

WHAT'S IN OUR 2020 CERTIFICATION PROGRAM?

GENDER EQUALITY

**Gender inclusivity and women's empowerment
for a more sustainable future**

An equitable future for all genders means a livable future for us all. Addressing gender inequality and empowering women in agricultural supply chains is an essential part of advancing human rights and sustainable economic development. It's also an often overlooked climate solution and an effective way to increase farm productivity.

Both male and female farmers and workers play an important role in agriculture, but female farmers and workers are often undervalued due to social norms. They often have less access to resources, information, training programs, decision-making, and other kinds of opportunities related to agricultural production as compared to their male counterparts.*

Gender equality is a human right for all. Moreover, when women are granted equal access to power and resources, productivity goes up and poverty goes down. Plenty of data shows that trained and well-informed women have more productive agricultural plots, steward their land better, and are more eager to embrace and use new innovations. When women are able to earn their own income, they also typically reinvest 90 percent of those earnings back into their families and communities. These are the reasons why we're taking a stronger and more consistent approach to promoting gender equality in our 2020 Certification Program.

WHAT'S OUR NEW APPROACH TO GENDER EQUALITY?

In our new standard, we are going further to promote gender equality by giving farms and companies new tools to understand the gender gaps and issues in their operations and how to address them. Certificate holders (including both farms and companies) are required to separate data for men and women to visualize gender gaps. Additionally, we are holding every certificate holder accountable for promoting gender equality by requiring them to create a written statement detailing their commitment to it which they then must share with group members, workers, and staff.

Certificate holders will also be required to appoint a person or committee dedicated to addressing gender equality. This person

or committee will carry out a basic risk assessment on gender yearly using our new Risk Assessment Tool. This tool will help them identify any gaps in their structure and procedures to address gender inequality and propose mitigation measures to help close those gaps. In addition to implementing those measures, the person or committee will be responsible for raising awareness about gender equality and women's empowerment with management and (group) staff yearly. They will also provide support in remediating cases concerning gender-based discrimination and workplace violence and harassment, following our Remediation Protocol—a part of our new "[assess-and-address](#)" approach.

GENDER EQUALITY SMART METERS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

While both companies and farms need to fulfill all of the core requirements mentioned above, farms will also need to implement gender equality Smart Meters starting their first year of certification. Smart Meters are a novel feature of the 2020 standard that support farms in setting their own self-identified improvement requirements best suited to their unique situation. Smart Meters align with our [reimagining of certification](#) which emphasizes continuous improvement and encourages farms to define their own priorities.

Gender equality Smart Meters are based on an in-depth risk assessment that helps farms identify and address more specific

** There are also many non-binary (those whose gender doesn't fall strictly within the conventional categories of male or female) farmers and workers involved in agricultural production. We aim to help make farms and companies more gender inclusive so that all genders in agricultural supply chains have equal rights and opportunities. Supporting and empowering women specifically is one of the main focuses of our certification program since women represent the largest marginalized gender group.*



Photo: Sergio Izquierdo

gender gaps related to their context. This assessment needs to be carried out every three years. The results of this more detailed assessment enable the responsible person or committee to address gender gaps by prioritizing and setting indicators, identifying mitigation measures that are most relevant to them, and tracking progress over time.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM OUR PREVIOUS STANDARDS?

Both the UTZ Code of Conduct and the 2017 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard address gender equality and take measures to raise awareness of women's rights. Both require training sessions to ensure equal opportunities for women and to prevent workplace violence and harassment. In both standards, some data is collected separately for men and women as well. The UTZ standard also requires appointing a person or committee responsible for promoting equal rights and opportunities for women. However, all of these measures apply only to the farm level. Gender equality at the supply chain level is not directly addressed in the previous standards.

In our new standard we are taking this further through the introduction of risk assessments on gender as part of the Risk Assessment Tool that will allow farms and companies to gain insights into gender issues specific to their context and identify targeted ways to address them. By collecting all relevant data for men and women separately throughout the process, farms and companies will be able to better visualize gender gaps and progress made.



REIMAGINING CERTIFICATION AND THE 2020 CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Reimagining certification is our long-term vision for the future of certification. It is part of our wider strategy at the Rainforest Alliance to drive change through our four main areas of work: climate, forests, livelihoods, and human rights.

In June 2020, the Rainforest Alliance takes the first step on its journey towards "reimagining certification" with the publication of its 2020 Certification Program. We've been working on this new program since 2018, when the Rainforest Alliance and UTZ merged.

The 2020 Certification Program—including a new Sustainable Agriculture Standard—is a unique opportunity to really change the way that certification works and how it delivers value to the many people and businesses around the world that use it.

Between June 2020 and mid-2021, the Rainforest Alliance will roll out the new program around the world, including a comprehensive training plan. Audits against the new program will begin in mid-2021.

Additionally, gender equality Smart Meters will enable farmers to set their own goals for addressing the specific gender issues on their farm.

WHAT OTHER RAINFOREST ALLIANCE INTERVENTIONS SUPPORT THIS WORK?

Beyond our work with farms and companies, we work with communities, local organizations, and governments to promote both gender equality and women's empowerment. Through our [Sector Partnerships Program](#), we support local organizations in nine countries producing cocoa, coffee, and tea to advocate for changes in policies and programs that make the sector more sustainable and inclusive, especially for smallholders and female farmers and workers. The program helps to empower women, make their voice heard, and put their issues on the political agenda.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Read more about [what to expect in our new certification program](#). For specific questions, email us at cs@ra.org.

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