



Ms. Dorianne Rowan Campbell
Owner
Rowan's Royale
Jamaica

Dorianne Rowan Campbell founded Rowans Royale (RR) an enterprise which produces Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee - one of the most expensive and sought-after coffees in the world. Dorianne's RR is an organic enterprise which could set an organic model for the communities on the island, as well as highlights environmental issues and the role a small farmer can play in combating climate change; environmental degradation and contributing to disaster mitigation.

The methods employed on the farm promote soil-friendly production and conserve species habitats, especially for the bird population. Coffee, conventionally grown, is particularly harmful for the soil therefore RR has developed unique ways of applying compost through "feeder sleeves" dug in at the uppermost drip line of coffee trees so that very little of the nutrients wash down into the river valley below. RR produces its own organic fertilizers, compost and fungicides. A recent report concluded that the Rowans Royal farm had the most birds and least coffee berry borer, the primary coffee pest, compared to other larger farms that participated in the survey.

This year, in response to climate change challenges and multiple hurricanes distressing the coffee (5 since 2004), some rare medicinal herbs were planted in order to attempt to supply a growing pharmaceutical market. Considering the environment, RR is exploring the use of solar power on the farm (on a wider scale than the current solar lights and flashlights). Also, RR is planting a combination of hardwoods and quick growing trees to protect the mountainsides. The quick-growing varieties are used for fertilizer and on-farm cooking fuel. Permaculture techniques are now being employed to ensure even less danger of erosion. Exposed at IUCN's Barcelona Congress to eco-agriculture techniques, these are being shared with other farmers and the GPS techniques encouraged so that organic farmers can map the habitats they protect and nurture. RR is part of Jamaica Organic seed protection working group.

The RR farm operates in partnership with its workers by ensuring fair employment practices; inclusion in all organic training courses offered and continual upgrading of wages and benefits.

Dorianne has been for 30 years an international consultant on gender, human resource development, training and environment and currently has been part of a team running ICTs and organic farming workshops for women farmers in the Caribbean. She is a qualified organic farm inspector. She also runs a community "greening project" in her neighbourhood which has the 1st regular recycling collection service in Jamaica.

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Helen Loe
Owner
Herbal Health Clinic
New Zealand

The Herbal Health Clinic was opened ten years ago by Helen Loe, Medicinal Herbalist, to market herbal teas from herbs organically grown from her commercial herb gardens. Helen envisioned a business dedicated to the cultivation of a wide range of medicinal herbs, grown in their local district. The Herbal Health Clinic offers organically grown herbal infusions in order to support people in better health in a cost effective and environmentally sustainable way.

Today, an extensive range of medicinal herbs are grown on the property of the Herbal Health Clinic, for the high quality herbal tea blends that Helen has created to treat common health issues. The methods applied by the organization promote the sustainable use of natural resources in the local community. Herbal Health Clinic follows the bio-dynamic principles for organic growing by using the resources available on the farm (e.g. Composting tree mulch), balancing the soil, stimulating insect life, encouraging the bee population, hand harvesting instead of using machinery, cutting water usage though mulching.

Traditional knowledge is a precious and long-tested resource of know-how that has become intimately bound with modern awareness of the need for biological diversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources. Helen continuously research and study for blending medicinal herbal recipes and works with the indigenous Maori people, in studying our native flora. The clinic is also committed to transmitting this essential knowledge and skills for future generations; organizing presentations and workshops for students from local schools as well as medical herbalist students from universities. By using native and indigenous herbs, the organization applies and contributes to the survival of ancient, local, and traditional knowledge in relation to the use of medical plants.

The direct marketing strategy through selling the products directly to consumers, at farmers markets or by mail order, reduces the transportation of products to retail outlets, and therefore the CO₂ emissions.

The activities of Herbal Health Clinic link the issues of health, sustainable natural resource management, the maintenance of traditional knowledge, and women's entrepreneurship in one single organization.

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Adriana Soto Ruiz
Owner
Gente Reciclando
Costa Rica

Gente Reciclando was founded as an alternative source of supply for the local plastic industry in 2001. The cornerstones of this new enterprise were the commitment to conservation, sincere client orientation and constant spirit of entrepreneurship. Motivated by the philosophy of Life Cycle Analysis which aims to transform residuals into products, we transform recyclable plastic waste into industrial raw material of high quality that is purchased by micro, small and medium industries in Costa Rica.

Gente Reciclando was the first recycling enterprise in Costa Rica to incorporate cleaner production strategies into its processes, services and products. We continue with these improvements through the inclusion of an environmental management system and corporate social responsibility.

Actually, we are developing eco-designed methods to recycle PET bottles and materials generated by households and businesses in order to valorize and reinsert them into the national market.

