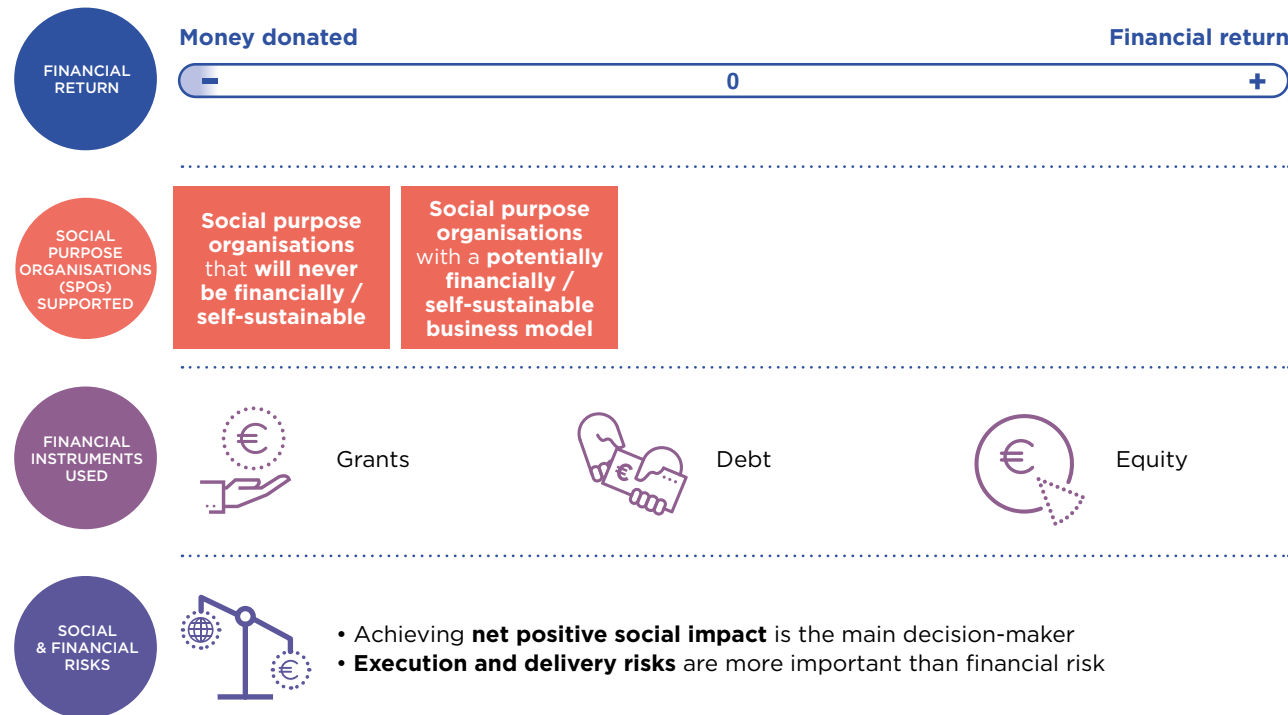


syngenta foundation for sustainable agriculture

issues related to the corporate industry, with the aim of **advancing best practices or setting new industry-wide standards.**

A Corporate Social Investor (CSI)* and its affiliated company can align in four ways. With this case study, we highlight “**industry alignment**” of our alignment typology, in which a CSI aligns its mission and/or core focus areas with **social**

Investment strategy



* Corporate Social Investors (CSI) support social purpose organisations (e.g. social enterprises, charities) with financial and non-financial support. CSIs are investors *for* impact related to a company: a corporate foundation, corporate impact fund, corporate impact incubator, accelerator, a social business.

Industry Alignment Strategy

The **vision** of Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) is a **bright future for smallholder farming**. The Foundation therefore strengthens the farming and food systems by catalysing market developments and the delivery of innovations, while building capacity across public and private sectors. One important focus of SFSA is to raise awareness of smallholder farmers’ challenges with key organisations in civil society and the private and public sector. In addition, SFSA encourages a wide range of organisations, including many companies in the agribusiness sector, to set higher standards for the full economic inclusion of smallholder farmers in developing countries. The industry alignment strategy thereby helps SFSA to benefit from the company’s worldwide agricultural expertise, innovations and network in order to support ‘pre-commercial’ farmers.

Organisational Profile

Legal structure:
Corporate Foundation

Affiliated company:
Syngenta AG

Funding model:
Annual company contribution and external funding

SDGs:



Yearly investments:
EUR 19M in 2019

HQ location:
Switzerland

Geographic focus:
Africa and Asia

Social sector:
Climate-Smart Agriculture, Sustainable Development, Financial Inclusion, Women & Youth

Advice and key learnings



“To create sustainable economic, social and environmental impact for low-income smallholder farmers, the public and private sector need to collaborate globally, regionally and in local agricultural value chains. For strategic collaborations with Syngenta

and other private sector partners, we have established key principles of engagement. These safeguard the independence and credibility of our work, and ensure that the objectives and impact of each partnership are always aligned with the Foundation’s purpose and mission.”

REBECCA HUBERT SCHERLER, LEGAL COUNSEL AND SECRETARY TO THE FOUNDATION BOARD AT SYNGENTA FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



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Industry alignment in practice

Social issue tackled by the CSI

The so-called “orphan crop” cassava is a vital source of calories for millions of Africans. Cassava (manioc) is robust, highly adaptable to different environments, and grows well even in poor soils. However, the cassava production is often neither reliable nor efficient, leading to adverse effects on the food security in many countries.

On the one hand, farmers still rely on traditional agricultural methods that keep the crop’s yields far below its potential. At the same time, there is no formal market that offers African farmers a sustainable, high-quality supply of planting material. Without such, a steady and high yield of cassava is hard to achieve. While private-sector solutions could significantly increase the crop’s yield and production reliability in the face of weather extremes, pests and diseases, companies have so far concentrated only on other crops, as cassava has no financially attractive opportunities for them.

In 2016, the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) therefore started a collaboration with the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation EMBRAPA to help cassava farmers in Africa. In partnership with Ugandan stakeholders, researchers developed a technological solution named MandiPlus that helps to produce high-quality cassava planting pieces more sustainably and efficiently. Using this technology, every new planting piece is coated with stimulants to increase its growth rate and with protectants to shield it from insects, fungal and viral diseases. As a result, farmers can considerably increase the crop’s multiplication rate and its yield.

Solution supported by the CSI

While Syngenta does not work with non-commercial crops such as cassava, the company had developed a similar treatment system for sugarcane, which shares many similarities with cassava. Through the alignment with its corporate founder, SFSA was able to use the company’s technology and expertise on the topic, alongside that of other interested organisations such as EMBRAPA, to develop this sophisticated solution for smallholder cassava farmers.

Impact benefits

The new and higher-quality production method could make a vast impact on the food security and livelihoods of many smallholder families, even beyond Africa. SFSA is therefore now catalysing private sector investment in establishing commercial production models based on the MandiPlus initiative. By turning this into an economically viable business model, both the farmers and suppliers could not only contribute to the food security of their communities, but also become financially self-sustainable in doing so.

Business relevance

The Foundation wants to stimulate private companies, including Syngenta, to include lower-income agricultural customers in their business models. The design of appropriate products plays a crucial role here. By developing MandiPlus alongside EMBRAPA, SFSA has shown how smart adaptations of cutting-edge technologies could benefit smallholders and their business partners. As the MandiPlus initiative moves forward, the plant science and chemistry innovations may well be combined with digital and other solutions to maximize their impact.

Interested in joining our community and shaping the knowledge around CSI? [Get in touch](#)

More information about [Strategic Alignment](#)