

# Emerging Insights on Integrating Living Income into Landscape Initiatives

April 2026



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## Introduction

Landscape initiatives are increasingly emerging as an effective route to support the environmental and economic resilience of landscapes and smallholder farmers producing raw materials for global supply chains.

**A landscape initiative is a multi-stakeholder initiative that operationalises a landscape approach in a particular landscape, by setting common goals, taking collective action while reconciling different interests, and monitoring progress towards shared sustainability goals and outcomes.**

Very often, one of the common goals is to increase the income of smallholder farmers and producers living in the landscape, in order to maintain a decent standard of living. To identify what constitutes a decent standard of living, a living income benchmark study can be conducted.

Living income is the net annual income required for a household in a particular place to afford a decent standard of living for all members of that household. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events.

ISEAL has been exploring the role of landscape and jurisdictional approaches in addressing livelihoods and income challenges for smallholder farmers. This paper forms part of ongoing research to understand to what extent existing landscape initiatives are integrating livelihoods and living income considerations.

This paper includes in-depth case studies of four current landscape initiatives, providing insights into how landscape initiatives are explicitly engaging with living income concepts and objectives. The landscape initiatives, implemented by IDH, Proforest, and Swisscontact, provide a broad sample of contexts, through different geographies, crops, and maturities.

Analysis of the four case studies shows that landscape initiatives use a range of approaches to integrate living income in practice, based on their needs. These approaches include conducting living income studies and setting explicit income targets within each of the initiatives. The findings also highlight how understanding the living income gap helps inform tailored strategies to close the gap, that both support producers and safeguard environmental and climate outcomes.

Based on the early stage of understanding how living income is being integrated into landscape initiatives, the paper proposes some initial recommendations for practitioners.



## Recommendations for landscape practitioners:

- Clearly distinguish between living income and living wage to ensure appropriate application across smallholder and hired labour contexts.
- Assess the need and timing for a living income benchmark by determining whether existing benchmarks can be used or adapted before commissioning new studies.
- Set explicit and measurable living income targets to guide programme design, implementation, and monitoring.
- Analyse the underlying drivers of a living income gap, including productivity, prices, costs, and household characteristics, to inform targeted interventions.
- Co-ordinate multiple stakeholders to align efforts and increase overall effectiveness.
- Maintain programme flexibility to adapt to changing contexts, new data, and emerging insights on income dynamics.

## Recommendations for living income practitioners:

- Strengthen collective understanding of living income methodologies to ensure consistent application across organisations and contexts.
- Contribute to building an improved body of evidence by systematically documenting, sharing, and evaluating what works for closing living income gaps.
- Ensure income benchmarks are understood and applied appropriately by clearly communicating when and how they should be used, including their limitations.
- Build and maintain strong partnerships across value chain actors, governments, and civil society to support coordinated action.
- Engage landscape-level partners to enable more scalable, aligned, and context-specific approaches to closing living income gaps.
- Foster private sector interest by demonstrating the business case for investing in living income and integrating it into sourcing and sustainability strategies.

The paper provides further explanation and details the research leading to these recommendations. Practitioners are encouraged to use the examples and learnings presented to inform their own integration of living income approaches in landscape initiatives.

### Note:

The case studies presented in this paper illustrate how different landscape initiatives have embedded living income into practice, including through use and development of living income benchmarks and conducting actual income measurement. Approaches varied across initiatives and are documented in the case studies below. Practitioners seeking to work on living income are encouraged to consult formal guidance from the Living Income Community of Practice (LICO<sup>P</sup>) to ensure credible, transparent, and comparable assessments.

#### These include:

- [Criteria\\_LILW\\_Estimates.pdf](#)  
Provides clarity on establishing robust living income and living wage estimates, ensuring methodological rigour, transparency, and comparability.
- [Looking for a Living Income Benchmark?](#)  
Offers guidance on when to use existing estimates, how to apply them, and what to do when no local benchmark is available.
- [Actual Income Measurement](#)  
Provides practitioners with practical guidance on how to define, collect, and interpret actual household income data and calculate the living income gap within living income measurement exercises.



# The value of integrating living income in landscape initiatives

The research identified a number of reasons why it is useful to consider living income at the centre of landscape initiatives discussions.

- **Defined income goal:**  
Conducting a living income assessment provides a location-specific and measurable income target which defines a decent standard of living for farmers and producers within a landscape.
- **Multi-commodity income:**  
A living income approach is useful because it considers income from multiple commodities or income streams experienced within a landscape, rather than focusing on a single crop. This provides a more accurate measure of farmers' or producers' resilience and their ability to achieve a decent living standard.
- **Structural income constraints:**  
Many family farming households face structural challenges, including, low productivity, limited market access, and high climate vulnerability, all of which threaten the stability of the main crop income. A living income assessment helps to understand these underlying socioeconomic conditions and inform strategies that go beyond productivity improvement to address systemic barriers.
- **Climate adaptation:**  
Integrating living income into landscape planning guides climate adaptation measures that improve farmer resilience and income. By prioritising interventions that deliver both economic and environmental benefits, landscape initiatives can advance resilience while supporting sustainable livelihoods.
- **Protecting ecosystems:**  
Understanding household income levels helps identify ways to increase income without placing additional pressure on ecosystem or encroaching on forests or land for agricultural production.
- **Gender inclusion:**  
Living income findings can enhance the inclusion of vulnerable groups, especially women farmers. When women are empowered in agricultural production, it leads to stronger, more resilient, and economically viable families and communities.
- **Scalable and sustainable:**  
Embedding living income into the landscape governance structure of public, private, and community actors, can move efforts from isolated pilots to sustained, scalable, and multi-stakeholder strategies that benefit entire regions.
- **Proof for partners:**  
Conducting baseline and endline living income assessments and comparing them to a validated benchmark provides robust evidence for partners.

# Overview of case studies' commonalities and differences

Four current landscape initiatives were studied to understand how living income approaches are being integrated into landscape initiatives.

The landscape initiatives are implemented by IDH, Proforest, and Swisscontact, members of the Landscape Practitioner Network. The landscape initiatives chosen have all, to varying degrees, integrated living income measurement and strategies to address living income gaps. To provide a broad sample of contexts, the case studies chosen have different geographies, crops, and levels of maturity.

	<b>IDH</b> Raízes da Caatinga Program, Brazil	<b>Swisscontact</b> The SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative, Indonesia	<b>IDH</b> Huila Landscape Initiative, Colombia	<b>Proforest</b> Sungai Linau Landscape Programme, Indonesia
<b>Rationale for integrating living income</b>	To understand income levels required for a decent standard of living and establish income targets and measure progress	To reflect the multi-commodity nature of the landscape, recognising income is derived from multiple sources	Income from main crop alone not sufficient for living income; to support income diversification	To respond to funders priorities; to support income increase to prevent encroachment on forest
<b>Landscape initiative living income targets</b>	Targets focus on production and value chain, not specifically citing living income	Income increase targets are used; not specifically citing living income	Living income targets are partially integrated (Coffee: living income target; Cocoa: living income gap target)	Income increase targets are used; including one target of reducing living income gap
<b>Living income measurement approach</b>	Commissioned a living income study (Anker Methodology) for the landscape initiative	Commissioned a living income study (Anker Methodology) for the landscape initiative	Used a comparison living income study from IDH Coffee program	Used a comparison living income study from a neighbouring district (Proforest study)
<b>Living income assessment findings</b>	Actual household incomes are two or three times lower than the living income benchmark	Showed varied income gaps; smaller income gaps observed among producers with additional salaried income	Showed varied income gaps; the smaller the farm, the larger the income gap	20% of households meet the living income benchmark
<b>Focus of actions</b>	Actions focus on improving productivity, market access, climate resilience, and finance access	Actions focus on increasing crop production and market access, and income diversification	Actions prioritised income diversification, also combining focus on gender and climate	Actions focus on increase productivity, market access, and diversification strategies
<b>Monitoring and evaluation (endline)</b>	Endline assessment to be conducted in next multi-year cycle	No endline assessment due to change of length and focus of initiative	Endline assessment to be conducted for IDH Coffee Program	Endline assessment planned for 2026

