



# NEWSLETTER July 2024

## Dear members, dear readers,

What's new in the ValueLinks community? In the first half of 2024 Association members were once again very active with a series of seminars and events. The association co-organized a webinar with GIZ and the African Union on the AU “Guidelines for inclusive agricultural value chains development”. We had discussions on the EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, the German supply chain law and on the EU Regulation on deforestation-free products.

Things will remain exciting in the second half of 2024. The long-awaited pilot seminar on “ValueLinks for Agrifood Systems” will take place from October 21 to 25. It deals with the new strategic focus of the ValueLinks method on the transformation of food systems and thus will take ValueLinks to a new level. The topic has already been an issue in earlier editions of this newsletter. Now is the time to get practical. Several new concepts and tools have been developed that can be used for VC studies and training alike. See the lead article on page 2. We invite transformation thinkers and all value chain practitioners to test the new approach and participate in its further development. The seminar will be held in the beautiful Rheingau region close to Frankfurt, at the time of the grape harvest. Don’t let this opportunity go.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition. And always remember: Any contribution to this newsletter is very welcome. Send us your ideas and information on your activities and experiences!

*Andreas Springer-Heinze, Sonia Lehmann, Fernando Camargo, Lars Düerkop*

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## 1. ValueLinks experience and strategic trends

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### New training: “ValueLinks for Agrifood Systems (VL4AFS)”



Since 2023, the ValueLinks Association is working on the new training “ValueLinks for Agrifood Systems” (VL4AFS). The working group consists of Andreas Springer-Heinze, Alfons Eiligmann, Annemarie Matthes, Fernando Camargo, Gunter Viteri, Joachim Weber, Lars Dürkop, Afework Germamo and Pierre Johnson.

The fundamental transformation of agrifood systems is becoming increasingly important as an approach to international development cooperation. The core area strategy 2021 „Sustainable Agri-Food Systems“ of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) aims at supplying food in sufficient quantity and quality within planetary boundaries, with the least possible use of resources and in compliance with a human rights-based approach. It is this context in which we are now placing the action-oriented methodology VL4AFS that provides the framework for a systemic approach to transforming agrifood systems with a value chain (VC) perspective.

VL4AFS is based on the proven structure of the ValueLinks methodology. The main difference to ValueLinks 2.0 is a much wider scope. For one, the systems boundary is extended from VCs to agrifood systems. Accordingly, the first step is to determine and prioritize a national or regional agrifood system (AFS) as a geographic/spatial framework. The analysis starts with describing and analysing it. The second difference is the focus on food value chains, i.e. the range of food products that make up popular diets in the respective AFS. This implies focusing on social considerations of food consumption and nutrition.

Obviously, the AFS is composed of several food VCs. The analysis of the overall system is followed by parallel VC analyses of the most important food products. This makes it possible to descend from the abstract level of the AFS to individual VCs. Another important difference to ValueLinks 2.0 is the new concept of AFS “transformation” that has been introduced by FAO and other agencies. “Transformation” goes beyond “development” in the sense that the global agreements on climate protection, water and biodiversity set the strategic direction. Here too, the horizontal, i.e. the spatial perspective is gaining in importance.

