



SOLARED Coffee Project

Summary

Country	Kenya
Implementer	Africa Fairtrade Network Limited
Target groups	Coffee producers
Duration	03/2020 – 07/2022
Type of energy use	Drying

Challenge

Coffee is one of Kenya's most important agricultural products. Around 700,000 families live from coffee, usually growing it on small fields. One of the most important tasks is drying the coffee beans in the sun. This usually takes place between October and December, during the rainy season. The drying process goes through several phases, takes between 12 and 14 days and is very labour-intensive. Moreover, the duration and uncertain weather conditions jeopardise the quality of the dried beans, which is an important indicator for the market price.

Impact Logic

In order for solar drying systems to become established in the coffee cooperatives involved, Fairtrade Africa informs them about the new technology and installs nine solar coffee dryers in nine producer organizations and an additional eight solar dryers financed by producer organizations. Three cooperatives working with Fairtrade Africa are already experienced with solar drying systems due to their involvement in pilot projects. Part of the project is to adapt the design of the systems to local conditions and thereby improve them. In addition, Fairtrade produces manuals for the design, installation and maintenance of the dryers as well as training manuals that contain best practice examples from the three pilot projects as well as from other countries. Together with

the Coffee Research Institute, Fairtrade conducts training of trainers and courses for its cooperatives. The improved drying of the coffee as a result of the measures presented increases its quality and thereby the income and economic situation of the producing farmers.

Innovative Project Element

The idea of using solar-powered PV systems for coffee drying is underutilized itself so far in Kenya. Accordingly, the project establishes a new technology application in Kenya that fits well into an existing value chain system. In addition to that, the project considers the whole value chain when setting up its cooperation system. Fairtrade also works together with coffee marketing organisations which provide financial support for financing solar dryers in terms of loan advances. The effects of the new coffee drying technique are immediately observable: Time used to dry coffee beans is reduced from an average of 14 days to an average of five days. As a direct result of this, no backlog of clearing dry beans at the factory adds up. Furthermore, the beans dry uniformly due to regulated temperature which improves the overall coffee quality which in turn directly translates to increased prices at the markets and returns to the farmer.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.gruene-buergerenergie.org

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Address
Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1–5, 65760 Eschborn
T +49 6196 79-0

Design
Atelier Löwentor, Darmstadt, www.loewentor.de