

Moving Stories Central America

In Jinotega, 200 coffee farmers have begun, through the support of Soppexcca, to grow cocoa. The project is being supported by Commitment for Life through Christian Aid, and has been running for five years.

At first, the farmers' attempts to use seeds for growing the cocoa failed. But now farmers source 'grafted' plants. Soppexcca offers one-to-one training for the farmers on how to grow and harvest cocoa: tools, pruning, harvest, fertilisers and the use of saplings to eventually offer shade for the coffee and cocoa plants. The Soppexcca technicians also teach about food security (how to grow food) and good environmental practices.

Technicians like Lilliam also go into schools. They help set up school vegetable gardens and teach about climate change. They introduce practices to help protect against changing weather patterns. Examples include the planting of trees for shade, and green barriers (hedges) planted along steep banks to prevent the heavy rains washing away the soil's nutrients. They also promote the use of natural fertilisers instead of harsh chemicals.

In addition, Lilliam offers workshops to promote gender equality and educate men about domestic violence. They present a report to the cooperative which is then sent to Soppexcca HQ every three months. They are the bridge between farmers, the cooperative and the technicians and Soppexcca.

It is important to state that forest/jungle **cannot** be cleared to make way for new cocoa plantations. Commitment for Life is grateful to the skilled and dedicated workers like Lilliam.

Photo: Esme Allen - Lilliam, a Soppexcca technician, teaching a class about climate change in Santa Rosa school.



Our best chance of ending this pandemic is to ensure that everyone, everywhere has access to COVID-19 vaccines, tests and treatments. But pharmaceutical monopolies and patents threaten everyone as no-one is safe until everyone is safe.

People from around the world are calling for a #PeoplesVaccine – freely available to everyone, everywhere. Learn more here

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