



*Strengthening the capacity of women
coffee farmers in Jamaica through training*

Project Report 2021-2022



“ Strengthening
the capacity of
women coffee
farmers in
Jamaica
through training”





Strong Women = Strong Coffee

JAWiC (Jamaican Women in Coffee)

JAWiC is proud to represent Jamaica as the national chapter of the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA), since April 2019. We seek to connect women in coffee, to recognize their contributions to the industry and to empower a sustainable, equitable future. By developing and nurturing a supportive community, the women of JAWiC use our collective strength to catalyze positive change in the coffee industry.

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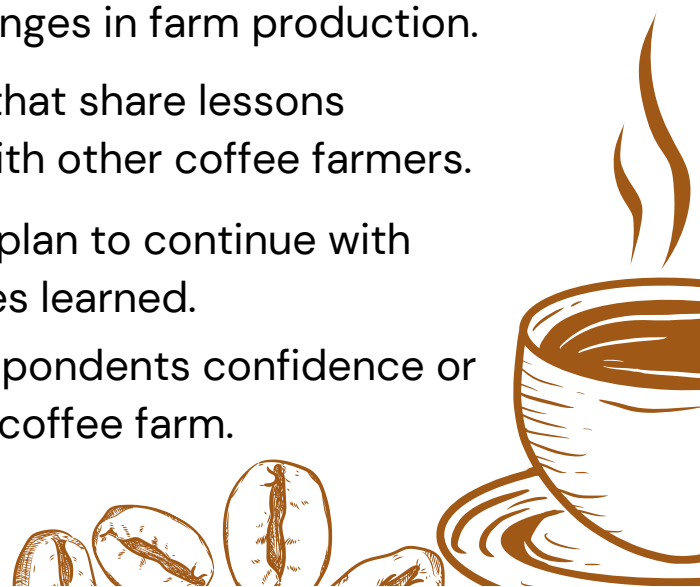
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Project Description

Jamaica produces less than 0.1% of global coffee traded, yet remains a key player within the international specialty market as the producer of one of the best tasting and most expensive coffees in the world — the Blue Mountain coffee. This category of specialty coffee is produced within communities along the Blue Mountain range which covers the parishes of St. Andrew, St. Thomas and Portland. Within the rural coffee-farming communities of Hagley Gap, St. Thomas, there are

approximately 232 registered coffee farmers, where only 28% are women. Here, coffee farmers produce on small fragmented plots of land that are often complemented by cash crops such as bananas, plantains, and assorted vegetables, as well as the rearing of livestock. This diversifies their income and contributes to household food reserves. However, despite producing the prestigious Blue Mountain coffee, communities in this region remain impoverished and

underdeveloped with poor infrastructures, and limited technology.

The Problem...

Preliminary research by IWCA Jamaica has found that Blue Mountain women coffee farmers are disproportionately affected by multiple stressors including climate change, access to markets, the out-migration of labour, and more recently the Covid-19 pandemic.

They also have systematically lower access to resources such as finance, farming inputs, training, and information than men. Furthermore, even though women coffee farmers carry the double burden of household duties and farm responsibilities, remunerations of their labour and opportunities to elevate themselves along the coffee value chain are often limited. Women perceive their contribution to the coffee

industry as 'lesser than' compared to men. Consequently, some have neglected their coffee fields and turned to growing cash crops full-time.

The Goal...

JAWiC successfully secured its first grant (CAD \$21,972) from the 2021/2022 Canada Fund Local Initiative (CFLI) program. The project *"Strengthening the capacity of women coffee farmers in Jamaica through training"* aimed to increase the capacity women coffee farmers through the provision of practical resources and hands-on training that will improve their coffee production and quality, manage the impact of climate change, as well as strengthen their participation within the coffee value chain. This project is a step towards fulfilling JAWiC's mission of ensuring a sustainable and equitable future for women in Jamaica's coffee industry.





Project Activities

Sensitization Workshop

A sensitization workshop was held with residents in the communities of Penlyne Castle, Epping Farm, Minto and Hagley Gap – A total of 35 women attended this workshop. The opportunity was used to inform them about the project, our findings from a pilot field study that was conducted in 2019 and JAWiC's intentions based on the results.

JAWiC conducted a situational analysis in 2019 to understand the challenges facing women coffee farmers and areas for intervention. Farmers had requested assistance in accessing markets, supply of farm inputs, training of women and youth, and access to technology and information. They acknowledged the need for resources and information to improve the quality of their coffee in order to receive higher prices.

