



IMD-SAI Platform Training Workshop

Rolling Out Sustainable Agriculture in Food Companies

IMD Campus, Lausanne, Switzerland, October 18-19, 2010

Minutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 18-19 October, SAI Platform together with IMD - one of the top two education centers for executives worldwide - launched a Masterclass Workshop in embedding sustainable agriculture (SA) strategies in companies involved in commodity value chains. The event was supported by the Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH).

About 30 mainstream managers linked to commodity value chains participated in the Masterclass. The first day of the Masterclass helped managers to a) understand the business context that lends strategic relevance to SA as an issue and broker knowledge with leading experts b) build a business case for SA and exchange expertise with others managers while doing so, and 3) learn from best practice examples. A case study on Unilever's move to 100% sustainable tea in its Lipton supply chain was greatly valued by participants, as was a high level "knowledge brokering" intervention from Dr Jason Clay, Vice President for Market Transformation at WWF. The second day of the Masterclass focused on empowering managers to instigate change within their organization and return to their company with a plan of action.

About the take home value of the workshop, participants said "I now have a better understanding about the way I an approach sustainability assessment at the farm level and I found some opportunities to improve and design better strategy." "I made great new contacts with participants and have new ideas for projects."

Participants at the end of the workshop were asked to rate each module with the using numbers: 5 = Excellent, 4 = Good, 3 = Fair, 2 = Poor and 1 = Very Poor. The overall value of the program was rated 4.10 by the participants. Given this good score, the workshop will be run again next year at IMD, and hopefully in other regions of the world soon. It can also be provided as an internal training event. Should you be interested in hearing more about either option, contact efellus@saipatform.org

DAY ONE

Welcome & Introduction

Dr. Aileen Ionescu-Somers, Director, IMD research and learning Center for Corporate Sustainability Management (CSM), welcomed everybody. Ghislain Pelletier, SAI Platform's president, addressed everybody through a pre-recorded video. He explained that SAI Platform had decided to develop this training as per requests received from member companies, which were facing internal and external hurdles



to build business cases around sustainable agriculture (SA), and implement them throughout their supply chains. He shared his own experience with the trial workshop a year ago, which he particularly enjoyed because it not only brought content to the participants about SA and supply, but also let them practice and play around with organizational challenges in a really exciting and enjoyable simulation tool.



Module 1: Setting the context for SA

The module started with an interactive “Myth buster” session aimed at identifying common myths associated with SA and food production. This triggered interesting discussions about what SA really means, the drivers and resources needed to make it happen on a wide scale, and whether this would allow to feed the world’s population by 2050 - [See Presentation 1](#).



It was followed by a “knowledge brokering session” during which Jason Clay, WWF, gave a presentation on “How big brands can save biodiversity” - see http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/jason_clay_how_big_brands_can_save_biodiversity.html - and answered questions about the challenges related to SA and its roll-out on a wide scale. The session was considered by the participants to be one of the highlights of the day.

Module 2 – Part one: Why should you be active in addressing SA challenges?

Aileen Ionescu-Somers gave a presentation on pressing social and environmental issues, and how they threaten the food chain sustainability. She explained how the business response to these threats is increasingly moving from risk management to value creation - [See Presentation 2](#). Participants then broke out in small groups to analyze the pros and cons for a company to act on sustainability issues or not. Some people were asked to be cynics so as to grasp some of the challenges commonly faced by managers in their company, when trying to convince their peers to join a sustainability initiative.

Module 2 – Part two: The business case for SA

The session was aimed at explaining why managers often had failed at promoting SA initiatives in companies in the past, and how this could be changed. It was shown how the business case, in order to receive the necessary buy-in and support in the company, must be built like all other business cases - showing the economic value and value creation for the company - [See Presentation 3](#). Participants then broke out in smaller groups to develop the first lines of crop-specific business cases, as well as an “elevator speech” aimed at getting top management support for these.

Module 3: Embedding SA in sourcing

Participants first split in smaller groups to analyze and discuss the brand new case study written by Research Associate and case writer Dr. Tania Braga, Dr. Aileen Ionescu-Somers and Ralf Seifert, Professor of Operations at IMD and supported by SAI Platform and IDH, entitled “Unilever sustainable tea: Leapfrogging to





mainstream". See [IMD-UnileverCaseStudySustainableTea](#). The case study was perceived to be one of the best ones ever seen about mainstreaming SA. IMD intends to further develop it and use it also in mainstream programs such as Mastering Technology Enterprises, a program for technical managers including supply chain managers.



Emeline Fellus, SAI Platform Deputy Manager, then gave a presentation about SAI Platform, its activities and main products and services aimed at helping member companies successfully implement sustainable agriculture initiatives throughout the food chain - See [Presentation 4](#).

Participants were encouraged to be critical and provide suggestions to enable the Platform to deliver even more value added to member companies, as well as other relevant stakeholder groups. Suggestions included: focusing work on additional crops, such as cocoa, meat and wheat, as well as on cross-cutting issues such as child labor; sharing best practices on strategies and concrete actions relating to SA; and making this training widely available – to members, their suppliers, and any other groups which involvement is crucial for a wider roll-out of SA strategies throughout the food chain.

Cocktails and Dinner

Cocktails and dinner were then offered to the participants at the IMD restaurant.

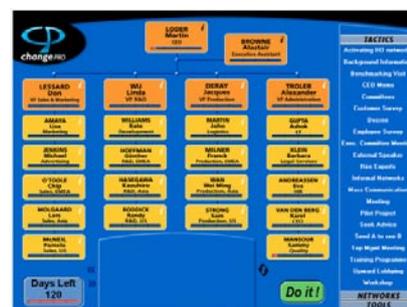
DAY TWO

Module 4: Breaking down organizational hurdles

The module started with a presentation from Aileen Ionescu-Somers on the main hurdles faced by managers when trying to implement SA initiatives in their companies. It was striking to learn that the biggest challenge is not technical, but breaking down mindsets of managers and filling knowledge gaps about the significant industry threats and business risks of unsustainable agriculture - See [Presentation 5](#). Later on, participants split into smaller groups to identify the main organizational hurdles faced in their specific companies, and ways to address them.

Module 5: Leading change in the organisation

Participants played the "Change pro" game simulation. In that game, each player is a "consultant" engaged to roll out a SA initiative in a company. He/she has 120 days to do so by building the right networks, using the right tools in the right order. See [Presentation 6](#) and <http://www.learningways.com/changepro.html>



A presentation was then given by Tania Braga on the game findings and key learning about leading change in companies through the right networks. See [Presentation 7](#).

A last exercise was conducted by Aileen Ionescu-Somers to guide each participant through their own company-specific challenge in engaging internal networks in SA initiatives, and how to do that in order to make everyone evolve – including resisters and by-standers – to be supportive of their initiative. See [Presentation 8](#). This provided participants with solid take-home value, and with a project in mind that could be started the very next day.