



bean
voyage

Annual Report 2020

ERADICATING THE GENDER GAP IN FARMING COMMUNITIES



We envision a
world where **all**
farmers **thrive**
no matter their gender.

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2020 Highlights

In 2020, we launched a Whatsapp-powered learning program for 200+ smallholder women to provide consistent access to key market information and opportunities for urgent support to survive the pandemic. We generated \$46,000+ in incomes for smallholder women, sold roasted coffee to improve cash flow to make up for farmers who lost green coffee contracts, and raised relief funds' to provide food baskets to 100+ community members.



202
smallholder
women

Farmers received 40+ hours of technical training on key topics on sustainable farm management.



808
community
members

On average, each producer impacted 3 family and community members with their knowledge after Care Training.



32%
improvement
in knowledge

The number of producers that scored 70+ points on the evaluation exams increased by 32% after the training program, displaying a drastic improvement in adequate knowledge on key topics.



3x
more than
market price

On average, producers earned \$3.69 per pound of coffee after enrolling in the Care Trade program. Directly from our women-powered coffee brand, \$45k was paid to producers.

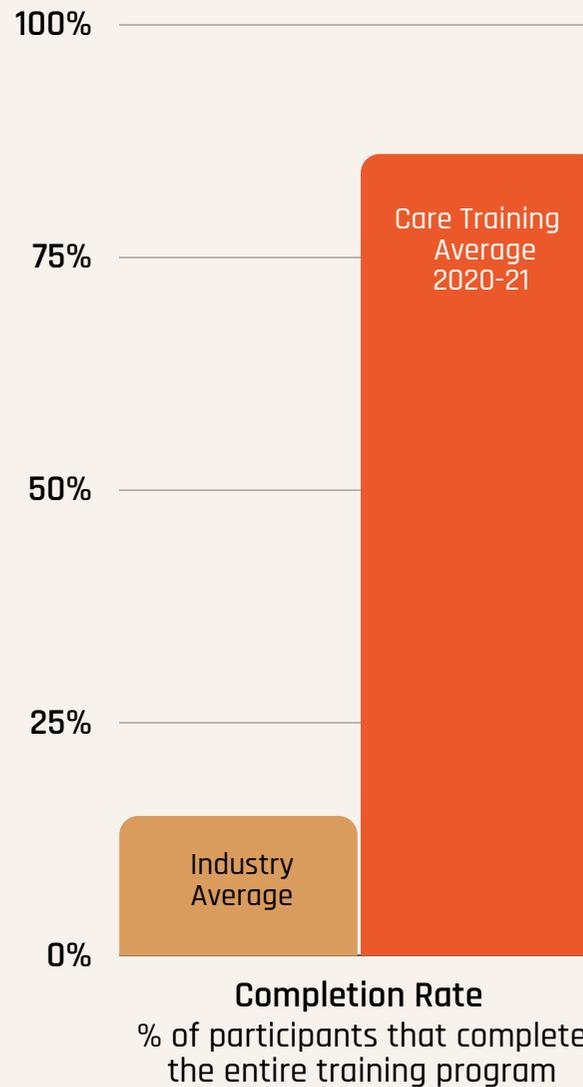
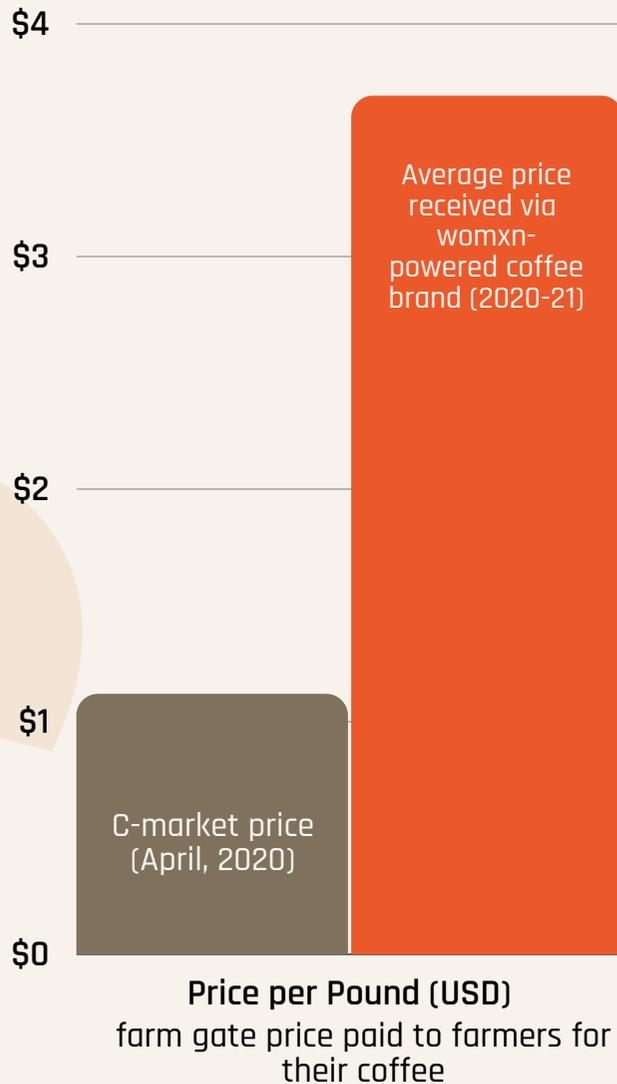


