

# COMMUNITY COFFEE COLLECTIVE, S.A 2<sup>nd</sup>-QUARTERLY REPORT FOR DISTRICT COFFEE SCOUTS.

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With skills, C.C.C, coffee scouts and farmers lead to making difference in sustainable coffee farming.

Youth, Men, women from Bukeye and Kayanza are committed to producing the coffee of high quality.



*Bukeye coffee scouts being technically trained on ground about good agronomical practices in coffee farming.*

## 0. Introduction

Set up with a goal of helping coffee farmers to improve the quality of their coffee, IPM Coffee scouts project (Sponsored by the District Coffee Roasters) have been and still doing its possible through different activities aiming to make impact in the coffee farming communities. Started on hunting bugs in 2014<sup>th</sup>, many problems were also evocated by the coffee farmers and requesting for solutions. When analyzing their requests, the team found that, adding to the difficult situations encountered because of the war, a serious cause was associated to the lack of knowledge, as many farmers are illiterate. This enabled the team to start the year of 2015<sup>th</sup> with a new motto called: “*Jeho kuki?*” in Kirundi language, which means, *and me why not?*” in English. This short question arouses each farmer to self ask question why he/she cannot care about his/her coffee?

The objective of this approach is to enable coffee farmers to become themselves the *scouts* of their own coffee trees, through teachings. With this, farmers will be able to make a diagnostic of their farms, able to find out some solutions and therefore increase volume and quality of production. Adding to the meetings and campaigns being regularly conducted, in this new approach, a structure of coffee farmers named **IPM\_friends** has been set up. These farmers are coming from different hills and sub-hills and have willingly accepted to be part of this project. 10 groups are then made and each group is composed from **15-20 coffee farmers** and being framed by one scout. Thus, number of lessons including cherry quality, fertilization, good agronomical practices, pests and disease... are being regularly taught by the Agronomist to these farmers, depending of the appropriate period.

For this quarter period, all activities done were especially devoted to receiving cherries at both Bukeye and Heza washing stations, and teaching the IPM\_friends. Several activities have been then implemented as: Cherry selection, sensitization about cherry quality, training the IPM\_friends and scouts, conducting research.

## 1. Cherry selection

The cherry selection is an activity daily conducted at the washing stations during the cherry reception time in the harvest season (**February 23<sup>rd</sup> - June 16<sup>th</sup> 2015**). It was done by the team hired and trained for this in collaboration with the coffee scouts. Separating the under and over ripe cherries, as well those damaged by insects was the most important charge. By doing this, it was also an opportunity to teach farmers the importance of picking ripe cherries for good quality of coffee. The picture below shows the team during selecting cherries.



