

Supporting small farmers in Colombia

Since 2017, we have been involved in coffee cultivation projects in Colombia. In the first phase up to 2019, we invested 300,000 EUR to work with the Hanns R. Neumann Foundation and SKN Caribecafé to improve the income and living conditions of small coffee farmers and their families and contribute to the sustainable development of coffee cultivation. Over a period of two years, a total of 940 smallholders have received active support through trainings and workshops on sustainable cultivation methods, improved coffee processing methods, professional farm management and business planning. The outcome:

- Indirectly, we have reached more than 3,500 family members.
- 35% of the project participants were female coffee farmers.
- In April 2019, we were able to sell the coffee from the project.

In the second phase of the project from 2020 to 2022, we reached a total of 1,503 smallholder coffee farmers and their families with an additional 300,000 EUR. Once again, we worked closely with our project partner SKN Caribecafé. Despite the pandemic, we were able to carry out on-site training and individual technical training sessions and subsequently deepen the content through online training and support via technical tools. The most relevant topics for the small coffee farmers:

- More efficient water use,
- Improving the management of agrochemicals,
- increasing productivity and therefore
- increase in coffee bean quality.

In terms of gender equality, we are pleased to have gained a higher proportion of female coffee smallholders (22%) than comparable projects in the region. To achieve this, the training dates were coordinated with the female coffee smallholders to suit their professional and family responsibilities. And anyone who had children to look after could simply bring them along to individual training sessions. This also fostered the next generation's interest in coffee cultivation.

By the end of 2026, around 2,350 small coffee farmers are expected to benefit directly and 9,800 family members indirectly from the measures as part of the third project phase. Together with SKN Caribecafé, a total of over 500,000 EUR will be invested, of which 123,000 EUR will be provided by the [Due Diligence Fund](#) of the Initiative for Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains (INA). Activities to promote a sustainable coffee supply chain in line with new legislation with a particular focus on gender equality will be funded. Trainings and workshops will specifically support young and female smallholder coffee farmers in accessing coffee markets and raising awareness of their rights and potential labor risks. We hope to be able to engage 42% women in the project by the end. The coffee produced by the project participants will be sold again in Germany during Christmas 2024.