



THE CHAIN
collaborative

Annual Report

2022



*The Chain Collaborative
co-creates opportunities
and strengthens capacities
for community-led change
in the coffee sector.*

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Letter from the Founder

Dear Collaborators and Supporters,

It always brings me such joy to spend time writing this annual letter, because it allows me to sit down and reflect on everything we have accomplished as a team over the course of the past 12 months. This year in particular, we have a lot to be proud of and even more to be grateful for: 2022 was our best year yet—not just financially, but also as a result of the impact we were able to foment in partner communities. First, we launched our Community-Led Development Incubator program, a reimagined and improved approach to our main mission of investing in local leaders in coffee communities around the world. In total, we onboarded six participants from five countries across Latin America, and began planning for the launch of the East Africa-based Incubator in 2023. Meanwhile, we continued to work with our ongoing Community-Led Development Partners at Now Africa Initiative (NAI) in Uganda, supporting them to continue their alternative income and primary school programming. On behalf of this farmers' group, we also helped to steward our biggest donation to date, a \$100,000 gift to NAI to build the first-ever locally-owned dry mill in Kanungu District!

Of course, none of this work would have been possible without the contributions of our generous supporters, who all showed up this year in a way we could only have dreamed of. Our earned income models of Consulting and Education also allowed us to maintain our fiscal health, and we are very proud to share that our client and student partnerships flourished in 2022. In total, we taught fourteen courses to over 60 students, and consulted for six organizations and four companies. On the consulting side, we authored the Algrano Market Trends Review for 2022, researched and wrote fact sheets for the European Union, and designed the five-year climate change and environment strategy for Fairtrade International, all in partnership with Expressing Origin. Under the banner of our education programming, we continued to teach all three levels of the SCA Coffee Sustainability Program and also launched a new course of our own: Sustainability Reporting.

Last but not least, we maintained several “Special Projects” partnerships throughout the year, supporting both Digital Coffee Future and Sustain Coffee through our Fellowship program. We welcomed five new Fellows in total during 2022, two in support of Sustain Coffee and three in support of Digital Coffee Future and our other programmatic work at TCC. We are so thrilled about everything these Fellows were able to accomplish, and are even more excited to share that two Fellows, Camila Khalifé and Carolina Pirola, have officially joined our team part-time for 2023. Their incredible support is not all that the upcoming year has in store for us. Aside from getting ready for the launch of our Community-Led Development Incubator program in East Africa, we are also looking forward to seeing NAI's mill in action, supporting more program work with Digital Coffee Future, and continuing our partnerships related to carbon and the coffee sector. For our most recent work in this regard, see the report we authored in collaboration with Whittier College and the Specialty Coffee Association, recently published in October 2022.

There is so much more we'd love to share with you about what made this year special, so please flip through the remainder of our annual report to learn more. Thank you for having made it all possible!

With love and gratitude,



Nora Burkey

Founder and Executive Director
Organizational Programs and Partnerships Lead



2022 Highlights

community-led development Incubator Launch

After years of partnering individually with local leaders in Latin America and East Africa, we designed a new way of building relationships and supporting community-led projects. 2022 marked the year we launched the Community-Led Development Incubator, an 18-month program designed for cohorts of emerging leaders to design and carry out their own projects. Keep on reading to learn more about it!

special projects Program Fellowship

In 2022, we revamped the TCC Program Fellowship, an opportunity for coffee professionals to collaborate with our team in support of community-led development work in the coffee sector. Fellows do this all while completing the full SCA Coffee Sustainability Program at no cost. In 2022, we were able to give more structure to the program, developing better onboarding, task-assignment, and feedback tools.

consulting Fairtrade Climate Strategy

In 2022, we were hired alongside Expressing Origin to work as a short-term Project Coordinator for the Senior Advisor of Climate Change and the Environment at Fairtrade International. Together, we developed the organization's five-year Global Climate Change and Environment Strategy. For the assignment, we analyzed internal documentation and conducted focus groups and qualitative interviews with key stakeholders before writing the final strategy.

2022 Highlights

ongoing
partners

Now Africa Initiative's New Mill

In 2022, we received our largest donation yet so that Now Africa Initiative could found the first-ever locally-owned coffee dry mill in Southwestern Uganda. With this mill, they expect to be able to quadruple both the number of farmers they can support and the amount of money they can return to their primary school each year.

