



Wild coffee cultivation in Ethiopia

Original Food and GIZ create opportunities for smallholders in the Kafa region



The challenge

The last remaining mountain rainforests in the Kafa region in south-western Ethiopia are regarded as a biodiversity hot spot with a key function for global climate change mitigation. The region is also the birthplace of *Coffea Arabica*, which still grows wild in Kafa. Alongside coffee, this unique ecosystem also produces honey and spices. Yet despite its natural riches it provides very few income opportunities for local smallholder families. Up to now they have been practicing subsistence farming.

Various development partnerships with the firm Original Food between 2003 and 2010 made it possible for some 50,000 people in Kafa to earn a livelihood from revenues generated through the project. In addition to strengthening the local economy, the main aim of the project was to preserve the biological diversity of the Ethiopian mountain rainforests and at the same time conserve the stocks of wild coffee plants. One of the greatest achievements for the Kafa region was the establishment of a UNESCO biosphere reserve through the project in 2010.

‘With our innovative approach we aim to help preserve Ethiopia’s forests while creating economic opportunities for the local population. develoPPP.de is the perfect partner for this.’

Florian Hammerstein, Managing Director at Original Food GmbH

Despite the good results reached by the end of the project in 2010, there was still a need to sustainably consolidate the achievements of the development partnerships:

- The amount of wild coffee harvested was too small to remain competitive over the long term. The initiative was to be expanded and its effectiveness increased.
- Environmentally friendly measures in the production process such as recycling organic waste were not yet being implemented sufficiently.
- Investors and the Ethiopian Government were promoting cultivated coffee, especially the coffee known as garden coffee, but also plantation coffee. This was threatening to displace the wild coffee and harm the ecosystem.
- At the same time the population growth in the region was increasing the pressure on the forest ecosystem.

The solution

In order to overcome these challenges, Original Food GmbH, a German trading company for certified wild coffee, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH entered into a new develoPPP.de development partnership. With the develoPPP.de programme, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) promotes the sustainable engagement of companies in developing countries and emerging economies. GIZ is implementing the programme on behalf of the BMZ.



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In this new development partnership, Original Food and GIZ pursued the objective of integrating further smallholders in the Kafa region into the supply chains for certified organic wild coffee and other agricultural products such as tea, honey and medicinal plants.

The smallholders were also helped along the path to organic and Fairtrade certification in order to achieve higher market prices. This enabled a significant increase in the average income and also contributes to conserving local biodiversity.

Our services

As the majority of smallholders in Kafa are organised in cooperatives of the Kafa Forest Coffee Union (KFCU), the project partners worked closely with the KFCU in order to establish a quality assurance system for the existing supply chains. This was the only way to ensure compliance with the certification criteria for wild coffee over the long term. Both the smallholders and the employees of the cooperatives were trained so that they can carry out their respective tasks along the value chain. The cooperatives, in charge of harvesting, processing, sorting and transporting the wild coffee, played a particular role. The project enables the cooperatives to build up sustainable value chains for agricultural products independently and to manage them efficiently up to the exporting stage.

The smallholders have also been trained in using agricultural wastes as fertiliser and biofuel. They have been supported in developing supply chains for other certified agricultural products, such as honey. The training measures have also shown the farmers the potential of locally used spices and medicinal plants for local sale – a further possible source of income.

Impacts and results

- More than 60,000 people now have a share in the sustainable economic development of the Kafa region through the sale of wild coffee.
- International companies that trade in certified wild coffee and other agricultural products from the Kafa region can rely on the fact that the supply chains are oriented towards the corresponding sustainability criteria. This raises the competitiveness at international level and improves income opportunities for the smallholders.
- Sustainable agriculture contributes to preserving the biological diversity of the mountain rainforests.

At a glance

Duration	1 June 2010 – 30 September 2014
Country	Ethiopia
Objective	Through the increased integration of smallholders in the supply chains of certified wild coffee and other products such as medicinal plants and honey, the incomes of the population in the Kafa region have increased and the biological diversity of the mountain rainforests will be secured over the long term.
Partners	Original Food and GIZ
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preserving the number of wild coffee plants and local biodiversity.• Generating and increasing the incomes of up to 60,000 people in Kafa.• Reinforcing the national and international supply chains for wild coffee and other certified organic agricultural products from the Kafa region such as honey, tea and medicinal plants.

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