



STRONG WOMEN = STRONG COFFEE CASE STUDY

CULTIVATING PROGRESS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

IWCA Brasil's focus on education and partnership in Matas de Minas brings new opportunities, including coffee quality improvements and income diversification to coffee families including women, men, and youth.

In 1980, the Matas de Minas community formed the Centro Comunitario Rural de Conceição (CCRC) association, and Julenia Maria Lopes da Silva's grandfather was the first president. As a community leader, Julenia has helped guide the group to further develop quality control and focus on marketing. Thanks to the IWCA's presence in the Coffee Entities Council of Matas de Minas, CCRC is now part of a pilot project of farmers who are being tutored by a technician. There are 18 groups of 10 farmers each and one of them is called "The IWCA group."



Members of CCRC take a moment for a photo

About Julenia Maria Lopes da Silva

Julenia Maria Lopes da Silva is from Carangola, Minas Gerais, Brasil in the Matas de Minas Coffee region, an area made up of many small-scale coffee farmers. She became an English teacher and had the chance to get a Masters in Applied Linguistics at the University of Leicester, UK, thanks to the Rotary Foundation. She has worked in Brasil, Portugal, and Germany. She returned to Matas de Minas in 2008 after buying a 15-hectare coffee farm with her German husband, Helmuth. Having grown up in a coffee family farming, she has seen how important coffee quality is and the tremendous unmet need to provide this information to farmers.

Brasil Country Context

- **Population** (2017): 209,300,000
- **Poverty** (2017): 4.8 % population living at poverty ratio of \$1.90 per day
- **Gender Inequality Index (GII)** (2017): 0.41
0=equality, 1= high inequality
- **World Risk Index Ranking** (2015): 123
1=high disaster risk, 171=low disaster risk

References

Population & Poverty: <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/country/BRA>

GII measures human development & status by gender: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>

World Risk Index measures exposure & vulnerability to natural hazards: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=ee5978152b5c4cd2aaaaaf3a14d379c8&extent=-180,-86.3126,180,88.0275>



Julenia sharing about the IWCA Brasil organization

Developing new opportunities to grow income and coffee quality

Julenia was surprised to see many coffee farmers pick their coffee when it was still green, before it should be harvested because they needed the money. When she found out that all state schools in Brasil must buy fruit and vegetables from small farmers' associations to provide hot meals to their students, and she immediately saw the chance for women to make their own money, as many had an orchard. She wrote several proposals, and the group started getting orders. In the last 4 years, the CCRC community of 180 people have sold over US\$200,000.00 bringing happiness to the women who now, having an extra source of money, can wait a bit longer to pick the red coffee beans.

CCRC also works with young farmers, considering they will take their parents' farms one day, and they need to know about quality and technology. The group has organized coffee tasting courses and attended several lectures to improve technical knowledge. Recently, CCRC had a local coffee quality competition among the association farmers, and to their great surprise, 28 out of 34 samples had 80 plus scores, indicating specialty coffee. Although the group didn't have money for prizes, Julenia made sure each one got a certificate. It was very rewarding to see how the farmers were touched by that simple certificate printed on A4 paper. She made sure their names were there, husband and wife, as well as the score.



The group pauses for a photo before travelling



Cherry sorting and selection



Training covering coffee cupping and quality

IWCA Brasil was formed in 2012 and has grown to include 13 sub-chapters with representation throughout the value chain. The group has strong alliances with government supported programs and trainings to further advance coffee knowledge and skills. To contact the IWCA Brasil leadership and learn more, please visit the Chapters page of the IWCA website: www.womenincoffee.org.

The mission of the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA) is to empower women in the international coffee community to achieve meaningful and sustainable lives; and to encourage and recognize the participation of women in all aspects of the coffee industry.