COURSES Sustainability Reporting Course

In 2022 we decided to grow our course offerings and designed a course on Sustainability Reporting. This course is designed to help coffee professionals both measure and report on the impact of their sustainability initiatives. It was taught for the first time in April, and again in September 2022. Already, we have seen students apply their lessons learned at their companies.

staff New Team Members

2022 was a year of major growth for The Chain Collaborative, and we are very happy to have two new members on the team. Carolina Pirola and Camila Khalifé were part of the 2022 TCC Program Fellowship, and after completing the program, we were able to hire them both to continue supporting TCC's programs, communications, and consulting services.





Explore Our Impact

Community-Led Development Programs

At TCC, we put change-making power in the hands of local leaders. We do this by building relationships with cohorts of local leaders in coffee-growing communities, cultivating their project design and management skills, and fostering the development of their community enterprises. The community-based organizations these leaders represent can be formal cooperatives, associations, or social enterprises, or otherwise informal networks. For us, the key is that we partner with emerging leaders with limited access to funding and partnership opportunities. TCC's unique and innovative approach recognizes the multi-faceted needs in coffee communities and intentionally resources local leaders to develop culturally-specific solutions that create social, economic, and environmental impact. The following section describes the impact of our central program, the Community-Led Development Incubator, as well as our ongoing partnerships.





Community-Led Development Incubator

The Community-Led Development Incubator is an 18-month collaborative learning experience for local leaders in coffee-growing communities looking to increase their impact in their communities and expand their networks. Participants complete three program phases over the course of 18 months. The first phase is the Learning and Design Phase; the second, the Implementation Phase; and the third, the Peer Support Phase. These three phases allow participants to design a community-led development project, implement it with TCC funding and robust support, and report on its impact.

Finally, participants are able to join an ongoing TCC-led alumni network of change-makers in the coffee sector. Most importantly, this work allows global communities to combat intergenerational poverty and marginalization in the coffee sector on their own terms, and according to their own visions for change.

The Incubator Timeline



Incubator's Impact in Numbers

6 Local leaders from 6 communities in 5 countries across Latin America are part of 2022-2023 Community-Led Development Incubator.

90,000 USD invested in the Community-Led Development Incubator projects.

1,500 People impacted by our Community-Led Development Incubator, and the projects of Ongoing CLD Partners.

200 Hours of group and one-on-one support and feedback with our partners in coffee-growing regions.

100% Of participants report feeling more confidence to design and lead future projects in their communities after the Incubator.

80% Of participants are first-time grant recipients.

The following section highlights the work of three of the six 2022-2023 cohort participants, demonstrating TCC's impact across the three pillars of sustainability.

Colectivo Rokunin México

social impact highlight

Colectivo Rokunin (CR) is a community-centered collective that works alongside coffee growers from indigenous communities in the Sierra de Zongolica. They lead projects that centralize art, sustainable agriculture, cultural preservation, and gender equity.



“Using the tools provided during the Incubator sessions helped us to open our minds about where we needed to pay more attention, and that’s how we learned that the cultural aspect was very important for the community.”

“We didn’t impose what we thought was a priority, but let the group make decisions about what was important to them.”

Itzel Mendoza,
Colectivo Rokunin

Colectivo Rokunin and the coffee-producing group Diez Familias fully embraced the Incubator process, maintaining an open mind to new ideas and creating space for new leaders to emerge. They’re currently moving forward a multi-faceted project plan. The first component is related to coffee, focused on improving quality to achieve higher prices. But the component that the community is most excited about is not related to coffee. Through their initial meetings, they realized it was very important for them to rescue and preserve the community's native language and culture, so a youth group is leading an initiative to offer Nahuatl classes for the community. Throughout this process, unexpected group members have stepped up and taken leadership on moving these projects forward.

economic impact highlight

Jovemcafé Guatemala

Jovemcafé is a group of 25 young coffee entrepreneurs from the Com community of Jacaltenango, Guatemala. This women-led group started in 2017 to support their members through a range of projects, including providing access to credit, and training in finances and market access.

"The group members are happy and motivated. They are proud of the way we are organized and how projects are carried out considering everyone's points of view.

Also, other communities have shown interest in how we organize ourselves, so now we are training new leaders who can work on projects like ours."

Paula Pérez,
Jovemcafé



Jovemcafé has partnered with TCC to develop two projects aimed at helping the group achieve financial stability and create jobs in the community. Their main project is the establishment of an egg-selling business to generate income and allow group members to save and reinvest the profits. To this end, they have built enclosures for 300 Highland Red hens, which currently produce around 300 eggs a day, both for the group's consumption and for selling to members of the broader community who used to buy imported eggs. The success of this project has drawn the attention of other community groups who want to follow their lead and start their own initiatives.