685 kg
food baskets
provided

\$6.3k was raised to support 26 families and 100+ individuals with 3 months of food; and 386 pickers were connected to 18 producers to tackle the labor shortage during harvest season.

2020

Key Impact at a Glance



92.5% report increased involvement in household decision making (greater agency)



95.5% report gaining tools to improve profitability of their farms (higher profits)



Founders' Note

Dear Friends,

When we started 2020 at Bean Voyage, we had plans to start scaling our model to reach our 2030 vision of reaching 10 million smallholder women. 2020 was supposed to be the Year 1 of our audacious plan to ensure that our tested and proven model could impact millions of lives in the next few years.

We had a rough idea of what the approach to scale would be: a digital training curriculum so that we can provide our services to a larger number of farmers globally. Considering the research and development such an endeavor would take, we agreed to dedicate most of 2020 on researching different methodologies, digitizing our curriculum, and building a one-stop learning platform for smallholder women farmers.

Just a few weeks later, in March 2020, our team was faced with a different kind of challenge: how might we continue being of service to our growing network of smallholder women partners in the midst of COVID-19?

We immediately re-grouped, and realized that 2020 was not a year of research and development for us, but a year to fully live the mission that we hold closely to our hearts: **ensuring that the gender gap impacting our smallholder partners would not further worsen living conditions during the worst pandemic that our generation has ever lived through.**

What was initially supposed to be a 12-month process was compressed into a four week research sprint. Our team worked all-hands-on-deck to digitize our training to continue providing key information for our producers, negotiated contracts with buyers from around the world to maintain their commitments to purchasing from our partners, and raised funds to provide emergency relief to 100+ family members of our partner producers.

In just a few months, what started as a relief effort completely pivoted our organization's programmatic model, and we hired local youth from coffee producing communities to help us meet the demand of increasing numbers of producers that wanted to join the Care Trade program.

Although we are very far from ending the process, the Year 1 of our 2030 vision has taught us that the biggest approach to scale is our deep relationships with our producer partners. While we were figuring out ways to adjust our model, our partners from all regions of Costa Rica showed up to share their insights which eventually informed the model that has been most effective. We learned that although digitization and youth are the core elements of our approach to scale, the one thing that will ensure that such scale will succeed is having open, transparent conversations with our

producer partners about their priorities, needs, and ways in which we can mobilize resources to support their dreams.

As we look towards the Year 2 of Bean Voyage's scaling journey, **here is what our producer partners are sharing with us:**

they want to continue growing their knowledge base to produce more, and better, quality coffee that can fetch higher market prices; they want to be connected to more independent roasters around the world that are willing to pay a thriving living wage for their products; they want to get more seats at the governing tables to be able to influence policy that affect their lives; and finally, they want to build a greater support system to help through difficulties such as COVID-19.

With this information, we have informed our goals for 2021. Below, you will read some insights from our work this year, and a few ideas that we have for 2021. If you have the capacity to support any of these initiatives, do reach out and we can tell you more about how you can help.

Thank you for sharing your resources, knowledge, and energy with us as we continue to grow this tiny community of passionate and dedicated feminists working to eradicate the gender gap in farming communities.