## Case study: Raízes da Caatinga Program, Brazil

The Caatinga is a semi-arid biome in northeast Brazil, characterised by high climate variability, recurrent droughts, and limited access to natural resources. The region is home to a large number of smallholder farmers who rely on diversified and climate-sensitive livelihoods, often combining agricultural production with off-farm income and social protection policies.

The Raízes da Caatinga Program is a public-private sector landscape initiative created in 2021 by IDH in partnership with the Laudes Foundation. The Program is present in the Sertão do Pajeú, in Pernambuco, in the Sertão do Cariri, in Paraíba, and in the Sertão do Apodi, in Rio Grande do Norte. It is structured around commitments to promote sustainable territorial development, the restoration and conservation of the biome, and the social inclusion of family farmers, and is built around a strategy focused on three axes: Produce, Protect and Include (PPI).

### LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE CONTEXT:

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#### GEOGRAPHY

Caatinga, Brazil

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#### SCALE OF LANDSCAPE

Approximately two million hectares;  
51 municipalities across the three territories  
in the Caatinga region

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#### COMMODITY FOCUS

Cotton, fruits, honey, goats

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#### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Three compacts in different states – Pajeú (Pernambuco), Cariri Ocidental (Paraíba) and Apodi (Rio Grande do Norte)

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#### START OF LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE

2021

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#### TARGETS RELATED TO LIVELIHOODS/ INCOME IMPROVEMENT

KPIs to increase income through increased production, investment, and market access

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## Improving income in the Raíces da Caatinga Program

The Raíces da Caatinga Program includes a set of activities with targets focused on strengthening productive systems, expanding market access, improving access to finance, and increasing farmers' capacity to generate stable and diversified income.

Key targets include:

- **Expansion of agroecological cotton production**, reaching **1,500 family farmers** integrated into structured value chains by 2027.
- **Strengthening apiculture value chains**, supporting **500 family farmers** to increase honey production and market participation.
- **Development of horticulture production systems**, providing technical assistance and market integration for **300 new farmers**.
- **Promotion of red rice production**, enabling **50 additional producers** to access formal markets.
- **Strengthening small-scale agro-processing**, supporting the operation of at least **20 agro-industries** focused on honey, cassava flour, and fruit pulp.
- **Increasing certification and market access**, with a target to raise by **15% the number of family farms with certifications** (e.g., organic certification, SIM, SIE, SIF, Selo Arte).
- **Expanding access to rural credit and financial services**, supporting family farmers and cooperatives to access public and private credit lines (such as PRONAF and other financial mechanisms), enabling productive investments and strengthening farm resilience.

## Motivation for conducting a living income assessment

The decision to conduct a living income assessment was driven by multiple factors. First, baseline studies conducted in the territories indicated that many family farming households faced structural income constraints linked to low productivity, limited market access, and high climate vulnerability.

Second, partners within the initiative—including donors and technical organisations—expressed interest in better understanding the income levels required for farmers to achieve dignified livelihoods in the semi-arid context.

Finally, aligning the programme with emerging global discussions around living income in sustainable supply chains and landscape initiatives created an opportunity to establish a clear benchmark that could guide long-term strategy and investment decisions.



Photo credit: IDH

## Living income definition and assessment

**The living income benchmark assessment was conducted by the Anker Research Institute (ARI) in 2024, using ARI's definitions and methodology, which estimates the cost of a decent standard of living based on locally relevant household expenditure patterns. The study combined official national datasets, regional cost-of-living data, and field validation to estimate the income required for a typical household of four people in different macro-regions of the Caatinga.**

The study clearly distinguished between living income and living wage.

**Living income** refers to the net annual income earned by family farmers, derived from agricultural production, off-farm activities, and other income sources at the household level.

**Living wage**, in contrast, refers to the monthly income earned by workers employed in agricultural establishments, reflecting labour-based remuneration rather than household production systems.

## Introducing activities to address the income gap

**In the territories studied, estimated living income benchmarks range roughly between R\$2,800 and R\$3,800 per month in rural regions, with higher values observed in metropolitan areas. The actual income is two or three times lower than the living income benchmark, indicating that many farming households in the semi-arid region still face significant income gaps relative to what would be required to meet basic needs and maintain economic resilience. The full benchmark results showing the range across the three regions are available [here](#).**

These income gaps are primarily driven by a combination of low agricultural productivity (which will be addressed by promoting climate-adapted agroecological practices to increase productivity), restricted market access and price volatility (which will be addressed by strengthening farmer organisations and market linkages to improve price realisation and stability), and limited access to appropriate financial services and working capital (which will be addressed by expanding access to tailored financial mechanisms to enable investment and smooth income fluctuations).

## Monitoring income-related outcomes in the Raízes da Caatinga Program

With the completion of the living income assessment, the Raízes da Caatinga Program now has a clearer understanding of the income levels required for farmers to achieve a decent standard of living in the Caatinga. For the next multi-year cycle, the initiative will explicitly monitor income levels and income growth among participating smallholder farmers, using living income benchmarks as a reference point to assess progress, adjust strategies, and ensure that implementation efforts effectively contribute to improving farmers' livelihoods over time.

Household income will be measured through a mixed-methods approach, combining direct data collection (via periodic household surveys capturing both on-farm and off-farm income sources) with proxy indicators such as productivity, sales volumes, and market prices where direct measurement is not feasible.

Data from project partners at a project-level already indicates increases in agricultural productivity, expanded market access, higher commercialisation volumes, and increased investments in productive systems. In several cases, farmers have also diversified their income sources by combining agricultural production with new market opportunities and value-added activities.

Integrating living income objectives can improve the effectiveness of a landscape initiative by setting a clear socio-economic benchmark that aligns environmental and development goals. In the long term, ensuring progress toward a living income strengthens resilience, supports sustained adoption of sustainable practices, and underpins durable landscape-level impacts.



Photo credit: IDH

## Case study: The SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative, Indonesia

The SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative was set up in January 2023 by Swisscontact and was implemented under the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)'s Sustainable Landscape Program Indonesia (SLPI). Swisscontact implemented the project together with Earthworm Foundation and Koltiva.

The landscape initiative aimed to improve governance, protect high conservation value areas, and improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, with key targets being: CHF 1 million net attributable income increase for palm oil and cocoa smallholders (achieved: CHF 2.2 million); 30% of palm oil and cocoa households above the poverty line (achieved: 89%); productivity improvements (10% target; achieved 21–68% depending on crop); 1,500 farmers qualified for sustainable supply chains (achieved: 3,438).

### LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE CONTEXT:

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#### GEOGRAPHY

The LASR (Leuser–Alas–Singkil River Basin) Landscape covers three districts in Aceh Province, Indonesia: Aceh Singkil, Subulussalam, and Aceh Tenggara.

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#### SCALE OF LANDSCAPE

The LASR jurisdiction covers 721,554 ha in which 460,741 ha are forests. These districts span lowland peat areas, riverine landscapes, and highlands of the Leuser Ecosystem Area.

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#### COMMODITY FOCUS

Palm oil and cocoa

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#### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

District-led Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (MSPs), Working Groups, village governance, and private sector governance

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#### START OF LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE

LASR Phase I ran from January 2023 – December 2025, implemented under SECO's Sustainable Landscape Program Indonesia (SLPI).

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#### TARGETS RELATED TO LIVELIHOODS/ INCOME IMPROVEMENT

Key targets for income increase; percentage of households above the poverty line; productivity improvements; number of farmers qualified for sustainable supply chains

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## Motivation for considering living income

Swisscontact had previous experience with living income assessments. In 2021, it initiated the first living income benchmark for cocoa farmers in Sigi, Central Sulawesi using the Anker Methodology. Swisscontact's implementing partner for this study was the Cocoa Sustainability Partners (CSP) of Indonesia.

Based on this experience, Swisscontact conducted a living income assessment in the SLPI-LASR Landscape. The assessment was intended as a reliable and robust measure of the impact of smallholder farmer income increments, to underpin a strategy for livelihood interventions outside palm oil production. Considering living income was especially useful for a landscape approach which covers multiple commodities.

## The Living Income Benchmark and Actual Income Study

The SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative adopted the Global Living Wages Coalition definition of living income. The net annual income required for a decent standard of living (food, housing, health, education, transport, contingencies).

In Q4 2023, Swisscontact commissioned CSP to conduct a **Living Income Benchmark and Actual Income Study**, applying the Anker Methodology across all three districts.

The research and analysis included:

- Household surveys (240 farmers)
- Farm-level production and cost data
- Household consumption, housing, and other costs (non-food, non-housing)
- Comparative benchmark calculations for each district
- Income composition: on-farm, off-farm, and other sources
- Inclusion of household loans and debt behaviour

To calculate actual income, full household income data was collected, including on-farm, off-farm, food produced, and remittances. The actual income was directly compared to the benchmark to estimate gaps and guide actions.



## Living Income Benchmark and Actual Income Study results

The study identified a larger income gap in Aceh Singkil where the poverty rate is the highest in the province and spending is far higher due to the location.

There was a smaller income gap in Subulussalam where the palm oil farmers have their own salary from full-time employment, for example in the civil service, adding to their income.

	Aceh Singkil	Subulussalam	Aceh Tenggara
Living income benchmarks (per month)	IDR 6.32 million	IDR 6.88 million	IDR 6.41 million
Actual income levels	IDR 3.59 million	IDR 6.42 million	IDR 3.90 million
Income gaps	IDR 2.73 million	IDR 0.46 million	IDR 2.51 million



## How the living income assessment informed landscape initiative activities

The SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative and CSP validated the interim living income assessment findings through focus group discussions with district governments, buyers, farmer groups, and NGOs. The final living income study report was shared with the government, companies/buyers, and commodity platforms. These stakeholders recommended interventions to improve incomes, which were included in the report. Swisscontact then chose the interventions that were most relevant to the area to implement.

### Productivity and cost reduction

- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) training (target of 10,064 palm oil and cocoa farmers)
- Agroforestry model for cocoa
- Access to quality planting material (cocoa)
- Cultivation registration letters and traceability, enabling access to higher-value markets (palm oil and cocoa)

### Diversification

- 561 smallholder farmers adopting alternative crops (outside major commodities: shallot, chili, horticulture crops, and multipurpose tree species (MPTS) for forestry)
- Women-led farmer groups expanding regenerative agriculture (shallot)
- Cocoa agroforestry diversification across 890 farmers

### Market access and pricing

- RSPO certification (1,093 palm oil smallholders certified)
- Rainforest Alliance certification (1,947 cocoa farmers)
- Strengthened farmer groups and cooperatives for collective selling (cocoa)
- Transparent price information through supply-chain partners (cocoa and palm oil)

In cocoa, the interventions contributed almost equally to income improvements: GAP training increased productivity; promoting and applying agroforestry supported diversification; and collaborating with off-takers increased market access. In palm oil, livelihood interventions had the most impact, not only for palm oil farmers and households, but also for communities living around the palm oil plantations and close to the forest.

## Monitoring living income progress

Living income was initially embedded as an Impact KPI (I1: defining the living income gap and strategies) when Phase 1 of the project was intended to be five years. SECO subsequently reduced Phase 1 to three years and the focus of Phase 2 (2026-2029) is on governance and multi-stakeholder collaboration. Due to these changes, the SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative will not conduct an endline assessment.

However, the postline impact analysis of Q4 2024 and Q4 2025 using a sample of 283 cocoa farmers and 235 palm oil smallholders showed an increase for farmers who benefitted from SPLI-LASR activities during 2023-2025. On average, a palm oil farmer increased their annual income by CHF 282 from one farm hectare, and a cocoa farmer increased their annual income by CHF 138 from one farm hectare. This increase can be partly attributed to the living income study which recommended the potential activities to increase income.

The living income study helped the project to curate recommendations for increasing smallholder farmer incomes, and reducing consumption if appropriate, to close the income gap. It increased knowledge of measuring income increase from productivity, and off-farm income. In general, integrating living income made the landscape work more people-centred, strengthening sustainability of conservation and compliance agendas.



Photo credit: Swisscontact

## Case study: Huila Landscape Initiative, Colombia

The Huila department in the southwest of Colombia stands as the country's leading coffee producer, and contributes significantly to cocoa production. Huila includes approximately 250,000 hectares of natural forest ecosystems, including high-Andean forests.

The HYLEA Compact was launched in 2021 to meet the challenge of conserving the forest, while protecting the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. The HYLEA Compact has a governance structure that is supported by IDH and Conservation International, with strategic advisory from the Regional Environmental Authority (CAM), and the Huila Government, and is led by a Technical Secretariat. The Compact corresponds to 15 municipalities and involves around 20 organisations including companies, local associations, public entities, civil society organisations, and international cooperation agencies.

### LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE CONTEXT:

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#### GEOGRAPHY

Huila, Colombia

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#### SCALE OF LANDSCAPE

15 municipalities which occupy an area covering 826,900 hectares

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#### COMMODITY FOCUS

Coffee and cocoa

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#### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

HYLEA Compact - Technical secretariat, Executive Board, and General Assembly

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#### START OF LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE

September 2021

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#### TARGETS RELATED TO LIVELIHOODS/ INCOME IMPROVEMENT

Under the landscape approach, within the livelihoods and small farmers inclusion principle, two indicators were defined in the commitment related to living income: "Coffee producers implementing actions toward achieving a living income"; and "Closing the living income gap for cocoa-producing families."