Additionally, the hen waste will be used as organic fertilizer in the second project: a nursery with 10,000 timber, fruit and decorative trees that they expect to sell to locals and use in their own coffee farms. Both of these initiatives will generate substantial income needed by farmers between harvest seasons.

environmental impact highlight

Asoseykún Colombia

AsoSeykún is an Arhuaco community from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta region in Colombia. Since 2008, they have worked to recover, reforest, and protect their ancestral land. One strategy they have leveraged to meet this goal is processing and selling their coffee collectively at a fair price to increase internally-generated income.



“The Incubator project is just a small piece of the larger puzzle. We are learning how to communicate our vision to the western world, but also learning from others' experience.”

This project is like a bridge between our goals as a community, and what the rest of the world is looking for in a cup of coffee.”

Seyaru'kwingumu,
Asoseykún

AsoSeykún truly believes in collective action and its power, and this tenet is embodied in the land where their families live. It belongs to the whole community as there is no individual ownership, and only a small portion of their land is dedicated to growing coffee, cacao, and other goods, whilst the majority is dedicated to forest regeneration which, in the long run, benefits us all.

AsoSeykún is focusing their Incubator project on building infrastructure and adding value to an important source of income: the collective sale of coffee. For them, the meaning of community-led development resides in a harmonious connection between spirituality and the way their community's goals are achieved.

Community-Led Development Ongoing Partners

Now Africa Initiative



Now Africa Initiative (NAI) is a grassroots farmer organization located in Nyamigoye Parish in the Kanungu District of Southwestern Uganda. NAI's mission is to play a catalytic role in contributing to the socio-economic transformation of rural Uganda through sustainable agricultural development and educational improvements.

2022 has been a year of growth for NAI and their projects. Karama Education Center, the school they founded in 2017, now has 410 students, 90 more than last year! In 2022, they started a school feeding program with the aim to improve the nutrition and health of learners, using corn and soybean flour produced in the community, and vegetables from the organic school garden. Denis Twinamatsiko, NAI's founder, has reported that since this program started, learners look healthier and cases of absenteeism due to illness have significantly dropped down.

Another NAI project, started in 2021, is an alternative income initiative that consists of growing soybeans side by side with coffee. In 2022, NAI had a cohort of 100 farmers joining this project; now, they are finishing harvest and have been trained in soy milk production at a household level to boost their nutrition and diversify income streams.



The first locally-owned dry mill in the region

Without a doubt, the largest NAI project in 2022 was building and installing the first ever locally-owned dry mill in Southwestern Uganda. For the first time, NAI will be able to control the primary processing of their own coffee, enabling them to enhance quality control and offer green coffee directly to the market, to access better prices.

In the last quarter of 2022, NAI completed the installation of the necessary equipment. They expressed that the biggest challenge they faced during the set-up of the mill was price increments of building materials due to high inflation. This situation was caused by different factors, such as the after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and a prolonged drought. Another challenge they continue to face is access to stable electricity for the running of their equipment, as electricity in their community is inconsistent.

Denis has shared with us that profits from the mill operation will support NAI projects, including the running of their primary school and the continuation of their Farmer Field School program. At Karama Education Center, the additional income will allow NAI to increase teacher salaries, hire new essential staff members, and welcome more students. NAI will also generally be able to partner with more farmers, and pay them higher prices for their coffee.



Sustainability Education

courses

SCA Sustainability Program

The Specialty Coffee Association's Coffee Sustainability Program consists of three course levels: Foundation, Intermediate, and Professional. The Foundation level is designed to offer baseline knowledge of what the term sustainability means and the challenges of acting sustainably across the coffee value stream. The Intermediate level builds on these concepts and provides more instruction about the history of sustainability, while developing each student's ability to analyze and interpret a variety of sustainability projects at various parts of the coffee sector. The Professional level offers an intensive, practical experience in which students design, carry out, and assess their own sustainability project in accordance with their individual, organizational, or business goals and capabilities.

The Chain Collaborative offers online, virtual coursework to coffee professionals and enthusiasts worldwide. We partner with a variety of industry-wide trainers and academic institutions to deliver content, promoting a shared understanding of the complexities of sustainability in the coffee value stream.

Our work involves providing both theoretical and practical education, allowing us to influence the industry towards more sustainable outcomes and inspire a greater focus on social, environmental, and economic justice.

Sustainability Reporting

This online course is an opportunity for coffee professionals to explore the importance of corporate and non-profit accountability, and practically develop a strategy to improve sustainability, impact, or transparency reporting at their own companies and institutions. Students learn about the different types of industry-wide reporting, understand key terminology, and assess opportunities for data collection. The goal of the course is to develop each student's understanding of how to use specific tools and frameworks to develop a feasible data collection and sharing methodology. Each student will also develop and implement a plan to collect data, and practice reporting on a particular sustainability pillar or company/organizational value.

Consulting Partnerships

Over the course of 2022, we have provided consulting services to 5 new clients and continued 5 ongoing relationships together with Italian-based consultancy Expressing Origin. Our services for the year included strategy development, research and report writing, and much, much more.

Algrano

This past year, TCC had the pleasure to partner with Algrano to release a European market trends review. Together with Expressing Origin, we designed and conducted qualitative surveys and interviews with roasters, producers, research institutions, and non-governmental organizations in the coffee sector. Following an assessment of European consumer trends and an in-depth analysis of the survey and interview findings, we authored a comprehensive report that helps small and capitalized coffee players make more informed decisions.

Fairtrade International

In 2022, we designed and authored Fairtrade International's five-year Global Strategy for Climate Change and the Environment. To this end, we reviewed and analyzed current climate change strategy documents across the Fairtrade network and connected with Fairtrade stakeholders to gather their input on the development of a global climate change approach. Alongside Fairtrade's senior advisors, we presented an updated set of commitments and strategies that will allow the organization to prioritize activities geared toward climate justice for farmers and workers.

Jenga Lab

TCC and Expressing Origin were contracted by JengaLab to author a factsheet for the European Union about the intersection between digital and gender, and to organize and launch a webinar to present the main elements of the research. This collaboration also offered the team the opportunity to provide lectures on coffee digitalization for the ICT4Development Master organized by the University of Turin (Italy) and NGO2.0.

Special Projects

Special Projects are initiatives that are outside the realms of our core programs and services, but allow us to keep innovating with peers in the coffee sector to support the development of coffee communities worldwide.

By creating intentional partnerships, we are able to innovate and forge new collaborations that build our community and expand our mission.

Sustain Coffee Library & Fellowship

Founded in 2018, Sustain Coffee was created to connect various actors within the coffee industry to a comprehensive database collating available research and resources on sustainability. We have the privilege of partnering with them to contribute a variety of resources each year and manage the Sustain Coffee Fellowship. This is an opportunity for young coffee professionals to work directly on the development of the resource database; receive credit they can put toward the cost of TCC courses; and receive training and mentorship in social media and stakeholder outreach.

Digital Coffee Future

Digital Coffee Future is an interactive and virtual community of practice that allows coffee value stream actors to share and exchange knowledge and learn about digitalization in the coffee sector. As one of The Chain Collaborative's Special Projects partners, we support the growth of Digital Coffee Future through our Program Fellowship and by providing strategic guidance, as well as through educational content development and consulting services.

TCC Program Fellowship

The Chain Collaborative Program Fellowship provides the opportunity for coffee professionals to work alongside our team on our community-led development programs and consulting projects; learn how to engage in community-led development in the coffee sector from an anti-top down and anti-colonial perspective; and complete the three levels of the SCA Coffee Sustainability Program at no cost. Fellows also have the opportunity to engage in and share sustainability research in support of our Special Projects partners Sustain Coffee and Digital Coffee Future.