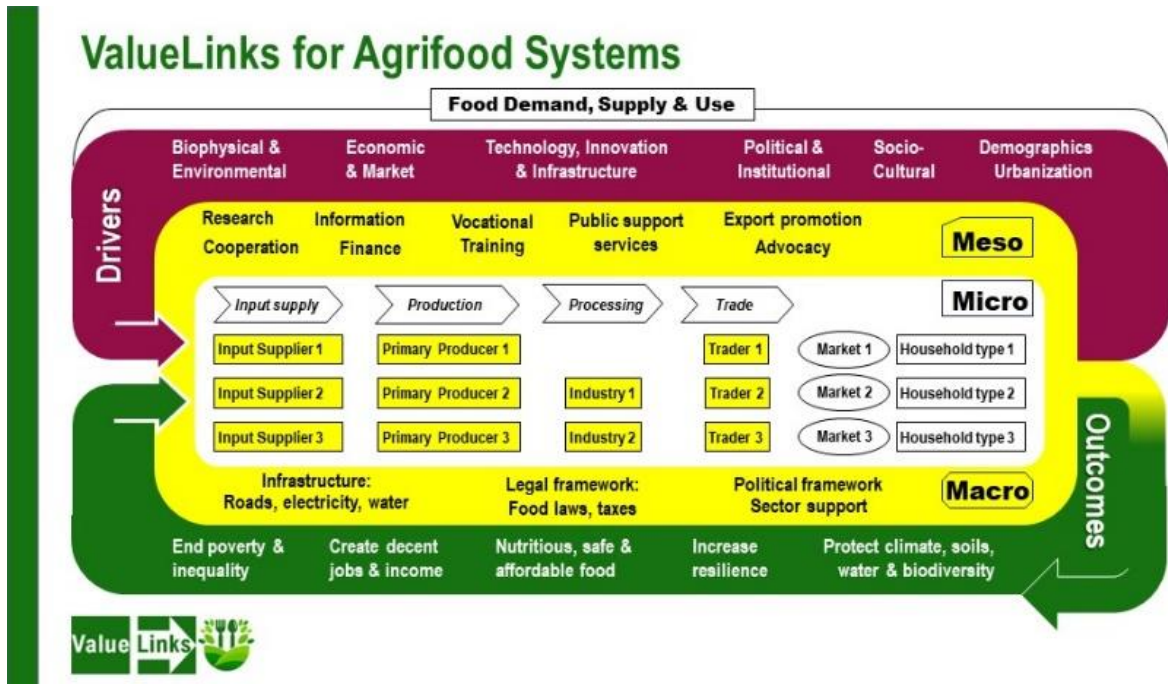
New tools and training materials include:

- Assessment of national and regional agrifood systems
- Environmental, social and economic analysis of AFS
- Urban and rural food habits/nutrition assessments of social strata



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- Climate proofing and carbon footprints in practices
- Determining the drivers of transformation processes
- Strategy development and transformative action
- Regenerative agriculture
- Green business models
- Financing a green economy/climate insurance.



A first pilot training seminar will be organized by IDC in Oestrich-Winkel (Frankfurt area), Germany, during the week for October 21-25, 2024, animated by the ValueLinks Association founding members Andreas Springer-Heinze, Alfons Eilgmann and Annemarie Matthes. The number of participants is limited to 20.

For expressions of interest →: [training@idc-aachen.de](mailto:training@idc-aachen.de)

## Presentation of ValueLinks and “Agrifood Systems Transformation” at German universities

In summer 2024, Andreas Springer-Heinze is holding a series of lectures on ValueLinks topics. The first two lectures have already taken place on June 13 at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (HUB) and on July 3 at the University of Hohenheim.

The lecture at the HUB "From value chains to food systems and back" examined the concept of the agricultural and food system and linked it to value chain analyses, particularly the analysis of environmental hotspots. A special session was dedicated to the strategic controversy over transformation pathways. Conventional planning strategies are based on global goals, derive solutions to problems and design activities accordingly. Another strategy, closer to ValueLinks, is to influence



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ongoing economic development if it leads to sustainable results. While the first strategy is task-oriented, the second is a “principle-oriented approach” that remains flexible and focuses on opportunities. The second lecture at the University of Hohenheim focused on innovation processes in value chains in general. The conclusion is that the development of value chains is an autonomous evolutionary process. Interventions must take place at exactly the right time in order to be successful.

On September 4, Andreas Springer-Heinze will present his book "*Die unendliche Transformation*" at the Stratum Lounge in Berlin (please register at <https://www.stratum-consult.de/events/>). The presentation will be held in German. Participants are cordially invited to attend either in Berlin or online. Another presentation will follow at the beginning of September at the IÖW (Institut für Ökologische Wirtschaftsforschung), Berlin.

Finally, on September 11, the University of Berlin, Welthungerhilfe (WHH) and the ValueLinks Association are organizing a half-day workshop at the Tropentag Conference 2024 in Vienna. The title is "Forgotten cultures, overlooked actors and participatory research: unlocking the potential of value chains to transform food systems". See: <https://www.tropentag.de/conference/workshops.php#W11>. Participants of the Tropentag are very welcome. The keynote speeches (one of which by Andreas Springer-Heinze) will be broadcast online. Further information will be available on the [valuelinks.org](http://valuelinks.org) website.

