



# THEORY OF CHANGE

Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung



## INTRODUCTION

Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung (HRNS) is an independent foundation and operates since 2005. The aim of the foundation is to improve the social situation of people in tropical countries (especially the producers of agricultural crops such as coffee), the welfare and education of youth, and the protection of nature and the environment. HRNS pursues its objectives through:

- proactively implementing project work and programs,
- engaging in partnerships and cooperation with like-minded organizations from the public and private sector,
- learning jointly with partners and sharing experiences and lessons learnt.

## PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Coffee is produced in more than 60 countries. Around 12.4 million smallholder families worldwide depend on coffee for their livelihoods.\* Many more are engaged in the processes along the coffee value chain. Most of these smallholder families live in poverty and grow coffee on small pieces of land in combination with other crops. They face numerous challenges, such as a lack of agricultural knowledge or access to competitive finance, production inputs, markets, technology, quality information, and land titles.

Farmer organizations exist in most coffee producing countries but are often weakly managed, ineffectual, or dysfunctional. Smallholder families are largely left to act alone in the market, usually at the lowest value point, and without access to support. Coffee produc-

tion and the cultivation of other crops is being adversely affected by climate change and environmental degradation. The voices of women and youth are rarely heard, which leads to inequalities in decision making and unfair distributions of responsibilities between family members.

Young people lack opportunities and do not see a future in agriculture. Consequently, they are migrating to urban centers in search of job opportunities. In many cases this results in precarious employment situations. At the same time, the farming population in coffee regions is aging, and the potentials of future generations cannot develop. Sustainability programs within the coffee value chain often neglect smallholders at the bottom of the supply chain.

\*Source: [www.enveritas.org](http://www.enveritas.org)



around **12.4 million**  
smallholder families worldwide

# OUR VISION OF CHANGE

HRNS' work goes beyond coffee production. We support smallholder families to take a proactive role in shaping their lives in an informed and self-determined way. We are convinced that diversified production is the backbone of rural well-being. It reduces risks of internal and external shocks such as price volatility, climate hazards or pests and diseases. Improved agricultural output advances the economic situation and fosters the living standard of smallholder families. To enable such positive improvements, our approach combines the development of advanced agricultural practices, appropriate farm and household management strategies, adaptation to climate change, and member-oriented farmer organizations. Gender equality, intergenerational dialogue and skills development for young people are vital in all our activities. We support the farming community to advocate for their needs and promote entrepreneurship, respect, and integrity as values of decision-taking. As a result, smallholder families are driving prosperous development of their livelihoods for themselves and their communities.



**Smallholder families prosper, and youth are drivers for thriving communities in coffee regions.**

## ASSUMPTIONS

There are a number of important assumptions that are underlying HRNS' approach. They will be continuously monitored.