Carbon, Coffee & Climate

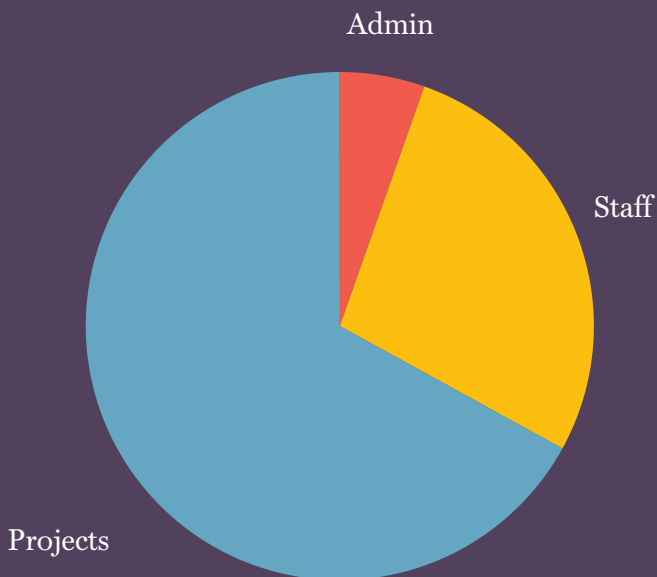
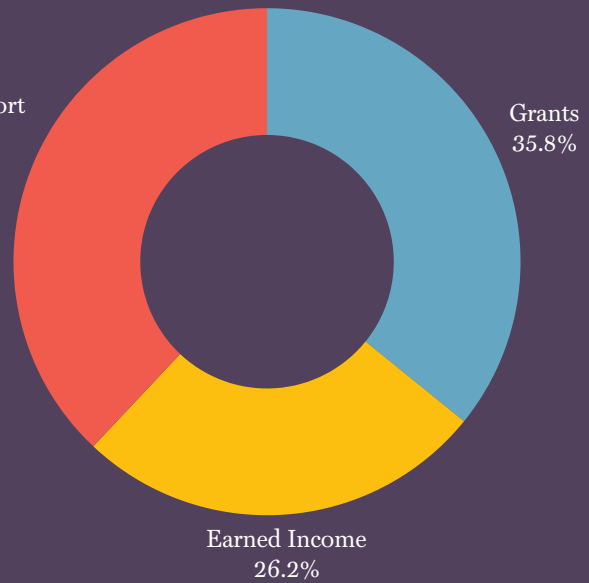
Throughout 2022, we partnered with Whitter College's Environmental Science Program and the Specialty Coffee Association to write and publish a report on the tools and strategies companies and organizations within the coffee value chain have adopted, or what tools and strategies they plan to adopt, to measure and reduce their carbon and GHG emissions. Our research included a literature review to understand GHG emission and quantification in agriculture and coffee; a desk review of company and organizational documentation on their work to date; an online survey for companies and organizations to share their current practices; and a series of interviews for more detailed qualitative information on company approaches and challenges. The final report has been very well received. You can read it [here!](#)

Financials

Income

Grants	\$147,500
Earned Income	\$107,770
Contributed Support	\$156,345

Contributed Support
38%



Expenses

Admin & Fundraising Expenses **5.4%**
Includes conference travel, subscription and platform fees, and general operating/office expenses

Staff & Contractor Salaries **27.6%**
To manage all our program and communication efforts

TCC Partners' Projects **67%**
Resources invested directly in our community partners.

In 2022, our Earned Income covered 91% of all Salaries and Admin & Fundraising Expenses, meaning that only 9% of these needs were covered by Grant Funding and Contributed Support.



Looking Ahead

programs CLD Incubator East Africa

In 2023 we are welcoming our first East African Community-Led Development Incubator cohort. Four group leaders from Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Uganda, will develop projects with and for their own communities, based on their goals and visions for change.

education Digital Fundamentals

We are very proud to have collaborated with Elisa Criscione and Digital Coffee Future on a new educational course/program, designed to explore the exciting world of digitalization in agriculture and coffee. It covers everything from understanding digital tools to mapping processes and information flows, as well as data for decision-making, and best practices for data management.

consulting New Partnerships

In 2023, we have been moving forward full-force expanding our consulting services alongside Expressing Origins. We are currently carrying out research and reporting work with The Nature Conservancy and Riot Capital, and look forward to many more opportunities to come.

Our Supporters

We are always grateful for our allies who, with their kind support, help us continue our community-led development work in coffee-growing communities in Latin America and East Africa.

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Ways to Support Us



Our Courses

Expand your knowledge while contributing to transformational work. Sign up for now of our upcoming offerings!



Our Monthly Donor Initiative

Sign up to give a monthly donation of any size. In return, you will receive monthly emails about the progress of our partners, and earn the chance to win a gift from one of our Perks Network donors each month.



Our Perks Network

If you are a coffee company, you can support us by providing us with in-kind gifts that we can offer to our monthly contributors, or auction off to support the work of our partners.



Consulting Services

Visit our website to explore our menu of services and contact us to discuss how we can help your company or organization make a meaningful impact. We offer packages as well as one-off services in collaboration with Expressing Origin.

Our Staff



Nora Burkey

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Thank You
2022