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## Motivation for exploring living income as part of the landscape initiative

**Stakeholders in Huila—particularly those in the coffee and cocoa sectors—expressed a strong interest in better understanding and improving the socioeconomic conditions of producer families. The concern that income derived from the main crop alone is insufficient to ensure dignified and sustainable livelihoods became more pressing as persistent income volatility, limited diversification, and structural barriers prevented families from thriving. Living income emerged as a relevant framework to move beyond productivity-only approaches; to introduce a more holistic understanding of household wellbeing; and encourage diversified income strategies.**

During the goal-setting phase, the Compact incorporated a commitment under the Inclusion pillar to monitor the “Number of producers implementing actions toward living income”. For coffee, the indicator is: “Coffee producers implementing actions toward achieving a living income”. The “implementing actions” include diversification, productivity improvements and cost reductions, with the aim of companies, as well as organisations such as the cooperatives or local government, helping to deliver on this indicator. For cocoa, the stakeholders chose an indicator with the ambition of “Closing the living income gap for cocoa-producing families.”

## Using insights from Living Income baseline assessments

The HYLEA Compact used the living income baseline developed for IDH’s Coffee Program in Colombia in December 2023 to understand the starting conditions of coffee-producing households in many coffee regions of Colombia, including Huila. The study was designed to establish a data-driven understanding of actual household incomes, productivity levels, and living income gaps, in order to inform programme design and ensure that interventions respond to structural livelihood challenges rather than short-term market dynamics.

In Huila, baseline results were closely linked to the exceptional coffee price context of 2022, highlighting that income performance was not fully underpinned by structural resilience. This underscored the importance of strengthening income stability beyond price cycles, particularly through diversification, improved cost management, and sustained productivity gains.

The findings also revealed significant variation within the producer base. While some segments showed no immediate income gap, others remained vulnerable to falling below living income thresholds under less favourable market conditions. The segments corresponded to the size of the farm, and the results showed that the smaller the farm, the larger the income gap.

These conclusions helped direct coffee-related interventions in Huila to focus on the segments requiring support to close the living income gap, with a strong emphasis on gender inclusion, on-farm diversification, and the integrated relationship between environmental protection, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods.

For cocoa, the assessment was conducted through the Cacao for Development (C4D) program funded by USAID-USDA, which developed income gap diagnostics against a national benchmark rather than a full benchmark-based household income study. The study recognised that for many cocoa families, achieving a living income is less related to short-term productivity gains and more reliant on building diversified and resilient production systems. This translated into a focus on diversification, gender inclusion, and agroforestry-based approaches that link environmental protection with income generation.



## Actions to address living income in the Huila landscape initiative

**The living income references in the HYLEA Compact’s Commitments informed project-level strategies, with three projects in coffee and two projects in cocoa specifically taking a living income approach.**

The projects were implemented in partnership with different funders, mainly the private sector, in different areas of Huila, and introduced actions related to the specific producer needs in the area. Strategies chosen by the projects included increasing crop production, reducing production costs, income diversification, premiums for conservation, and gender empowerment, all while conserving the forest and ecosystems.

In coffee, there is huge potential to improve productivity due to aging coffee trees and traditional coffee crop management, so current efforts are dedicated to crop renovation, transforming crop management, and reducing the cost of implementing practices.

**‘Sustainable harvest, Brighter future: Coffee innovation’ (SKN)** aimed to tackle both the socio-economic challenges and gender disparities faced by coffee farmers in Huila. The project focused on living income through crops in addition to coffee, and included KPIs for increased productivity, and the percentage of net income increase from focus crops, disaggregated by gender.

**‘Cultivating Change: Women-Driven Sustainable Coffee in Central Huila’ (Coocentral)** aimed to support 200 coffee-growing women toward positions where they gained empowerment and recognition within the coffee production sector, with KPIs for increased productivity and market access for women growers.

**‘Hylea Coffee’ (Caravela)** strengthened income generation, stability, and resilience for producers through direct procurement and premiums for quality and conservation, with targeted technical assistance to support better practices and decision-making.

**‘Cacao Effect – Huila Extension’ (Luker)** aimed to increase crop production while protecting the farm’s ecosystem through sowing new crops and/or rehabilitating current cocoa crops in the farms of small cocoa producers.

**‘Family Farming, circular and regenerative’ (Colcocoa)** worked with producers in Huila to help identify and strengthen economic alternatives to diversify their income beyond their main crops, including secondary crops, value addition, and access to payments for ecosystem services.

## Monitoring living income progress

**Across the projects, a combination of monitoring mechanisms focused on productivity improvement, income diversification, market access, and environmental performance.**

Measurement of IDH projects’ impact on addressing living income in Huila, Caldas, Antioquia, and Cauca was underway in early 2026 through the IDH Coffee Program’s endline study, using the previously conducted baseline. This study, due to be published in mid 2026, is expected to provide specific insights on income dynamics, early outcomes, and enabling conditions in the regions. It is expected to generate updated evidence—including income data, income gap estimates, proxy indicators, and qualitative feedback.

Integrating living income objectives has helped generate substantial knowledge on the mechanisms needed to close income gaps. Different projects (ranging from productivity to income diversification) have informed local stakeholder discussions on how to systemically address living income gaps at a landscape level from field level implementation.



## Case study: Sungai Linau Landscape Programme, Indonesia

Proforest's Sungai Linau Landscape Programme covers five villages in Bengkalis Regency, Riau, Sumatra in Indonesia, which overlaps with the Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu Biosphere Reserve. The programme aims to protect the forest from deforestation due to palm oil production and illegal logging, and therefore supports palm oil producers to increase their income without encroaching on the forest for agricultural production.

The goal is for 50% of households joining the programme to have improved their livelihoods or benefitted from alternative sources of income by 2027. Key targets include at least 35 farmers benefitting from alternative income from coffee intercropping; 60 women benefitting from other alternative sources of income; and 300 households reducing the living income gap.

### LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE CONTEXT:

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#### GEOGRAPHY

Five villages in Bengkalis Regency, Riau, Sumatra in Indonesia.

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#### SCALE OF LANDSCAPE

57,741.35 hectares of forest area with 45,000 ha covered by the landscape initiative; 1,630 households mapped in four villages, of which 347 households participate in one or more activities of the landscape initiative.

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#### COMMODITY FOCUS

Palm oil

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#### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Strategic advisory, project management and delivery by Proforest, with hired village facilitators. PepsiCo, Nestlé, IFF (International Flavors & Fragrances Inc.), Lactalis, APP (Asia Pulp & Paper Group) and Musim Mas provide financial and in-kind support to the programme.

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#### START OF LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE

Phase 1 of the initiative started in 2021. Living income objectives started in Phase 2 (2024-2027).

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#### TARGETS RELATED TO LIVELIHOODS/ INCOME IMPROVEMENT

50% of households joining the programme improving their livelihoods or benefitted from alternative sources of income by 2027

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## Motivation to measure living income

Income is generally a key indicator for studies in livelihoods improvement work, and some of the funding companies indicated they would benefit from a living income indicator. For Proforest, living income was linked to Target 5 (improving livelihoods or accessing alternative sources of income), due to the understanding that higher incomes for communities surrounding forestland decrease the pressure on natural ecosystems, as there is less need for households to rely on expansion of palm oil production.

## Conducting a living income benchmark and baseline assessment

Proforest benchmarked the living income in Bengkalis based on a 2023 study benchmarking living income in Siak and Pelalawan (neighbouring districts). The values were adjusted for inflation to 2025, and local village facilitators sense-checked and adjusted local expenditures to decide on an estimated living income benchmark for Bengkalis. Proforest then conducted a baseline living income survey with 347 households in four of the five villages (Sungai Linau, Sumber Jaya, Bandar Jaya, and Tanjung Damai).