**There may be other opportunities to present ValueLinks at universities in and outside of Germany. Please turn to [springer-heinze@valuelinks.org](mailto:springer-heinze@valuelinks.org) for any suggestions. AU Guidelines for Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains development in Africa: A webinar report**

The International ValueLinks Association e.V. and the Sectoral Project Agriculture of GIZ organized a webinar with a large number of participants on April 11 to discuss the newly published African Union (AU) Guidelines for Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains Development in Africa.

The webinar brought together GIZ colleagues and experts of the international ValueLinks Association working on the development of agricultural value chains. The key speaker Dr. Agbonlahor Mure, Senior Production and Marketing Officer, of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment (DARBE) of the African Union Commission presented the objectives and structure of the Guidelines.



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**AU Guidelines for Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains Development in Africa**

April 11, 2024, 13h00-14h30 CET

AU – SAFGRAD, ValueLinks Association, GIZ Sector Project Agriculture

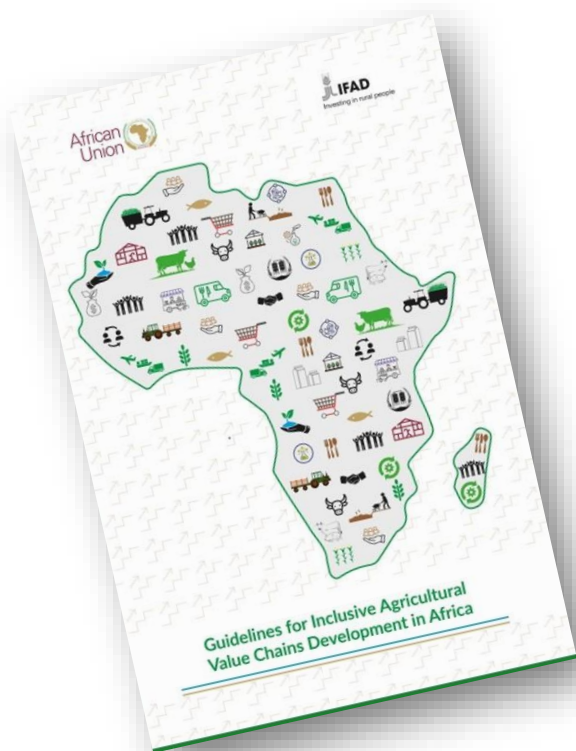
**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

**ValueLinks**

African Union

The focus of the guidelines is on presenting best practice experience on agricultural value chains promotion covering the eight value chains crops, wild fish, aquaculture, poultry, beef, dairy, small ruminants and piggery. The discussion of the best practice results in recommendations for game-changing policies for inclusive value chains promotion. The AU Commission aims at anchoring the AU Guidelines in the national agricultural policies of member countries.

Webinar participants appreciated the AU guidelines because they are VC specific - at least as specific they can be at continental level. Of course one has to adapt them to national / local contexts, but the advantage is not to start from scratch again and again. Dr. Andreas Springer-Heinze and Alfons Eilgmann compared the AU Guidelines with the structure of the ValueLinks approach. Both are similar to each other as they apply a systems perspective to VC promotion. While the AU guidelines are very specific on particular solutions of the individual value chains, ValueLinks can contribute particularly with its comprehensive VC analysis and





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strategy development part and its trainings on VC promotion.

The webinar participants agreed that the AU Guidelines and the ValueLinks approach can be combined well as they complement each other well. Overall, the webinar was characterized by a lively discussion between ValueLinks members and GIZ project staff. For more information, please contact [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org).

### New coaching materials: “Coaching the AgriBusiness Cluster”

The GIZ ProAgri project in Benin recently developed a manual in French language “Coaching des AgriBusiness cluster”. The manual was inspired by ValueLinks and written by authors who are closely associated with the ValueLinks approach. The authors made the manual available to the ValueLinks Association. The manual is available in the member area of the ValueLinks website. You can find and download it under “04-Member Upload”, “05 Other VC promotion documents” and the document name “ABC\_VDEF” or contact [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org).

### Join the Agribusiness Expert Talks 2024!

Scaling of proven agribusiness approaches is needed urgently. Re-inventing the wheel is not an option. **Agribusiness Expert Talks 2024** are therefore organized in the framework of the business Support Facility for Resilient Agricultural Value Chains. GIZ, through Agri-Business Facility for Africa and the MOVE implements this initiative with financial support from BMZ and EU-OACP.

