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GFI Newsletter: BeFair Kits Delivered to 1000 Farmers



BeFair Campaign Farmer Livelihood Kits Arrive in Guatemala

After much anticipation, one thousand Farmer Livelihood kits arrived this month in Antigua, Guatemala, after traveling from Nicaragua by land through Honduras and then El Salvador. Two GFI partners will distribute the donated kits over the next month to the indigenous smallholder farmers in Alta Verapaz. The partner organizations chosen to handle the distribution are Community Enterprise Solutions (CES), which is focused on helping to improve smallholder quality of life through access to alternative and quality technology at reasonable prices. The other organization is the Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives and Coffee Producers of Guatemala (FEDECOCAGUA) which is dedicated to improving market opportunities and livelihoods for small producers of coffee through teamwork, creativity, innovation, and social and environmental responsibility. Each partner will distribute 500 kits, helping farmers to produce more and higher quality food for themselves, their families and the markets they depend on for their livelihoods.

The simple technology of the Farmer Livelihood Kits represents more than improved food production and yields for the recipients. Until now these farmers have been anonymous statistics in dozens of state development projects and international cooperation efforts, the real people lost in analysis of the larger issues of poverty, inequity, social exclusion, and lack of access. Through the BeFair Campaign, producers in the most remote places of Guatemala receive a helping hand from thousands of miles away, a hand that connects them directly with the community of supporters and friends who have joined the GFI family to support BeFair and make a difference in the lives of the otherwise forgotten indigenous farmers of Guatemala.

The arrival of the Farmer Livelihood Kits in Guatemala constitutes a new source

of hope for many families, not only in diversification of products or improved food security, but also in the serious commitment of people who believe in opportunity, equality, and the possibility of positive change. The BeFair Campaign's delivery of simple, low-cost technology is a small but significant step toward lifting hard-working communities out of poverty and onto a more equal footing with larger market players. Our sincere thanks to all of the BeFair Campaign supporters for making this possible; you have done more with your gift than you could ever imagine!

Collaborators in the Field: GFI's Guatemala Team

The delivery and distribution of the Farmer Livelihood Kits in Guatemala builds on the networks created and strengthened through GFI's Veracruz Community Empowerment Program (VCEP) in Alta Verapaz. After 22 months of development, we can already see the positive impact of this simple, low-cost technology on the lives of smallholder farmers.

Two VCEP collaborators, working step by step together on site, made this impact possible. With their technical expertise, patience, and great knowledge of the socio-economic situation in the region, they developed and presented activities that helped the farmers take on ownership of the technology and of the agricultural and financial skills to move beyond subsistence farming.



Professor Felipe Cucul Xal, originally from the Department of Alta Verapaz, has a high commitment to local development and is familiar with the group dynamics in the area. Thanks to his ability to obtain consensus among disparate populations and to make clear connections between the technical and practical knowledge in the communities, he has been a cornerstone for realizing the basic objectives of VCEP in Alta Verapaz.

Aroldo Coc Cuc, a college student soon to graduate and also from Alta Verapaz, has a contagious spirit that was invaluable during the agricultural techniques training. None of the difficulties of working in the region – the climate or the distance and time required to travel to remote, isolated communities, for example – dampened Aroldo's dedication to developing and presenting the activities for the farmers. In many cases, he was the cohesive element that permitted the maintenance and growth of VCEP's producer groups.



The success of all GFI's programs lies in the commitment and expertise of our local partners and implementers. Their knowledge of the people and conditions in the area -- along with their amazing ability to share important skills and knowledge in ways that are meaningful to different populations -- ensures that the support and methodology GFI brings to its programs around the world have a profound and lasting impact.

"Climate Change is the biggest economic opportunity of our generation"

by Jose Maria Figueres

Former Costa Rican President. GFI Board Chair and new President of the Carbon War Room outlines how harnessing the power of entrepreneurs will have to solve the climate crisis - because there is no planet B

During the 2012 Camp David Summit from May 18-19, the G8 nations agreed to promote economic growth through job creation. Leaders from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States concurred that job expansion offers the best hope for the future. U.S. President Barack Obama noted that the serious economic downturn in the Eurozone affects the U.S. as well as other countries far removed from Europe. Thus, the success of these goals depends on coordinated collective action. This united effort to stimulate job creation must avoid the short-term solution of informal employment, which provides little opportunity for advancement, and instead focus on expanding the formalized workforce.

Although informal employment can supplement struggling economies in the short-term by bolstering production and income levels, informality is associated with long-term economic stagnation. Informal workers have little or no protection from labor abuses under national legislation, often receiving severely reduced wages in potentially unhealthy and unsafe work environments. Incomes earned and assets procured through informal work can't be used as collateral to obtain a loan, limiting the ability of both workers and firms to increase wealth and raise investment capital. Informality is also associated with a myriad of economic ills, including income

inequality, high prevalence of poverty, and misappropriated tax and foreign aid funds. These issues can become systemic, affecting every aspect of society if left unaddressed. Moving toward formalized job creation is more essential than ever from the G8 during these trying economic times.

While strategies seeking to reduce informality and transition workers to the formal sector must be country-specific, they require collaboration from all levels of society, including the private sector, governments, and laborers. These strategies generally focus on reforming existing business regulations to create an incentive for informal firms to register their activities and hire more workers formally. Additional strategies involve revising tax codes, and adding to social security measures like unemployment insurance. Overall, reducing informality would not only expand the job market but also help to alleviate other issues G8 leaders cited at the summit, including food shortages, high unemployment, and severe poverty.

Ever the optimist, I see the challenges of our generation not as inhibitors of creating a better world, but as exciting opportunities. Far from being the biggest threat, I believe: climate change is the greatest economic opportunity of our generation.

Read more of Jose Maria's 10 May, 2012 Article at [businessGreen](#)

"Today with the economic and technological wherewithal, we have the ability to do something on the climate change front and the inequality front by changing our economy to a low carbon footprint."

-Jose Maria Figueres
GFI Board Chair &
President of the Carbon War Room

Get Involved:

Can \$40 Really Make a Difference?



Have you seen the video? The impact you see there starts with just a \$40 investment in a small irrigation technology that has made a big difference. The Global Fairness Initiative launched the BeFair Campaign to bring low-

News:

Josephine's Happy Hour taps over 50 donors for the BeFair Campaign

The 30s and 40s DC MeetUp group has been a strong supporter of the BeFair campaign since the beginning, and on June 22 they delivered again with hundreds of supporters more than 50 donors contributing to the livelihoods of Guatemala Farmers. Thanks you Josephines and thank you to all the generous supporters.

cost technologies that improve livelihoods.

Farmer Livelihood Kits use low-cost drip irrigation and specialized trainings to help farmers improve their nutrition and increase their incomes by as much as 50%. Your contribution of \$40 will deliver one irrigation kit plus technical trainings to an indigenous farming family in Guatemala and lay the path to real opportunity and empowerment.

Donate just \$40 or more and receive a BeFair water bottle!



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**DOES YOUR BUSINESS OFFER
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Together we can make a big difference in the lives of thousands of farmers. Want to engage your colleagues in a high-impact campaign? EMAIL Aalap at ashah@globalfairness.org and find ways your office can help make a real difference by partnering to support GFI.

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