

Celebrating a year of transformation

Dear All,

Welcome to the third newsletter from the Salt Network—a very special addition which celebrates the first year of the Network and hopes to both acknowledge the journey we have travelled so far and outline the vision we have for the future. We marked our anniversary by coming together for our first ‘open’ event and over 60 business leaders and academics joined us to hear what has been achieved since Christian Aid established the first [Salt Network](#) hub in London last October and to consider how they might ensure their businesses have a more positive impact locally and globally

The evening celebrated the work members are doing to lead change in their own businesses, provoke a community of change across faith and business networks and resource change by supporting entrepreneurs in the global south. As well as celebrating the achievements of the founding year, attendees had fresh inspiration from ex-Global Marketing Director at Hasbro, Simon Gardner, Christian Aid’s CEO, Loretta Minghella, and John Lewis’s Corporate Responsibility Director, Benet Northcote.



Benet Northcote in a foreword for a Christian Aid report ‘Towards a Sustainable Economy’ says: “Any experienced director will know that running a company involves extensive discussions about risks and opportunities.” “A relentless focus on risk will blind us to the potential of new opportunities. And tunnel vision about opportunity will leave us no room to consider the consequences of action; consequences that could prove fatal to the success of an enterprise.”

The network is growing quickly with 40 members now meeting as part of the London hub, two new hubs launching this Autumn in the North East and East Midlands and workshops already planned for London, Exeter, Nottingham and Newcastle in 2018 (see back page for further details). It is hoped that further hubs will launch across the UK in 2018 with the first international hub in the planning for 2019.

Salt manager, Helen Howe said: “The evening was both humbling and inspiring as we stepped back and appreciated how much change has been set in motion by our members. It is such a privilege to support them in their discipleship as they explore how to put their faith into action and transform their businesses. What has been incredible in this first year is not only the willingness for members to make real change but also their desire to support each other on this journey. People are in very different places when they join the network and come from businesses both large and small but they are all happy to walk alongside each other and challenge themselves and each other to do more, to be more. This is the start of a vision becoming a reality – a vision for Christian business leaders uniting to transform their businesses, their communities and global communities.”

Leading Change

As with all discipleship, transformation for Salt members starts with themselves and their first challenge is always around how they can lead their business in a way that takes into account both opportunities and risks to have a more positive impact on communities locally and globally. At each workshop members are inspired to review their business impact and start to develop action plans on how they can move forward. The change that is taking place is now well evidenced with 77% of established members having made pledges on how they will improve business practices. Some of the members are now sharing their learning and the annual event saw two members, Olu Ogunbode (Global Education Foundation) and Simon Hickman (Access Insurance) share a little of their journeys. Olu spoke about the challenges of protecting human rights when working in a global context, and in particular ensuring that his suppliers and enterprise associates in Nigeria respect the highest standards of employment practices to protect against aspects of Modern Day Slavery. Simon shared Access Insurance's journey so far with Salt and how their resolve to review their mission and values through extensive staff consultation is now taking them on a path where they aim to achieve B-Corporation status later this year.

The increasing number of Benefit Corporations (or B-corps) were first highlighted in our June workshop where Salt member, Sophi Tranchell, (Divine Chocolate) highlighted this growing movement. A company needs to pass [a minimum score to become a B-Corp](#), after which they also need to [change their legal structure](#) to take into account an explicit aims towards environment, society, transparency along with economic benefits. The third London workshop saw B-Corps explored further as Sophi outlined Divine's B-corp journey. We were also joined by Charles Wookey ([A blueprint for better business](#)) who inspired members with Blueprint's five principles of a purpose driven business and their framework to guide decision making.

This workshop was a continuation of the one in June and helped members consider further how to develop and embed business purpose and values. Following the workshop, members undertook a range of pledges including defining their business purpose and values, clearly articulating purpose to customers / investors, communicating and recruiting to their values framework, and exploring how they can measure values and purpose.

Provoking a Community of Change

One of the aims of Salt is to give members a united voice to speak out to the wider business community, church community and policy makers on issues that affect the world's poor and encourage and support members to influence others. This was a key component of the first annual event and in addition, many business leaders have made pledges to influence others outside Salt, either via one to one conversations, speaking at networking events or speaking at partnership events.