Agribusiness Experts from African, Caribbean, Pacific and Europe tackle innovative and successful interventions suited to boost (i) growth of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) operating in agricultural production, processing and services in these regions and (ii) employment, be it from other enterprises, professional organizations, technical and financial service providers along value chains.

Expert Talks also disseminate information on regulatory frameworks and market access conditions to the European Market. The Expert Talks explore successful approaches for scaling and what additional support or leverage next generations of young agribusiness professionals may need. At the same time digital knowledge dissemination opens new opportunities.

For more details, hot topics and access to the sessions click here à [Expert Talks - 2024 - agribusiness-facility.org](https://expert-talks-2024-agribusiness-facility.org) or contact [Stefan.Pletziger@giz.de](mailto:Stefan.Pletziger@giz.de)



## 2. ValueLinks studies, trainings, seminars

### Review of studies January - September 2024

<b>Date &amp; Place</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Author</b>
Sept 2023 – Jan 2024 Mindanao, <b>Philippines</b>	Assessment and Study of Value Chain Governance Ecosystem Models for Coffee in Sultan Kudarat and Bukidnon and Cacao in Davao Region for IFAD-DTI RAPID Growth Project	Rita I. Pilarca
Nov 2023 – Feb 2024 <b>Philippines</b>	Value Chain Analysis in South Cotabato and Sarangani, Region 12, in the Coconut Alliance Project for GIZ	Rita I. Pilarca
April 01-28 <b>Burkina-Faso</b>	Complete analysis of the cassava and potato value chains in Burkina Faso using ValueLinks tools	Nasser Kankoudry Bila
April-September 2024 <b>Benin</b>	Mapping, selection, analysis and development of the action plan of the preselected value chains of PIRVATEFOD-BENIN using ValueLinks	Nasser Kankoudry Bila, Dieudonné Konnon
first half of 2024 <b>Burkina-Faso</b>	Etude sur les besoins en services dans le secteur de moringa en fonction du stade d'évolution des entreprises	Jean Bosco Dibouloni, Maximilian Schulz
10-11 Juillet 2024 Koudougou, <b>Burkina-Faso</b>	Atelier d'informations sur le marché de moringa suivi de rencontres B2B (business to business)	Jean Bosco Dibouloni

### Review of seminars and trainings January - June 2024

<b>Date &amp; Place</b>	<b>Seminar/Participants</b>	<b>Trainers</b>
Feb. 19-23 Yaounde, <b>Cameroon</b>	The 4.5-day ValueLinks Introductory Training in French organised by IDC/Ecotrading SARL saw 12 participants from 6 different GIZ projects. A main focus was on Non-Timber Forest products (NTFP) value chains.	Alfons Eiligmann, Dr. Guy Merlin Nguenang,
March 18-22 Bangalore, <b>India</b>	The GIZ project Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector (GIC) in India organised a 4.5-day ValueLinks Introductory Training with 25 participants. The seminar is part of a series of three seminars including a particular Training-of-Trainers (ToT) seminar to build up a pool of Indian ValueLinks trainers. The training material is currently under translation into Hindi.	Alfons Eiligmann, Kavita Bhardvaj
April 15-19 Bogota, <b>Colombia</b>	IDC and ECO Consult organised a 4.5 day ValueLinks training in Spanish. 29 participants from 13 different projects/organisations enjoyed a remarkable workshop atmosphere and the updated Spanish ValueLinks PowerPoints adapted to the latest layout.	Fernando Camargo, Gunter Viteri



