



March 2023

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen,

I am honored to join you at the UN Water Conference 2023 in New York as I represent The Well Coffeehouse from Nashville, TN, USA. At The Well Coffeehouse, we are turning coffee into water. As a coffee importer, roaster, and retailer, we have witnessed the critical intersectionality between the countries where we source coffee and the challenges those coffee-growing regions experience to have access to sustainable water resources. When our founders learned about the water crisis over 10 years ago, their desire to make a sustainable impact in the water crisis mobilized them to make it our mission and create a social enterprise that not only served great coffee but made a great impact. Ethiopia is known as the birthplace of coffee, yet in the Ethiopian community where our implementing partner works, less than 50 percent of the community has access to safe water.

Therefore, with our profits, we love full circle. With each coffee we source, we grant an implementing partner in the country to invest back in water programming. For some communities, it's a well or rain tank. For others, it's anaerobic tanks to prevent erosion and recycle water for irrigation. Either way, we want to make a difference they need to see sustainable development, health, and progress in their community.

Additionally, we also want to make sure that coffee farmers are earning a living wage and a fair price for their coffee. So we are paying above market rates to our coffee partners to ensure better livelihoods for those in coffee-growing industries. As a roaster retailer, we believe it's our responsibility to highlight the disparities in the areas we source coffee and fight for a voice for those communities.

Currently, the average age of coffee farmers across Africa is 60, according to the International Coffee Organization. Many young people realize they don't want to work in the farms and are choosing other careers that have access to the resources they need, including better wages. Without their investment in the future of coffee, and our investment in their livelihoods, including water, we will see a reduction in coffee farmers continuing generational coffee for a consumer that is increasing in consumption globally.

In the past 10 years, we have been able to provide water to over 20 communities and nearly 30,000 people in coffee-growing countries through our granting partners. We have paid premiums for coffee to ensure a better living wage and livelihoods for our farmers, yet we know we are just one coffee roaster and represent just a fraction of the industry.

We want to call on other coffee roasters and retailers as well as those who consume one of the world's most endeared beverages to think about the communities that grow the coffee they have come to love. This World Water Day, we are inviting other roasters and retailers to use their voice and their dollars to invest back into the communities that bring us the world's best coffee. We have vetted several organizations doing great work in coffee-growing regions, and we can connect you with a funding opportunity to champion the work of those who are investing in these communities.

Let's continue to love full circle, one cup at a time.

With gratitude,

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