

UNLOCKING THE WEALTH OF AFRICA'S COFFEE

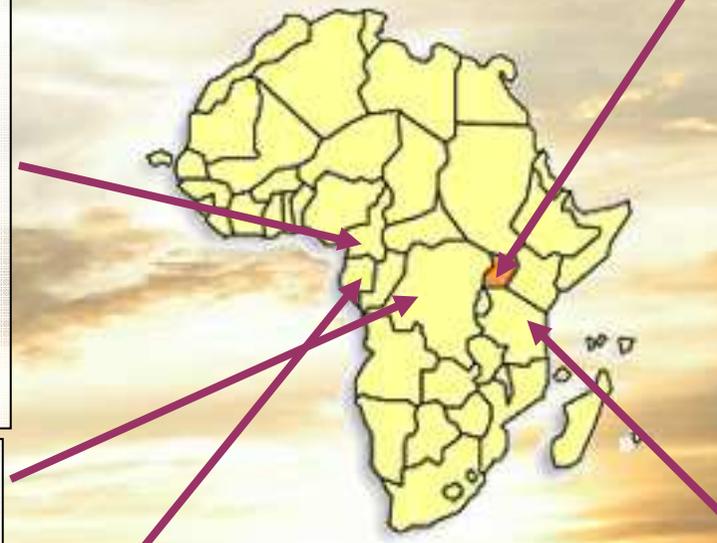
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CAMEROUN : The implementation of the National Coffee Strategy is covering many aspects of the industry, but one important focus is the pilot project, financed through the World Bank from the All ACP Programme of the EU. This aims to develop small coffee washing stations as centres of production excellence, to enhance the quality of the coffee, but also to support farmers in improving productivity. There are 2 in arabica areas and 2 in robusta zones. It is hoped that there will be some production from the next season, starting in Sept/Oct. The preliminary evaluation of the quality from the small quantities produced in 2010 was very positive for both arabica and robusta. Our role is mainly in supporting the agronomy side of this pilot project, funded by the EU AAACP Programme through ITC, together with other activities to promote productivity and quality.

D.R.CONGO : Since the national stakeholder meeting held in Kinshasa in January 2010, a National Coffee Strategy document has been completed and was formally handed over to the Government on 13th April 2011 in Kinshasa. This had been validated by the Provincial platforms, who will largely be responsible to follow up the implementation of the strategy. We have developed a pilot project proposal for small coffee washing stations in Bas-Congo, where the unique "petit kwilu" variety gives an almost completely neutral cup when wet processed.. We are hoping this will be approved and financed by the EU in Kinshasa. This will aim not only to improve quality of the coffee, but also the help farmers improve productivity of their holdings, to make coffee again a profitable crop. In January 2011 we held a stakeholder meeting for the coffee sector in South Kivu, to agree a plan of action for this potential important producing province. This also included a workshop for women in the coffee sector, aimed at finding ways to support their work where they face particular challenges. In addition, it is likely that the CFC will fund a programme in Eastern Congo from late 2011 for production and quality improvement

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UGANDA: The 4th Annual Stakeholder took place at the Research Centre at Kituza in Mukono on 8th December, and brought together nearly 450 people from all across the coffee sector. There was very good representation of the farmers. The work of the last year was reviewed, and objectives agreed for the new coffee year 2010/11.

Exports have decreased slightly in the past 2 years, put down mainly to the drier weather conditions. Work is being done to establish if there are other factors which are causing this decline. It is hoped that 2010/11 will see a return to the uptrend. Our work in the past quarter has also focused on issues relating to climate change as well as women in coffee, two of the approximately 6 major themes which are confronting the coffee sector in Uganda.

It has been encouraging to see the Uganda government adopt a policy of using a multi-stakeholder process (MSP) similar to ours in the coffee sector, for 15 of Uganda's major crops.

TANZANIA: The National Coffee Conference took place in May 2011 in Morogoro, bringing together over 200 stakeholders from all the production regions. The national coffee strategy has been drafted, and this was presented at the Conference.

We have now started to work with the Zonal Stakeholder Committees in the development of their district and regional coffee development plans, to build their capacity for the implementation of these plans, and to see that they are integrated with the national coffee strategy. These committees bring together private and public sector stakeholders, and provide a valuable forum for shared functions and cooperation.

FUNDING: Café Africa is a non-profit association under Swiss law. We have an independent organisation in each country where we work. Our funding comes from grants and from consultancy work for international organisations working in the coffee sector. We have much appreciated the help received from some Foundations, Trusts and private donations which have enabled us to initiate the work in Tanzania and D R Congo this year. It is always a particular challenge, especially starting off in a new country.

ECCAS: We have recently worked with the Economic Community of Central Africa, based in Libreville to prepare a strategy for the coffee sector, in order to develop its capacity for involvement in the economic sectors in the Community. Of the 10 member countries, 9 are coffee producers, though some have at present a very small production. It is expected that through this initiative, coffee will come up the agenda in terms of these countries' economic priorities, and we will start to see more investment and emphasis on coffee from this region, which is considered the origin of the robusta coffee variety.

WEB-SITE: We have recently updated and improved our web-site – www.cafeafrica.org – and aim to update this regularly with information about our activities in our different areas of operation.