



PRESBYTERIAN COFFEE PROJECT

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 over \$7 billion (US\$) to foreign creditors while fifty-one percent of its population lives below the poverty line (1991).

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 a shambles. As government expenditures have shifted to servicing international debt, literacy has plummeted to 73% for men and just 64% for women. 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. Churches and faith-based organizations across North America have answered this call, joining the Jubilee USA Network (*formerly Jubilee 2000*)

campaign and supporting developing nations in their appeal for debt relief. The strength of this partnership was expressed by a pastor from the

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

Julius Nyerere, former president of Tanzania

Msitu wa Tembo parish when he told the Nebraska church delegation, "Your voices will now be added to our voices so that we can be heard."

Jubilee is also an opportunity for us to consider the impact of other economic relationships such as trade. For example, as the cost of payments on foreign debt rose in the 1980's, market prices for commodities such as coffee — a vital source of foreign exchange in many indebted countries such as Tanzania — plummeted. Farming communities are thus confronted with both dwindling government support and little income from their 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 go into debt to local moneylenders or banks, using future harvests or their small plot of land as collateral. Isolated from markets 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 Presbyterian Coffee Project is an opportunity to share the message of Jubilee while supporting small farmers through fair trade.

As part of this effort, Equal Exchange has introduced *Tanzanian Jubilee*, a special program that assists small coffee farmers and their communities in Tanzania through fair trade. The coffee, available in 8oz. packages, is grown on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro by the farmers of the Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union (KNCU). Through the project, farmers are able to sell their coffee directly through their co-op, receiving a fair price for their products, affordable credit, and a long-term trading partner.

Whether at fellowship hour, committee meetings or in our own homes, coffee is often an expression of the kindness and community that we share with one another. Through this project your church or congregation can share this love with communities in Tanzania and other indebted countries in the developing world. As we are called to honor Jubilee, we can also honor our global neighbors in their struggle to build a better future for themselves and their communities. •



For more information:

JUBILEE USA NETWORK (*Formerly Jubilee 2000*)
222 E. Capitol St., NE, Wash., DC 20003
202-783-3566 • www.j2000usa.org

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202-1396
888-728-5626 x5626 • www.pcusa.org

For information on ordering coffee for your church:
EQUAL EXCHANGE INTERFAITH COFFEE PROGRAM
251 Revere St., Canton, MA 02021
781-830-0303 x228 • www.equalexchange.com
e-mail: interfaith@equalexchange.com

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 a democratic cooperative of about 135,000 members from over 90 local cooperatives. Most farms are very small, varying in size from between 1 to 8 acres. The coffee is usually intercropped with food crops such as corn, potatoes, and shade trees such as bananas. 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.

The smooth, mild coffee grown on Kilimanjaro is considered to be among the finest in Africa. Still, farmers often struggle to obtain fair prices for their beans. By sell-

ing their coffee through their co-op, members receive affordable credit, better prices, training and quality improvement programs, and transportation services. 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 your church purchases fairly traded coffee through the Presbyterian Coffee Project, you are supporting this partnership of fair trade, economic democracy and self-help.

"As I look to the future, a better income from coffee will mean better schools, dispensaries and roads.

Buying from KNCU means you get the fine quality you need, and the farmer gets the best return."

Tobias Ndakidemi, Chairman, KNCU