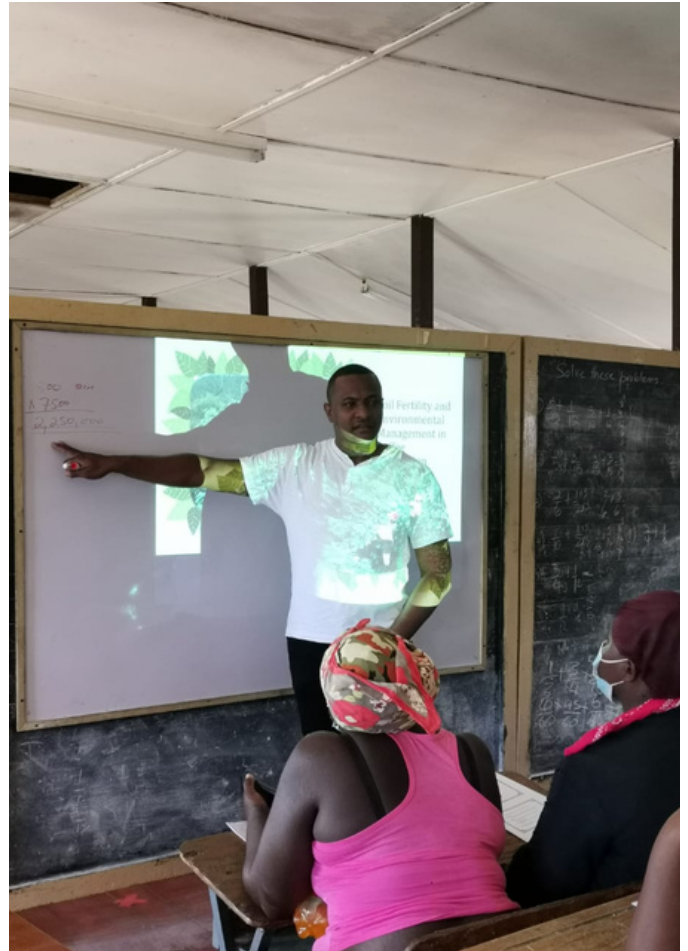
However, the sensitization workshop provided the opportunity for women coffee farmers to speak on their priority areas for training and their general expectations. In many ways, their responses confirmed the results of the pilot field study and the areas that the project had intended to provide training on.



Soil Management & Environmental Conservation

The project consisted of several in-house training and in-field training sessions facilitated by an experienced agronomist. Under soil management, farmers learned theoretical knowledge on soil classification, soil health, and the type of nutrients that are beneficial for coffee plants. The in-field training required participants to carry soil from their farm and they were shown simple techniques in identifying their soil type, conducting pH test, and monitoring plant nutrition.

Farmers were also encouraged to play their part in environmental conservation by practicing agro-forestry, intercropping fruit trees, maintaining proper drainage channels and avoiding soil erosion.



Pest & Disease Management

This training session involved beneficiaries learning good agricultural practices to better identify, treat and manage the appearance of pest and diseases such as, the coffee leaf rust (CLR) and the coffee berry borer (CBB), in their coffee farms. This includes, proper field sanitation, ensuring proper, setting CBB traps, and ensuring adequate plant nutrition, etc.

MANAGING COFFEE LEAF RUST (CLR)

What is Coffee Leaf Rust?
Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) is a fungus that infects the leaves of coffee trees. The fungus is spread by wind, rain splash, and even by people. CLR appears as yellow spots on the underside of leaves. These spots keep on growing bigger and eventually infect the leaves to such an extent that the leaves drop from the tree.

Why is it important to manage CLR?
Coffee leaves produce food for the coffee tree enabling it to grow fruit. Sick coffee trees with few leaves cannot produce much coffee cherry.
One good leaf can provide nutrient for 3 coffee cherries.

How can you manage CLR?
It is recommended to carry out 2 preventive sprays every year at the following times in order to effectively control CLR:
 ✓ at the beginning of first rainy season (Sept/Oct) just as the CLR spores are beginning to grow.
 ✓ at the beginning of second rainy season (March/April)

What will be the cost and the benefit?
 Chemical, Surfactant, Foliar fert., Mist blower hire = **1 spray = JMD 8,800** (~ 1 box of coffee)
2x Sept/Oct and March/April Beginning of rainy seasons = **2 sprays = JMD 18,000** (~ 2.5 boxes of coffee)
Total Costs per acre per year to control CLR: **JMD 18,000** (~ 1.5 boxes of coffee)
Total Savings per acre per year: **40 boxes/acre** if other key issues are also managed.

Logos: IFC (International Finance Corporation), European Union.



Harvesting Best Practices

This training session covered good agricultural practices for harvesting/reaping coffee in order to ensure quality, and maximize financial gains. Participants were encouraged to harvest only ripe cherry coffees and to ensure care during the picking process to avoid damaging plant nodes that will bear fruit in the following crop year.





Advocacy & Outreach

Throughout the project's life cycle, several activities were done to raise awareness of the challenges facing women coffee farmers in the industry, as well as the need for equitable access to resources and their participation in the coffee value-chain.

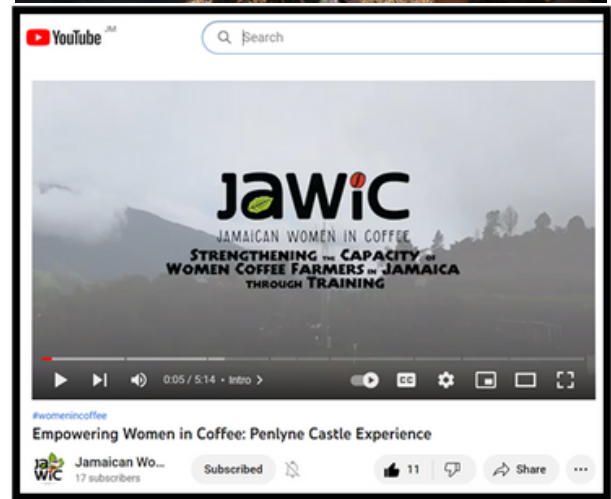
Highlighting the gender dynamics within Jamaica's local coffee industry is crucial as it provides an opportunity for the voices of the under-

(smallholder women coffee producers) to be heard, the confidence to speak truth to power, and facilitate the ability of producers to be a part of their own solution and community development.



Publications

Two blog posts (written by Dr. Roseann Smith) were shared on JAWiC's website, as well as on other social media platforms. They focused on the barriers that poor road networks create in providing capacity building efforts to remote communities, as well as the challenges women face in juggling domestic responsibilities and attending training sessions.



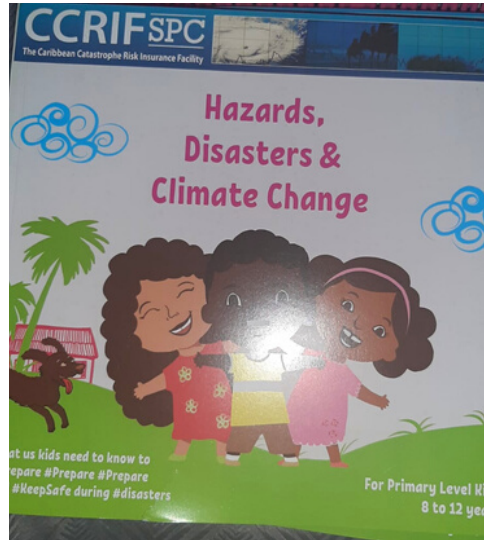
Video Story

The stories and experiences of women coffee farmers, including the impact of the trainings on their livelihood were captured in a video story-telling production. This was shared on JAWiC's Youtube channel and other social media platforms, further increasing advocacy and public awareness.

Care Packages

The training sessions culminated with a 'Graduation' ceremony where beneficiaries shared their experiences with the project's funders (High Commission of Canada). Likewise, 35 women coffee farmers received care packages that would increase their capacity to plant and harvest coffee sustainably,

thereby increasing yield and economic earnings. Care Packages to beneficiaries included bags of fertilizer, knapsack sprayer, record-keeping booklet, coffee seedlings, and certificate of participation. The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) also provided 35 books on natural disasters and climate change for the children of the women coffee farmers.





The record-keeping booklet was created and provided for each beneficiary to support efforts in record keeping, as well as document the content delivered in the training sessions. This provided an opportunity for beneficiaries to recap the information learned at their own convenience.



Beneficiary sharing her experience with members from the High Commission of Canada to Jamaica

Other Features

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JAWiC Strengthens the Capacity of Women Coffee Farmers in Penlyne Castle, St. Thomas, Jamaica



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Jamaican Women in Coffee (JAWiC) secures CAD\$21,972 grant.



mona.uwi.edu/ts/tst-new-research-grant-jamaican-women-coffee-jawic

FST New Research Grant | Jamaican Women in Coffee (JAWiC)



Dr. Anine-Teresa Birthwright (PhD graduate) and Dr. Rose-Ann Smith (lecturer) from the Department of Geography and Geology have secured Research funding from the Canada Fund Local Initiative (CFLI) programme for the project, "Strengthening the capacity of women coffee farmers in Jamaica through Training" to be conducted through the Jamaican Women in Coffee (JAWiC) programme. The primary aim of the project is to increase the capacity of women coffee farmers through the provision of

Emina Tudakovic @ETudakovic · Feb 3


Wonderful to see that the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives has been used so productively by @JAWiCoffee. Looking forward to seeing some of these enterprising farmers soon and finding out where to buy their delicious coffee! ☺️

JAWiC : Jamaican Women in Coffee @JAWiCoffee · Jan 31

We conducted our 4th and final #CFLI training with our women coffee farmers!! 🌱☺️ We were in the field learning more about pests and diseases, as well as tips on good coffee harvesting techniques. @CanadaJamaica @pcharlesjr @ETudakovic

#CanadaFund #Coffee #Farming

Show this thread



Canada in Jamaica @CanadaJamaica · 12h

High Commissioner @ETudakovic recently joined @JAWiCoffee for the closing event of their #CFLI Project. The project impacted 35 women coffee farmers through several workshops & activities to improve their farming techniques. Small local contributions = big local impact! #IDW2022



You and Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, Jamaica

Canada in Jamaica @CanadaJamaica · 12h

We are proud to partner with an amazing organization like International Women's Coffee Alliance – @JAWiCoffee for the social and economic development of women coffee farmers. Small local contributions = big local impact! #IDW2022 #GoForTheGoals




Emina Tudakovic @ETudakovic · Feb 5

Inspired today by 🇺🇸 women growers in Penlyne Castle, Hagley Gap @JAWiCoffee. #CFLI #CanadaFund project used to boost these already hard-working farmers & we saw how coffee grows! More photos of the project to come from @CanadaJamaica in coming days. @pcharlesjr @moafjm



Views from Penlyne Castle - gorgeous but the drive is not for the faint of heart. Watch the below video from @JAWiCoffee - transport is a major challenge for these hard working farmers and the road could use some attention. @pcharlesjr @JulietHolness

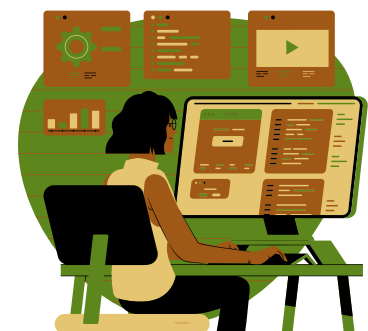




Monitoring & Evaluation

The Jamaican Women in Coffee (JAWiC) implemented a capacity building project for 35 blue mountain women coffee farmers, funded by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI). The project aimed to empower and support these women farmers by providing them with the necessary skills and resources to improve their coffee production and increase their income. As part of the monitoring and evaluation process, a survey was conducted to assess the

impact of the project on participants. This section presents the results of the survey and to provide recommendations for future capacity building initiatives aimed at supporting women coffee farmers in the region, as well as increase our advocacy potential to serve our communities.



Methodology

The survey was conducted with 20 women coffee farmers who participated in the CFLI project implemented by JAWiC. The survey was conducted from October to December 2022 using Google Forms via telephone to gather information on the impact of the project on the women farmers.

