



December '18 edition

THE GIFT

OF

BUSINESS

Hello!

Welcome to our latest newsletter; I hope amongst the busyness of this Christmas season you find time to stop, reflect and spend a little time enjoying this addition of the **Salt Network News**.

There has certainly been a lot to reflect upon over the last few months with a trip to Bolivia with some of the Salt members and the first Salt Network conference to name just a few of the exciting activities within the network.

JUST A THOUGHT

As we head towards Christmas, spare a thought to how transformational business can be – that it can very much be a **gift**. Business can not only provide meaningful employment, and a place where you can find value and be valued; but for those who have the opportunity to work for a values based organisation it can provide an opportunity to be part of building a business that is transformative, for people, communities and the planet.

Many of those we met in Bolivia would also see that enterprise can be a powerful and effective route out of poverty – but only if that enterprise is sustainable and inclusive in the way that it operates.

How has your work place been a gift to you, others and the planet in 2018?

In this last newsletter of 2018 you can explore a little more about the way that Christian Aid is working to strengthen businesses in Bolivia, giving indigenous populations hope whilst safeguarding the Amazon basin in which they live.

You will also read a little more about the conversations and pledges that are happening across the network. Salt is, as always a network open to all business leaders – there to help support, inspire and equip you all to be changemakers – we hope in providing this gift of support to you, you in turn will be supported to run businesses that have a positive impact in the world; transformative, Kingdom building businesses. We were given the ultimate gift in Jesus Christ and at this time of year, let his presence in our lives help us all to run our businesses in a way which reflects his love for all.
Merry Christmas!

THE GIFT OF LEARNING

On the 5th October 2018 we welcomed business leaders from across the United Kingdom to join us for the first Salt Business Network #StandTogether conference. The event featured rousing keynote speeches from prominent global business leaders as well as a wealth of workshops designed to inspire and engage delegates to use their business, both large and small, to help transform global and local communities.

The day conference offered the opportunity for Christian business leaders to be supported and equipped to be changemakers in their workplaces and business sectors as well as providing opportunities to support fledgling businesses overseas. As with all our Salt events, the aim was to empower individuals to think deeply about their faith and work, to support them to pioneer positive business practices and to foster action focused partnerships that generate transformational enterprise around the world and embrace the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.



Matti Kohonen, Christian Aid's Principal Advisor for Public Sector, Policy and Public Affairs said "many of us wish for a world without poverty, conflict, climate change, ill health and injustice, but what we should be asking ourselves is how do we fill the estimated \$2.5 trillion funding gap needed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. One thing is clear, no amount of government development aid or even private philanthropy could fill this financial

gulf. What is certain is that businesses which are both profitable and socially conscious will be key to securing an answer".

Echoing this sentiment, the conference heard from Paul Gerrad, Director, Group Policy and Campaigns, Co-operative Group, Sophi Tranchell MBE, Managing Director, Divine Chocolate, Lord Dr Michael Hastings of Scarisbrook CBE, Global Head of Citizenship, KPMG International, David Conner, founder of 2030hub and Martin Rich, cofounder Future Fit Foundation. With further workshops getting into the nuts and bolts of current issues such as modern slavery in supply chains, value-based business strategy, work / life balance, benchmarking better business and biblical views of business practice.



Asking members to lead change within their own business is an essential part of Salt – we want Salt to be more than a 'talking shop' – we want it to be a space where business leaders can learn, reflect on their faith and think about how they can influence their business to be good news in the world. Hopefully this year's conference has helped form part of that journey for all of those that could attend.

THE GIFT OF EXPERIENCE

We've talked a lot to members about the work that Christian Aid is doing across market sectors in the global south – helping those in poverty to build businesses that are ethical, sustainable and inclusive as a key device to helping them out of poverty. This November saw two Salt members travel with our Salt Lead, Helen Howe to visit these projects and experience first-hand how this transformation is happening.

Developing Sustainable Businesses in Bolivia *what we learned*

By Marjory Mair & Cal Bailey

During our time in Bolivia (29th October – 10th November 2018) we met with several of the Christian Aid (CA) Partners and learned about their work impacting climate change, gender justice and human and land rights for the indigenous communities. They are achieving this through their partnerships in Eco-Tourism, Agriculture, Handicrafts and the Solar Oven Project.

We noticed how Christian Aid in Bolivia, a small team of 4 led by Emma Donlan the Country Manager, 2 programme managers (Licette and Maria) and a finance manager (Mariana) see themselves as part of the solution and not The Solution. No projects are dependent on continuous funding - gone are the days of financial 'handouts', or simply digging wells and constructing buildings. "We don't want money but we do need help" says Nicholas, Logistics Manager at an eco-tourism business at Mashiquipe "and we want to share what we learn with other communities". CA Bolivia see their role as facilitators of that help in working with local Partners and putting the indigenous people in the driving seat by starting with participatory planning that includes the children and the women.