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<b>Date &amp; Place</b>	<b>Seminar/Participants</b>	<b>Trainers</b>
May 3 <b>Philippines</b>	Webinar on Value Chain Management for the Department of Trade & Industry, Central Visayas	Rita I. Pilarca
May 14-17, Lomé, <b>Togo</b>	Training of 16 participants from financial institutions on ValueLinks and Contract farming (combination of two approaches) organised by the project “Programme pour la Promotion de la compétitivité du secteur privé au Togo (ProComp)”	Nasser Kankoudry Bila
May 21-25, Lomé, <b>Togo</b>	ValueLinks 2.0 Training for 20 participants of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Chamber of Commerce organised by the project “Programme pour la Promotion de la compétitivité du secteur privé au Togo” (ProComp)	Nasser Kankoudry Bila, Koffi Francois-Xavier Dzobgema
May 27-31 Lomé, <b>Togo</b>	ValueLinks 2.0 Training for 21 participants organised by the project “Programme pour la Promotion de la compétitivité du secteur privé au Togo » (ProComp)	Nasser Kankoudry Bila, Koffi Francois-Xavier Dzobgema
June 3-7, Tbilisi, <b>Georgia</b>	The GIZ project “Promoting Green Deal Readiness in the Eastern partnership Countries” (ProGRess) organised a 4.5-day ValueLinks Introductory Training with 19 participants (key project staff and project partners from Ministries and private sector) from Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine, Moldova and Azerbaijan.	Alfons Eiligmann, Fernando Camargo
June 13-15, Ouagadougou, <b>Burkina Faso</b>	The consulting company AGRODEV organised a 3-day training seminar on VC promotion base sur ValueLinks with 11 participants (consultants, project staff and a shea butter trading company).	Jean Bosco Dibouloni, Harouma Bougoum
Ouagadougou, <b>Burkina Faso</b>	Communication à l’université Ki Zerbo de Ouagadougou sur l’intégration dans les chaines des valeurs moringa, riz et volaille	Jean Bosco Dibouloni
July 1-5 and 15-17, Delhi, <b>India</b>	The GIZ project “Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector” (GIC) in India held a second 4.5-day ValueLinks Introductory Training with 18 participants and subsequent 3-day ValueLinks ToT workshop with 13 participants.	Alfons Eiligmann, Umesh Kumar

## New group of ValueLinks trainers in India

The GIZ project “Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector” (GIC) organised a ValueLinks Training-of-Trainers (ToT) seminar in cooperation with the project “Sustainable agricultural systems and agriculture” (AgSys), creating a further pool of ValueLinks trainers in India. The thirteen newly qualified ValueLinks trainers come from different NGOs such as Tata Trust, Skillgreen Global, Lupin Human Welfare and Research, Rythu Sadhikara Samstha, Welthungerhilfe and a university in Himachal Pradesh, as well as from UN Women and the two GIZ projects. For further information contact [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org).





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## Upcoming seminars and trainings July 2024 – January 2025

<b>Date/Place</b>	<b>Seminar/Participants</b>	<b>Contact</b>
October 21-25 <b>VL4AFS Seminar in Oestrich-Winkel, Germany</b>	4.5-day <i>ValueLinks for Agrifood Systems (VL4AFS)</i> pilot training seminar in English organised by IDC in Oestrich-Winkel, Germany (50 km from Frankfurt). The seminar is open for enrolment, seminar places are still available. Participation fees are applied. A detailed announcement is published at <a href="http://www.idc-aachen.de">www.idc-aachen.de</a>	<a href="mailto:training@idc-aachen.de">training@idc-aachen.de</a>
18 – 22 Nov 2024 Jacquesville, Côte d'Ivoire	4.5-day <i>ValueLinks</i> training in French organised by IDC and Promak Afric. The seminar is planned as a regional event aiming primarily at French-speaking professionals from West and Central Africa. The seminar is open for enrolment, seminar places are still available. Participation fees are applied. A detailed announcement is published at <a href="http://www.idc-aachen.de">www.idc-aachen.de</a>	<a href="mailto:training@idc-aachen.de">training@idc-aachen.de</a>
Jan/Feb, 2025 Bogota, Colombia	IDC and ECO Consult will organise their 4.5 day <i>ValueLinks</i> training in Spanish for the second time in Bogota. The exact date is still to be determined. Participation fees are applied, expressions of interest to participate are welcome. A detailed announcement is published at <a href="http://www.idc-aachen.de">www.idc-aachen.de</a>	<a href="mailto:training@idc-aachen.de">training@idc-aachen.de</a>



## 3. Recommended reading and further information

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### Global Risks Report 2024

The Global Risks Report, developed in collaboration with Marsh McLennan and Zurich Insurance Group, explores some of the most severe risks we may face over the next decade, against a backdrop of rapid technological change, economic uncertainty, a warming planet and conflict. As cooperation comes under pressure, weakened economies and societies may only require the smallest shock to edge past the tipping point of resilience. For download, go [here](#)

### EU Regulation on Deforestation free Value Chains (EUDR)

Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council on May 31 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010, available in several languages [here](#)

### Addressing deforestation through supply-chain regulations: The role of voluntary standards systems

Forests are vital to the survival of the natural world. To decouple agricultural supply chains from deforestation, a “smart-mix” of policies is needed: a combination of mutually reinforcing measures that provides a framework for all stakeholders to act, both on the ground in producer countries and in consumer countries. This paper discusses how voluntary sustainability standards and certification schemes can play in an important role in this smart mix, in particular in terms of supporting supply chain regulation. Download the ISEAL EU deforestation policy paper [here](#).