The survey consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions, designed to gather information on various aspects of the project, including the farmers' perceptions of the trainings, their experiences and challenges, the impact of the project on their coffee production and livelihoods, and the sustainability of the project outcomes, as well as future areas of support and/or capacity building that are required.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the 20 respondents, who participated in the project.

The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to summarize the responses and highlight the key findings. The open-ended responses were coded and categorized to identify patterns and trends, and to provide insights into the experiences and challenges faced by the women coffee farmers.

The survey results were then compared to the project goals and objectives, and recommendations for future capacity building initiatives were developed based on the findings.



Results

The survey results provided insight into the impact of the CFLI project on the participating Blue Mountain women coffee farmers. The majority of the respondents were in the 30s, 40s and 50s age group. When asked why they had decided to participate in the project, they emphasized the need to **improve their knowledge on coffee farming practices, to improve their coffee production and to improve their income**. Others mentioned that they were encouraged to participate by neighbours/friends/family within the community; they haven't participated in a training before and wanted the experience; and that they wanted to learn everything about coffee and taking care of their farm. When asked about whether their expectations have been met, the majority (65%) responded positively (see Fig 1), as well as

gave a high rating for the overall performance of the trainings/workshops (95%) (see Fig 2).

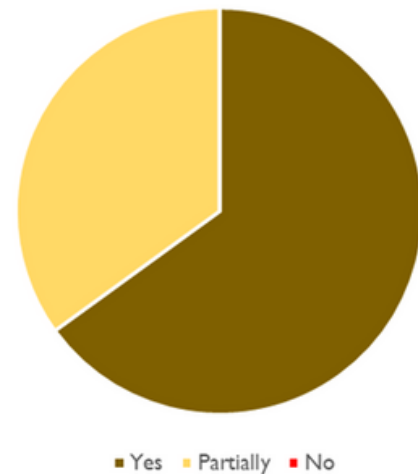


Figure 1: Respondents on whether their expectations were met

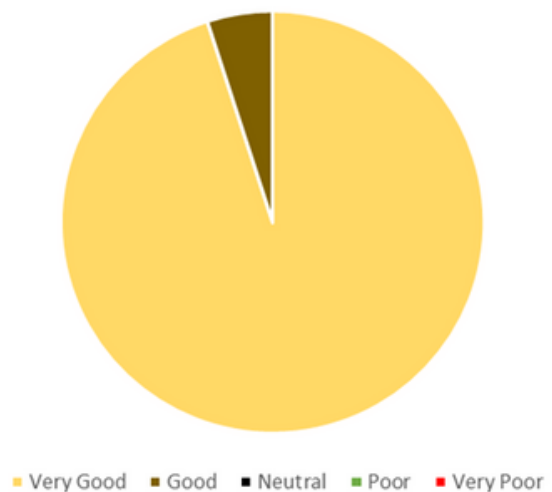


Figure 2: Ratings of respondents on the general performance of the trainings/workshops.

Some of the respondents shared their views/reasons for their evaluation score of the project and its trainings/workshops, such as:

"I learned a lot that I'm now doing on my farm. I can identify certain issues with the coffee plant and know how to manage them"

"I have never gone through a training like this and [it] broadened my understanding"

"Learned a lot, gain a lot of experience, help to uplift and upgrade women, because women are leaders"

"There were things that I didn't know, such as the different types of soils, different types of fertilizer, how to apply fertilizer, the amount of nutrients the coffee plant needs etc. I'm now using the Coffee-Lizer on my farm and I'm seeing the difference."

Figures 3 and 4 respectively shows respondents' perceived level of knowledge improvement before and after participating in the training. While some women coffee farmers scored their prior knowledge on topics as 'good' or 'very good', before participating in the training, the majority of women coffee farmers noted that their knowledge on the training topics were 'poor', 'very poor' or 'absent' (see Fig 3).

However, after the training, a marked increase on the improvement of knowledge across all topics was noted (see Fig 4). Participants who had no knowledge on topics such as soil classification, on-farm soil testing, plant nutrient deficiency, pest and disease management, and environmental conservation best practices, all noted that they now had 'good' or 'very good' knowledge on these topics.