In order to support local community development we hire site workers and service suppliers from the local population. Since gender equality is one of our main social focuses we involve women in certain stages of the production, offering jobs that can be realized from home and develop special time schedules that correspond to their possibilities. As part of the corporate social responsibility, some community projects are supported by Gente Reciclando through providing recycled plastic raw material for the elaboration of products such as bags, wallets and coin purses.

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Dr Anna Savage
Executive Director
Proyecto Titi
USA

*Cotton-top tamarins (*Saguinus oedipus*) are small primates found only in northern Colombia and are severely threatened by habitat destruction, capture for the illegal pet trade and the amount of plastic waste improperly disposed. Plastic waste became a direct threat to the survival of the critically endangered cotton-top tamarins as plastic bags had blown into the forest and the tamarins being curious monkeys began to investigate this novel item.*

Proyecto Titi's multi-disciplinary conservation program addresses not only the biological concerns of species protection, but actively engages local communities in becoming part of the solution. The project has developed a sustainable income generating program that is based on turning plastic trash into products that can be sold both locally and internationally. The project provides a practical alternative that allows artisans and their communities make a conscious choice to protect cotton-top tamarins.

Through innovative education programs the project has significantly increased local knowledge and changed attitudes regarding the need to conserve cotton-top tamarins. Proyecto Titi created a women's artisans group (ASOARTESANAS) and taught them to make beautiful "eco-mochilas." Plastic bags are collected, cut into strips and then crocheted into amazing tote bags. To date, these women have recycled more than 1.5 million plastic bags that would have otherwise been left to pollute the environment. The enhanced self-esteem of these women who founded ASOARTESANAS has been amazing. Many of them were single heads of households, with no clear means of income. They now are providers for their families, leaders in the communities, and role models for future generations of Colombian women.

The artisans have become the strongest ambassadors for the conservation program and have encouraged other women from nearby communities to learn to crochet, thereby increasing the number of families committed to cotton-top tamarin conservation. Proyecto Titi is working to engage other organizations in collecting plastic bags for the artisans. Local church groups, regional conservation authorities, and the Barranquilla Zoo all collect plastic bags for the artisans.

Each student wishing to visit our field site to see wild cotton-top tamarins must bring 50-100 plastic bags that will be given to ASOARTESANAS. This easy activity engages students by directly helping to clean up the environment and become personally involved in cotton-top tamarins conservation actions.

Proyecto Titi actively shares its knowledge with other organizations interested in creating economic alternatives for local communities that benefit the environment. The eco-mochila training program has trained numerous individuals in Colombia and our outreach program has spread to other countries. In collaboration with WIDECAS, Proyecto Titi hosted 6 women from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Panama to learn how to make eco-mochilas. These local artisans now sell eco-mochilas to tourists visiting sea turtle nesting sites. We are in the process of developing a collaboration to bring eco-mochilas to communities in Madagascar that are working to save lemurs.

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Francenid Perdomo Perdomo
Director
ASOFUNGICOL
Colombia

Because of the protein contained in edible mushrooms (Pleurotus and Shiitake) they are also known as the meat of the forests and their consumption is recommended as part of food security. Edible mushrooms contain vitamin B, vitamin B2, pantothenic acid, biotin, folic acid, nicotinamide, vitamin C and minerals, such as phosphor, iron, calcium and potassium. The Association of Producers of Edible Mushrooms of Colombia – ASOFUNGICOL-, managed by Francenid Perdomo Perdomo, aims the production and commercialization of edible mushrooms.

This productive activity has achieved conservation, protection and good use of natural renewable resources through the utilisation of crop residues (coffee pulp, sugarcane and corn husk, among others) which were disposed into the water bodies or burned. The production is developed under clean and ecologic techniques. The producers follow the methodology of "Zero Emissions" which offers the maximum benefits of the materials used. The products of all member producers are put into market through ASOFUNGICOL at national level.

The social aspect is extremely important of this activity: actually, there are 340 member producers, majority of them single head of households. 70 per cent of these producers belong to displaced populations that found income in producing mushrooms for themselves and their families.

This activity merging environmental, social and economic considerations is in continuous expansion demonstrating that also environmental activities can be profitable and sustainable.

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Ms. Rachel Ambrose
Managing Director
Tanzania Maasai Women Art
Tanzania

Women's responsibilities, in rural areas of Tanzania, are extensive. They are in charge of providing water, firewood, food security and care to their families, and in addition to that, they have to get involve in some income generation activity.

Many women supported their families by selling firewood to tour operators but Tanzania Maasai Women Art (TMWA) has help them realize the value of natural resources and the necessity for its protection. The production of Massai jewellery now, provides these women a sustainable livelihood activity that protects the environment.

