



NESsT Venture Fund

A philanthropic investment fund for social enterprise development

Investment Brief: Chile

Corporación Educacional RUF Cunco

www.meliliwen.cl



Location: Cunco, Chile

Sector: Education and employment of indigenous women, preservation of Mapuche culture and the environment

Stage: First year, later-stage portfolio

Organizational Information

Date founded: 1994

Annual Budget: US\$ 156,800

Employees: 7 full-time, 15 part-time, 2 volunteers

Mission: RUF Cunco promotes community development and the economic and civic advancement of rural indigenous women, specifically through training, vocational

support, and cultural events in Chile's impoverished southern Araucania region.

Social Challenges: The Mapuche comprise about 95% of Chile's indigenous people, and about one-third of them live in poverty, with higher unemployment levels than the general population. Mapuche women, particularly in isolated rural areas, have few opportunities to work outside the home. Another challenge is education: one of every four Mapuche women is illiterate.

Social Enterprise Overview

Enterprise Description: RUF Cunco produces and sells a line of beauty creams made from extracts of medicinal herbs and native plants from the local area. The enterprise buys the herbs from the Mapuche women, who cultivate the herbs utilizing their knowledge of medicinal properties of plants with the technical support of RUF. Each worker is paid for her efforts and remaining profits are used to

cover operational costs of the organization.

Social Impact Goals: Provide 11 Mapuche women with a steady source of income from the sale of herbs, increasing their family income and improving their standard of living. At the same time, marketing the creams helps to widen understanding of Mapuche culture.

Financial Goal: Increase self-generated income from 5% to 60% of revenues.

NESsT Investment

Overall Financial support to Date
US\$ 8,500

Financial Support Needed (Year 1)
US\$ 7,000

Capacity-Building Support (Year 1)
valued at US\$ 7,500

1. Evaluate, refine and implement the business plan and marketing strategy.

2. Evaluate and develop financial systems, operations, organizational structure, fundraising, performance management and impact on mission and values.

3. Enhance in-house sales and distribution of creams.

In addition to NESsT workshops, NESsT meets on a bi-monthly basis with RUF Cunco management and facilitates consulting and financial support for RUF Cunco from the NESsT Business Advisory Network.

NESsT is assisting the organization in the following areas: