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**GERARDO ARIAS CAMACHO.** As a coffee farmer/producer in Llano Bonito, San Jose, Costa Rica, Gerardo Arias Camacho and his family had inevitably been burdened by instability of coffee market prices. To support his family, he worked in America for 8 years in order to support his family and make enough money for his parents to retire. With coffee prices oftentimes lower than the cost of production, Camacho was again forced to return to the States in order to provide for his family's survival. Currently, he is on the board of his village cooperation, which is part of the Fairtrade consortium; through this involvement, the community now has the funds to build up the education, environmental protection, civil structure, and processing plant systems that were previously neglected as individuals were scrambling to meet their own basic needs. In addition, the farms has proven to be more environmentally friendly as a result of Fairtrade, through planting trees, reducing the use of pesticides, and many transformative practices within the community. Through Fairtrade, Camacho feels empowered without constantly being under the mercy of the market fluctuations but instead, being able to not only provide for his own family but also the greater community through environmentally sustainable practices. One thing that resonated with me was his discussion about his children. His oldest son is currently in college, his ten-year old son has as much education as he does, and his daughter is in her second year! Growing up in an immigrant family myself, I see a similar kind of struggle to provide for the family in my parents. Under the burden of unstable market prices, it must of felt hopeless and helpless as Camacho struggles to even provide for basic survival needs for his family, including food and shelter. To know that he is able to open a whole world of opportunities for his children previously unavailable to him because of Fairtrade, I am able to fully understand what that empowerment means.