TMWA is a locally owned and managed company which produces and sells hand made beaded jewellery from Tanzania. The main objective of this company is to empower women in business and society: to create and encourage sustainable and transformational micro-enterprises in rural communities, to improve literacy and raise HIV awareness.

Tanzania Maasai Women Art (TMWA) was founded in the framework of the development projects promoted by the environmental NGO Istituto Oikos (an IUCN member) and its partner Oikos East Africa in 2006. Up to date, Maasai Women Art (MWA) has been registered in Tanzania as a company; which directly benefits 148 Maasai women in Arusha, Meru and Monduli, regions of Northern Tanzania.

The company guarantees fair working and trading conditions to Maasai women and encourages better environmental practices. The beaded jewellery is distributed at a national and international level. Each piece is created out of the traditional skills of Maasai women combined with the creativity of Italian designers. At present, an Italian Jewellery Designer, Francesca Torri Soldini, supports the women, with specific training on production quality and improvement of design.

The project has increased Maasai women's access to literacy and numeracy courses, also business training, including book keeping and basic accountancy, which is provided on a six monthly rotational programme. At least 30 seminars on hygiene and water utilization have been held in the schools and community centers. Workshops are provided for health education, specializing in HIV awareness. The screening of documentaries is frequently used for HIV education to overcome illiteracy constraints.

As a result, women are now independently managing a common fund for the development and welfare of the group; the women of Mkuru have registered as a co-operative and manage their own shop and cultural boma; deforestation has dramatically decreased and a strong environmental consciousness has been born.

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Ms. Gail Ambrosius
Owner and President
Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier-Madison
USA

The goal of Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier is to source delicious, natural chocolate from small producers from Central and South America, enabling them to have a sustainable livelihood while providing US customers with a gourmet product that they can feel good about consuming.

The single origin chocolates produced by Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier are made of cocoa obtained from small family farms from ten different countries of the world. The Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier is owned and managed by the founder Gail Ambrosius, and stands as an inspiring example of women's creativity and international entrepreneurship.

Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier works in close collaboration with the small producers of cacao - many of the farms are visited by Gail to make sure the cacao is grown sustainably in a healthy and diverse ecosystem, without the use of harmful chemicals. The direct trade between the enterprise and the local producers of cacao contributes to ensuring that the farmers are paid a good wage for their work, and that their children are able to attend school. Lately, advocating for programs that teach farmers about biodiversity and responsible cacao propagation has become a growing focus of the enterprise.

Education has a growing importance in the activities of Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier on both sides: it aims to make the full circle connection of growers of cacao to the final products for the customers in the USA. The enterprise actively informs staff and consumers alike about how cacao is grown, where and by whom, and how it gets to the North American market.

The University of Wisconsin School of Business awarded Gail Ambrosius Chocolatier with their 2008 Dane County Small Business Award. The DCBSA committee selected Gail on the basis of several criteria including business viability, employee relations and benefits, and community involvement.

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Ms. Seva Fumoux
Director
CLEAN STAR TRUST
India

Climate change is negatively affecting natural resources in the developing world, as well as the rural poor who have traditionally lived off these resources. Now more than ever, there is a pressing need for environmentally sustainable livelihood options.

Central Maharashtra, in central India, illustrates this need. It is a drought-prone and land-locked region where natural resources are already largely depleted. The increasing scarcity of water, coupled with erratic monsoon patterns and severe erosion, has forced more than one half of the population into rural exodus, leaving farms abandoned and classrooms empty.

Three years ago, a small group of alumni from Oxford University's MBA in Social Entrepreneurship started a field-based research on sustainable BioFuel production from tree-borne oilseeds on wastelands in central Maharashtra with the help of the local communities. After two years of trials, they were able to establish a set of silvicultural practices related to the propagation of oilseed producing trees, and began testing technological applications for processing the oilseeds into usable BioFuels.

Instead of starting a for-profit organization, the group decided to leverage their knowledge locally to benefit the wider community. Today, CleanStar Trust incubates micro-enterprises at the village level to develop energy solutions by the poor for the poor.

CleanStar Trust creates community platforms where women, organized in Self-Help Groups (SHG), design and implement plans to generate new sources of income from existing resources through better management. These women's groups are in charge of managing their businesses as well. As a group, they own all the assets obtained during the incubation stage (trees and processing units). The program provides income, promotes women's leadership and contributes to decreasing the seasonal migration of women within the region.

Over the last three years, demand for inedible oilseeds has picked up in the local markets (mandis), allowing the women's businesses to flourish. Government schemes to promote BioFuel processing units have supported these businesses, as have private sector investments such as a newly built BioDiesel refinery in the target area.

