



ProFound kicks off the ASPIRE programme

Early this month, ProFound officially started the ASPIRE programme with its partners: SNV, Triodos-Facet and the Ethiopian Apiculture Board. Our goals are to enhance rural incomes in Ethiopia with beekeeping activities and to raise export volumes of bee products. The programme will realise these goals by achieving the following results:

- Organising beekeepers
- Access to business development services
- Ensuring access to capital
- Ensuring access to markets
- Building capacities of sector organisations
- Building knowledge in the honey value chain

ProFound will mainly be responsible for supporting access to both domestic and export markets. In order to ensure market access, ProFound will analyse gaps to be overcome by Ethiopian companies in the bee products trade.



Transitional beehives in Ethiopia

We will work on quality management schemes to assist those companies with the realisation of their marketing strategies.

-- Kasper Kerver

IDH & CBI: cashew nuts

Following a request of CBI, ProFound carried out a tailored study on sustainable cashew nuts for the Dutch Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) in the last months of 2012. The study was commissioned in the framework of IDH's pilot programme in West Africa, which aims at upscaling processing in the region and at increasing transparency and sustainability within the cashew sector.

In order to get a deep insight into the sector, ProFound interviewed several companies (importers, processors, retailers) in 6 European countries, and combined such information with quantitative data for a comprehensive analysis of the market. The results delivered to CBI and IDH will be partly used for IDH's next steps in its cashew programme.

-- Gustavo Ferro



MMF shaping up

ProFound has been very active in business development in 2012, also through servicing the Matchmaking Facility of Agency-NL. We organised successful visiting programmes for a variety of sectors within the MMF in the course of this year.

One example is the successful case of Senegalese enterprise Top Mountain. In July, the directors of Top Mountain came to the Netherlands for meetings with Dutch horticultural businesses active in vegetative propagation and in-vitro fertilisation. Top Mountain's goal was to further develop their business plan by selecting the most interesting products for the Senegalese market and to create partnerships with Dutch companies.

As a follow-up, Top Mountain has asked ProFound to be involved in the further preparation of their business plan. The company's next objective is to buy young plant material and to establish partnerships with Dutch companies.

-- Jesse Bloemendaal and Bert-Jan Ottens

CBI work in 2012

Following CBI's new way of structuring its market intelligence products, in 2012 ProFound carried out market analysis of 7 sectors, ranging from natural ingredients and wine to home decoration & textiles. The new methodology of producing high-quality market intelligence products involves consultation with a peer group composed of industry players and experts. The focus is now stronger on aspects such as foresighting, trends and considerations for action aimed at Exporters and Business Support Organisations (BSOs) in developing countries.

Moreover, ProFound continued to carry out tailored market analysis for CBI's partner BSOs. Besides cashew nut market analysis for IDH (see article), we worked on coconut derivatives for the Philippines, exotic fresh fruits for Colombia, and quinoa and chocolate for Ecuador.

-- Sharifa Zaidi

SIPPO GAP Analysis BiH

To support future SIPPO value chain interventions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), ProFound carried out a GAP analysis for (organic) Natural Ingredients and Fresh Fruits & Vegetables. ProFound identified the main bottlenecks for SMEs to export to EU/EFTA markets and, together with local stakeholders, determined what is needed to improve this situation in terms of activities and partnerships. Based on this assessment ProFound proposed potential scenarios for SIPPO's future programmes in BiH.

ProFound consultant Robbie Hogervorst and a national consultant collected existing reports and statistics and interviewed almost 70 stakeholders throughout the country, including companies, government institutions, business support organisations, research institutes, NGOs and donors. The outcomes of the research were verified and prioritised during a meeting with sector stakeholders.

-- Robbie Hogervorst

Blue Rhino Africa

ProFound and sister company Blue Rhino initiated a new initiative for linking value chain development and financial mechanisms in Africa: Blue Rhino Africa. BRA's business models provide returns to both private investments and local communities, but also to the environment through our integrated agro-biodiversity landscape management approach.

In 2012, activities have taken off in Tanzania and Ethiopia with partners in both countries (and supported by University exchange programmes), involving bankable business schemes, appropriate financial mechanisms, and scaling-up marketing strategies.

-- Bert-Jan Ottens



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