EDUCAFE – PILOT TESTING OF A MOBILE APPLICATION

CONTEXT
Peru is 9th largest producer of coffee in the world, one of the leading producers of organic and Fair-Trade certified coffees. Coffee is Peru’s main agricultural export commodity and makes up about 25% of national agricultural income. responsAbility supports tens of coffee cooperatives in Peru through pre-harvest financing and aims to implement a mobile application that enhances information exchange between coffee cooperatives and farmers, which has proved successful in Nicaragua. The application not only provides farmers with timely information on weather and educational materials to support farm management, but it also enables the cooperatives to collect more accurate data and insights on farmer farm-level activities. The project will build on the project in Nicaragua by developing a white label application, which will allow it to be available to a much wider audience and pilot-test the mobile application in another geography and setting with two Peruvian cooperatives.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE INVESTEES
Both investees are Peruvian coffee cooperatives. ACPC Pichanaki is located in the Chanchamayo department, in a region that was hit hard by the Roya crisis in 2014 and where many cooperatives did not survive. The geographical spread of their members and their remote location poses common challenges to their operations. This cooperative is the strongest in the region and best placed to export the certified coffee of their members. Selva Andina, the other cooperative, is a smaller cooperative located in Jaen, which focuses on supporting their members with the production and export of certified and high-quality coffee.

OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT
The overall goal is to provide farmers with a knowledge sharing platform, as well as educational materials to support farm-management through the piloting of mobile application. While most of the activities will be implemented by an external provider; the two cooperatives have committed to mobilize their teams of agronomists to ensure coordination of the activities internally, generate educational and farming content for the app, answer questions that the farmers can ask via the app. Through a white-label approach, the application will be marketed and deployed with the name defined by the cooperatives. Both cooperatives have identified groups of farmers as pilot users and internal staff (agronomists) to manage the application. A total group of 180 farmers has been identified, including 47 women.

The expected outcomes of this project are:
1. Ensure that the app is adapted to target users and achieve its active usage.
2. Facilitate the roll-out of the app to a larger group of users in various geographies.
3. Strengthen coffee production skills and knowledge of the targeted farmers.
4. Any increase in yield after harvest will be tracked to assess the value of the app.