In Solidarity,
Sunghee Tark and Abhinav Khanal
Founders, Bean Voyage

About bean voyage

Bean Voyage is a **feminist** non-profit social enterprise on a mission to **eradicate the gender gap in farming communities**.

For generations, women coffee farmers have earned less than their male counterparts. Excluded from access to information and market opportunities, women farmers face significant challenges to mitigate the risks of climate change and a volatile economy.

In an effort to break the cycle of poverty affecting coffee-farming communities and support women farmers in leading a thriving livelihood, Bean Voyage works to increase their access to educational opportunities, markets, civic engagement, and well-being support.

We aim to **eradicate the gender gap in 2,500 coffee communities, supporting 10 million smallholder women and their families around the world by 2030.**

What keeps us up at night?

There are **248** million smallholder women farmers globally, many of whom live below the poverty line. Despite their heavy involvement on farms, the gender gap limits women's ability to succeed as farmers and business leaders, exposing them to greater risks of poverty. The majority live in rural areas and farm on less than 5 acres of land, and 68% of them earn barely enough to sustain their families, let alone grow their businesses.

Access to training & information means improved productivity, quality, and income from harvests - eventually leading to a more sustainable future for smallholder women and their communities.

We are addressing **four major challenges** which cause the widening of the gender gap for our partner producers: knowledge, income, visibility, and wellness.

Four major challenges



Knowledge

54% of the smallholder women in our programs have never received any formal training in running their coffee farms.



Income

smallholder women earn 40% less income than their male counterparts, primarily due to limited access to direct markets that can pay a higher price for their coffee.



Visibility

smallholder women make up less than 10% of the board leadership in local level cooperatives in Costa Rica, limiting their ability to inform local level gender policy and affect their visibility.



Wellness

smallholder women have limited access to peer support groups and limited ability to seek support. According to WHO, rural women are more likely to experience domestic violence than urban women, and they are less likely to receive help.

Who do we work with?

Women feed the world and provide care for our society.

We collaborate with smallholder women, who own farms smaller than 5 hectares, and 25% of them make less than \$2 a day, living below the poverty line. 68% of the producers do not make enough income from agriculture to cover basic living costs.

We recruit smallholder women in groups of 50 people either through cooperatives or as independent women's organizations. Producers with no prior experience in capacity-building workshops are prioritized in the selection process. Of these women, 54% are 40 years of age and over and 66% sell their harvest to local cooperatives or buyers for a loss.



Where are our partner farmers?



The interactive map is available on: <https://www.beanvoyage.org/covir20>



Care Trade™ & its Four Pillars

We provide a bundle of services to ensure equal access in 1) educational opportunities, 2) market connections, 3) civic engagement, and 4) health and well-being support to smallholder women farmers.



We call our approach, Care Trade™.



**training on
sustainable farm
management**



**direct &
transparent
market access**



**civic engagement
& leadership**



**health & well-
being support**

Our Theory of Change: Care Trade™

If we provide...



Gender inclusive
training



Direct and Transparent
market access



Advocacy &
increased visibility



Crisis relief
support

to...



248m
women farmers

smallholder women farmers who face barriers in accessing information and markets, earning 39% less income than their male counterparts



then...



10m
women farmers

in **2,500** farming communities by **2030**

will have...



Higher
income



Greater
agency



Thriving
families



Healthier
soil

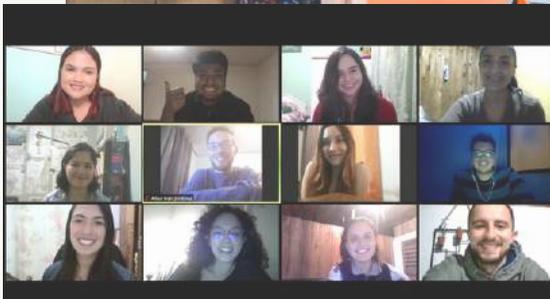


Care Training

We provide bite-sized learning materials and workshops on **sustainable farm management** via community-based facilitators. Producers receive the training in a safe, gender-inclusive and accessible environment through synchronous and asynchronous workshops.

We also host Master Classes with industry leaders delving deeper into key topics.

In 2020, we provided training on plant care, soil management, new varieties, post-harvest quality control, farm & household finances, export regulations and storytelling.



