

Building a more inclusive coffee sector by supporting youth with increased skills and economic opportunities

Section 1: Concept Overview

The link between young people in coffee communities today and the availability of coffee in the future is irrefutable. The inability to earn a livable income is driving young people away from becoming coffee farmers, leading to outmigration to urban areas. In order to ensure a future for coffee, it is critical to support young farmers by building key skills that will help drive innovation in the sector and provide opportunities along all parts of the supply chain.

Project Objective:

Objective 1: Strengthen agricultural training programs - Agricultural training programs are key to engaging youth to become future farmers and equipping them with the tools to innovate the coffee sector. To ensure existing schools and programs thrive and meet current needs, we propose to work with stakeholders in the coffee sector to ensure existing curricula meets the needs of the sector and labor market; strengthen capacity of teachers in key topics determined through needs assessments in each project country; provide access to experts and field experiences.

Objective 2: Entrepreneurial training - Support youth to develop business and technology skills including budgeting, marketing, communications, and others. To support youth led projects, develop a regional competition for innovative business ideas in the coffee sector. Youth participants will receive support from mentors to refine their business idea and winners will receive financing to get their idea off the ground.

Brief Description: Globally, the average age of farmers is 60 years old, and young people are increasingly pursuing non-agricultural careers rather than following in the footsteps of their parents and grandparents. Youth are less attracted to agricultural jobs because of the barriers they face entering and profiting from the industry and the presence of other, more attractive options for their future. However, the demand for coffee continues to increase globally, with no slowdown in sight. To meet the demand for coffee, it is crucial to find approaches that both motivate youth to choose careers in the sector, and to ensure the commodity can provide a stable future. Though this is a new concept in development, Rainforest Alliance has already made advancements in an analysis of youth conditions and needs in the coffee sector, map of potential stakeholders and development of project outline.

Country of Focus: We envision a multi-country project including Colombia, Guatemala, and Honduras

Key Performance Indicators:

| Indicator | Metric | Baseline | Project Target |
|---------------------------------|---|----------|----------------|
| Obj 1: Capacity Building | # of teachers trained | TBD | 100 |
| Obj 1: Capacity Building | # of students indirectly reached through TOT | TBD | 1,500 |
| Obj 1: Capacity Building | # of regional trainings to share learnings | TBD | 3 |
| Obj 1: Capacity Building | # of alliances generated | TBD | 15 |
| Obj 2: Entrepreneurial training | # of youth trained | TBD | 100 |
| Obj 2: Entrepreneurial training | # of youth led projects created | TBD | 30 |
| Obj 2: Entrepreneurial training | # of youth participants in regional LATAM competition | TBD | 30 |
| Obj 2: Entrepreneurial training | # of alliances generated | TBD | 15 |

Please indicate how this project aligns with the 2025 Targets:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resilient supply | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improve well-being & prosperity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen market demand | <input type="checkbox"/> Conserve nature |

A more inclusive coffee sector with greater participation from young women and men is critical to improving well-being and prosperity. Youth face barriers that prevent them from fully participating in political, economic, and social life. They may be excluded through legal systems, land and labor markets, discriminatory attitudes, or perceptions, among others. Working toward youth inclusion requires addressing these barriers and gaps to create an environment in which youth have the access and ability to fully participate in society. Additionally, supporting youth to access increased economic and educational opportunities decreases the need for outmigration to urban areas and contributes to a more resilient coffee supply.

Project Status: New concept still under development

Project Timeline: *Start date: January 2022 End date: December 2024*

Section 2: Partnerships

| Organization Name | Role in Project | Contribution |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Colombia - Federación Nacional de Cafeteros, Asoexport | To be confirmed | |
| Guatemala - ANACAFE y Asociación Nacional del Café | To be confirmed | |
| Honduras - Instituto Hondureño del Café, Asociación Hondureña de Productores del Café, Asociación de Exportadores de Café de Honduras | To be confirmed | |

Expectations for Partner Engagement: We are currently looking for partners in this project. We envision an alliance between a number of stakeholders in the sector, including coffee companies, universities and agricultural training programs, business leaders and others. We need support from partners to participate in the needs assessment, ensure training topics are in line with sector needs, support youth led businesses through mentorship and/or seed funding, share knowledge with youth and teacher participants, and participate in designing the youth-led business competition. We welcome different levels of support from stakeholders throughout the sector with a common aim of supporting young people to gain skills and opportunities to lead to meaningful employment in the coffee sector.

Deadline for partnership opportunities: 1/31/2022

Section 3: Funding

Project Costs:

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Total project costs | 950,000 |
| Secured funding | 0 |
| Funding needed | 950,000 |

Explanation of Funding Use:

Funds will be used to support this regional project, spanning 3 countries over 3 years. This includes funds for:

- dedicated staff specialized in capacity building and work with youth;
- workshops and supplies
- regional workshops for participants to share experience
- entrepreneurial training, including development of tools, workshops, support of mentors
- regional competition for youth-led businesses
- travel for staff and participants in regional workshops
- consultants for needs assessment, evaluation, and other tasks

For more information on this project, please contact Maria Ghiso – Senior Manager, Youth Inclusion at mghiso@ra.org