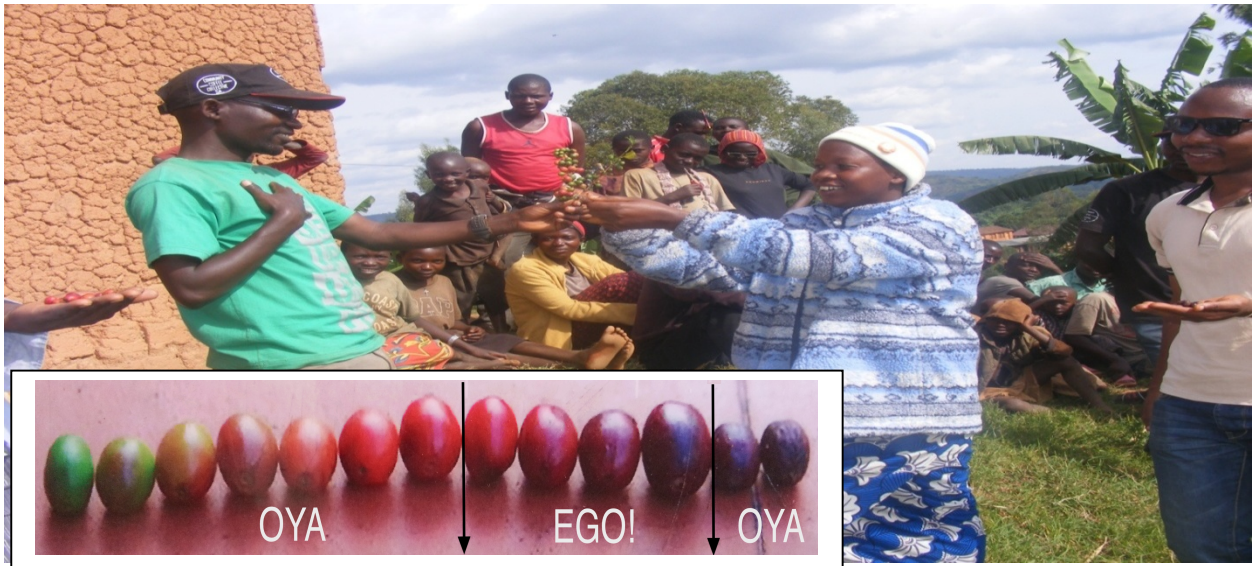
## 2. Cherry quality sensitization

Working in areas with many competitors dealing with cash money when collecting cherries without caring about quality, and where farmers were not accustomed nor sensitized about cherry quality, it was too hard for us to make a serious cherry selection. Many farmers started by that time complaining about the cherries being rejected. They considered the selection system as a way of wasting their coffee. Seeing the situation likely, the IPM team adopted a strategy of teaching the importance of picking ripe cherries when harvesting, not only at the washing station but spreading also this activity in many collines, through playing sketches and making visits in the LMC cherry collection points. The game was called: “**Margarita’s coffee farm**”. In this sketch, Margarita was a coffee farmer who never cares about her coffee and even the coffee scouts’ teachings. But she will regret when returning home from the washing station with a sack full of under and over ripe cherries rejected than other farmers who cared about the selection system. This will lead her to getting paid little money at the payment day, comparing to others. Signal that over **500 persons** From Ninga, Gikungere, Gaharo, Gahaga, Buhorwa, and Munyinya (Including youth, men and women) have watched to this game. The picture below shows the farmers during watching the play at Gaharo hill.



Playing only sketches was not enough. The cherry collection point's leaders asked too for sensitization about this activity where they were collecting cherries. Then around **40 visits** both for Heza and Bukeye have been done by the scouts and Agronomists. When observing the difference of sugar content between ripe and under ripe cherries by using the refractor-meter (**Picture presented at the home page**), farmers finally understood that they were selves wasting their coffee, instead of the selection team. One farmer has admitted: *'we were complaining about the cherry selection process but now the brix-meter brings clarification.'*

The picture below shows farmers from Ninga hill learning how to pick ripe cherries, using the **Ego** (Yes) and **Oya** (No) cherry sheet.



### 3. IPM trainings

The trainings provided this period concerned the coffee scouts and the IPM-friends. Farmers learnt the techniques and importance of fertilization and the scouts were trained about good agronomical practices for the coffee farming. In this training, farmers learn theories first and then practice on ground what they have learnt. The aim of this training is to enable farmers to make a diagnostic of the nutritional deficiency of coffee trees when observing leaves and know the role of each nutrient when applying the NPK as mineral fertilizer, organic fertilization or mulch. From the training, each group found better to build a worm farm that can help them to produce organic fertilizer for their coffee, things seemingly appreciated and can help them to come out solving slowly some problems associated to the lack of nutrients in their farms. The picture below shows the farmers visiting the worm farm built at Bukeye washing station during the training.



The training done for the scouts is more helpful especially when analyzing the state of the coffee farm. It is a tool that allows them to find out solutions of many problems in the farms. This concerned: “Good agronomical practices for coffee farming”. It covers different topics such as: ***Soil properties, fertilizing practices, mulching, and coffee in combination with leguminous, shade trees, pruning techniques, pests and Diseases.***

The pictures below show the scouts being trained theoretically and practically in a library and a coffee farm of Gahaga hill.



According to the feedback from the scouts how they appreciate the training, here are some of the ideas emitted:

**Agathon:** *“I much appreciated the training and hope not to lose myself when I will be framing my IPM friends in the coffee farm. I also thank LMC and the Agronomist to plan such courses so much profitable for us and request for continue providing even many things in other agronomical sectors”.*

**Suavis:** *“I had never got skills about good agronomical practices and now I understand why we find many coffee farms in a state of nutritional deficiency”.*

**Claude, Nadine and Oswald:** *“The training was too interesting for me. I am slowly becoming an Agronomist who will help coffee farmers to improve the conditions of the coffee farms and therefore the quality of coffee. I also understood what I learnt theoretically when I was practicing on ground but we didn't have enough materials for demonstration”.*

#### **4. Pruning campaign**

A survey conducted in the year of 2014<sup>th</sup> when investigating about the state of coffee farms in different hills, has shown that many plantations were old (**varying between 40-60%**). In the way of working in the sustainable coffee farming, the urgent solution for such plantations was to process with a regeneration size. Being now in a pruning period (generally conducted each year after the coffee harvest season, in July), this makes an opportunity for the IPM team to mobilize and sensitize coffee farmers about this activity, which has officially been enhanced by the Director Manager of LMCP at Gaharo hill (precisely at Mirama sub-hill). The pictures below show farmers starting pruning at the pruning opening day.