*The training and graduation photos in person were taken before the rise of COVID-19 & social distancing.

COVIR-20 to Tackle COVID-19

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to host in-person workshops and our producers **faced a loss of purchasing contracts due to the declining market.** The canceled contracts resulted in more than \$200,000 in losses for a key Bean Voyage partner - a collective of 67 smallholder women coffee producers in Costa Rica. This loss represented up to 75% of annual income for the smallholder women coffee producers. **On the household level,** this meant decreased funds for their children's education and healthcare for the family and led to food insecurity. **On the farm level,** this led to the producers' inability to purchase seeds and fertilizers that would impact the subsequent harvest. Moreover, the severe cut in their annual income meant accumulating interest on loans of women producers who already had challenges accessing favorable interest rates due to their gender, and exposed entire farming families to an unprecedented level of financial risks considering the limited social infrastructure that could support them.

So, we launched **Colaboración Virtual 2020 (COVIR-20)** - a response to the COVID-19 pandemic to continue providing key knowledge programs, market access support, and emergency food relief to smallholder producers by leveraging existing low-cost and highly-accessible technology such as **WhatsApp.**

Each week, for 3 months, producers received curated learning materials via **WhatsApp** in voice notes and images. We then hosted live sessions on WhatsApp where the producers were given a space to ask questions and test their understanding by playing interactive games. We created early momentum for the market access program as we have successfully negotiated purchasing contracts with independent roasters such as Girls Who Grind, Bean n' Bean Coffee, and De Mello Coffee Roasters, among others. We also continued to leverage storytelling and social media to fundraise to provide basic necessities for 100+ people living within the network.

Care Training: 2020 in Review

In 2020, at the outburst of COVID-19, we launched a virtual learning program for 250+ smallholder women to provide consistent access to key market information and opportunities for urgent support to survive the pandemic.



Output:

- 202 women coffee producers.
- 606 community members received training indirectly.
- 40 hours of training per participant over 12 weeks.
- 10 young leaders trained as Care Facilitators.

Outcome:

- 32% more producers received 70+ or higher* on knowledge test after the training program.
- After the program, the lowest-scoring participant improved her score by 54.5% and the highest score went up by 12.6%.
- 98.5% of the participants said they would recommend our programs to others.
- Attrition rate: 13.94%

Impacts:

- 92.5% of participants expressed being more involved in **decision-making** in their family after the program.
- 86.5% of participants felt more comfortable expressing their dissatisfaction about a particular situation in the household.
- 100% of participants expressed gaining tools to **improve the quality** of their products.
- 95.5% of participants expressed gaining tools to **improve the profitability** of their farm after the training.

*We believe that if participants score 70% or higher, they exhibit good enough knowledge in the key topics.



Care Market



Our access-to-market program connects smallholder women coffee producers with coffee buyers around the world.

Producers in the womxn-powered coffee network participate in internal quality analysis to understand the qualities of the coffee, as we provide transparent feedback to them. We facilitate conversations between our producer partners and buyer partners so that both parties are heard with the focus on creating a safe environment for farmers to tell their stories and earn a thriving income from their hard work.

Through Care Market, **producers have garnered more than 3x c-market prices for their coffee**, ensuring that they are able to not only sustain but thrive with their coffee businesses.

For each pound of coffee sold, buyers are to contribute 5 cents towards the Care Fund. Bean Voyage does not charge any price other than the 5 cents per pound currently for the coffee, and more than 90+% of the FOB prices go back to the producers as farm gate price. The Care Fund is reinvested into the Care Training program unless specified by buyer partners with their interest in investing in Care Engagement and Care Well-being programs.



Care Market: 2020 in Review

In 2020, we were able to showcase our producer partners' coffee in roasted form within Costa Rica, and in green in the UK, Canada, US, and France thanks to our roaster partners. It was the first year that we've sold green coffee in larger quantities, and we are grateful to everyone that supported us in the journey.

229%

higher farm gate prices than the c-market

USD 3.69

average farm gate price (per lb) paid to BV farmers in 2020

USD 44,000+

total amount paid to producers that exported coffee through BV platform for 19-20 harvest

USD 3,610

revenue for producers for local roasted coffee sales via BV



Output:

- 10 new partnerships
- 15 events hosted

Outcome:

- 6 contracts signed
- the average contract size: **14 bags (966 kg)**
- **5,796 kg** of coffee exported



Care Engagement

Care Engagement is our advocacy program, working closely with the *Coffee Institute of Costa Rica* (ICAFFE) to ensure greater policy- and community-level engagement for smallholder women in local cooperatives and coffee boards. The program aims to amplify the voices of smallholder women coffee producers, visibilize their roles, and recognize their often-unpaid-and-invisibilized involvement in the coffee industry.