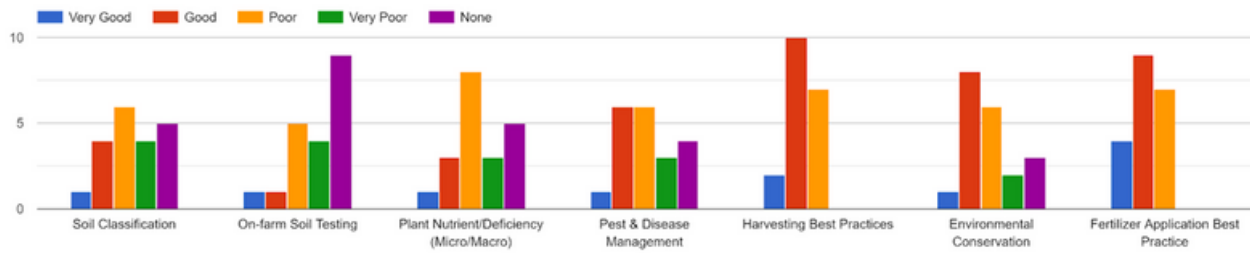


Figure 3: Perceived level of knowledge on topics before the training

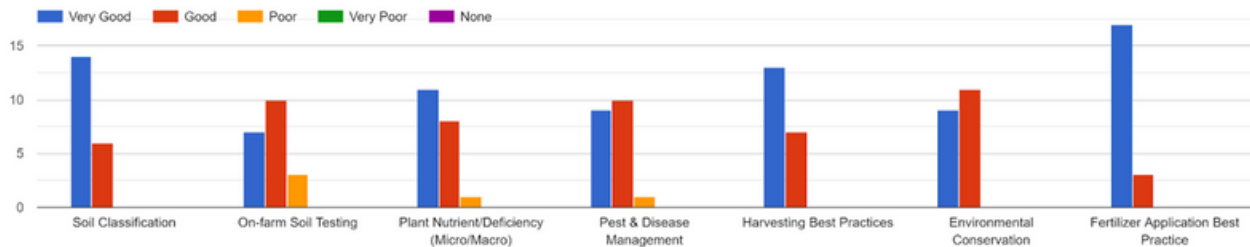
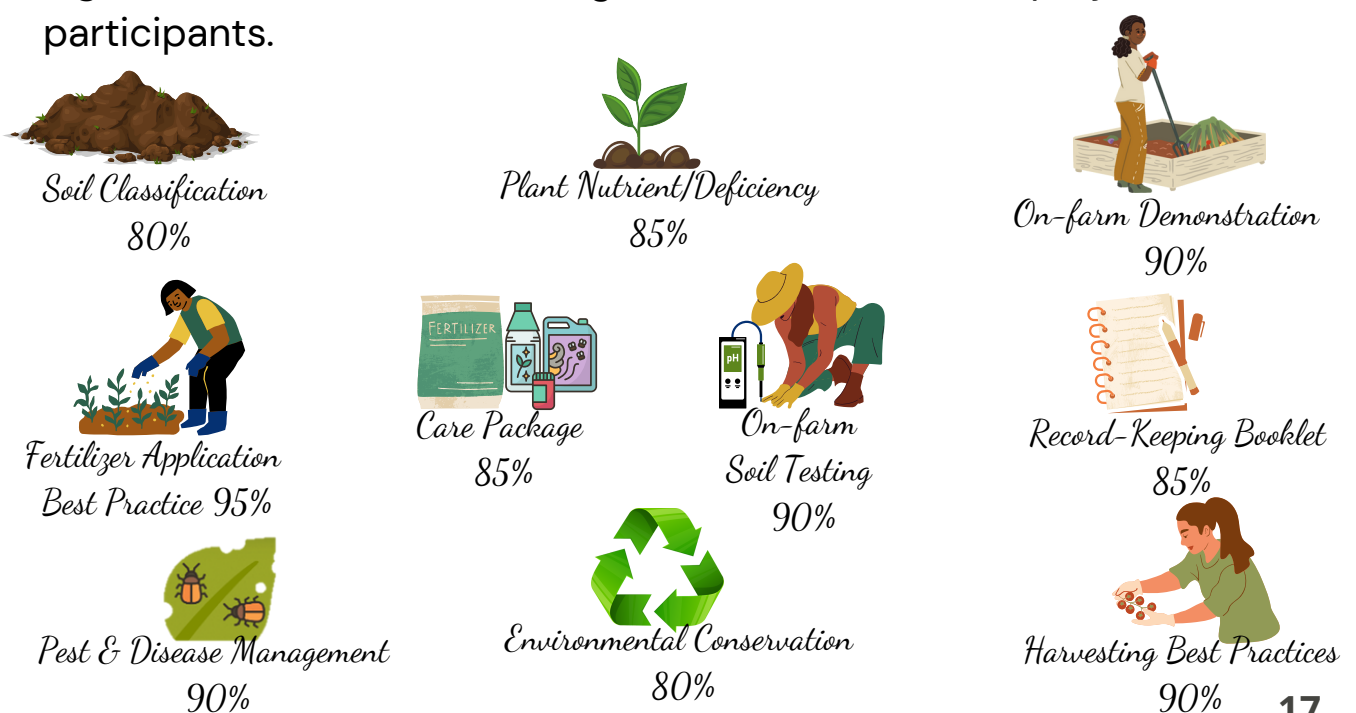


Figure 4: Perceived level of knowledge on topics after the training

According to respondents, the main strength of the workshop were the combined use of in-class lessons for theoretical learning, in-field demonstrations for practical training, and the expert knowledge of experienced trainers. This multi-pronged approach to capacity-building and knowledge transfer was found to be beneficial to the participants. The respondents also shared the main areas of the trainings and technical assistance they found most beneficial to their coffee farming livelihoods (see Fig. 5 below). They also made the suggestion to increase the training sessions for future projects.

Figure 5: Main areas of training that was beneficial to project participants.



When asked about any changes made to their production practices as a result of the knowledge gained from the trainings, the majority (85%) of the respondents shared positive sentiments (see Fig 6 and farmers' comments below).

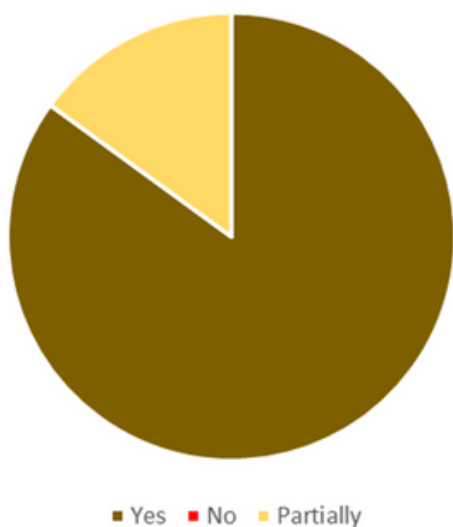


Figure 6: Production practices changed as a result of training.