The baseline living income survey was devised by Proforest, based on the Anker Methodology, as a practical and cost-effective method to conduct a living income assessment. Living income was determined as the basic costs for decent livelihoods, based on 17 key local expenditure categories: 1) Education; 2) Food; 3) Clothing; 4) Health; 5) Transport; 6) Electricity; 7) Water; 8) Communication/mobile phone credit; 9) Tobacco/cigarettes; 10) Social funds (weddings, funerals, religious and social events); 11) Village contributions; 12) Taxes/levies; 13) Transfers or assistance for family members; 14) Credit payments to moneylenders; 15) Loan instalment payments; 16) Savings; 17) Other expenses.



## Living income baseline survey results

The living income benchmark established for 2025 was around 8,000,000 IDR/month, for an average household of four individuals. The baseline survey revealed that only around 20% of households were meeting the living income.

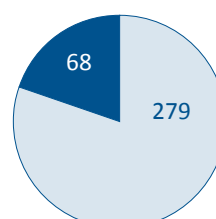
The number of households meeting the living income is similar to the number of households that are able to save money (70 households: 20%). This suggests that there is potential to look at savings as a proxy indicator for households meeting living income thresholds, which Proforest will explore in future surveys.

The villages in Bengkalis are relatively isolated, making access to financial institutions more difficult. Sumber Jaya is much closer to the main road compared to Sungai Linau and Bandar Jaya, enabling greater market access. All four villages suffered flooding every one or two years, with Bandar Jaya and Sumber Jaya the most impacted, which affects market access. A lack of infrastructure, limited access to information, and lower development priority due to location play a significant role in the villagers' income potential.

## Living income baseline (2025)\*

	BANDAR JAYA			SUMBER JAYA		
	# HHs**	% of total HHs	Average income	# HHs**	% of total HHs	Average income
<b>Below Living Income Standard</b>	69	90.8%	Rp 2,889,130	34	59.6%	Rp 4,782,353
<b>Within Living Income Standard</b>	3	3.9%	Rp 8,000,000	5	8.8%	Rp 8,000,000
<b>Above Living Income Standard</b>	4	5.3%	Rp 9,350,000	18	31.6%	Rp 11,944,444

	SUNGAI LINAU			TANJUNG DAMAI		
	# HHs	% of total HHs	Average income	# HHs	% of total HHs	Average income
<b>Below Living Income Standard</b>	70	74.5%	Rp 4,141,429	106	88.3%	Rp 3,588,679
<b>Within Living Income Standard</b>	5	5.3%	Rp 8,000,000	4	3.3%	Rp 8,000,000
<b>Above Living Income Standard</b>	19	20.2%	Rp 11,789,474	10	8.3%	Rp 10,705,000



**68 out of 347 (19.5%)** households participating in SLP live with an average income above the living income benchmark

\* More granular information available at request

\*\* HHs: households

## Activities introduced to address income gaps

The Sungai Linau Landscape Programme implements activities focused on productivity improvement, diversification, and market access. Village government and villagers were involved in the identification and selection of alternative or additional livelihood activities.

The programme aims to increase incomes of participating households through:

- Improving palm productivity (via good agricultural practices (GAP) training for smallholders; training of trainers for smallholder-hub facilitators)
- Alternative sources of income to palm production, such as palm stick production.
- Establishment of Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLAs) for women groups.
- Agroforestry (including coffee and other trees being produced by local nurseries; establishment of plant nursery in two villages: Sungai Linau and Bandar Jaya)
- Gender training at the village level, and exchange visit to a coffee cooperative in Pulau Rangsang.

## Monitoring the impact of income-increasing interventions

The living income baseline study was conducted in 2025, with the next survey planned for 2026. To understand how the GAP training for smallholders affects productivity, the 2025 survey asked questions about production behaviour changes compared to 2020.

These questions identified that for at least one village, Sumber Jaya, productivity has improved considerably. Future surveys will monitor if income has also increased.

The VSLAs have improved the financial literacy of the women’s groups, particularly in terms of saving practices, cash flow recording, and collaboration. Palm stick production has provided a modest income increment, which the women have used to support household expenses, for example buying school materials for children.

Village	Average productivity of oil palm (kg/ha/year)	
	2020	2025
Bandar Jaya	12,956	12,658
Sumber Jaya	6,260	12,500
Sungai Linau	18,959	15,080
Tanjung Damai	-	22,462



## Benefits of incorporating living income into the programme

**Integrating living income into the landscape initiative has had a positive impact on stakeholder engagement, broadening engagement beyond actors in the supply chain. Besides the economic activity, the programme also provided training and technical support for the local community in financial literacy, leadership, and how to build a structured organisation.**

BUMDES (Badan Usaha Milik Desa/village owned business enterprises) developed new business workstreams for palm sticks as an alternative income. This achievement was communicated to local government departments, such as the SMEs office, and provincial and district offices for women's empowerment and child protection.

Specifically, living income objectives have provided the Sungai Linau Landscape Programme with direction for where its activities should be leading. Living income is a tangible metric that enables understanding of the gap between current income and the income needed for decent livelihoods, and helps to focus the initiative's activities.



Photo credit: Proforest

# Emerging Insights

Analysis of the four case studies shows that landscape initiatives use a range of approaches to integrate living income in practice, based on their specific needs. These approaches include: conducting living income studies and setting explicit income targets within each of the initiatives. The findings also highlight how understanding the living income gap helps inform tailored strategies to close the gap, that both support producers and safeguard environmental and climate outcomes.

## 1 Approaches to estimating living income benchmarks and assessing income gaps.

Two landscape initiatives commissioned a bespoke living income benchmark for the landscape using Anker Methodology: 1) IDH's Raízes da Caatinga Program commissioned the Anker Research Institute (ARI) to conduct a living income benchmark using ARI's definition and methodology; 2) Swisscontact commissioned a Living Income Benchmark and Actual Income Study conducted by Cocoa Sustainability Partnership (CSP) in early 2024, applying the Anker Methodology.

Two landscape initiatives utilised and adapted living income benchmarks from neighbouring districts. 1) Proforest benchmarked the living income in Bengkalis based on a 2023 study benchmarking living income in Siak and Pelalawan (neighbouring districts). Proforest used local facilitators to locally compare expenditures, and allow for inflation to 2025, to arrive on an estimated living income benchmark for Bengkalis. 2) IDH's Huila landscape initiative used the Living Income baseline developed for IDH's Coffee Program in Colombia (December 2023) as an important evidence base to understand the starting conditions of coffee-producing households in many coffee regions of Colombia, including Huila.

In these case studies, the living income assessments typically combined (1) a **living income benchmark** (cost of a decent standard of living) and (2) **actual household income measurement**, allowing for estimation of the **living income gap**.

The majority of producer families are living below the living income benchmark. In the Raízes da Caatinga Program, Brazil, the actual income was two to three times less than the living income benchmark. In the Sungai Linau Landscape Programme, Indonesia, only 20% of households met the living income benchmark. These findings indicate that income gaps are often significant and persistent, suggesting that closing them requires sustained and multi-dimensional interventions.

### Considerations for whether to commission a living income study for the landscape or adapt a benchmark from a comparison study

The following considerations are drawn from the analysis of the case studies and illustrate practical trade-offs observed in different contexts. For formal guidance on when to conduct or adapt a living income benchmark, practitioners should refer to the LICoP Benchmark FAQ ([Looking for a Living Income Benchmark?](#)).

