

Ladies and gentlemen,

Hivos stands for Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation. We are based in the Netherlands, with Regional Offices in Harare, Costa Rica, Indonesia and India. We have around 800 partners in 30 countries and our annual budget is about 82 million Euro. We have two domains: one promoting Human Rights, including gender, democratization, but also culture and ICT. The other domain is Sustainable Production, one team focussing on financial services and business development and a Sustainable Production team working in a chain approach to improve quality of production and access to markets. This also includes support to organic agriculture. Recently we started a new section on Climate Change. In June, a Climate Change Campagne will start and also a Climate Fund will be launched. Organic agriculture projects are eligible for funding.

Hivos is for about 20 years now contributing throughout the organic sub-sector with support to training organisations, NGOs providing services to small scale farmers, national platforms, regional service providers and worldwide by supporting IFOAM.

We need the involvement of small scale farmers producing organically in order to contribute to a more balanced, fair and sustainable world where all people have the right and chance to a safe and decent living.

Organic agriculture shouldn't be seen in isolation. We need to look at the ecological, social and economic context of organic agriculture, and act on negative tendencies that are taking place e.g. introduction of GMOs. At the conventional global market, but increasingly so on organic markets, a tendency of concentration of buying power is taking place making it increasingly more difficult to smallholders to cope with the quality requirements and to access markets. At the same time, farmers have to deal with several quality standards for one market segment. In its approach, Hivos attempts to prevent that a large percentage of the world population is excluded from a decent livelihood.

Conceptually, Hivos has been working for the last five years together with other institutions, NGOs and consultants to develop Risk Based Quality Management training modules for producer groups. A system based on HACCP methodology (a methodology originally designed to ensure food safety) and ISO 9000:2100 (regulating documentation), now united in ISO 22.000.

Therefore it is embedded in worldwide accepted standards.

The approach is taking the producer group and its members as a starting point to build up understanding and capacity in quality management, and developing internal standards based on a thorough risk assessment that will lead to continuous improvement in compliance to external standards and in performance. There are many similarities with the Internal Control System, but RBQM puts more emphasis on empowering farmers, is realistic in what smallholders can handle in meeting standards but also provides a route to increased compliance, and allows the combination of several quality standards in one management system. It is a long road, but if it will provide small scale farmers the capacity to operate on quality markets and negotiate a better income, it will be worthwhile the investment.

Hivos is involving more and more the private sector. To this end we bring several parties together in a contract. This multi party contract between producer group, trainer, trader, certifier, buyer and donor describes the roles and responsibilities of each involved and these are a result of negotiation between parties. We also expect the buyer to contribute with at least 25% to the training of the producer groups. A training trajectory of about 3 years will be necessary.

Training needs are defined on the basis of the prevention of the highest risks of non compliance (internal standards), first aiming to gain a certain level of quality management capacity within the producer group, later to meet also external standards. We have several pilots in coffee and cotton, and also in vegetables in South Africa and now starting in Kenya with Uchumi.

We also try to set up a training infrastructure of trainers and promoter farmers who are able to train producer groups in establishing this risk based internal quality management system.

This is a short overview of some of our activities.

For more information please visit our website:

[www.hivos.nl](http://www.hivos.nl)

Thank you for your attention.