

Alfrida Ndunguru, known as Mama Chacha, Ruvuma

The thing that has helped me is education. Everything I have is the result of the education I've received. Without the teaching I've had from TaCRI I wouldn't be producing my own hybrid coffee tree seedlings and explaining the process to my fellow farmers. I have a reputation as a good coffee farmer, and while it's true that I use my own strength to do the work, it's TaCRI's training that showed me the way. We used to harvest around 250 kilograms of parchment coffee from our old coffee trees: now we harvest three tonnes per year.



It all started in 2001 when I was part of the first Farmers Field Study - that's where I learnt the techniques I'm using now. I started with seventy-five cuttings and was shown how to grow and reproduce them. Now I have seven thousand seedlings and I can sell each seedling for 250 shillings¹. I supply cuttings to farmers in this area and far away. I'm expanding my production of cuttings and I'm also training farmers to establish their own clonal gardens. They learn the techniques quickly. Teaching others is important work - that's how we spread knowledge: men, women, they all learn from me and they do what I tell them!

Coffee farming is in my family. My husband's grandfather, Chief Tekambwani, was the uncle of Christomus Makita, who introduced coffee to this area from Moshi and later became paramount chief of the Matengo people. I was born not far from here in 1953 and married my husband Christandus Ndunguru, known as Chacha, in 1969. We had seven children, but sadly two of them died. The others are grown up, some are married and we have seventeen grandchildren. All our children are farmers.

I feel I've achieved a lot in my life. We've built a good house and we have six cows, five pigs and four goats. I've gained an education for myself, which is what brought you here to see me today. I have a visitors' book full of the names of people who have come from all over the country to see me and the farm. When Tanzania's President, Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, came here in 2006, I met him and was presented with a wheelbarrow in recognition of the work I'm doing. I am also proud that our own children have been educated. I feel I've been blessed and I thank God for the way I'm able to teach people, and I thank Him for all the people who come and visit me.

¹ Equal to around ten Euro cents, or twenty US cents as of June 2008