- Using a living income benchmark from a neighbouring district or other study was seen as a cost-effective, practical way to introduce a living income element to the landscape initiative. It helped initial prioritisation of interventions and stakeholder engagement. This approach was particularly useful in early stages, where rapid insights were needed to inform dialogue and identify priority areas for action.
- It was also noted that where approaches were harmonised (e.g., using Anker Methodology or comparable frameworks), results could be easily compared across regions and actors, supporting collaboration and sector-wide learning. While benchmark values differed across locations due to variations in the cost of living, consistency was maintained through the use of aligned methodologies and transparent assumptions.

- Where benchmarks were adapted, pairing them with household income data (baseline or surveys) enabled estimation of the living income gap, which was critical for targeting interventions. However, the quality of the gap analysis depended on how well the benchmark assessment reflected local conditions and how robust the income data collection was.
- An adapted benchmark was not considered as robust and specific as a bespoke living income benchmark assessment, and made it harder to calculate the impact of the activities designed to close the income gap, because there was not a baseline and endline assessment directly related to the area of the activities.
- Benchmarks adapted from other regions were also not considered to reflect local price levels, consumption patterns, or household structures.
- Without a locally derived benchmark and consistent baseline/endline income data, the accuracy and comparability of determining whether households are below, at, or above a living income, and tracking changes in the living income gap over time, are reduced.

## 2 Including living income in landscape initiative targets.

Two landscape initiatives specifically included living income in their targets. IDH's Huila landscape initiative had two indicators related to living income. In coffee, the indicator is: "Coffee producers implementing actions toward achieving a living income." In cocoa, the indicator focused on: "Closing the living income gap for cocoa-producing families." Swisscontact's The SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative, Indonesia had an Impact KPI (I1: defining the living income gap and strategies).

These examples demonstrate an evolution from general livelihood improvement goals toward outcome-oriented targets linked to a defined standard of living.

The other two landscape initiatives have targets related to income increase, alternative incomes, improved livelihoods, and increased productivity. While these targets focus on income, productivity, and livelihoods, they still meaningfully contribute to living income efforts by strengthening the economic conditions required to achieve a living income.



### Considerations for including a living income target

- Including a living income target related to a closing a specific income gap provides a clearly defined, measurable objective, grounded in a benchmark. It encourages a number of related strategies to be employed to best close the income gap. In practice, this often requires combining multiple intervention levers, such as productivity improvements, price changes, cost reductions, and income diversification, rather than relying on a single strategy.
- Defining a living income target helps clarify the difference between improving conditions and actually achieving a decent standard of living. Targets such as increased productivity, higher yields, or income growth are only indirect indicators of progress, as they do not necessarily mean that households earn enough to meet their basic needs. An income increase doesn't equal a living income unless it reaches a defined threshold.
- Measuring the progress towards a living income target requires a benchmark, baseline, and endline assessment and requires more analysis or information about which levers to employ to close the income gap. This introduces greater data and analytical requirements, and also requires alignment across stakeholders on definitions, methodologies, and indicators. While this can increase complexity, it strengthens comparability, credibility, and accountability of results. Engaging with existing guidance and harmonisation efforts, such as those developed within the **Living Income Community of Practice** can support more consistent and effective implementation.

### 3 Location-specific differences in living income and cost structures.

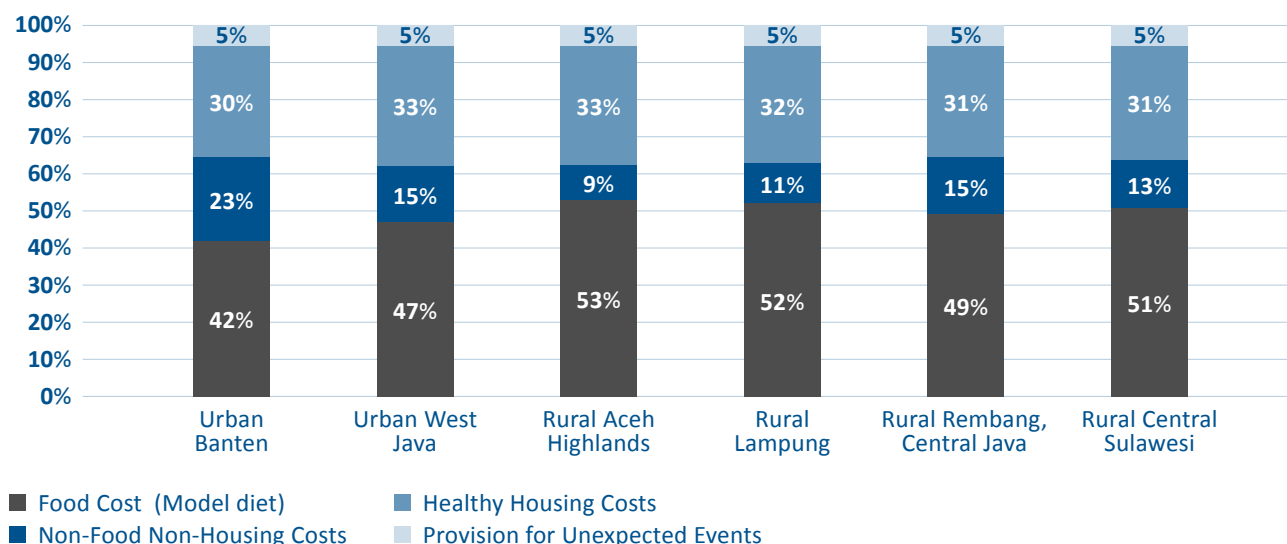
All the benchmark or baseline assessments highlighted different living income levels in different geographical areas of the landscape initiatives. Income gap vary depending on the location and farmer specifics. In the SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative Indonesia, the larger income gap in Aceh Singkil is due to the poverty rate being the highest rate in the province and spending is far higher due to the location. The lowest income gap was in Subulussalam, where palm oil farmers also have their own salary. In Sungai Linau Landscape Programme, Indonesia villages nearer the main road have greater market access and higher incomes.

Neighbouring areas may have the same living income benchmark but it is comprised of different values for each expenditure item. For example, a 2025 study by the Anker Research Institute estimating living income in six locations in Indonesia found that four rural locations had a similar living income figure but there were variations in the different expenditures. While the main living income benchmark value might be similar (e.g. within 2% across rural regions), the component parts (e.g. food, housing etc) might vary more beneath it. In rural areas, the difference in housing costs can be as high as 58%.

This highlights that similar benchmark totals can mask important underlying differences in cost structures, which has implications for the design of targeted interventions.

## Living Income Cost Components Across Six Urban and Rural Regions in Indonesia

Source: Anker Research Institute <https://www.ankerresearchinstitute.org/indonesia-home>



## Considerations for using location-specific living income findings

The following considerations are drawn from the case study analysis and highlight how location-specific living income findings were used to inform more targeted and effective interventions.

- A living income benchmark study will pinpoint which expenditures, challenges, and opportunities are driving the income gap in each geographical area, enabling tailored interventions.
- Recognising intra-landscape variation is critical, as households operating within the same value chain may face very different economic realities depending on their location.
- It highlights differences within the same landscape, helping to avoid one-size-fits-all approaches.
- It helps identify key cost drivers (e.g. food, transport, housing), allowing more targeted and effective interventions. For example, high transport costs may point to infrastructure or market access constraints, while high food costs may indicate local supply or productivity issues.
- Variation across locations increases the complexity of programme design and implementation, as different areas may require different strategies. A landscape approach provides a great opportunity to involve the diverse stakeholders needed.
- Differences between areas make it more difficult to aggregate results or communicate a single overall living income figure for the landscape.



