



CAFÉ FEMENINO

BOLIVIA PROGRAM

Cooperative »

Union ProAgro

Producers »

42 women

Women leadership »

2 (Secretary of Gender and Board Secretary)

Production »

88 hectares of Café Femenino production annually

Certifications »

Fair Trade, Organic



PRODUCER BACKGROUND

Overcoming a variety of barriers, including geographic isolation, rugged terrain, and a traditionally lower status in society, the women of Café Femenino Bolivia Program have successfully improved their coffee-producing livelihoods, their future prospects, and the health of their families and communities. It all started in 2009, when the women separated their coffee production from the men's, created a women's association, and started their own Café Femenino Program in Bolivia.

One of the first advancements the women in Bolivia achieved upon joining Café Femenino was having their names included on the titles to their land. This may sound trivial, but by doing so, the land remains with each woman if she becomes abandoned or is widowed, thereby providing protection from further poverty for herself and her children. Psychologically, this act instills a sense of value and ownership over each woman's livelihood and business. This is a powerful means of creating self-esteem for women who are accustomed to being viewed as servants to their husbands.

COFFEE PROFILE

Aroma »

Vanilla, cocoa, nutty, sweet

Cupping »

Almond, citrus, clean, consistent, cocoa

Varietals »

Caturra, la criolla

Process »

Washed

Harvest »

April - September

Elevation »

1,100 - 1,750 meters

BECOME A PART OF THE CAFÉ FEMENINO STORY.

The network of organization, communication, and access to resources that the women have built through the Café Femenino Bolivia Program has allowed them to plan for a better future for their families, communities and themselves. Notable successes include:

Computer and Accounting Education »

The women have given themselves access to a host of educational resources including a 4-hour computer training session to help equip them with basic computer knowledge. Additionally, the women have bolstered their ability to plan financially with various accounting workshops that provide education in subjects related to mathematical calculation, accounting and information to audit their organizations.

Coffee Industry Training »

As the women continue to climb the ranks within their cooperative, it becomes increasingly important for them to understand the ins and outs of the coffee industry. To get there, the women requested workshops to help them receive training and grow their knowledge base across every phase of the coffee production supply chain. The result was the Commercialization and Certification of Organic Coffee Initiative that provides the women with the training they need to further their understanding of the coffee industry outside their cooperative.

Community Health »

In partnership with World Vision in La Paz, the Café Femenino Bolivia Program trains and supports health promoters in a region that faces many health risks due to its geographically remote and poverty-stricken reality. This program provides immunizations, medicine kits, and health information in the communities where Café Femenino coffee is produced.



WITH SELF-ESTEEM COMES SELF-EMPOWERMENT

The women have reported a host of positive changes in their lives and their communities since joining Café Femenino in 2009. For them, the most valuable change is their successful creation of a cooperative space in which all women have educational opportunities and the chance to have their voices, ideas and opinions heard at the highest level of leadership.

The changes these women have fought for have taken them far from the positions of inferiority and subjugation from which they started. Beginning from a place of low self-esteem and self-worth, the women of the Café Femenino Bolivia Program now view themselves as business women in charge of their own destiny. And with the control of their own money, they have the ability to funnel their resources in the direction of their children and their community.

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