To date, we have successfully signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ICAFFE to collaborate to promote women's rights in coffee in Costa Rica, and have organized the Care Summit to bring forward the issue of gender equity among key stakeholders within the ICAFFE.

Furthermore, we are partnering with *Needle and Frame*, a non-profit collective of artists and storytellers on a self-directed documentary film project for 5 women coffee producers to visibilize their roles in coffee amongst policymakers and industry professionals.



Care Engagement: 2020 in Review

In 2020, we signed an MOU with the ICAFE, a first step towards ensuring greater policy- and community-level engagement for smallholder women in local cooperatives and coffee boards in Costa Rica. We started on a self-directed documentary project with 5 women coffee producers and a artists and storyteller collective, Needle and Frame to visibilize womxn's role in coffee.

Output:

- 15 Webinars Hosted or Participated to Sensitize the Issues of Gender Gap in Farming Communities
- 20 hours of training provided on participatory documentary project

Outcome:

- 5 advocacy partnership established (ICAFE, CoopeVictoria, CAF, ASOMOBI, and ASIPROFE)





Care Support

Care Support is our well-being program to ensure that we are able to provide on-going support for smallholder women coffee producers during COVID-19.

In 2020, we provided food packages for **26 smallholder women and their collective 100+ family members** for **three months** as they navigated through the food crisis at the onset of the pandemic.

We also launched an **emergency call center** to connect producers facing worker shortage with potential workforce.



Harvesting Care - Call Center



CAFÉ DE COSTA RICA **bean voyage**

Ponen a su disposición una línea para **productores(as)** que necesitan **recolectores**

8808-2738

La disponibilidad de recolectores dependerá de los contactos de la base de datos del CR-CAFE

www.icafe.cr • www.cafedecostarica.com

Care Support: 2020 in Review

In 2020, we launched the **Harvesting Care** program and **COVID-19 Food Crisis Relief Program**.



Output:

- USD 6,300 raised for relief funds

Outcome:

- **26** smallholder women supported with food & basic necessities for **3 months** consecutively.
- **386** pickers connected to **18** producers.
- **2** temporary jobs created for the call center.

Impact:

- **684.75kg** of food provided for **1,875** community members supported (*estimated*)

Meet the Care Traders 2020



Arleen and Maria Jimenez

As one of the first producers to start a mill in the region, Don Mario, father of Arleen and Maria, invested his “pure sweat” (borrowing his words) to start the **Beneficio La Angostura**. He believed in coffee's power to lift his family economically and it did for a while.

The sisters then joined a few years ago to help their family combat the challenges that they were facing with the farming business back then - low market prices, continually growing costs of production, and lack of support from the local coffee industry. Arleen says that she has noticed that her dad was very stretched - as a producer, miller, and also expected to network, market, and sell their product to sustain the business.

Maria and Arleen share with us that one of the biggest challenges for them is to predict **how much they can sell to whom, each year.**

Amidst the challenges, they are two of the most enthusiastic participants in our training sessions. They come with a lot of questions for each training session.

Maria tells us that while she has been running the mill with her sister with the support of her dad who has been a lifelong producer, it is important that she also gets second/third opinion on their practices. “It's not that I don't trust my dad (laughs), I just think there's a value in continuously learning and updating your knowledge,” says Maria.

These two girls with lots of innovative ideas and energy are ready to take their farm and mill to another level and we are so excited to accompany and witness them along with you all!!



