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MEDIA RELEASE

20 million women to address climate change in coffee

- Women in coffee producing areas are often left out in a decision-making process.
- The initiative for coffee&climate promotes gender equality and drives change for women and climate change in coffee production.

One of the most impactful ways to promote sustainable development in coffee households and producer communities is to drive change for women! As there are 20 million farmer families producing coffee there are also 20 million women that are ready to perform their role. Therefore the initiative for coffee&climate is expanding its gender-focused climate component.



Strengthening their rights, supporting their participation in household decision-making, incorporating them into farmer organizations, and empowering their knowledge supports families and communities to grow stronger. Thus gender programming also needs to be incorporated into any strategies for coping with climate change.

Most of the coffee production worldwide is not mechanized. In many regions and in particular in most of Africa, **women can do up to 90% of the field and harvest**

work. [A survey from the International Trade Center](#) indicated that this is a 'typical' role for women in the coffee industry globally. They are rarely involved in higher value-generating activities. Income from their family's coffee field is mostly channeled through the men without a common decision-making process at the household level which means without the involvement of the other family members.

"Within the initiative for coffee&climate (c&c) we are looking at many coffee regions that are facing negative effects of the changing climate: higher temperatures and water stress lead to lower

productivity and often also inferior product quality”, says Michael Opitz, Director of the initiative for coffee&climate. Not only is it getting more demanding to cope with effects on the crop, women in rural areas also face additional challenges. Besides working in the field they are responsible for most household related tasks. “To give an example: women in rural areas of Southern Tanzania spend up to three hours per day for fetching water and for collecting firewood. At the same time water is getting scarce. [Deforestation](#) makes it more difficult to collect firewood.”

Introducing practical and time-saving technologies such as clean and efficient cooking stoves, solar energy and domestic rainwater harvesting are addressing women’s ‘time poverty’, increasing the household’s members’ health, helping them to save money and protecting the environment simultaneously. Explore the approach in this short video: <https://youtu.be/hsuonUz0DFQ>

Incorporating the gender approach in climate projects, therefore, goes far beyond climate-smart practices on the household level. The saved time allows women a more frequent participation in training activities and **become drivers of climate-smart agronomy practices.**

Additional programming efforts include the promotion of joint decision taking with a long-term vision as well as the stronger participation and integration of women into management processes and structures in coffee farmer organizations and cooperatives to strengthen operations, transparency, networking and service orientation to their members.

The initiative for coffee&climate is implemented by Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung and working with coffee producing families in Central America, Brazil, Tanzania, and Vietnam. It prepares coffee households for the challenges of climate change and strengthens their ability to adopt better production and resilient livelihood strategies.

Enhancing the understanding of **farming as a family business** with specific female coaching have proven to amplify our project effects. “Previously I used to go to the stream to fetch stream water daily but after installing domestic rainwater harvesting I can now go after some months; so this time when I am in the field I don’t think of not having water at home. Also at the beginning I could not fully invest my time in production since much of my time I spared it in search for water especially during a prolonged drought period”, states



Joyce Hamala, coffee farmer from Tanzania. And when it comes to climate-related actions the impact on the situation of women, on project results and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change is even receiving a further boost. By that, we close a significant gap in sustainability programs.

At the initiative for coffee&climate we are therefore expanding the gender-focused climate component. We want to support lifting the efficiency and impact of coping strategies at household and community level and we want to assess together with farming households and farmer organizations how to further develop approaches for enhancing their efforts to prop up resilience.

Our public partner, the Swedish International Development Agency, has granted us with some resources for starting corresponding activities in two locations, Tanzania and Trifinio in Central America. While we are looking forward to engaging with the producer families, communities and farmer organizations we would also like to open up the intervention and invite like-minded partners to cooperate, to jointly gain new experiences and to learn together how to collectively improve. Knowledge will be systematized and documented as case studies or tools to be shared sector-wide via the [coffee&climate toolbox](#).

Financial contributions are welcome and will be leveraged by three with the support of our public partner.

Are you interested in learning more about this unique opportunity? Write an email to info@coffeeandclimate.org or register in advance for our upcoming webinar about c&c's gender-focused climate component and how to join the program:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/6ece445b5bd9cff8d746f627e8486654>

Webinar: May 17, 5:00-6:30pm CET (UTC +1)

Further materials will be provided upon request.

Read more at www.coffeeandclimate.org

The initiative for coffee&climate is implemented by Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung. www.hrnstiftung.org

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