

Guest Profile

Name: Mr. Josephat Sylvand

Title: Assistant Export Manager

Organisation: Kagera Co-operative Union Ltd (KCU Ltd)

Location: Kagera region is north west of Tanzania, 1,400km from Dar-es-Salam.

“Fairtrade to me is an alternative approach to conventional trade that aims to improve the livelihoods and well-being of small producers by improving their market access, strengthening the organizations, paying a fair price that covers costs of sustainable production and hence providing continuity in trading relationships” Josephat Sylvand

About Josephat Sylvand

Josephat is a son of a coffee producer who was a committed member of KCU Ltd. By being a member of KCU his managed to educate his family, some even to university level.

Josephat himself joined KCU Ltd in 2005 as a graduate and worked as a coffee trader. At the same time he was being trained on all issues relating to coffee export and marketing. Currently he is an Assistant Export Manager, and he assists the Export Manager in all areas of KCU Ltd's export office, his roles include:

- Research for markets
- Preparing and sending coffee samples to customers
- Negotiating coffee contracts: offering and receiving bids; receiving shipping instructions and sending shipping documents to customers; as well as sending notification to customers immediately after shipment
- Maintaining all necessary requirements for coffee export logistics e.g. organizing coffee transport to port warehouse, preparing coffee export approval forms for authorization by Tanzania Coffee Board etc.
- Maintaining computer files for coffee stocks movement, warrants; quality/grade analysis, purchase and sale payments purposely for easy reference
- In absence of Export Manager, responding to all enquiries

Organisational Profile

Kagera Co-operative Union Ltd (KCU) www.kcu-tz.com

Location: Kagera region is north west of Tanzania, 1,400km from Dar-es-Salam

Product: Coffee

Membership: 124 Primary Cooperative Societies representing over 60,000 small farmers

Established: 1950

Fairtrade: Since 1988 they have been selling an increasing part of its members' coffee under Fairtrade terms

Organic: KCU were the first exporters of organic coffee from Tanzania and are the largest supplier of organic Robusta coffee to the Fairtrade market

KCU is made up of 124 primary cooperative societies, in the districts of Bukoba and Muleba in Kagera region, North West of Tanzania (west of Lake Victoria). The two districts cover about 15,000 sq km. Usually there are one or two primary societies in each village. Each primary society is owned by about 500 small coffee producers; Kagera Cooperative Union Ltd therefore has about 60,000 members. For a primary society to be a member of KCU, it has to own shares in KCU. Each primary cooperative society has about nine committee members, and sends three representatives to the KCU General Assembly which convenes twice a year. This is the supreme body for KCU Ltd decision making. Primary cooperative societies also hold General Assemblies before each assembly of the union.



Bilabo Primary Cooperative Society meeting in Muleba

KCU's mission and objective is to seek, establish and maintain favourable markets in order to improve the income and well-being of its farmers. It is a pioneer of Fairtrade in Tanzania. It has been involved in the promotion of Tanzania coffee abroad, always focused on increased sales and higher remuneration for the farmer. Through active involvement with, and direct selling into, the Fairtrade market, KCU has paid its farmers up to 100% more than generated through the commercial price. It is also involved with Export Promotion of Organic Products in Africa (EPOPA), whose objective is to promote innovative and environmentally sound farming techniques aimed at improving the well-being of the community.

KCU Coffee

KCU is a leading producer and exporter of Tanzanian high quality Bukoba Robusta and natural Arabica coffees; as well as spray dried instant coffee powder.

The Robusta and natural Arabica coffee is picked when the cherries are ripe, then dried on drying mats. In favourable weather, drying takes approximately 10 days. Dried coffee is then transported to processing mills where hulling (removal of hard outer skin) is undertaken. The bean is then polished ready for grading and other processes.

Maturation takes between 6 and 8 months. KCU Ltd collects dry cherry coffee from farmers, for selling to exporters in the auctions organised by Tanzania Coffee Board. It also exports directly to overseas customers.

Social Development

When members collect and market their coffee together, they create a fund to which deductions from coffee sales are deposited to assist members' children in attaining education, health services and other basic needs. This chance is usually wasted when coffee is collected by private buyers, who most of the times lack a collective responsibility drive.

The Fairtrade social premium has enabled our members to construct/improve roads and bridges to their crop collection centres. Also classrooms and health centres have been constructed, which cements not only the relationship within our members, but also creates a strong partnership between KCU members and the Fairtrade buyers.



Nursery children at Katoma Primary School in Bukoba Rural District, supported by KCU

Economic Development

Through Fairtrade our members, both individually and collectively, have attained survival level and beyond. Also due to the Fairtrade system KCU could withstand the competition and also survived when coffee prices fell due to the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement's quota system.

With the Fairtrade minimum price, KCU members have been able to invest into an instant coffee factory, to ensure that value is added to the coffee that is exported by the union. The union currently owns 51% shares in TANICA instant coffee factory, which can produce 500 tons of spray dried instant coffee per annum.



KCU owns 51% shares in Tanica Instant Coffee Factory

Information on markets is an important requirement if one has to deal with the outside world. KCU is currently kept up to date with market developments and information supplied by our Fairtrade partners, labelling initiatives and FLO.

Environmental Development

Fairtrade led to the introduction of organic coffee production to KCU via Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa (EPOPA). As a result KCU was the first and so far the only producer/exporter in Tanzania, under Fairtrade terms, of Organic Robusta. The Organic project would not have been possible without payment of an organic differential to organic coffee producers from the Fairtrade reserves. Today we are selling almost 300 tons of organic coffee to the Fairtrade market, earning an organic differential of about 20 cts per lb and 10 cts for the Fairtrade premium.



Engineers working at KCU coffee processing plant, Bukop

Labour Conditions

KCU Ltd might have done the right thing in the past on labour conditions, but without a clear reference point as to what is required by National as well as International Labour Laws. With Fair trade, the standards stipulate categorically what constitutes a violation and a penalty is clearly prescribed in case of non compliance.

Tanzania Facts

Full Name:	United Republic of Tanzania
Population:	38.5 million (UNDP HDR 2006)
Capital City:	Dar Es Salaam
Languages:	Kiswahili, English
Currency:	Tanzanian Shilling (Tsh)
Major agricultural exports:	Coffee, cashew nuts, tobacco leaves, cotton lint, wheat
Life expectancy:	52 years
Adult Literacy Rate:	72%
HDI Ranking:	152 out of 177



Did you know?

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