

WILMAR SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURS (WISSE) Final Report - October 2022



“WISSE really facilitates and support us to adopt sustainable practices to better manage the ecosystem and to protect the environment”

Carlos Rene Rivera, Independent Smallholder from Hondurcaribe.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to the third and final annual [WISSE](#) report, which indicates the end of the three-year smallholder training program.

To celebrate this incredible journey, and to verify the progress made, the Wilmar team together with the WISSE implementer NES Naturaleza visited in September 2022 several smallholders supplying the four mills enrolled in this program.

“It was unbelievable to see how much progress these smallholders have made since I last saw them at the closing of [WISSH](#) in 2018”, reacts Daphne Hameeteman, the Sustainability Lead of Wilmar Europe.

After the visits to the smallholder plantations, Wilmar hosted a closing event in La Ceiba, on the 22nd of September. The general managers and the sustainability and technical teams of the mills were all invited.

The consensus amongst all the participants is that WISSE brought more than sustainability knowledge to the smallholders; it also created a better understanding of the palm oil business, so in the future better decisions can be taken, with improved financial benefits.

In this report, we will share the results of the complete WISSE program, but also smallholder and trainer feedback, which we obtained during the visit.

1. WISSE Training and Certification Results

Three years ago, we started the WISSE program with very ambitious goals: training 1950 smallholders and 45 technicians of 4 mills on sustainable palm practices, and at the same time certify 900 smallholders. Since these mills and smallholders previously also followed the [WISSH program](#), it was mutually agreed that this would be possible.

However, at the time when the goals were set, nobody could imagine what the world and Honduras were about to face: a) the Covid-19 pandemic, b) Hurricanes ETA and IOTA in Honduras, which destroyed many hectares of oil palm, and left others with diseases created by the flood, c) labour immigration to the US, and d) the Ukraine war generating o.a. shortages of fertilizers and other agricultural supplies.

Despite those challenges, NES Naturaleza and the technical team of the mills trained 1666 smallholders on average, on every of the 8 topics¹. This means that 85% of the intended number of participants was successfully trained. Within the WISSE program also 352 smallholders got certified which is 39% of the initial goal². During the meetings in September, it became evident that WISSE brought significant value not only to smallholders, but also to the mill's technical and sustainability teams.

Table 1. Smallholders trained during WISSE

GENERAL INFORMATION		YEAR 1						YEAR 2						YEAR 3						
		TOSH 1			TOSH2			TOSH3		TOSH4		TOSH5		TOSH6		TOSH7		TOSH8		
MILL	TOTAL PRODUCERS	GROWERS TRAINED	% PART	GROWERS TRAINED	TOTAL TRAINED	%	GROWERS TRAINED	%	GROWERS TRAINED	%	GROWERS TRAINED	%	GROWERS TRAINED	%	GROWERS TRAINED	%	GROWERS TRAINED	%		
PALMASA	338	82	24%	254	336	99	325	96,2	338	100	294	87	323	96	359	106	325	96	338	100
ASAPALSA	450	158	35%	540	698	155	455	101,1	450	100	450	100	450	100	450	100	450	100	450	100
HONDUPALMA	800	102	13%	534	636	80	615	76,9	763	95	733	92	758	95	760	95	350	44	840	105
HONDUCARIBE*	125	186	149%	93	279	223	226	180,8	156	125	156	125	232	186	125	100	125	100	90	72
Total	1713	528	31%	1421	1949	114	1621	94,6	1707	100	1633	95	1763	103	1694	99	1250	73%	1718	100

¹ 1) Sustainability Standards, 2) Sustainable Entrepreneurship, 3) Record keeping, 4) Verifying Sustainability, 5) Child Protection, 6) Generation Gap, 7) Traceability, 8) Sustainability Commitment

² In the previous [WISSE report](#) we already reduced the certification objective to 540 smallholders, because of the challenging circumstances. Taking the revised objective into account we reached 65%.

2. Benefits from the Smallholders' Perspective

During the closing event, the mill leaders explained that WISSE significantly strengthened the technical capacities of the mill sustainability team, the smallholders and their families, and therewith led to the inclusion of the smallholders in the sustainability journey of the mill. Especially the fact that the booklets, videos, templates and other tools, were easy to understand by the smallholders and could also be applied for future training sessions, added value in their opinion.



During the three years, WISSE provided a greater appreciation between the mills and the smallholders. The growers noticed that the technical teams are creating value with the WISSE program and now they are more open to visits of the sustainability team from the mills to their plantations.

This close interaction provided the mill employees with a better understanding of the challenges of the independent smallholder producers. Furthermore, the smallholders also noticed the value of a stronger relation with the technical teams, which led to more loyalty towards the mill.

Moreover, the WISSE participants learned to see the connection between their palm business and safeguarding the environment. By using their resources more efficiently, they noticed the positive effects on ecosystems and realized the environmental services that nature provides.

3. Benefits from the Business Perspective

Throughout the three-year WISSE program we emphasized the importance of continuous improvement, to both the smallholders and the mills.

According to the sustainability leaders, implementation of this concept became visible in the day-to-day activities of specifically five areas:

- **Traceability:** supporting the team leaders on the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and creating capabilities to build maps of the farms
- **Productivity:** implementing soil assessments to define soil nutrition
- **Profitability:** creating awareness on premiums for certified Fresh Fruit Bunches, and derived palm oil
- **Cost reduction:** efficiently applying input products
- **Access to new customers:** interested in certified palm oil and improved awareness of mills' good sustainable practices

4. Benefits from the Technical Leaders' Perspective

Sustainability leaders shared their learnings from the program explaining how their leadership and communication skills improved. Additionally, the sustainability teams gained a better relationship within their peers in the Palm Oil community, something they considered very valuable.

Overall, the sustainability leaders feel more prepared to support sustainable practices in the field and they ratified their commitment to continue fostering certification among the smallholders.

“WISSE trainings were very important because they helped us to improve our plantations. We now apply some activities, which we never did before”

Octavio Gomez Ramos, Independent Smallholder from Hondupalma.



5. Conclusions and Next Steps

During the program hundreds of smallholders improved their understanding of sustainable practices and the benefits this brings to their business. WISSE provided a sustainability toolkit that allowed them to continue their journey towards responsible practices and certification. Thanks to the commitment of smallholders, technical teams, the mills and program supporters, 1666 producers were trained and 352 smallholders achieved certification under RSPO and ISCC.

MARIPOSA will continue with programs during 2023 to further their mission of transforming the palm oil supply chain in Latin America and increase awareness on sustainability transformation and best practices.

WISSE is the first program under the MARIPOSA, which is a crowdfunding initiative created by Olenex together with its customers. By implementing programs like WISSE, Olenex customers directly contribute to change on the ground in the palm oil industry in Latin America; a great example of #SharedResponsibility.

Please direct all your questions to palm_sustainability@olenex.com.