After almost a year of construction and planning Sikaab’e is finally positioned as the training and vocational school of the communities of Chimaxyat and Nueva Concepcion in Guatemala. However this is just the beginning, the school’s long term goal is to become sustainable through its productive activities in agriculture and livestock. Today the school is differentiating itself through the quality of the trainings and the opportunity it offers to students of learning by doing.

**Index**

**Education**

**Productive Activities**

- Chicken Business
- Pig Farming
- Nursery Garden
- Cardamom Driers
Education

- **Vocational Training:** Through a partnership with the training institution INTECAP, we are able to provide education on programs such as electricity, carpentry, and cooking.

Last year 21 students graduated from the Guatemalan Cuisine cooking class and in the following months we will be starting the new electrician class for 30 students, enabling graduates to gain valuable skillsets for their future.

- **Feminine Hygiene:** Through a partnership with NGO Days for Girls, over 230 girls have been trained on Feminine Hygiene and received Feminine kits.

- **Agricultural Trainings:** Training has been an important component of economic development where the following issues have been addressed:
  - Development of nursery gardens
  - Production diversification
  - Grafting

This trainings have been conducted in 21 different communities, 11 of which are now practicing diversification among their production to increase income security on their own.

Chicken Business

This is the first productive activity to reach profitability, we are currently working at an 88% capacity and have had a mortality rate of 2.25%, lower than the 5% standard mortality rate in egg production. The quality of the eggs produced outgrows the quality of products in the region, which is a great way for us to be competitive and improve nutrition for people in the area.
Pig Farming

Pig production is one of the largest investments to date, we currently have 18 healthy pigs and our team is receiving additional assistance with artificial insemination practices to ensure that we reach profitability.

Nursery Garden

Over 20,000 plants have been planted as part of the 18 Ha nursery garden at Sikaabe.

- **7ha**: Cacao
- **11ha**: Other species such as: Cardamom, Pachouli, Citrics, Maracuya, Peppers, etc.
Cardamom Driers

Cardamom has represented one of the main sources of income for people in Guatemalan villages for many generations. However, oftentimes farmers don’t have the necessary resources to sell Cardamom at a fair price since they depend on middleman to buy their green cardamom before it expires. By providing the community with Cardamom Dryers we will be enabling farmers to dry their product and gain independence from middleman therefore increasing their income in the long run.

There are over 550 families who produce cardamom in the region and with this project we are looking to train them on best agricultural practices trainings to improve their yield and quality to ensure their cardamom turns into better incomes.

Impact achieved this Harvest Season

- Increase the income of 97 families by 724 dollars per family.
- 807 jobs remunerated
- 4 steps of the value chain had been passed on to the community
- We had the opportunity to train 130 families on better practices, plague management and cost tracking.
Lessons Learned this Harvest Season

- Since we started late in the season we experience the instability of the market and incurred into higher costs than average which is why we held to our Cardamom instead of selling it at a loss, which by no means was speculation on the market on our end.

- This was a season to launch better practices training for the farmers of the region and for the team on the ground to start developing relationships with different cooperatives so we can find the best matches to work with at Sikaab’e.

- In regards to Training, we were able to identify metric needs for us to be able to better track our impact per farmer and we are already working on creating the right measurement structure for next season.

Timeline

Sept 17. Worked with established Co-op to assist them on drying their cardamom and learn about the cardamom market. Dryers in a separate community were used

Nov 15. We started drying at Sikaab’e

The construction of a cardamom drying facility and two cardamom dryers was completed in November of 2015. Upon completion, a total of 830 quintales of cardamom were dried at Sikaab’e resulting on 149 quintales of pergamo that were sold to Nelixia to be distilled into cardamom oil. The purchase price of pergamo was on the lower scale of the overall seasons’ price range, which affected our balance sheet resulting in a loss.
Model

COOP producers

Local intermediaries (as logistics providers)

CHOICE

additional margin created by:
- drying margin
- increase in negotiation force (drying)

drying service to cover operating costs

Dryer

COOP

Nelixia

other actors

KEY

- benefits
- green cardamom
- dried cardamom
- cash flow

fair market price

option in case of opt-out by Nelixia [speculation]

working capital

leasing of infrastructure

best practices:
- agriculture
- reforestation
- social

CEOP

cash flow