After successfully partnering with LICC on an event focusing on Modern Day Slavery earlier this year, we are exploring further partnership events with a number of organisations from across faith and business networks. Events in 2018 will hope to look at values in business, B corps and how we can tackle inequality. Look out for further updates in the Spring Newsletter.

Resourcing Change

There is no membership charge for joining the Salt network but members are encouraged to support our work financially and in the last year they have donated over £117,000 to support a wide range of Christian Aid's work. One area of work we are keen to encourage members to support is our innovative work with enterprises in the global south. The Social Enterprise Programme (SEP) has provided support for 14 enterprises across the globe and has reached more than 510,000 poor and marginalized individuals to date. These enterprises are being supported to make key improvements in order to reach a point where they are commercially viable and well managed businesses with clear growth milestones, at which point they may want to seek external investment in order to grow further.

We have carried out activities such as identification, evaluation, incubation, delivery of technical assistance and monitoring and evaluation support to a total of 14 enterprises, costing an average of around £4,500 each. At our annual event, we were joined by Deirdre O'Sullivan-Winks, Christian Aid's Programme Director for ACRE and Inclusive Business who gave an update on the work and passed on thanks from the Managing Director at Chalalan Eco lodge, Rodrigo, via an audio clip.

Members have now donated £5,500 to support the work of the SEP and have pledged £10,500 more but the potential transformation we can enable through supporting this programme is significant.

We have so much more to do to explore the most impactful and effective ways of doing good through business and we are now looking at ways we can not just utilise member's financial resources but also use members skills and expertise to move this work forward. To that end we have two exciting events planned for 2018. Firstly, in February, we are going to look at how we can use members skills and expertise, in a workshop environment, to help support and inform our work. We will be asking members to bring their expertise, experiences and advice to help us explore some of the challenges facing our social enterprise work and ask them to guide us through to solutions from their own experiences.

Secondly, in September 2018 we are looking to take a few members to see some of our SEP work first hand. This will be a self-funded trip but will allow supporters to get a real feel for the challenges and successes of this innovative work.



Bolivia: [The Chalalan Ecolodge](#). Photo Credit: Gui Carvalho



Dates for your Diary:

Salt Exeter: Friday 12th January 2018 10.00am-1.00pm (Exeter)

What motivates you as a business leader and how does your faith play a role in that? How does your business reflect your values and how do you ensure your business doesn't just make a profit but impacts people locally & globally in a positive way? Just some of the questions which will be explored by the new Salt Exeter hub at their inaugural workshop! This workshop is open to all existing Salt members and any Christian Business Leader who wants to find out how faith and business can unite to tackle poverty.

Register [here](#)

Salt East Midlands: Tuesday 30th January 2018 3.00-6.00pm (Nottingham)

The first East Midlands workshop will also focus on purpose and values in business, exploring the importance of purpose and how you can embed values within your business to ensure it has a positive impact on communities both locally and globally. This workshop is open to all existing Salt members and any Christian Business Leader who wants to find out more about how faith and business can unite to tackle poverty. Register [here](#)

Salt London: Tuesday 27th February 2018 4.00-7.00pm

Supporting & Informing Christian Aid's work. This is going to be a completely different workshop where we ask you to bring your expertise, experiences and advice to the table to help us explore some of the challenges we are facing with our social enterprise work and ask you to guide us through to solutions from your own experiences. Register [here](#)

Coming to a region near you.....

Salt North East: We're anticipating our second workshop in the NE will be on the topic of 'Putting Values to Work'. Date tbc but expected to be in March 2018

Salt Bristol, Salt West Midlands, Salt Yorkshire, Salt North West & Salt Scotland are all being planned for 2018—if you'd like to be a founding member, just get in touch.....

Interested in Salt and would like to find out more?

If you want to find out more about the kind of people who join Salt and why—visit the new Salt [webpages](#) to find out more about our members and what motivates them. If you have any questions or would like to be part of this exciting new movement just contact the [Salt Network](#) Manager, Helen Howe for further details: email hhowe@christian-aid.org

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