



# Using the RAI Tool for Agribusiness in practice

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Date: July 10, 2024



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Sustainable Development

# Methodology and Approach

## Pilot testing the RAI Tool for Agribusiness with SSNUP and ABC Fund Investors

1

- Selection of agribusinesses for testing. Identified from lists of agribusiness investees provided by investors.

2

- Consent to participate sought from agribusinesses (and subsequently from other stakeholders interviewed in fieldwork).

3

- On-line interviews. Use of the Tool with each key/functional manager (CEO, HR, Finance) to secure relevant response, evidence and contextual background to each question.

4

- In-country Field Visits. Qualitative, “triangulation” interviews with stakeholders (farmers, community representatives, women, youth, suppliers, local officials, NGOs...)

5

- Analysis and review of results (including Tool Dashboard and careful assessment of stakeholder interviews)

6

- Assessment of Tool “efficacy”, feedback of issues, deficiencies and recommendations to further refine tool

7

- Development of case studies on each agribusiness, as a learning resource, basis for agribusiness to improve RAI alignment and recommendations to governments, investors and others

# Outcomes and feedback I

- **Pilot testing was essential in refining and enhancing the tool.** For example, in terms of:
  - A filtering system (any agribusiness only has to respond to relevant questions)
  - Refinement of questions, duplication removal, clearer formulation of questions/indicators etc.
  - Improvement of dashboard and graphical display of overall results in the Tool
- **Agribusinesses found the tool understandable.** (Formulated in the “language of business”)
  - But concern on its useability by smaller businesses (comprehensive, but long). Possible options:
    - (Some) Agribusinesses make use of consultants to apply the tool. Larger companies could be trained to use the tool.
    - Shorten tool by focusing on the most important set of questions/indicators
- **Challenges and limitations (in conducting the pilot testing).**
  - Cases of poor comms for online interviews, evidence of compliance not required, management availability in some cases screened out some candidates (and caused delays)

# Outcomes and feedback II

- **Agribusiness' feedback on testing, results, case studies:**
  - Appreciative of RAI alignment gaps highlighted, including insight from stakeholder interviews
    - They saw this is a basis for improving how they operate
  - Some managers with limited exposure to RAI struggled with some of the questions
    - But essential for them to know, and a learning exercise
- **Potential uses of the tool**
  - Self-assessment, self-audit by agribusinesses (or led by consultants)
  - Use by impact investors/financiers as an input into deciding to invest in an agribusiness (and for post-investment evaluation)
  - A supplement to existing ESG evaluations

**Thank You!**