### What the EU CSDDD says about contracts

This political brief analyses the content of the newly adopted EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) with respect to commercial contracts. On July 5, 2024, the CSDDD was published in the Official Journal of the EU. It will enter into force on July 25, 2024 and Member States will have to transpose the directive into national law by July 26, 2026. With the text finalized, the policy brief reviews its requirements with respect to commercial contracts – one of the key tools that companies are expected to employ in meeting with their human rights and environmental due diligence obligations. Available for download [here](#)

### Solidaridad's new publication: Assessing responsible purchasing practices

There is a growing consensus among companies, civil society organizations, trade unions, and public authorities that suboptimal purchasing practices can contribute to adverse human rights impacts in global supply chains. In the past decade, particularly in relation to the textile and garment sector, the world has witnessed the creation of frameworks, assessment methods and other systems for companies that want to improve their purchasing practices. This paper undertakes a systematic review of many of these methods, tools and approaches. Through comparative analysis, the publication identifies common



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themes across the tools, such as the emphasis on transparency, collaboration with suppliers, fair pricing, and a focus on product design and production planning. It also pinpoints critical questions that the tools consistently address. Download [here](#)

### **The grounds for sharing: A study of value distribution in the coffee industry**

With over 2.25 billion cups of coffee consumed globally every day, the international coffee market generates substantial and growing value. However, there has been a knowledge gap on how this value is distributed in the supply chain and how much of it reaches coffee growers. The complexity of the coffee market and price volatility brings risks for all stakeholders in the supply chain. Risk mitigation has led to a concentration of value away from producers, in the hands of coffee buyers and brands. Rising costs of labour and inputs have hit the most vulnerable coffee producers hard. Having farmers in a disadvantaged position is a long-term risk for the sector as a whole. With this in mind, the Global Coffee Platform (GCP), IDH and Solidaridad commissioned BASIC to build a model to estimate the distribution of value, costs, taxes, and net profit margins along coffee value chains, from coffee farmers in Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia and Vietnam, to retail consumers in Germany. Available for download [here](#)



## 4. Membership and networking

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### Is your personal profile updated?

Please check whether your personal profile is still up to date. In case, please just send us an updated text to [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org).

### Strengthening the LinkedIn profile of the ValueLinks Association

Since a couple of months, the LinkedIn profile of IVLA is online. Of course, we have great interest in bringing up the number of followers. As a member of LinkedIn, please visit: *International ValueLinks Association e.V.* on LinkedIn and become a follower.

To attract more people, we still need a good background photo, presenting the diversity of members. The idea is to make a collage of pictures showing seminar situations and portraits. Anyone can take part and get represented, if he/she *agrees* to have the own portrait photo included. Obviously, the priority goes to members of the Association. For more information contact [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org)

### Sharing materials and experience

We would also like to invite you to share some own material with the community by uploading it to the respective part of the folder "04-Member upload" in the member area (please ignore a technical mistake message that may pop up. It should work nevertheless). For further information, please contact [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org).

### Your contribution to the next newsletter

A request and an offer to all members of the International *ValueLinks* Association: Please inform us about your activities so that they can be included in the next edition of this newsletter!

### Becoming a member

IVLA is a professional association of experts in the area of market development and value chain promotion. We welcome new members who are professionally active in this field, interested in sharing experience and in contributing to the advancement of the value chain approach to economic development, and the *ValueLinks* methodology in particular. The benefits of membership include privileged access to the latest methodological innovations, a platform for presenting own competences and achievements and contacts to colleagues all over the world. These are the fees for membership:

	<i>Entry fee</i>	<i>Annual fee</i>
<i>Fee for members with an OECD passport</i>	€40	€80
<i>Reduced fee for members with a non-OECD passport</i>	€20	€40

If you are interested in becoming a member, please ask for an application format by writing an email to [info@valuelinks.org](mailto:info@valuelinks.org)

#### **Contact/Imprint**

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