

# SUSTAINABILITY BRIEF

## RECOGNISING STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

### Empowering Our Supply Chain with DEI Awareness

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) play an essential role in fostering creativity, driving innovation and enabling better decision-making. A diverse talent pool brings a wealth of perspectives, leading to greater productivity, higher employee engagement and improved retention. When individuals feel valued and included, they are more motivated to contribute, strengthening both workplace culture and overall business success.



### UNDERSTANDING DEI

DEI encompasses distinct yet interconnected concepts. Diversity reflects the range of human differences, including race, ethnicity, gender, disability, national origin, language and socioeconomic status. Equity involves ensuring fair treatment and access to opportunities, recognising that different individuals have different needs to achieve comparable outcomes. Inclusion is about creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected and valued, with the ability to participate fully and authentically.

These concepts are deeply rooted in human rights principles, with frameworks like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions outlining key expectations for businesses to uphold equality and dignity in the workplace. For instance, the ILO's conventions on equal remuneration, maternity protection and support for workers with family responsibilities set international benchmarks that organisations can strive towards, guiding them towards more equitable and inclusive practices.

## DEVELOPING KEY PARTNERSHIPS

Recognising the importance of DEI in achieving organisational growth and success, Wilmar embeds these values into our policies and initiatives across our global operations.

Our [Equal Opportunity Policy](#) ensures fair treatment for employees, regardless of ethnicity, religion, nationality, disability, gender, age, social background, sexual orientation, union membership or political stance. Complementing this, our [Women's Charter](#) provides a comprehensive framework to create a fair and inclusive workplace for female employees. Beyond our internal efforts, we actively extend DEI initiatives to our suppliers to raise awareness and drive industry-wide transformation.



In 2023, we partnered with Nestlé and Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) to deliver training programmes for our suppliers, covering essential DEI concepts, policies and best practices aligned with Wilmar's commitments and international standards. This initiative was made possible through a grant awarded to BSR via the Nestlé Palm Oil Human Rights Fund, implemented in collaboration with Winrock International. Their support was instrumental in launching the DEI programme for our suppliers.

As a first step, BSR conducted a landscape assessment to understand the current state of DEI within Malaysia's palm oil industry. This involved a comprehensive review of global DEI standards, relevant Malaysian regulations and industry benchmarks such as the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO). The landscape assessment report is available publicly and can be accessed [here](#).

By engaging with local stakeholders, BSR developed tailored training materials, surveys and action plan templates, culminating in a series of workshops designed to equip suppliers with practical tools to address DEI challenges.

One of the key findings from the assessment was gender bias in the industry, where a longstanding culture of undervaluing women's contributions was hindering progress towards gender equality in the workforce. This issue was exacerbated by "ineffective gender employment policies and a lack of infrastructural support for women employees, such as childcare and flexible work arrangements for mothers", echoing concerns raised in an International Labour Organisation report "[\*The Gender Gap in Employment: What's Holding Women Back?\*](#)"



