

Welcome to your autumn updates

SHARED INTEREST FOUNDATION

Building a fairer world



Dear Supporter,

Welcome to your autumn newsletter, which brings positive stories from Africa and Latin America. Despite challenges faced due to the impact of Covid-19, we are continuing our work in rural communities in Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Nicaragua. Where, thanks to support from individuals, and funding from trusts, we have enabled people to learn new skills in cocoa farming, beekeeping, and water conservation. You can read more about these projects below, and follow the links through to our website for more information.

There is also an update on our Livelihood Security Fund, which we relaunched in direct response to the pandemic, to help producers struggling with the disruption caused by travel restrictions, alongside ongoing issues like extreme weather conditions, due to climate change. Our first beneficiary, Bukonzo Organic Farmers Co-operative Union (BOCU) has told us that the Fund has provided 1,200 coffee farmers and their families with vital shelter and essential food supplies after heavy rainfall caused five rivers to burst their banks in March. Keep reading for more information about this appeal and how you can show your support.



PROJECT UPDATES

GROWING FAIRER FUTURES

Our Growing Fairer Futures project is supporting 50 young people to become cocoa farmers. We have partnered with experts from the Cocoa Health and Extension Division (CHED) of the Ghana Cocoa Board to work with ten communities in the Osino District of eastern Ghana.

We launched the project in January this year, and have since worked with in-country experts to deliver training in Good Agricultural Practices and Climate Smart Agriculture.

After distributing farming tools and equipment, a total of 22,500 cocoa seedlings were planted as part of this project as well as plantain and maize seedlings. These plant food crops will provide important shade to the cocoa trees and food for farmers' families, with the surplus sold for additional income. In October, the young farmers will be trained in business and finance skills to help them run their new business profitably and sustainably.



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ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT (NICARAGUA)

We worked closely with a Nicaraguan coffee co-operative over the course of a year, to help farmers reduce their environmental impact.

The project, which concluded in August, supported 84 farmers from UCA SJRC, to learn how to manage the wastewater created by coffee production and their own households.

As well as impacting upon the health of farmers, the wastewater was damaging soil and disrupting the growth of their coffee

Together with UCA SJRC, we provided materials to construct water treatment filters on the farmers' land to prevent the contamination of soil and water sources from wastewater. Farmers were also supplied with 3,000 tree seedlings. Once established, these trees will not only encourage reforestation, increase soil fertility, and reduce erosion but will also provide important shade to coffee plants and subsequently increase yield.



FIND OUT MORE

Coffee producer Lillian said that before *“the wastewater was spilling and where the water was passing there were coffee plants that were dying.”* With the construction of the water treatment filter she has already seen the benefits *“I didn’t use to sow coffee on the areas affected by the water spill but now that I no longer have that problem I have already sowed coffee and I will have more production”.*



NEW PROJECTS: BEES FOR BUSINESS

Following the success of our pilot Bees for Business project in [Dakoro](#) last year, we were delighted to secure additional funding from Guernsey Overseas Aid to replicate this project in the nearby community of Sideradougou, in rural Burkina Faso. Here, many families rely on the dangerous and precarious task of gold mining as their only source of income. This project

launched in August and is supporting 75 women to become beekeepers as a safe and sustainable way to support their families.

Furthermore, with funding from the Evan Cornish Foundation, we are now supporting the fully established beekeeping group in Dakoro with additional training to develop their honey business and helping them to diversify into sesame farming. We will bring you updates on these projects in our winter newsletter.



LIVELIHOOD SECURITY FUND APPEAL

Covid-19 has affected all the producers and communities we support. In addition to restrictions on movement and trade, producers are also dealing with floods and delayed harvests, which are threatening livelihoods and increasing household food insecurity.

In direct response to these challenges, we re-launched our Livelihood Security Fund appeal to help farmers and workers in Africa and Latin America meet their basic needs and support their income levels during and beyond the Covid-19 crisis.

In June 2020, as part of this fund, we awarded a grant to Bukonzo, a coffee co-operative in Western Uganda, to support 1,200 farmers recover from the effects of devastating flooding. Masereka Exavia, a coffee farmer at Bukonzo, described the impact of the flooding, *“All the crops I had grown in the valley were washed away and part of what I had planted at home including coffee and banana plantations were washed away by the floods.”*

Our Livelihood Security Fund enabled Bukonzo to provide food items including maize and flour to the farmers to meet their immediate needs and support their families. *“It relieved us from the hunger that we were facing.”* (Masereka Exavia)

You can read more about our work with Bukonzo in our latest [blog](#) and if you would like to find out how to donate to this fund please visit our [website](#).



Thank you for your ongoing support. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your friends, family and networks.

Yours Sincerely,

Harriet Urwin

Foundation Development Officer



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