"I changed my use of fertilizer, I start applying it three times for the year. I usually apply it once."

"Implemented spraying for pest and borer earlier, fertilize earlier, cleaning field more often and burn the old cherries to prevent borer from spreading."

"When I fertilize, I write down the dates to know when I should do it again."

"Changed how to assess when a plant is lacking nutrient, improve fertilizer application."

"I now harvest coffee fresh so that it's not stale; I change the way of fertilizing, where instead of throwing the fertilizer on top [of soil], I now fertilize by trenching since my farm is on the hillside."

The respondents also revealed that the knowledge and practices related to some topics were easy to implement.

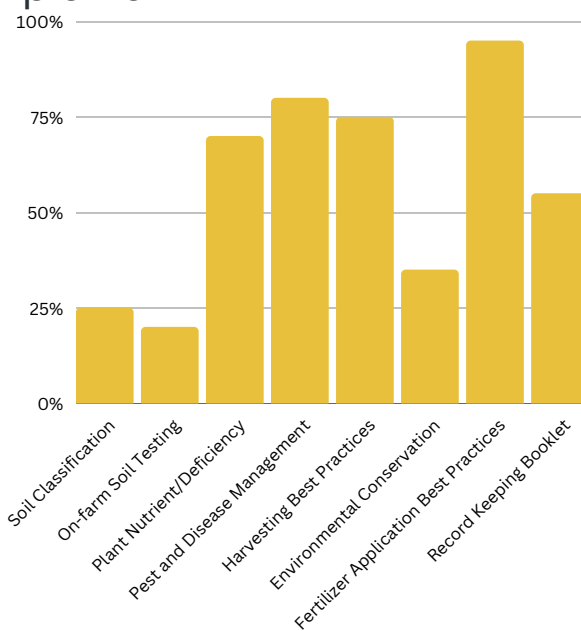


Figure 7: Knowledge and practices easy to implement.

Some respondents shared their perception on why some of the training topics were easier or difficult to implement than others.

Table 1: Perceived ease of implementing knowledge and practices.

Topic/Practice	Perceived ease of implementation	Perceived difficulty of implementation
Soil Classification and On-farm Soil Testing	<i>"I do nursery and recognizing what soil to use was easy to implement"</i>	<i>"Need to go deeper in next training with more examples." "Do not have the resource soil testing"</i>
Plant Nutrient/Deficiency	<i>"Everyday I was looking and observing my plants; I learned from the training how to recognized the deficiency and how to fix the problem."</i>	<i>"I still an issue with identifying the signs of plant nutrient deficiency."</i>
Pest & Disease Management	<i>"I know how what to use on my plants for pest." "I'm using the right chemicals to control it without damaging my crops."</i>	<i>"As a woman, I sometimes need help with managing the CLR, especially since I don't have a mist blower."</i>
Harvesting Best Practices	<i>"That's where you are looking for the result. [I] learnt that when it is cherry ripe you don't have to tear the limb and you don't damage the tree, easier to harvest when it is cherry ripe."</i>	N/A
Environmental Conservation	<i>"I make sure I'm doing clean farming and not damaging the environment."</i>	N/A
Fertilizer Application Best Practices	<i>"My ways were damaging the tree, so I did it the way they taught me, which shows I was over fertilizing the coffee."</i>	N/A
Record-keeping Booklet	<i>"Record keeping booklet helps to direct you properly on how to manage the farm and the other practices." "Normally when I fertilize I don't record, and then I would not remember when I applied the fertilizer, but now the record-keeping booklet has helped me to keep track."</i>	<i>"The record-keeping is not difficult to implement, but it's because I don't put out the effort to use it. Sometimes when I carry it into the field, I forget and leave it on the farm."</i>

In an effort to overcome some of these perceived challenges (see Table 1), some of the respondents stated that they would seek the assistance of other individuals who participated in the training, implement practices that they are currently able to afford, seek assistance from their local extension officer on soil, and make plans to increase their use of the record-keeping booklet. One respondent noted:

"I would ask someone with a mist blower (usually a man) to help with sprayer the CLR. For identifying plant nutrient deficiency, I look back on my notes and the record-keeping booklet."

The majority (70%) of the respondents also revealed that they were considering additional changes in their production practices as a result of the training and technical assistance (see Fig. 8).

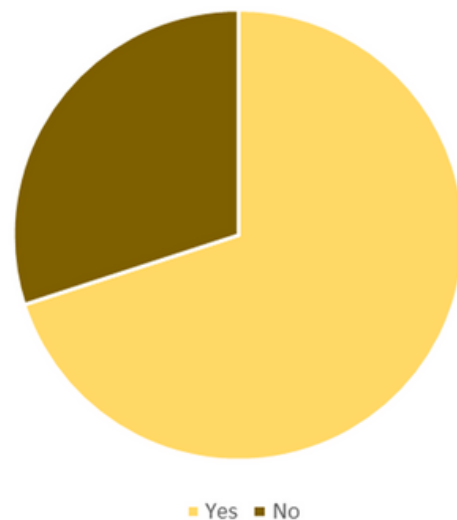


Figure 8: Participants consider additional changes to their production practices.

The main additional changes highlighted by respondents was the increased use of the record-keeping booklet.

"I would increase the use of the record keeping booklet because it help with management and is every efficient."

"There are some places on my farm where I want to reduce soil erosion, since I plant on a hillside. So, I plan to plant some barriers for this."

"I want to increase use of the book because because I need to have a plan in terms of how I manage the farm, how much I spend, if I'm losing or gaining. This is my number one priority because it is a business. I didn't see it as a business until I got the training."