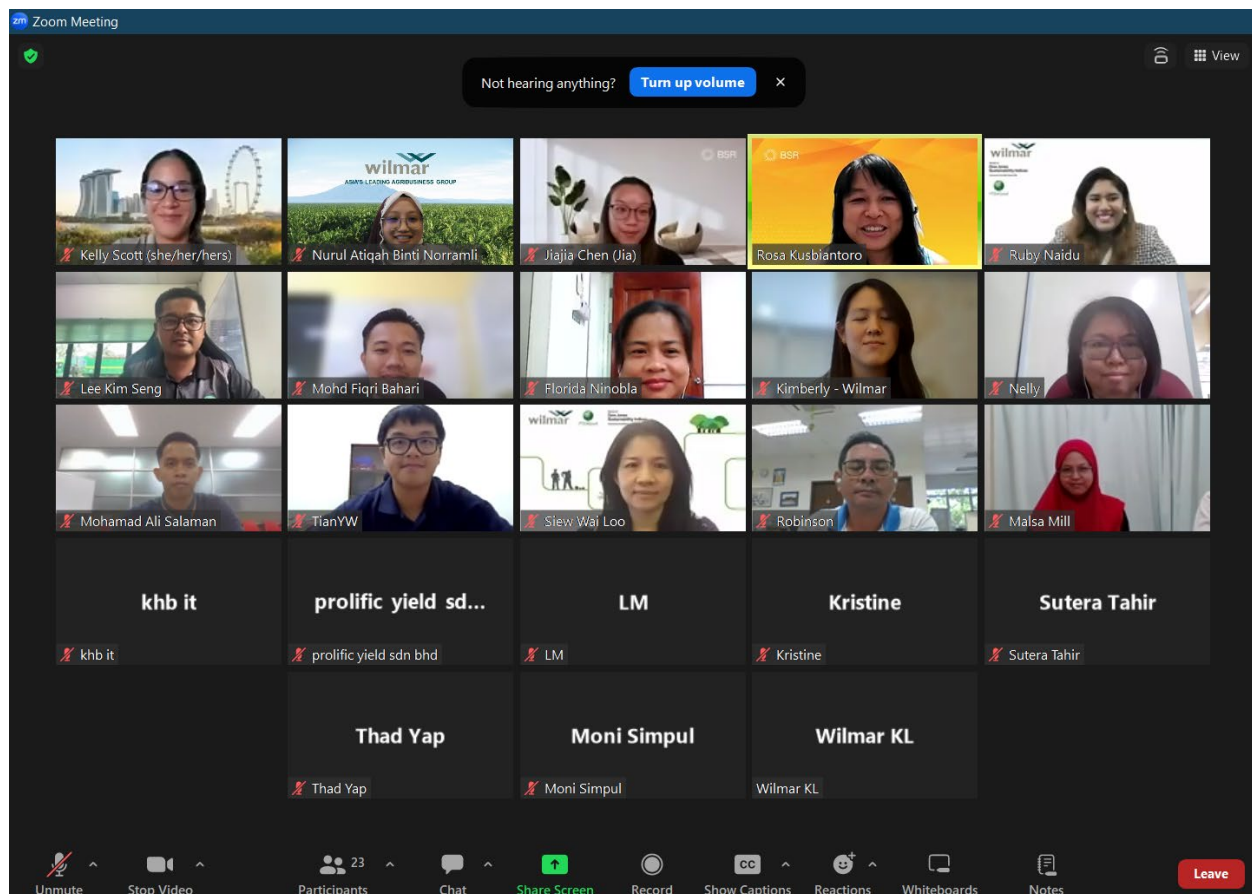
### BSR'S DEI TRAINING FOR WILMAR'S SUPPLIERS

In December 2023, BSR facilitated an in-person workshop in Sabah, Malaysia for Wilmar's suppliers, bringing together 45 participants from nine companies, including representatives from Wilmar and Winrock, on behalf of Nestlé. The workshop provided an interactive platform for participants to engage in breakout sessions focused on DEI challenges, assessments and strategies.



A key takeaway was the importance of conducting the workshop in both English and Malay, which ensured all participants could fully understand and actively contribute to the discussions. This inclusive approach fostered deeper engagement and more meaningful dialogue, reinforcing the need for accessibility in DEI initiatives.

The momentum continued with a virtual follow-up workshop in May 2024, attended by 26 participants from 10 companies. This session served as a refresher while expanding discussions on additional DEI topics, such as discrimination and harassment. Feedback from participants indicated that the training was both informative and practical, equipping them with the knowledge to address DEI issues within their organisations.



## LOOKING AHEAD

As this initiative comes to a close, its success highlights the critical role of DEI training in fostering a more inclusive and equitable palm oil industry. The positive feedback from participants, coupled with the practical insights from the landscape assessment, paves the way for sustained progress. Wilmar remains committed to supporting suppliers on their DEI journeys by continuously improving our programmes to meet the changing needs of the industry and ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion are not just ideals but everyday realities.