## Strategies to close the living income gap

**Increasing productivity is not the only way to increase income. Understanding the different components of a living income helps identify what interventions are needed. Income gaps are typically driven by multiple, interrelated factors, including low productivity, limited market access, price volatility, high production or living costs, and restricted access to finance, requiring a combination of intervention strategies rather than a single solution.** (See 'Strategies for closing income gap' graphic).

The most common strategies to close the income gap observed across the case studies were productivity increase, improving market access, crop diversification, certification, cost reduction, gender empowerment, and increasing financial literacy.

For the SLPI-LASR Landscape Initiative, Swisscontact presented the interim living income benchmark and actual results to local government agencies and different stakeholders, and they created a list of possible interventions. Swisscontact then chose the ones that were highly related to the area. This process illustrates the role of living income data as a decision-making tool, enabling stakeholders to identify and prioritise context-specific strategies.

A primary recommendation was to increase income from the main crops of palm oil and cocoa. Program activities supported increased production through GAP training (10,064 palm oil and cocoa farmers); agroforestry model for cocoa; access to quality planting material (cocoa); cultivation registration letters and traceability enabling access to higher-value markets (palm oil and cocoa). Palm oil and cocoa farmers did increase their income, according to postline data from evaluation studies conducted in Q4 2024 and Q4 2025, not as a living income endline assessment.

Swisscontact reported the interventions contributed almost equally to income improvements: GAP training increased productivity; promoting and applying agroforestry supported diversification; and collaborating with offtakers increased market access. This highlights that income improvements are often the result of combined interventions, rather than any single activity in isolation.

The Raízes da Caatinga Program plans to implement activities in the next multi-year cycle to address the income gaps identified in the living income assessment. These income gaps are primarily driven by a combination of low agricultural productivity (which will be addressed

by promoting climate-adapted agroecological practices to increase productivity), restricted market access and price volatility (which will be addressed by strengthening farmer organisations and market linkages to improve price realisation and stability), and limited access to appropriate financial services and working capital (which will be addressed by expanding access to tailored financial mechanisms to enable investment and smooth income fluctuations).

Overall, closing the living income gap requires coordinated action across multiple levers. Living income assessments can help identify priority constraints, but translating these into effective strategies depends on selecting context-specific, complementary interventions and sustaining them over time.

**Note:**

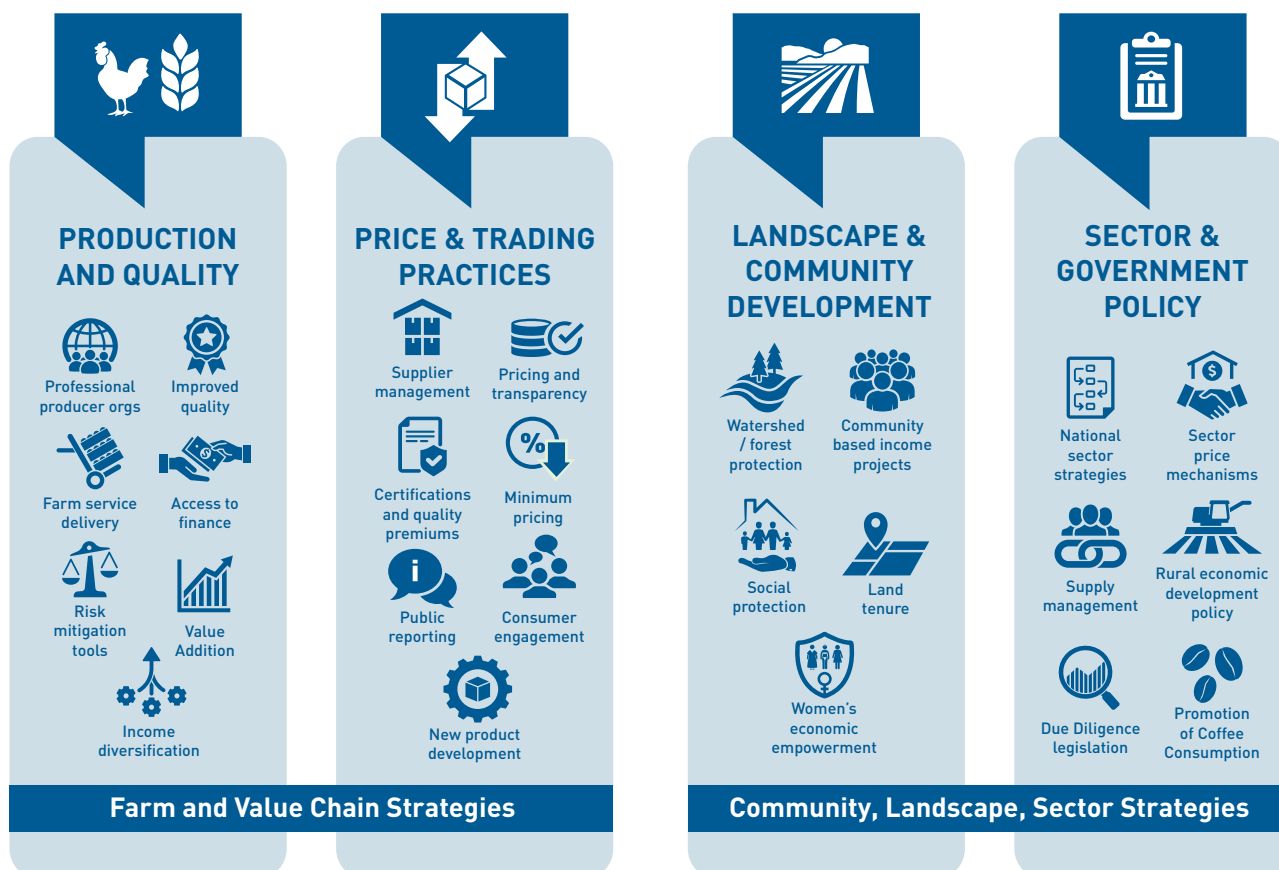
**Closing the living income gap is complex and highly context-specific. The LICoP framework below presents a range of complementary strategies and highlights the roles of different actors, supporting practitioners to identify and combine interventions that are most appropriate to their specific context.**

Published guidance and toolkits are available on the [LICoP website](http://www.living-income.com).



**Strategies for closing income gap**

Source: The Living Income Community of Practice [www.living-income.com](http://www.living-income.com)



# Recommendations

## Recommendations for landscape practitioners

**Integrating a living income lens into landscape initiatives can help ensure that sustainability efforts translate into tangible socio-economic outcomes. It is equally important to consider social aspects alongside environmental ones, since long-term sustainability requires aligning environmental objectives with improved livelihoods and economic viability. Living income provides a clear and measurable benchmark to assess whether landscape level interventions are actually improving household well-being.**

Based on the early stage of understanding how living income is being integrated into landscape initiatives, these are some initial recommendations for landscape practitioners.