"Increase use of the booklet and implement measures to prevent soil erosion. My farm was in a really bad condition when I did the training so I had to cut-back the coffee. Now I see it springing up and looking green, so I hope for more coffee next year."

Respondents also revealed some of the observed changes in their farm production since applying the knowledge and techniques learned from the training and receiving the farm resources (see Fig. 9).

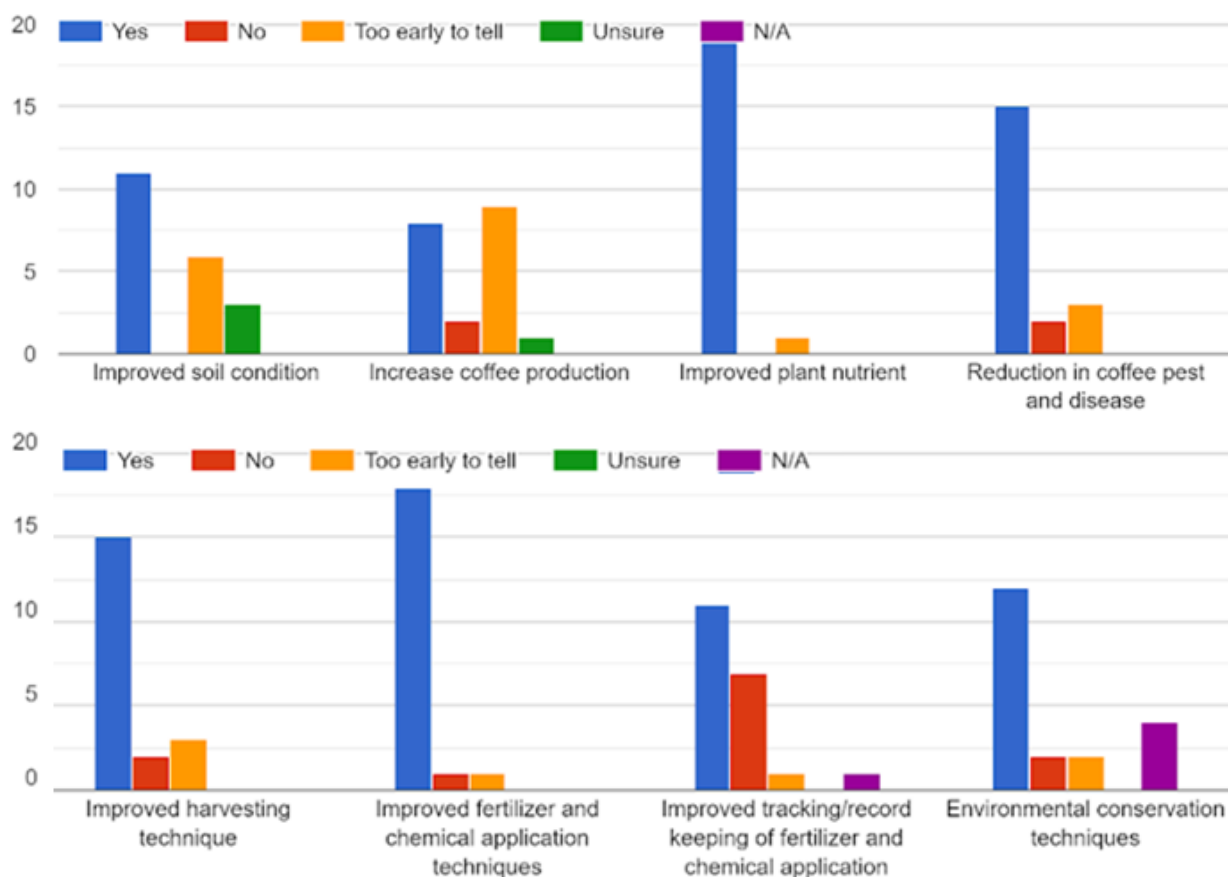


Figure 9: Observed changes in farm production.

Some respondents shared their experience of the changes on their farm:

"There is a significant reduction in coffee pest that I didn't expect."

"Increase greenery of the coffee trees."

"When I fertilize and spray the correct way, the trees/leaves don't shed like how they use to, and the coffee doesn't dry up. They young coffee leaves spring up faster and are thicker (dense). I learned that, more coffee leaves will cause more fruit to bear."

"My coffee tree appearance improved drastically because of the pest management I learned from training."

"Increased coffee production and reduced [coffee leaf] rust."

Knowledge Transfer, Lessons Learned & Recommendations

Throughout the project training/ workshop sessions, farmers were encouraged to share the knowledge gained with other coffee farmers in their community. According to the survey, 90% of the respondents noted that they shared the knowledge and skills learned with community residents.

"I shared some of the information with my neighbours and other women in my community....I told them about the soil testing. I didn't know what my soil was until after training....I wanted them to try it so their plant could improve too."

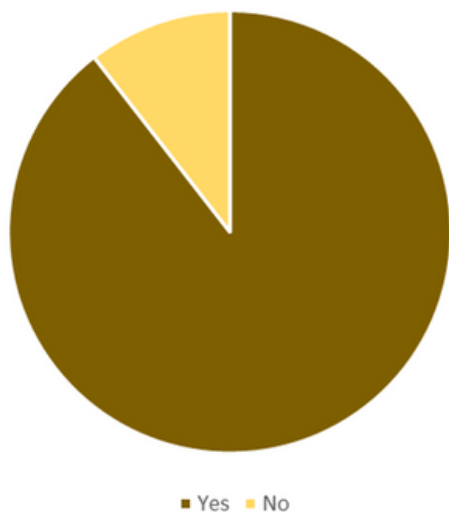


Figure 10: Participants that share lessons/experiences learned with other coffee farmers.

