

Mzuzu Coffee

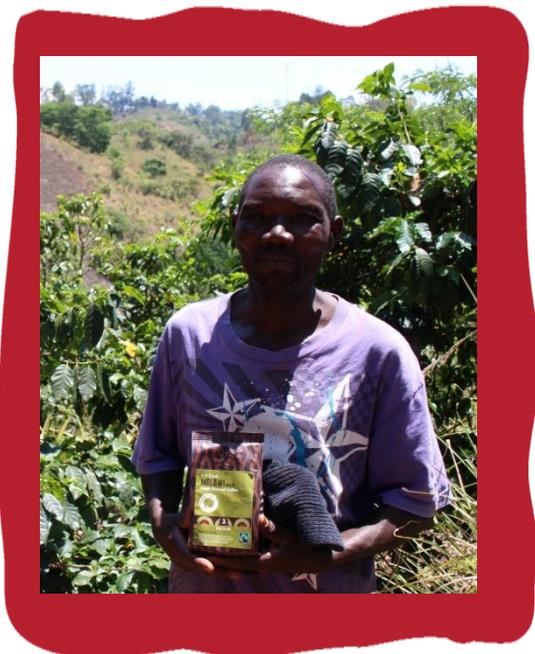
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In December 2014, as part of my work with [Traidcraft](#) to promote Mzuzu coffee in Scotland, I travelled to Malawi to meet with members of the [Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union](#). MZPCU is a democratic and empowered Union of farmers based in northern Malawi which currently has 2,652 members (smallholder coffee farmers), 24% of whom are women. Since the 1930s they have been producing high quality coffee with pride and care and they now sell it with dignity, knowledge and a keen understanding of our markets and our customer needs.



I met with operations director Bernard Kaunda who, over a coffee of course, told me how MZPCU's main activities involve the provision of agricultural extension services, processing facilities, financial assistance and marketing services. Bernard explained how being part of Fair Trade means farmers are guaranteed a fair price for what they produce, so they can forge sustainable livelihoods for themselves, as well as benefiting from community development projects.

One such farmer, doing just that is McDonald Nguluwe. Based in the beautiful Nkhata Bay Highlands McDonald has been growing coffee for most of his adult life.



The income generated from his fairly traded coffee sales has provided McDonald with the means to provide his family with food and safe, secure accommodation.

With his coffee income McDonald can send all his children to a good school in Mzuzu and with the money he has saved he has been able to build an extension on his house and buy some goats to provide milk for the family.

Meeting people like Bernard and McDonald, who are so knowledgeable, enthusiastic and dedicated, reminded me why I decided to work in development in the first place.

I feel privileged to be playing a small part in helping people to wake up to Malawi as a producer of quality, ethical and life-changing coffee.