

Autonomy and High Self-Esteem for Nziza Women

The 200 women of Nziza Collective are the sole supporters of their households. They are members of the community supplying a washing station owned by Land of a Thousand Hills (LTH) Coffee co. It sits on a mountain at 1800m overlooking Lake Kivu. This fully-washed coffee is a micro-lot of the mixed, heirloom bourbon varieties that grow in the region. Agronomists suspect the cool lake breezes are part of what give coffee from this region such a famous and consistently great taste. With support from LTH, the washing station owner, the Nziza women have started their own sewing collective as a means to earn more income during the off-season from coffee.



Selling their coffee as a women's collective and receiving support to start a sewing collective are all activities that enhance empowerment of women, not only for the individual coffee farmers, but for many women in the community who see what is happening. They see the Nziza women gaining more self-esteem as they take on leadership roles in the cooperatives (coffee and sewing.) They are making the plans, counting the money, opening bank accounts and taking full responsibility for

decisions. All these things enhance women's empowerment.