- **Clearly distinguish between living income and living wage to ensure appropriate application across smallholder and hired labour contexts:** Living income assessments are most relevant in landscapes where the primary actors are smallholder farmers or producers, as the concept focuses on household income rather than wages. In mixed contexts, it is important to clearly distinguish between living income and living wage approaches to ensure appropriate application.
- **Assess the need and timing for a living income benchmark by determining whether existing benchmarks can be used or adapted before commissioning new studies:** The timing of introducing living income within a landscape initiative is critical. In early phases, efforts are often concentrated on building trust, governance structures, and alignment among stakeholders. As such, conducting living income benchmarks and baseline studies may be more effective as a second-phase activity, once partnerships are established and there is sufficient buy-in to act on the findings.
- **Set explicit and measurable living income targets to guide programme design, implementation, and monitoring:** Including specific living income targets within landscape initiatives can strengthen accountability and provide a tangible way to track progress across partners. This also supports clearer communication of impact to external stakeholders, including funders and private sector actors.
- **Analyse the underlying drivers of a living income gap to inform targeted interventions:** Analysing the living income gap enables landscape practitioners to move beyond generic interventions and design context-specific strategies that address the underlying drivers of income shortfalls. These may include limited income diversification, exposure to climate and production risks, weak market access, or price volatility.
- **Co-ordinate multiple stakeholders to align efforts and increase overall effectiveness:** Collaboration between local organisations, farmer cooperatives, governments, and private sector actors allows landscape initiatives to align incentives, pool resources, and address systemic barriers in a coordinated way. Local organisations and cooperatives are essential for implementation, governments provide the policy and institutional framework, and private sector actors can drive market demand and investment.
- **Maintain programme flexibility to adapt to changing contexts, new data, and emerging insights on income dynamics:** Landscape initiatives need to continuously adapt their strategies based on insights from living income assessments, allowing them to respond to evolving challenges and opportunities. This iterative approach is critical to ensuring that interventions remain relevant, effective, and capable of delivering sustained improvements in producer livelihoods over time.



## Recommendations for living income practitioners

**Adopting a landscape-level approach can help scale living income efforts by addressing systemic barriers beyond farm-level interventions. Landscape initiatives can influence broader conditions such as land use planning, policy frameworks, and market systems, enabling coordinated, multi-stakeholder action to tackle the underlying drivers of income gaps and support more sustainable improvements in livelihoods.**

Based on the early stage of understanding how living income is being integrated into landscape initiatives, these are some initial recommendations for living income practitioners.

- **Strengthen collective understanding of living income methodologies to ensure consistent application across organisations and contexts:** A clearer and more consistent understanding of living income concepts and terminology remains necessary, particularly when engaging with landscape initiatives that bring together actors who may be less familiar with the topic. Confusion between living income, living wage, and minimum wage can limit effective implementation and alignment, as different stakeholders may operate with varying assumptions. For living income practitioners, this highlights the importance of building a shared understanding and clearly communicating the concept when working in multi-stakeholder landscape settings.
- **Contribute to building an improved body of evidence by systematically documenting, sharing, and evaluating what works in closing living income gaps:** There is a need to further develop practical guidance on translating living income concepts into actionable and scalable strategies. This includes better evidence on which combinations of interventions are most effective in different contexts, recognising that closing income gaps requires coordinated action across value chains and landscapes.
- **Ensure income benchmarks are understood and applied appropriately by clearly communicating when and how they should be used, including their limitations:** The cost of conducting living income benchmarks can be off-putting for companies, particularly in contexts where income data from government surveys is already available. In such cases, it is important to clearly articulate the added value of living income benchmarks. This includes demonstrating how living income benchmarks differ

from minimum wage measures and how they can more effectively guide strategies to improve producer incomes.

- **Build and maintain strong partnerships across value chain actors, governments, and civil society to support coordinated action:** Key enabling conditions for meeting living income include strong partnerships with local organisations, capacity building of farmer cooperatives, alignment between technical support and market development strategies, and increasing interest from private sector buyers in sustainable and agroecological value chains. These conditions are particularly important in landscape contexts, where coordinated action across multiple stakeholders is required.
- **Engage landscape-level partners to enable more scalable, aligned, and context-specific approaches to closing living income gaps:** Living income approaches can benefit from closer alignment with landscape-level processes and partnerships, particularly through engagement with local organisations and farmer cooperatives. These actors play a critical role in implementation, capacity building, and ensuring that strategies are grounded in local realities.
- **Foster private sector interest by demonstrating the business case for investing in living income and integrating it into sourcing and sustainability strategies:** Increasing interest from private sector actors in sustainable and agroecological value chains presents a key opportunity to scale living income efforts. Landscape approaches can help align these market incentives with local development priorities, enabling more coordinated and sustained pathways to improving producer incomes.



# Annex: Definitions, Methodology, Resources

## Definitions

**Actual Income:** The net income earned by all members of a household in a particular place.

Source: [The Living Income Community of Practice: Actual Income Measurement FAQ](#)

**Living Income:** The net annual income required for a household in a particular place to afford a decent standard of living for all members of that household. Elements of a decent standard of living include: food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events.

Source: [The Living Income Community of Practice](#)

**Living Wage:** The remuneration received for a standard workweek by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and her or his family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events.

Source: [Global Living Wage Coalition](#)

**Landscape:** A socio-ecological system, defined by a geographic area with common and interacting ecological and socioeconomic characteristics. A landscape may be delineated based on river basins, seascapes, ecosystems, jurisdictions, productive boundaries, or in other ways.

**Landscape Approach:** A management approach focused on multi-stakeholder collaboration to advance shared sustainability goals and build resilience at landscape scale.

**Landscape Initiative:** The multi-stakeholder initiative that operationalises a landscape approach in a particular landscape, by setting common goals, taking collective action while reconciling different interests, and monitoring progress towards shared sustainability goals and outcomes.

Source: [Core Criteria for Mature Landscapes, ISEAL, October 2024](#)

## Methodology

This paper is based primarily on qualitative research. The development of the paper included:

- A written questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with IDH, Proforest, and Swisscontact, as representatives from the Landscape Practitioner Network
- Development of the landscape initiative case studies and further input from IDH, Proforest, and Swisscontact
- Comparative analysis across selected initiatives to identify commonalities and differences in how living income is being incorporated in different contexts
- Review with key partners and experts from the Living Income Community of Practice
- Formulation of early stage recommendations for landscape practitioners and living income practitioners

## Resources

IDH Huila Landscape Initiative profile on SourceUp - [Huila](#)

IDH Raízes da Caatinga Program profiles on SourceUp

- [PPI Pact of the Sertão do Apodi](#)
- [Sustainable Pajeu](#)
- [Sustainable Cariri](#)

Proforest Sungai Linau Landscape Programme

- [Sungai Linau Landscape Programme - Proforest](#)
- [Sungai Linau Landscape Project - English](#)

Swisscontact Sustainable Landscape Program Indonesia (LASR) [Sustainable Landscape Program Indonesia \(LASR\) - Projects - Site](#)

The Living Income Community of Practice: Actual Income Measurement FAQ; Benchmarking FAQ; Calculation, analysis and reporting FAQ <https://www.living-income.com/tools-resources/publications/>

Core Criteria for Mature Landscapes, ISEAL, October 2024 <https://isealalliance.org/get-involved/resources/core-criteria-mature-landscape-initiatives-english>

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## Acknowledgements

**This publication was produced by ISEAL.**

ISEAL would like to thank Proforest, IDH, and Swisscontact for providing case study information and granting permission to share relevant insights.

This work was made possible through funding from the UK International Development from the UK Government. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the funder.

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