Signal that the same activities are continually being conducted in different hills under the supervision of the Agronomists and the scouts as shown in the pictures below.



Possibly, laymen could think that there won't be coffee cherry for the following 1 or 2 years but it is good to sacrifice our today so as to have better tomorrow.

**5. Research**

The activities about research concern the study done with ISABU (Institut Supérieur d'Agronomie du Burundi) institute about the effectiveness of pyrethrum in Kayanza and Bukeye commune, and also the perennial ground cover.

Concerning the pyrethrum, results from analysis have already shown that Pyrethrum as an organic insecticide can be effective against Antestia bug in the areas trialed. However final results, now being prepared by ISABU could be released soon. The table below resumes the results about one of the 3 protocols used in the study.

Tables indicating the evolution of bugs in the farms, from the beginning till the end.

**Incidence of bugs at the beginning of the study (t1)**

Name of the sub-hill	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
Rushiha Sub-hill	5	.52		
Gitaba Sub-hill	5	1.20	1.20	
Mirama Sub-hill	5	1.22	1.22	
Gitega Sub-hill	5	1.30	1.30	
Murehe Sub-hill	5	1.78	1.78	
Karambi Sub-hill	5	1.94	1.94	
Nyabikenke Sub-hill	5	2.04	2.04	
Ruyira Sub-hill	5		2.94	
Gahaga Sub-hill	5			4.80
Sig.		.397	.246	1.000

**Incidence of bugs at the end of the study (t2)**

Name of the sub-hills	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Rushiha Sub-hill	5	.24	
Gitega Sub-hill	5	.32	.32
Mirama Sub-hill	5	.34	.34
Ruyira Sub-hill	5	.54	.54
Gahaga Sub-hill	5		.64
Gitaba Sub-hill	5		.68
Karambi Sub-hill	5		.74
Murehe Sub-hill	5		.76
Nyabikenke Sub-hill	5		.76
Sig.		.155	.056

Analyzing the table above, we can note that the incidence of bugs in the farms was over the economic threshold level (**now known as 1bug/tree**) in almost all sub-hills at the beginning of the study (**t1**). However, this incidence has decreased till being under the economic threshold level at the end of the study (**t2**) for all sub-hills. From this, we realize that pyrethrum has contributed to decrease Antestia bugs (Ibifushi) in the farms with a percentage varying from **54 to 86%**. We can then suggest that if this product is largely spread in coffee farms, it can widely help in hunting bugs where the scouting technique is failed.

Concerning the peanut ground cover, this activity has met problems due to the climate change. The lack of rain after planting led to getting dry for some peanut cuttings. This obliged the team to intervene by regularly watering and this activity is continuously being done for this dry season as shown in the picture below, in one of the farms.





## Conclusion:

All activities conducted have focused to increasing the quality of coffee. This is not to doubt that progress and positive results start being observed. The LMC policy of making impact through education starts highly blooming.

Possibly, the first highlight of this 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter is that over **2000 people** have gained teachings about cherry quality, both at the washing stations and collection points. This has led to a large victory because coffee farmers have understood advantages of picking ripe cherries, things that has weaken competitors and rose therefore to an increase of volume and quality of cherries, comparing with the year of 2014<sup>th</sup>. A farmer from the IPM friends has admitted the following: *‘Before, I was getting back home with a lot of cherries rejected at the washing station. But for now, no at least 1 kg is rejected. The reason is that I am picking ripe cherries and leave the under ripe ones on trees’*.

The second highlight of this period is the time invested in trainings. Not only for scouts, around **135 farmers** (IPM friends) have been trained theoretically and practically about cherry quality, Mulching, fertilizing and Pruning techniques. The farmers and scouts enjoy themselves the teachings received when they start saying that slowly they are becoming small agronomists, and hope to come out solving some problems occurring in their fields.

The third highlight is about the researches and other innovative activities being conducted. Even small, this is helping to make planes and should consist in a key of success for such areas walking towards a sustainable farming system.

Ending this report, signal that wherever the coffee scout’s activities are implemented, they are much appreciated by the communities, who claim every day for increasing the number of coffee scouts, for other hills. These activities are also being well appreciated by the government organizations working in coffee sector such as Intercafé and federations. It is then hard to make a deaf ear to these voices crying for being secured in such activities aiming to improve the quality of coffee. We therefore take this opportunity to make an appeal to the District Roasters who have kindly supported this coffee scout’s project to continue supporting it for the following years and if possible to allow the increase of scouts for other hills.

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