"I explained to other farmers how to fertilize, how much fertilizer per year and how to control the coffee rust disease."



"I shared knowledge with dad, husband, and brother in law who also has a farm. I point out some issues I see on their farm based on what I learned."



"I told them how to fertilize their coffee and how to test their soil."



"I told them about the way to fertilize, the option of soil testing, and to stop picking the coffee from from early in the week and putting them down as this will affect the taste (stale)."



"Told my farmer friends that record keeping was important and every product you buy, goods we sell, payment received needed to be recorded."



"[I shared] with brother who will be planting now, the type of fertilizer.... if he's setting up any borer traps, how to manage the borer (strip off after reaping, burn, put up traps and spray)."



"I shared with a male farmer whose coffee started drying from the top. I shared with him that it may be due to nutrient deficiency, and that he may need to do a soil test."

The majority (95%) of the respondents shared that the training and technical assistance influenced their desire to keep farming coffee. They also plan to continue implementing the knowledge, techniques and practices learned.

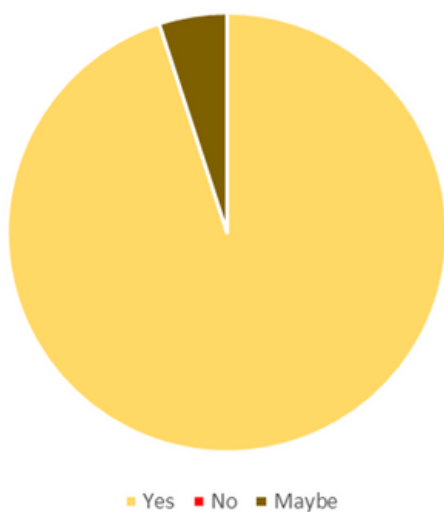


Figure 11: Respondents plan to continue with knowledge and practices learned.

The project training activities implemented thus far have provided knowledge on good agricultural practices (GAP) to women coffee farmers. This has built their confidence as they seek to improve their coffee output and increase their participation in the coffee industry.

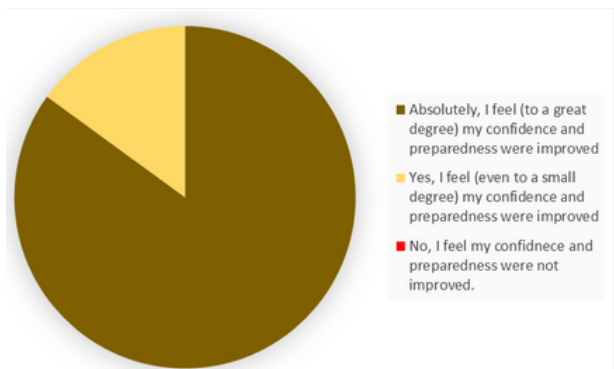






Figure 12: Change in respondents confidence or preparation to operate coffee farm.

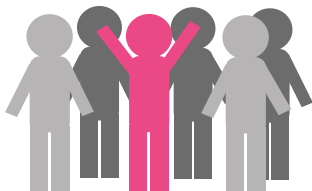
The majority (85%) of respondents also revealed that based on their participation in the training, they felt their sense of confidence or preparedness to operate a successful coffee farm greatly improved. Around 15% of respondents noted that their confidence improved to a small degree.

When asked about replicating and upscaling the CFLI project and training activities in other communities, respondents (55%) recommended that JAWiC kept the current format of the trainings. Some recommendations also included:

- 
 Increase follow-up visits to farms after the completion of the project to maintain connection with JAWIC and among participants.
- 
 Follow-up training sessions to assist farmers with topics such as, calculating how much coffee can be reaped from their land, soil classification and soil testing knowledge.
- 
 Increase the diversity of demonstration plots (not only use a central farm).
- 
 Increase the number of trainings and trainers.

Additional topics of interest for women coffee farmers included:

Leadership



Communication Skills



Financial Literacy



Climate Change



Coffee Processing & Quality



Coffee Roasting & Quality



VOICES FROM THE FIELD

It [the training] made me understand how much I was losing and gaining while reaping the coffee. I learned to write down everything I bought and write down how much I was selling the coffee to see if I was earning a profit.

Overall this training has been very good for increasing my production and the quality of our beans. This year the cherries were very big.

[The training] made me feel like a real farmer and more confident about the coffee we produce. I would appreciate JAWIC advocating for us to be able to get the best prices for our coffee. We also need to learn how the dealers come up with their pricing so we know exactly what we're worth.

It [the training] has helped me to be a strong woman in coffee. At one point I was planning on giving up, didn't know how to tackle the coffee pest and disease, didn't know why the coffee plant wasn't producing like it should even though I fertilize. It was since the training and learning about the different nutrients, the type of fertilizer and how to use it that I'm seeing improvements on my farm.

It [the training] help me a lot. It showed me how to take care of a coffee farm. I just want to increase my production but I'm slowly getting there and I'm super grateful for the training.

This training has helped me so much, extend my knowledge and understanding, how to grow, cultivate, have a good coffee yield.

We need to know how to manage the earnings, to pay pickers, to save, to buy farm materials etc. More training how to budget. Cost of living and transportation is so high. How to get more out of what we earn and manage it.

I really enjoyed the training, and I appreciate the care package with the spray pan and coffee seedlings. My husband has planted the coffee seedlings and they are coming on well.





CFLI/FCIL

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