HELANTA COFFEE

MDF   Australian Aid

About Helanta Coffee

Royawin Ceylon International (RCI) emerged as an off-shoot of the Japan Fairtrade Congradulate, a farmer-cooperative-based NGO. RCI's core business involves business-to-business green bean and roasted coffee sales to the local hotel, restaurant and café (HORECA) market. RCI sells unbranded green bean coffee to their buyers' individual brands, while the roasted coffee is sold under the Helanta brand to the HORECA sector. Currently, the brand sources coffee cherries and parchment from a large number of farmers located around the valley of Kotmale and the Central Highlands.

Market Constraints

Sri Lanka's coffee sector faces challenges relating to both the quantity and the quality of specialty-grade coffee green beans. Coffee farmers experience produce losses during harvesting as well as in the post-harvest stage, due to a lack of information around best practices at farmgate and processor levels. As a result, production volumes are low and quality is affected, hindering the growth of the industry. MDF is seeking to address these constraints and thereby improve incomes of coffee farmers.

Intervention

- Establish cherry purchasing system
- Improve processing methods and techniques
- Access to information on good agricultural practices

MDF's intervention with Helanta will support the company to set up a new coffee processing wet mill which will exclusively practise specialty coffee processing techniques to enhance the quality of green bean and also process higher volumes of high-quality green bean. This focus on specialty grade coffee will enable connections to new buyers, and Helanta will be able to offer farmers a premium price for selectively picked, carefully handled coffee cherries. Once the intervention activities are complete, Helanta is expected to be better equipped to process specialty green bean, on par with international buyers' expectations. This will enable the company to earn a higher price for green bean and access premium markets.

Photo credit: Helanta Coffee