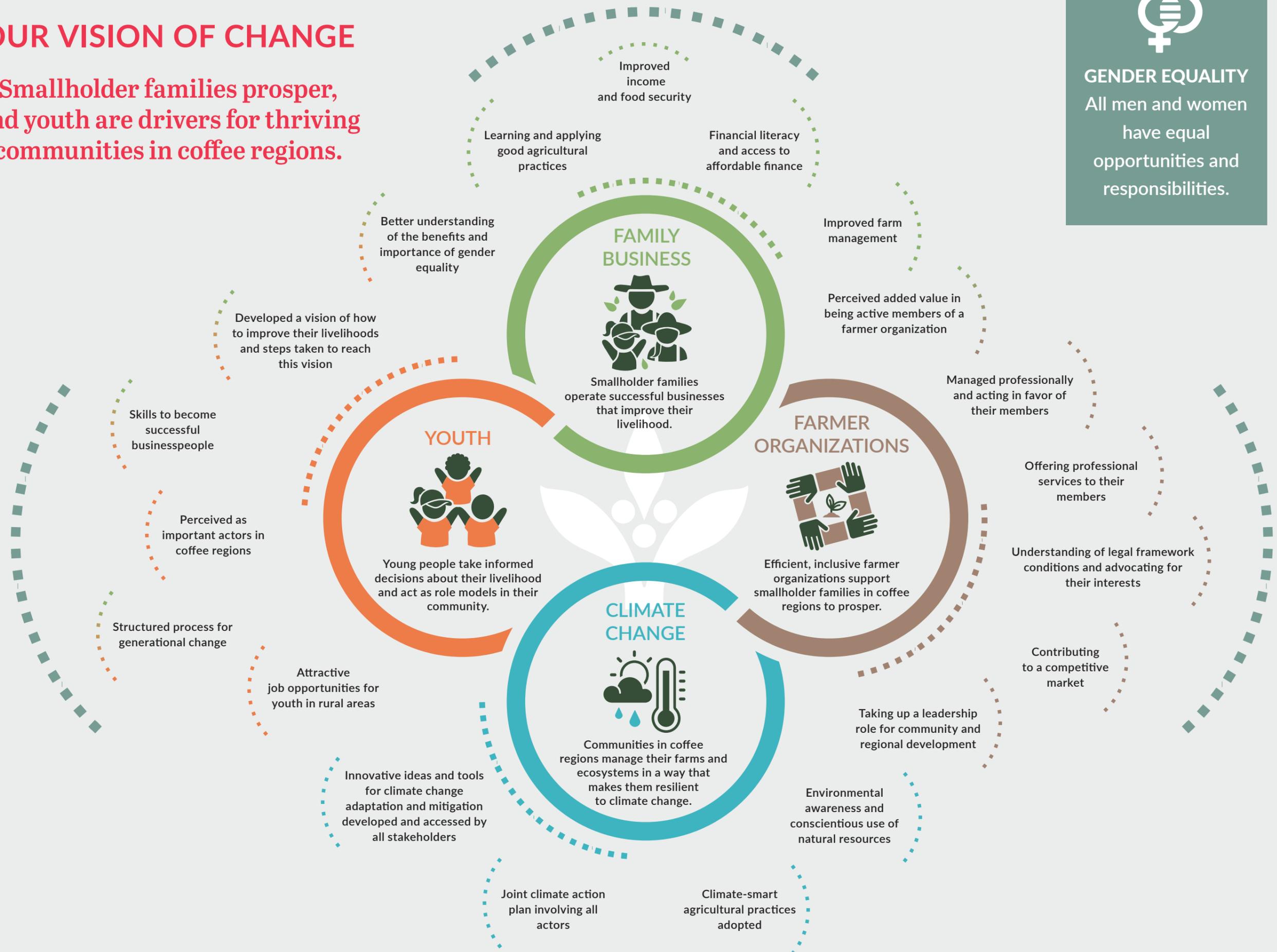


# OUR VISION OF CHANGE

Smallholder families prosper, and youth are drivers for thriving communities in coffee regions.



**GENDER EQUALITY**  
All men and women have equal opportunities and responsibilities.



# THE CORE COMPONENTS OF OUR LIVELIHOOD APPROACH



**Gender equality is a fundamental aspect of all four of these components and will be mainstreamed across our work and within the organization.**



## Family Business

As a result of HRNS's interventions, smallholder families are operating their farms as family businesses. All family members, whether male or female, older or younger, are aware of the advantages of gender equality and cooperation. They see themselves as equal partners in farming and other economic and household activities. They share opportunities and responsibilities.

Smallholder families develop a joint vision of how to improve their livelihoods, and all household members take proactive steps towards reaching it. By doing so, smallholder families improve their farming and business skills, increase their income and food security, and become successful businesspeople. Natural resources are adequately used and protected. They are positively perceived in their communities and give example to their peers.



## Farmer Organizations

Establishing and strengthening professional farmer organizations are important elements in reaching HRNS's vision of change. They are independent and self-driven and work beneficially for their members, offering increased access to markets and valuable services. We work to develop service-oriented, financially stable, and professionally managed organizations that act on behalf of their members. These organizations offer essential support services such as access to finance, inputs, information and training, ensuring proper post-harvest handling of crops, exercising quality controls, and promoting bulk marketing of farmers' produce. They support their members' economic and social interests in a transparent and business-oriented way. Over the years, HRNS has developed an approach that also integrates strong gender inclusion, youth representation, and generational transition at all organizational levels.



## Youth

HRNS creates opportunities and professional perspectives for and with the youth in coffee regions. We promote them as key actors for thriving communities. Young men and women taking informed decisions about their livelihoods inspire other youth and actively contribute to advance the situation in their regions. They showcase the existence of rural employment and business development opportunities. HRNS's interventions are aimed at developing social and technical capacities in farming practices and beyond of young men and women in addition to life skills. HRNS supports youth in identifying and pursuing job opportunities. With capacity-building programs young people also learn to recognize possibilities for self-employment. This enables them to use both on- and off-farm activities to develop themselves and earn their living. HRNS combines its expertise with other relevant partners to support the availability of the kind of youth-friendly services that are essential for making rural areas attractive to young people: family planning, health facilities, and education. With the support of older generations, structured processes for generational change in families, farmer organizations and their communities can make the regions better places for young people to build their lives.



## Climate Change

HRNS enables smallholder families in coffee-producing regions to manage their farms and ecosystems in ways that make them resilient to climate change. First and foremost, smallholder families are supported to adopt climate-smart practices at both farm and household level.

Innovative adaptation and mitigation techniques to address the effects of climate change are developed, implemented and shared by and within the smallholder community.

Farmer Organizations play an important role in combating the impacts of climate change by disseminating these technologies. Together with all relevant actors they become drivers in developing and executing joint action plans to make entire coffee regions climate resilient. As a result, smallholder farming systems can become embedded in thorough landscape management schemes. This goes beyond the community level as smallholder families form part of a global call for change. They understand that they play a critical role in assuring the future availability of healthy natural resources.



# INFLUENCING CHANGE AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL

## Part of the Communities

HRNS has made a long-term commitment to its work, which is deeply rooted in communities in coffee regions. We enjoy a high level of trust with smallholder families and farmer organizations. We are also committed to providing support during difficult times, e.g. periods of political instability. We will maintain our commitment for as long as conditions in the focus countries and regions allow field staff to continue to provide their services meaningfully.

more than **270** staff  
worldwide

## A well-connected Organization

We have a growing network of public and private partners, and a proven track record of successful interventions. We are a self-determined and independent organization with no commercial interests. We advocate for a holistic, long-term and context-appropriate socio-economic approach in coffee regions and build bridges between consuming and producing countries. This is needed to effectively address the complex challenges and opportunities of smallholder families.

## South-South Exchange

HRNS supports coordinated learning globally through various formats including South-South Exchange activities. HRNS staff, partners and beneficiaries connect and meet across regions and continents to learn from each other and to develop approaches further.

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

HRNS's approaches are accompanied by a strong and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system (M&E). This includes own data collection as much as third party evaluations and cooperation with suited development research organizations. Together with our partners we are jointly learning from the results of these efforts. In this way, we ensure that our approaches remain needs-based and further develop.



## HRNS' Activities in Coffee Regions

HRNS has operational offices in Guatemala, Brazil, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania and Indonesia. The head office is in Hamburg, Germany and a strategic office is located in New York, USA. HRNS has more than 270 staff worldwide made up of agronomists, economists, M&E and gender experts, and more.

Since 2001, we have reached more than 300.000 smallholder families in 18 producing countries. We anticipate that, in addition to our current beneficiaries, we will directly reach an additional 100.000 families in the focus countries until 2023.





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