



Coffee Beans Galore!

Budget: \$89,500 for a one-year project. Fully funded.

The Project:

In 2016-17 we provided funds for equipment to establish a coffee cooperative amongst the very poor and remote villages on the foothills of Mt Elgon, in eastern Uganda. Building on the success of four seasons of coffee planting, production and export, funding was used to expand infrastructure and further grow capacity. This project had several aims: to expand drying capacity and the network of purchasing centres on the mountain, develop new coffee fermentation techniques, purchase a 4WD pick-up van and develop the coffee roastery. Despite challenges posed by COVID-19, our partners experienced their most successful season yet with all goals reached plus more!



Outcomes and Impact:

- **Drying capacity:** this increased significantly with a new site off the mountain to take advantage of dryer weather. Coffee cherry production grew to 150 tons (up from 100) and plans are underway to strengthen and expand overseas export markets in USA, UK, Australia and an exciting opportunity in South Korea.
- **Expansion of purchasing centres:** a huge success enabling farmers to sell direct at fairer prices. The farmers network grew from 600 to over 1000, which led to increased employment for casual workers (100+, up from 55). Working with over 1000+ families exceeded all expectations!
- **New fermentation tanks:** these have increased the capacity for innovation in coffee.
- **4WD:** the 4WD has been an invaluable asset - used for safe transport of coffee and workers, training of farmers and also doubling as an ambulance/transporter of health workers into remote communities during the lockdown.
- **The coffee roastery:** this continues to grow and develop, resulting in new jobs and our partner's first international export of its own roasted coffee - a much-needed boost to offset the downturn in demand from tourists due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. The domestic Ugandan market will be further targeted going forward.
- **Training:** due to COVID-19 large gatherings were replaced by individual "garden by garden" visits. These smaller settings have strengthened relationships with farmers and helped them improve crop yield and quality.
- **Hungry Season Bonus – a highlight!:** farmers receive a bonus to get them through the dry season and this year in particular it was very welcome. Other improvements include savings groups and inter-cropped gardens for more steady income streams, decreasing deforestation/soil erosion and health promotion to tackle COVID-19.



Eva Wasaka started out as a member of the sorting team and then began managing a 16-strong sorting and drying team before taking on co-management responsibility with her husband. As the centres have expanded, Eva has taken on more responsibility as the scale of the work has increased and has become absolutely integral to ensuring the coffee is processed and managed as well as possible. Coffee has not only benefitted the 1000+ farmers and their families (6,600+ people) but many other workers!

Thank you from all the farmers and their families – this is life-changing!