

Published by

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

In cooperation with



Training of Trainers (TOTs)
Impacting bee management technical skills.
© Mt. Kenya West Women in Coffee



COFFEE INNOVATION

Coffee Diversification by Integrating Modern Bee Farming into Coffee Production to Cushion Smallholder Coffee Farmers from Delayed Coffee Payments and Fluctuating Coffee Prices

OVERVIEW: MT. KENYA WEST WOMEN IN COFFEE (KENYA)

CHALLENGE

Delayed coffee payments and fluctuating costs of inputs and price of coffee can have a negative impact on small-scale coffee farmers and their ability to pay for basic needs, leading to a cycle of poverty. In particular, women in this organization identified a lack of information and ability to initiate their income-generating activities because of requirements for accessing finance, social norms, and gender roles as barriers that they face. They were looking for ways to engage in revenue-generating activities around coffee that could leverage their involvement and abilities.

INNOVATION

TEACHING WOMEN AND YOUTH BEEKEEPING AND COFFEE CLIMATE FRIENDLY GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP)

Integrating modern bee farming into coffee production can cushion smallholder coffee farmers with supplementary income to bridge delayed coffee payments and fluctuating coffee prices. The project introduced two interventions simultaneously: Beekeeping for additional revenue (as it can be harvested up to three times per year), and GAP for coffee (including nitrogen-fixing shade trees) to maximize coffee value. These provide both immediate increase in income for women coffee producers, as well as opportunities for women and youth to grow businesses in nursery, beekeeping, and honey processing.

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Mt. Kenya West Women in Coffee (WESTWIC), a women-led membership company of 50 coffee estates and cooperatives, is committed to reaching 15,000 workers, 70 % of whom are women, with health information and services by 2024. The overall WESTWIC mission is to promote women coffee owners' welfare and empowerment through lobbying, training, representation, and stakeholder engagement.

KEY COMPANY STATS

NUMBER OF PRODUCER PARTNERS

Four cooperatives (total: 1,000 producers, 600 women)

NUMBER OF STAFF

Six

COST

COSTS

Contractual engagement of apiary trainers, transport for bee equipment and collection of honey, marketing for products. WESTWIC also provides agricultural extension services for a fee.

EFFECTS ON REVENUE

Could not be determined

PREPARATION

TIMELINE

Two years

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- Secondary coffee processing equipment
- Beekeeping equipment (bee hives, smoker, honey extraction knives and related tools, honey extractors, honey warmer, honey settling tank)
- Lab for coffee and honey quality control
- Packaging materials for both coffee and bee products

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

Two full-time and three part-time people for training delivery and equipment installation, plus trained apiary managers

LESSONS LEARNED

CHALLENGES

- Lack of land ownership documentation complicated the location of the apiaries.
- Limitation of numbers of participants during trainings due to COVID-19 restrictions increased training cost.
- Challenging myths associated with beekeeping and especially harvesting procedures were difficult.
- High farmer expectation on allowances/ compensation for participation in training and events was not anticipated.
- Drought hampered initial honey harvest.
- The biggest challenge in the exercise was to convince the participating groups on the co-ownership of the apiary. Despite this, women are more perceptive to the idea and some are opting to host their society members within their enterprises.

TAKEAWAYS

- Women training women works, and honey was a successful venture.
- Increase numbers of trainings for high impact aligned to the coffee and bee calendar, and have more media campaigns during both coffee and bee national and international events.
- Local government involvement may be needed early in the project to acquire apiary sites within the reserved ecosystems to ensure proper land permissions.
- Great enthusiasm by youth for the opportunity to be apiary managers led to higher than anticipated recruitment (18) and expansion of the training program.
- Coffee producers had felt left out of information flows, and were invigorated by the training and contact with WESTWIC.
- Participants are expanding and reinvesting in their equipment.

RESULTS: MT. KENYA WEST WOMEN IN COFFEE (KENYA)

As a result of integrating beekeeping training and Good Agricultural Practices:



Demonstration on honey extraction from bee combs © Mt. Kenya West Women in Coffee



495 PRODUCERS

were trained (of which over 54 % were women producers)



139 YOUTH

attended trainings, and the project generated interest among the youth to establish new coffee plantings, run apiary and nursery businesses and rehabilitate neglected household coffee farms



20 BEE-FRIENDLY COFFEE

customer relationships established



10 LAND USE AGREEMENTS

signed to allow construction of apiaries and water storages facilities, ensuring honey production support for five years

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Generally, the farmers trained report that their coffee improved comparatively to those not trained

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IMPLEMENTATION: MT. KENYA WEST WOMEN IN COFFEE (KENYA)



Survey carried out by project team, to collect data on the coffee farmers bee enterprise knowledge. © Mt. Kenya West Women in Coffee

STEP
1 Identify appropriate experts and trainers.

STEP
2 Survey potential participants to identify barriers to participation.

STEP
3 Socialise the program with local coffee farmer groups, cooperatives and women's self-help groups as well as specifically reaching out to youth. Deliver general capacity building.

STEP
4 Procure necessary equipment and materials, as well as land permissions and network partnerships with input providers and other related services.

STEP
5 Establish demo plot for apiary and conduct Training of Trainers (ideally one or more trainers per coffee region).

STEP
6 Introduce beekeeping equipment, establish nursery and conduct trainings on coffee GAP and beekeeping.

STEP
7 Conduct follow-up training and embed a practice of continuous improvement and support.

The COFFEE INNOVATION FUND has been developed and funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

MISSION: The Fund's objective is to increase the profitability of smallholder coffee farmers, and foster greater, more equitable value distribution along the supply chain through promoting innovative farming systems, transparent and inclusive business models, and access to new markets.

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Published by:
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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**Sector Programme Initiative for
Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains (INA)**

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Design:
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Photo credits:
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On behalf of
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Division 122: Agriculture, Rural Development
Bonn

Bonn, Germany, 2024

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Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development