Leticia Cruz

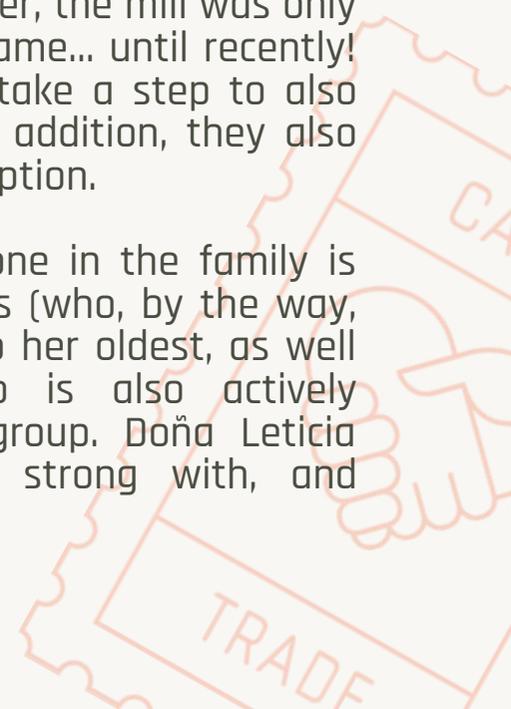


Leticia's loving and caring energy definitely does something to you. A mother of 4 children, and a passionate coffee producer, Leticia was born to coffee farming families and has been involved in coffee ever since she can remember!

When she married her husband, Don Mario, they merged two pieces of land that they both inherited from their parents. In addition, they've also leased a plot of land to expand their coffee production.

While they both own and work their coffee farms, harvest and mill the coffee together, the mill was only registered under her husband's name... until recently! This year, her family decided to take a step to also register her name as a miller. In addition, they also roast their coffee for local consumption.

It is admiring to see how everyone in the family is involved from their youngest sons (who, by the way, are such brilliant young twins!) to her oldest, as well as her niece, Guadalupe, who is also actively participating in our producers' group. Doña Leticia shares that her family "stays strong with, and through, coffee."



Franciny Vargas y Ivonne Madrigal

Franciny runs a mill with her husband Kenneth in San Marcos de Tarrazu. One of the oldest mills in the region, BioCafe was founded in 2003 and has transitioned to producing almost only specialty coffee 3 years ago.

Being the pioneer of micro-milling in the region, their family provides support to their neighbors in the region from providing them with wet-mill support to dry-mill services.

Franciny has recently also taken a new project to roast her own coffee, as well as create products with coffee. She has a delicious recipe for coffee chocolates, coffee liquor as well as 'cajeta' - traditional sweets from Costa Rica - that are popular among her neighbors.

In 2020, her son, Facundo joined Bean Voyage's team as a Care Facilitator, leading a learning group for 20 women in the region. Her daughter, Ivonne also joined the training group as she wished to improve her knowledge in coffee to support the family business.

Their roasted coffee brand, Cafe Doga, has also been growing and they are expanding their offerings to include coffee tours. We have been incredibly proud to witness their growth.



Montserrat Prado



As a young professional with endless dreams and work ethic, Monse started what she calls a "small project" to process coffee. Her partner and his family have been life-long coffee producers, and she wanted to help them see that there is more to coffee production beyond farming that they are able to take on.

With her partner being an agricultural engineer, they designed a micro-mill for Monse to manage everything on her own. Referring to it as her baby, her mill has a uniquely vertical design and has been certified by the local government for its efficient water and energy usage. Her coffee, thanks to her meticulous way of working, has an excellent clean-cup, and well-balanced sweetness.

Being one of the younger coffee producers in the region, she collaborates with the other producers in the group to bring more innovative ideas to the community.

Angie, Mayra and Marlen



Angie, Mayra and Marlen's family has a long history in coffee production. Their family mill, Fadiva - newly named to mean Family of Vargas y Diaz (their last names) - was the first micro-mill in the region. They were founded in 1905 and grew rapidly until they faced financial challenges which led to the collapse of the mill.

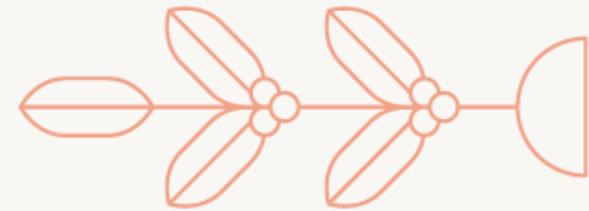
They said the banks didn't understand the coffee cycle (the income coming in during a very short period each year), and it posed challenges as they strived to grow their business.

The two sisters, Mayra and Marlen, and their sister-in-law, Angie, saw an opportunity 7 years ago. They rebranded and started the mill to become what it is today.

