

SUSTAINABLE HARVEST® WORKING WITH THE RWENZORI SUSTAINABLE TRADE CENTRE EAST AFRICA RELIEF EFFORT

In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, Sustainable Harvest® has teamed up with The Rwenzori Sustainable Trade Centre, the United States Africa Development Foundation, and producer organizations across East Africa to provide relief to those most in need.

While the spread of COVID-19 is more prolific in urban spaces, cases in rural, coffee-producing communities have the potential to be significantly more dangerous due to lack of essential support. By combining each organization's networks and resources, this collaborative effort will have significant impact by providing relief effectively and swiftly.

Click [here](#) to take a tour of the producer groups we are working with in this effort.

Main Challenges in the Region

- **Producer livelihood is in jeopardy** due to delayed shipments, cancelled contracts, transport lockdowns, and flattened consumer demand. Storage solutions must be sourced for producers in order for them to retain the value of their produce and be awarded with the premium they deserve.
- **Food insecurity in farming communities** due to lockdowns and curfews limiting access to food and essential resources. Floods in Northern Rwanda and Western Uganda resulted in dozens of casualties and damages, some irreversible, to crops and coffee trees.
- **Civil unrest in Democratic Republic of Congo** continues to endanger the general public and displace many people, including some coffee cooperative members and their families. As a result, asylum seekers in Uganda are increasingly putting more pressure on food systems.

Identified Forms of Relief

Food Kits and Essential PPE

Relief kit distribution began in May 2020 and continues to be organised. **Kits are designed by cooperative management to ensure goods reflect the needs of their communities.** Common items include beans, maize flour, cooking oil, salt, sugar, hand soap and face masks. Every kit for every community is slightly different and adapted to the local conditions and needs of those producer families. There's no overhead on our part; the money goes directly to the field in a 'no-load' way, allowing the cooperatives to do what they do best: **delivering services to their producer members**

Cooperative On-The-Ground Expertise

Many cooperatives have the expertise and tools to implement effective, impactful social programs relevant to their communities. Sustainable Harvest's Relief Effort enables cooperative associations to deliver crucial support to their members and the most vulnerable in their communities. This is support that goes beyond coffee.

The fastest and most effective way to distribute relief is for **cooperatives to act as service providers. Cooperatives are better able to ensure that supplies reach rural and vulnerable areas.** With the support of the Sustainable Harvest team in Rwanda, cooperative managers are required by Sustainable Harvest to submit photographs, videos, written documentation and receipts to verify that funds are allocated properly and reach the right people.

What Help is Needed Now?

The first line of intervention is to **provide cooperatives and their members with food and health security**. So far, we have provided food kits and PPE, specifically curated for cooperative members by cooperative leaders.

The second line of intervention is to **help secure the future sale of coffee as producers' main income cash crop, while consumer markets remain in lockdown or operating at far reduced levels**. GrainPro generously provided Sustainable Harvest with discounted rates on orders of hermetically sealed storage bags for cooperatives to store their coffee in. Thanks to funding from the USADF, 30,000 GrainPro Bag Zippers have been ordered so far, but many more are needed to secure producers in the long-term.

Country	Group	Total Members	Women Members	Kit Proposal	Quantity/Units	Unit Cost	Total Value
Rwanda	Nyampinga	235	223	GrainPro bags Jute Bags	640 640	2.13 2.34	2,861
	Abakundakawa	2,246	962	Food	225	21.77	4,898
	TUK	148	144	GrainPro bags Jute Bags Health Insurance	370 370 148	2.13 2.34 20.88	4744.14
	Mayogi	381	283	GrainPro bags Jute Bags	320 320	2.13 2.34	1430.4
	Gashonga	135	59	GrainPro bags Jute Bags	320 320	2.13 2.34	1430.4
	Dukundekawa Musasa	1,176	249	Food	225	28.12	6327
	Sholi	610	243	Food	225	20.91	4,705
Uganda	Karanguru	600	212	Food/PPE	212	27.92	5,918
	Kateebwa	480	230	Food/PPE	230	27.92	6,421
	Kabonero	601	138	Food/PPE	138	27.92	3,853
	Buka	299	62	Food/PPE	62	27.92	1,731
Malawi	Mzuzu Union	3,200	960	Food	225	23.87	8,449
DRC	Kawa Maber	2,500	491	Food	225	37.56	8,450
	CPNCK	2,388	433	Food	225	29.5	6,638
Burundi	COCOCA Union	27,517	6,574	Food	225	30.76	8,453
Tanzania	KCU	60,000	20,000	Food	670	8.8	5,896
Totals		102,516	31,263		2,887		82,205

About Sustainable Harvest® Coffee Importers

Sustainable Harvest® is a specialty coffee importer whose mission is to improve the livelihoods of coffee-farming families around the globe through its Relationship Coffee model. Since its founding in 1997, the company has partnered with over 200,000 smallholder farmers, helping them gain access to premium markets and increased incomes. It became the first B Corp certified company in coffee in 2008. We believe that strong, existing business relationships and transparent communication enables diverse coffee stakeholders to come together quickly, pool ideas and resources, to collectively support coffee producer communities when a crisis hits.

In 2019, Sustainable Harvest took up the mantle of Twin Trading in East Africa, setting up a new UK operation, keeping key staff, local field staff and committing to sustain partnerships and achievements built over many years. Sustainable Harvest Founder David Griswold and early Twin Trading Director Pauline Tiffen met after many years as part of this transition process, finding a new vision working together in the East Africa region.

About Rwenzori Sustainable Trade Centre

The Rwenzori Sustainable Trade Centre (RSTC) is an independent not-for-profit Ugandan company based in Fort Portal, Western Uganda. The RSTC promotes sustainable trade working in partnership with 7 cooperatives and more than 30 women's associations producing crafts and local crops for local markets. These organisations from the hard-to-reach communities have each been supported to organise, mostly from scratch, and become formally registered and democratic organisations, with excellent fair trade, organic and fine quality production. They represent more than 2,000 active, highly organised women (in craft, alternate income and savings groups), and 7,000 registered coop members (40% women) impacting just short of 50,000 people scattered across the four districts of the Rwenzori's. The RSTC has a livelihoods and educational vision, collaborating with all primary schools in the area. This means greater family incomes, food at school, resources for pupils, more girls staying in schools for longer and a diminishing absenteeism and community enforced bans child labour.