CleanStar Trust provides on-going technical support to small business owners in the following areas:

- 1. Wild seed collection, involving training and logistical support for the collection, storage, and sale of wild oilseeds to direct buyers.*
- 2. Biofuel tree plantations, involving micro-loans and technical support for BioFuel tree-planting and watershed management to grow the trees. Funds are disbursed regularly until tree maturity (3 years), after which oilseed sales generate yearly income.*
- 3. Oilseeds processing, which involves using CleanStar Trust's capital and technical expertise to purchase and start the operation of an oilseeds processing unit. After processing, (30% of the seeds) the oil is sold to local Biodiesel processors, and seedcakes (the remaining 70%) are sold to locals as bio-coal briquettes, or bio-fertilizer to boost crop yields and displace fossil fuels like diesel and kerosene.*
- 4. Agroforestry on wasteland, which involves supplying micro-loans for intercropping BioFuel trees with fruit trees and hardy leguminous crops or fodder.*

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Ms. Marlene Ruiz
President
Asociación Typha Tour
Costa Rica

Palo Verde is one of the most ecologically diverse parts of Costa Rica located between the rivers Bebedero and Tempisque about 30 km west of the city of Cañas in Guanacaste Province. There are approximately fifteen habitats created by the topography, soil conditions, drainage, the rivers overflow and the effect of tides. Palo Verde Lagoon is, for example, an important habitat for reproduction and resting of resident and migratory water birds.

However, the habitat loss in the area of the lagoon due to the invasion by the plant Typha dominguensis (known locally as tifa, enea or tule) of the previous years has led to a decline in the population of resident and migratory water birds.

"Typha Tour Association" is an organization formed by women which is engaged into producing paper using the invasive specie of Typha dominguensis distracted from the wetlands of Palo Verde National Park, declared a Ramsar site since 1992. The organisation is an example of women leadership that also created jobs for women heads of household in the community Bagatzi.

All activities of the Association are supported and supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica which ensures that both the tools and the process of extraction of Typha make only a positive impact on the ecosystem of the Park. By manufacturing paper from this invasive specie, the Association contributes to the process of restoration of wetlands through cutting Typha dominguensis or Enea to open water flows in order to provide a suitable habitat for migratory and resident birds.

The Alliance has also established formal partnerships with private and governmental institutions such as the Organization for Tropical Studies and the University of Costa Rica.

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Maria Helena Guarezi
Co-ordinator of Gender Equity Program
Itaipu Binational
Brazil

Itaipu Binational is an electricity generating company managed by Brazil and Paraguay with the mission "to generate electrical power of quality with social and environmental responsibility and support the sustainable development of the sectors of economy, tourism and technology in Brazil and Paraguay."

In response to the above, the company has included to its strategic plan and annual budget, the Program to Promote Gender Equity IB/MI since 2003. The general objective of this program is "to contribute to the full realization of social and environmental management of the Itaipu Binational through the equal inclusion of women and men into the processes of social participation and decision-making."

As the Program to Promote Gender Equity IB/MI is implemented exclusively in Brazil, further references made to governmental bodies are concerning those of Brazil. The gender equity program, coordinated by Management Committee of Gender Equity, addresses the issue in three different levels:

- 1. Corporate level: By constructing and implementing gender equity guidelines for the inclusion of women and men in all areas of the Itaipu Binational - there are specific provisions for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women as regards hiring policies, salaries, promotions, etc.*
- 2. Social and communitarian levels: These operations focus on supporting institutions from the public and third sector by providing support for women's organizations of the Paraná Basin III and promoting the implementation of the II National Plan of Policies for Women of the Federal Government.*
- 3. Institutional relations level: The Management Committee of Gender Equity is actively involved in the Permanent Committee on Gender Equity of the Ministry of Mining and Energy; and has a seat in the State Council of Women in Paraná as well as the Municipal Council of Women in Foz de Iguazu. The Management Committee of Gender Equity organizes meetings with women to promote the empowerment of women, their access to health services, the labor market and education as well as to prevent and combat violence against women.*

The Program to Promote Gender Equity IB/MI in particular provides financial and institutional support to various organisations which work with women. Moreover, the projects related to socio-environmental responsibility include activities, such as, organic farming, agroecology, eco-handbags, medicinal plants, etc. Other projects are concern the production, processing and marketing of products deriving from Family Agriculture in order to support sustainable rural development. The company assists the sustainability of indigenous communities; in particular, production of handcrafts, organization of environmental associations and cooperatives, as well as, provides training in various areas; such as, leadership and management. The company also supports a protected house "Casa Abrigo" for women victims of violence in Foz of Iguazu.

The company has won the prize "Pro-Gender Equity" in its first edition awarded by the National Secretary of Women's Policies (SPM) - prize awarded to entities that are known for their commitment to the advancement of women; moreover, Itaipu Binational has also joined the second edition.

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