



Building an inclusive and accessible supply chain - from bean to cup

The Lucy Foundation is a Kiwi social enterprise empowering people with disabilities in New Zealand and Mexico to work in the coffee industry by breaking down training and employment barriers and creating inclusive work environments.

The Lucy Foundation has been working with coffee-farming families, including disabled family members, to produce coffee for export back to New Zealand.

Robbie Francis, the director and co-founder of TLF, says the coffee is the result of hard work and commitment from the community in both Pluma Hidalgo, Mexico and New Zealand.

"The Lucy Foundation team have been working hard on the ground to promote inclusion and diversity in the community through coffee farming, agricultural workshops and employment. Robbie says.

"This project would not be possible without the support of New Zealand organisations and community. This coffee is not just coffee, it is proof that through coffee we can create inclusive and accessible trade."

The first batch of Pluma coffee was available for sale in late September and has nearly sold out. The launch events were attended by the Mexican ambassador, disability rights advocates and New Zealand supporters.

The Lucy Foundation's achievements:

In 2016, nearly \$25,000 was raised through PledgeMe for the first phase of the project.

- 30+ inclusive and accessible agricultural workshops with coffee-farming families and the wider community
- 6,000 litres of bio-fertiliser and 600 litres of insect and disease treatment made for the crops
- Development of a local barista training program (also delivered in sign language)
- Bee hives set up to increase coffee quantity and as additional income for the families
- Three people with disabilities in paid, part-time contract work
- First batch of Pluma coffee and cascara (coffee) tea launched in New Zealand

Why coffee?

Coffee is a good source of income for coffee farmers in this remote region of Mexico where poverty is high. Coffee is also being used to empower disabled people to work on coffee farms that their families have been working for generations, as well as become more active in their community. Pluma coffee is exclusively grown in Pluma Hidalgo, Mexico and is new to New Zealand coffee drinkers.

Coffee is the economic backbone of Pluma Hidalgo, Mexico with many families having a small number of trees in their backyard. The Lucy Foundation works side-by-side with these coffee farmers and their families to help improve their crops, facilitate agricultural workshops, practice beekeeping and promote inclusive economic opportunities within the community.

How can coffee increase inclusion and accessibility in New Zealand?

The Lucy Foundation is increasing work opportunities for disabled people in Mexico and New Zealand through the training and employment of community members involved in the coffee industry, from bean to cup.

24 per cent of New Zealanders live with a disability. Recent Statistics NZ findings show that disabled Kiwis are twice as likely to be unemployed in New Zealand and earn only half the average weekly income of non-disabled New Zealanders. Disabled people also have less access to services and face societal barriers and discrimination.

What will The Lucy Foundation do next?

A PledgeMe campaign (a New Zealand-based crowdfunding platform) for the second phase of The Lucy Foundation's coffee project, which includes expanding operations has now been launched. The team aims to raise a minimum of \$20,000 by 22 October 2017.

In order to increase coffee production we need money to:

- deliver agricultural workshops to the community (to increase the quality and yield of the plants)
- increase coffee production (expanding our project to include more families in accessible and inclusive trade)
- pay for day-to-day operations (keeping us going so we can continue to expand and improve the project)
- develop a community development fund (for inclusive and accessible resources, coffee tours, bee keeping and barista training)

Primarily driven by volunteers, The Lucy Foundation's operational budget for 2017 is \$65,000. Additional money raised will be used to further expand both the New Zealand and Mexico operations. The Lucy Foundation aims to increase this budget by \$100,000 over the next three years to grow the organisation and increase impact.

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The Lucy Foundation Director Robbie Francis is available for interviews and comment. You can contact her at info@thelucyfoundation.com or 027 529 2114.

To support Phase Two of the coffee project, please visit The Lucy Foundation's PledgeMe page: <http://pldg.me/lucy>

For more information about The Lucy Foundation and their coffee project visit www.thelucyfoundation.com, www.facebook.com/thelucyfoundation or contact the TLF team at info@thelucyfoundation.com.

For more Labour Market Statistics (Disability) please visit: http://stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/income-and-work/employment_and_unemployment/LabourMarketStatisticsDisability_MRJun17qtr



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