies from producers who benefited from the programme.



[\[Click picture to see video\]](#)

The closure of the WISSCo was held in Bogotá on October 19, 2018, with the participation of the *Sustainability Manager* of Wilmar Europa. During the meeting participants could provide feedback and suggestions on how to improve the program.



7. Conclusions and recommendations

WISSCo was the first programme supporting *independent* oil palm producers in Colombia and because of that it became an important source of lessons learned:

- To achieve a greater interest in sustainability from the producer, it is very important to provide a market context about the challenges that palm oil is experiencing in the international market.
- The different relationships between producers and the mills (associated or independent) can determine the success of a training program.
- When the producer is associated or loyal to the mill company, they are able to put aside economic issues such as a price, and focus on the knowledge sharing.

- The best results are gained when a training programme is linked to the existing training plans of the mills. Supervisors feel that the training attendance would be higher then.
- Even, in spite of having the request of the mills to unite independent producers in the same environment, it is assumed more effective to train them individually on their own premises.

As recommendations for future programs, the following was identified:

- Clearly and precisely define the indicators of compliance and therewith set a quantifiable/qualitative baseline³. The information gathered will be again evaluated at the end of the program.
- Evaluate with each mill the different levels of sustainability knowledge the small growers have and jointly determine from there, the needs of training according to the different range of knowledge.
- No training sessions on Monday's
- No mixing of independent producers of different mills

The above elements will be incorporated in the next small growers programme in Colombia: WISSCo2. This programme is planned to be rolled out in the first half of 2019, in a different region of Colombia.

8. Role of sponsors

During the WISSCo program, the contributions of Wilmar Europe were focused on structuring the program, securing participants and defining the training methodology, surveys and reports of the Program, as well as editing the handbooks. Likewise, with the resources of Wilmar, the video of the WISSCo programme was developed.

The Sustainable Trade Platform (STP) - Solidaridad was responsible for organizing together with the mill suppliers the logistics of the trainings in terms of transportation, accommodation and food for the trainers as well as the printings of the handbooks.



³ Note that in many cases it will be difficult to quantify the impact of a training programme in just 1 years, as many other factors are influencing palm production, such as the weather.