

Sustainability standards and the SDGs: productive employment and decent work

A snapshot of ISEAL members' contribution

Research shows that **sustainability standards** promote inclusive economic growth that supports core labour rights, improves sustainability awareness and fuels local entrepreneurship, **directly contributing** towards achieving **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8**.



SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Economic productivity and entrepreneurship

Sustainability standards **support** sustainable production, can **boost** productivity and profits of SMEs, **build** vocational skills and **spur** entrepreneurship.

Goodweave, Nepal 

Vocational **training programme** for women **weavers**¹

124	100%
No. trained women	Median income increase in 1st month

MSC, South Africa 

Estimated **certification benefits** for South African **hake fishery**²

37.6%
of current **estimated net value**

UEBT, Tanzania 

Helping low-income women farmers **access international biotrade markets** by developing a sustainable **Allanblackia** (oil producing tropical tree) supply chain and **training the community** on sustainable collection³

How?

Sustainability standards work with partners to **support farmers** and workers gain more from trade through **training** and **increased knowledge**. Certification often **improves access** to higher-value markets and credit lines for SMEs and can **increase** productive efficiency.

Workers' safety, rights and wellbeing

Sustainability standards uphold core labour rights, help to **improve workers' safety** and wellbeing at certified sites and **promote** industrial dialogue.

FSC, Congo Basin 

Social impacts of certification on workers in forest management units⁴

Existence of safety procedures

90% Certified	25% Non-certified
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Health and life insurance for staff

100% Certified	25% Non-certified
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UTZ, Colombia 

Worker health and safety on coffee plantations⁵

Workers with protective gear

81% Certified	35% Non-certified
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Access to first aid kits

60% Certified	17% Non-certified
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How?

ISEAL members' standards embody core ILO conventions and work with businesses, national governments and leading NGOs to **improve working conditions** in many sectors. **Standards** are supported by **independent assurance mechanisms** including **regular audits** to check compliance and support continuous improvement of labour conditions on **certified sites**.

Tackling child labour

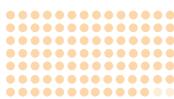
Sustainability standards work with partners at the field level to **identify** and **reduce** the incidence of child labour, including **rescuing** children from **hazardous work** and **helping** put them back into school.

UTZ, Ghana



Certified **cocoa farmers'** children going to school⁶

98%



GoodWeave, India, Nepal and Afghanistan



Since its inception⁷

3,554

children rescued from working in carpet factories

12,282

weaving community children enrolled into education

BCI, Tajikistan and Pakistan



Certified **cotton farmers** with advanced awareness of **child labour issues**⁸

Tajikistan

87%

Pakistan

71%

How?

Sustainability standards in sectors such as **agriculture, textiles and mining**, which account for the **highest rates** of child labour globally, have **strict criteria** on child labour and monitor incidence on certified farms. They also **build community awareness** of the issue and **support access** to education so children don't work during school hours.

Partnering to address key challenges

Research indicates **further improvements** are needed in some areas:

Increase safeguards for informal workers on certified smallholder farms

Improve efforts to support women workers

Improve measures to monitor trafficking and forced labour in supply chains

Tripartite dialogue and commitment to improve wages

Improve working with national governments to align with local laws, raise the bar and support enforcement

Standards are working with **governments, businesses and NGOs** to address these challenges and **drive dialogue and action**. For example, many ISEAL member standards are positioning themselves as **strong tools** to help businesses comply with **new transparency** in supply chains and **modern slavery regulations**.

Watch ISEAL's sustainable sourcing webinar for more on this.

ISEAL represents the global movement of sustainability standards.

To find out more about our members visit www.ISEALalliance.org

For more evidence on the impacts of standards visit www.standardsimpacts.org

Data sources: Evidence in this summary is based on publicly available data and research produced by ISEAL members and others with specific references available in the endnotes. All evidence is specific to the standard, product and country/region stated with limited generalisability. The nature of evidence varies according to research design and methodology used and not all evidence presented here has a counterfactual. Where a comparison is made the 'certified' refers to the standard in the sub-title.

List of acronyms used: MSC: Marine Stewardship Council; UEBT: Union for Ethical BioTrade; FSC: Forest Stewardship Council; ILO: International Labour Organization; BCI: Better Cotton Initiative

1. Source: GoodWeave. (2015). Weaving Opportunities in Nepal. Mid-Term Evaluation Report. From http://www.goodweave.org/uploads/File/Weaving_Opportunities_Q3_Report.pdf 2. Source: Lallemand, P., Bergh, M., Hansen, M., Purves, M. (2016). Estimating the economic benefits of MSC certification for the South African hake trawl fishery. Fisheries Research. 3. Source: Union for Ethical BioTrade. (2015). Annual Report. Amsterdam, Netherlands. From <http://ethicalbiotrade.org/dl/Annual-report-2014.pdf> 4. Source: Cerutti, P. et al. (2014). Social impacts of the Forest Stewardship Council certification: An assessment in the Congo Basin (Occasional Paper No. 103). Occasional Paper 103. Bogor, Indonesia. From http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/OccPapers/OP-103.pdf. Comparing nine certified and non-certified forest management units in Cameroon, Gabon and the Congo. 5. Source: García, C.; García, J.; Ochoa, G.; Mora, J. C. and Castellanos, J. F. (2014). Impact Evaluation of UTZ Certified Coffee Program in Colombia. (2008-2012). CRECE, Manizales. 6. Source: Waarts, Y. R., et al. (2015). Impact of UTZ certification on cocoa producers in Ghana, 2011 to 2014. LEI Wageningen UR, Wageningen. 7. Source: GoodWeave International. (2015). Global Indicators 2013-2014. Outcome Evaluation. Summary Report. From https://www.goodweave.org/uploads/File/GWI_Global_Indicators_2013-2014_Summary_Report.pdf 8. Source: Better Cotton Initiative. (2015). 2014 Harvest Reports. Geneva. From <http://bettercotton.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/FINAL-HARVEST-REPORT-2014-updated-2pg1.pdf>