



EQUAL EXCHANGE Interfaith Program

TANZANIAN JUBILEE



Our country spends nine times more on debt than on health care, four times more on debt than on education," a Tanzanian church leader explained to guests from Nebraska. "Debt payments consume one-third of our country's budget." Tanzania is classified by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a "Heavily Indebted Poor Country" (HIPC), owing nearly \$8 billion (US\$) to foreign creditors while fifty-one percent of its population lives below the poverty line (2002).

Thanks to compulsory and free education, literacy rates had reached 90% by 1988. But like many countries under the pressure of international debt, Tanzania's educational system is now in shambles. As government expenditures have shifted to servicing this debt, literacy has plummeted to just under 75% (1999). Many children simply can't afford to attend school because of expensive fees.

General health in Tanzania has also suffered. One child in six won't reach the age of five, largely as a consequence of easily preventable diseases and a lack of basic health care. Only one third of the country's population has access to safe drinking water.

JUBILEE & TRADE

Jubilee is an opportunity for us to call for a new beginning in our economic relationships, for the relief of debts and the sufferings of debtors. Communities of faith and faith-based organizations across North America have answered this call, joining the Jubilee 2000 campaign and supporting develop-

ing nations in their appeal for debt relief.

Jubilee is also an opportunity for us to consider the im-

impact of other economic relationships such as trade. For example, as the cost of payments on foreign debt has risen, market prices for commodities such as coffee—a vital source of foreign exchange in many indebted countries such as Tanzania—have plummeted. Farming communities are thus confronted with both dwindling government support and declining income from agricultural products.

Like the countries that they live in, small coffee farmers in the developing world are very familiar with the crippling effects of debt. Cut off from affordable credit, they are often forced to borrow from local moneylenders or banks, using future harvests or their small plot of land as collateral. Isolated from markets

"Must we starve our children to pay our debts?"

Julius Nyerere, former president of Tanzania

and government assistance, these farmers often struggle just to make a simple living.

FAIR TRADE & JUBILEE

As we consider the impact of debt on people in the developing world, we can also consider the impact of our own purchasing choices. The prices that we pay as consumers for everyday products like coffee, and the economic relationships that we support through these purchases, can have a profound impact on the lives of people around the world. Equal Exchange offers an opportunity to share the message of Jubilee while supporting small farmers through Fair Trade.

In 2000, Equal Exchange introduced *Tanzanian Jubilee*, a special product that seeks to educate consumers about the impact of the coffee trade, the efforts of small farmers to improve their lives and communities, and the tradition of coffee-growing in East Africa. This delicious coffee, available in 12oz. packages, is grown on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro by the farmers of the Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union (KNCU). Through this effort, farmers are able to sell their coffee directly through their co-op, receiving a fair price for their products, have access to affordable credit, and have a long-term trading partner—Equal Exchange.

Whether at coffee hour, committee meetings, in the office or in our own homes, coffee is often an expression of the kindness and community that we share with one another. Through Fair Trade, you can share this sense of community with small farmers and their families in Tanzania and other indebted countries in the developing world. As we are called to honor Jubilee every day, we can also honor our global neighbors in their struggle to build a better future for themselves and their communities. •

More About the Farmers of KNCU

KNCU, the Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union, was originally founded in 1924 as a marketing organization for the indigenous farmers of the Chagga tribe who grow coffee on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain.

Today, KNCU is one of the oldest cooperatives in Africa, made up of nearly 100,000 members from over 93 local cooperatives. Most farms are very small, varying in size from between 1 to 8 acres. Coffee is usually intercropped with food crops such as corn, potatoes, and shade trees such as bananas or citrus. But coffee is the most important cash crop for the farmers, providing income for cash needs such as school fees and medical expenses. Extended family structures mean that more than one household usually depends on each farm for support.



In 1999, Equal Exchange became the first company to introduce KNCU's coffee to consumers in the U.S. The smooth, mild beans grown on Kilimanjaro are considered to be among the finest in Africa. Still, farmers often struggle to obtain fair prices. But by selling their coffee through their co-op, members receive better prices, training in organic agriculture and quality improvement, and have access to affordable credit. By selling their coffee to Equal Exchange, KNCU receives a fair price, preharvest financing, and a better bargaining position when they sell to conventional coffee companies. And when you purchase this fairly traded coffee from Equal Exchange, you not only get a great cup of coffee; You become part of an international partnership of Fair Trade, economic democracy and self-help.

For information on Equal Exchange's Interfaith Program and faith-based partnerships, and ordering coffee, tea or cocoa products for your place of worship, office or organization, contact:

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