Their farm and mill located from 1450m to 1800 masl produce and process some of the most notable coffees in the region. The sisters, additionally, saw the slowly but steadily growing domestic consumption and identified an opportunity to increase local sales of roasted coffee. Soon after, they started roasting their own coffee.

"As much as we were involved in coffee production and processing, I felt like it was still very male-dominated. We loved coffee and still do, and wanted to do something with it. That is when it rang the bell in my head. I could combine my passion for cooking and experimenting, and the coffee!" says Angie.

Scale and Sustainability



Our vision for the next ten years is to **reach 10 million smallholder women** with the Care Trade program, while ensuring the quality of our farmer centric service.

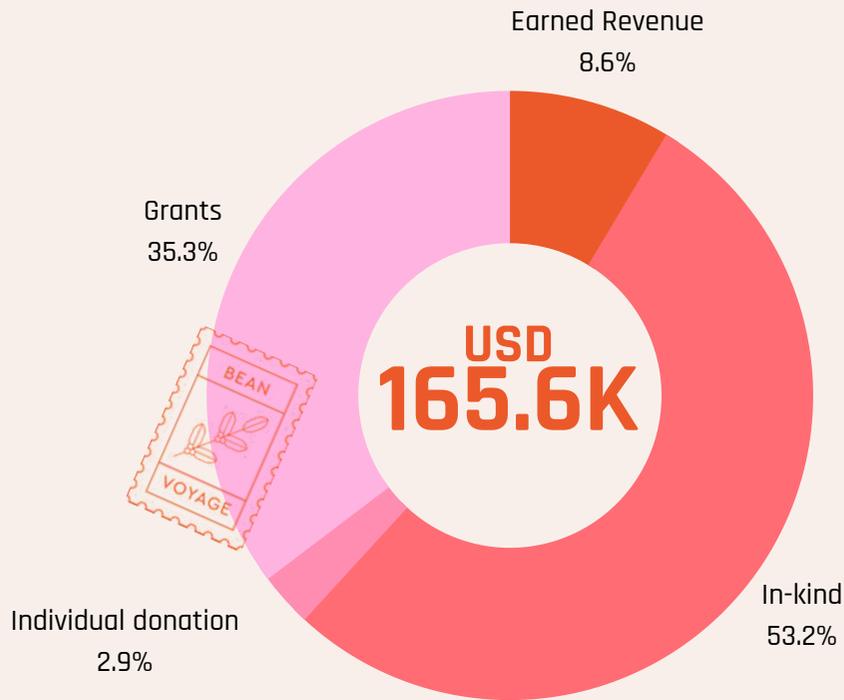
In order to set ourselves up for success, we have positioned **three** integral elements into our model: **(1) technology as tools, (2) community-based youth as facilitators, and (3) increased sources of revenue for the organization.**

We digitized our training curriculum to be facilitated over WhatsApp, to increase access to information for our participants as they navigate market uncertainties, while also being cognizant of their digital literacy. With the help of bite-sized learning materials delivered through voice notes, images, texts, and videos, we provide knowledge and tools while overcoming the digital divide.

We work with youth from coffee farming communities to help them gain meaningful employment opportunities as facilitators of our curriculum in their own communities. Each facilitator recruits and trains 40 smallholder women producers, allowing us to maintain the quality of the direct-to-farmer service, while ensuring exponential scale in a few short years.

Finally, to ensure the 200%+ increase in prices for our producers, we are working to gradually grow the market presence of Bean Voyage around the world. After our early success in Europe, US and Canada, we are now increasing our exposure in South Korea, and building long-term partnerships with conscious coffee roasters. Moreover, our invitation to the private and public sector to sponsor a scholarship encourages inter-sectoral collaboration and financial sustainability. The adaption of our learning module so that participants are empowered to train and impact others in their communities will ensure the scalability and sustainability of our work and impact.

Financials 2020



Donors and Sponsors

Canada Fund for Local Initiatives

Skees Family Foundation

Red Empress Foundation

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On Care Market:

De Mello Coffee Roasters
Girls Who Grind Coffee
Bean & Bean Coffee Roasters
Torrefaction Papillons
Algrano
Emma's Torch
Western Union
Cafeteria Del Parque

On Care Engagement:

Needle and Frame

On Care Support:

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Eradicating the Gender Gap in Farming Communities



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