We travelled up the Tuichi river to Madidi National Park, identified as "the most bio-diverse place on the planet" because of the numbers of species of birds, fish, animals, insects and plants. We've identified two of the projects impacting communities which we propose to enable through our funding:

- ⇒ The Solar Oven Project
- ⇒ Mashaquipe Eco-Tourism

The Solar Oven Project

Solar Ovens have no electricity or gas; they need no wood; they are powered by sunlight alone with deflectors which are also "box lids" folding over the food

to insulate it at night so that it can keep cooking. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Jam, Chutney, Dried Bananas, Banana Flour.... the list goes on of the produce we experienced from the Solar Ovens. However the benefits of the solar oven are not just more food options and healthier food but transformational lives, particularly for the women.



They now save time as there is no need to collect wood and stand over a burning fire. They also save money as there is no need to buy gas and oil. And with that time, they can be more economically active, making things to sell and generating an income for themselves and their families; getting their voice into the Community Associations to be included in political decision making, often speaking out against Government initiatives to build mega-dams, huge highways or large scale mining projects. Their health is improving - backs, eyesight and lungs are not being damaged by carrying the wood and the wood smoke from the fires and they are saving approx. 15 trees per family per year and substantially reducing their CO2 emissions – what's not to like?!

The challenge however is to extend the reach of the solar ovens into more communities in a financially sustainable way. We were impressed by the robust process of engaging new communities in their ownership of a Solar Oven, from building it, training (including the men and children) in the huge variety of uses for the Oven and also how to maintain it. CA is currently helping them to create a plan for developing a sustainable and commercial venture encouraged by demand from hotels and other businesses. Magda the General Manager from Inti Illimani who runs the project told us "we want to do better in a commercial way, not so that we become millionaires but we have a long list of people who want a Solar Cooker but not enough funds to provide them at the moment".

What we learned from the Solar Oven Project

The original idea of the Solar Oven was for the poorest; but it over-delivered on expectations of its impact on the lives of women, their families and communities; and a clear demand has been identified from elsewhere in Latin America so that a manufacturing business can be developed with product development, sales and marketing – so that this product, which deeply honours their culture, can benefit more individuals and communities.

Mashaquipe Eco-Tourism

The Amazon rainforest is a popular place to travel both for old and young – and small lodges, which provide river travel from the nearest airport at Rurrenabaque, have developed on a small scale to meet this demand.



We were taken by one small business at Chalalan to meet another at Mashaquipe and had the joy of witnessing the Manager from Mashaquipe and the Manager from Chalalan (in our world, direct competitors) meeting each other – something that would have been unlikely unless brokered by circumstance through CA Bolivia. After lunch, also joined by the Chalalan team, we had a presentation from Vilma, the General Manager. He shared the structure, the operating model and the values of Mashaquipe... values such as:

- ⇒ **Co-operation** – they want to work with others in the industry and share their practices and their training e.g. training English speaking guides
- ⇒ **Honesty** – with clients, community & self
- ⇒ **Inclusion** – of women on the team demonstrated by a finance department of 3 women and one woman on the Board of 4 people.
- ⇒ **Equality** – limiting the gap in salaries across the team

- ⇒ **Complementarity** - Not competing with other eco-tourism businesses but looking for ways to work together to grow the sector

Recent work by FUNDES, the CA local partner, has helped them develop their operating model and codes of conduct for both staff and visitors. 50% of their profit is re-invested in infrastructure (repairing and building new huts), 10% in marketing, 10% in training staff, 10% in savings, 10% dividend to the associates/ families and 10% distributed as CSR to local communities.

Challenges facing these small business include recent government decisions to limit USA and Israeli visas, the need for more English speaking guides, guests with disabilities; but we have seen that they can grow their business, learning and sharing their knowledge for the benefit of their communities, their precious environment and future generations.

What we learned from Eco-Tourism

Their clarity of purpose to do the right thing for their environment, their community and future generations has created a robust business model that drives the way they do business and gives them the best chance of a sustainable future. We were impressed by their generosity and long-term view in times of legislative restrictions.

Conclusion

As we left, one of Emma's early comments returned to us: the deep Bolivian value of reciprocity – or win-win. We certainly gained - our lives were enlarged and enriched and we hope that in sharing with you we can be salt in the Salt Network and encourage you that through your giving in finance, prayer, or support in any other way, we can be a force for Good Business on the other side of the world.

THE GIFT OF TIME

Have you benefitted from being part of Salt?

Would you like to see the network grow and develop in your region?

WE ARE CURRENTLY RECRUITING VOLUNTEER AMBASSADORS TO BUSINESS

You can volunteer for as little as a few hours per month but will ideally have a business background, be happy to facilitate hub meetings, keep in touch with Salt members and generally be a point of contact for our regional teams. Equally we are keen to see how you can support the work of Christian Aid's UK teams – if you would like to invest your time with us please get in touch.

January

- Tuesday 8th January 4.00-7.00pm: **Salt London** Workshop—Tackling Inequality
- Thursday 10th January 3.00-6.00pm: **Salt East Midlands** Workshop—Business & Creation (Nottingham)
- Wednesday 30th January 3.00-6.00pm: **Salt North East** Workshop—Good Investment (Newcastle)

February

- Tuesday 5th February 3.00-6.00pm: **Salt North West** Workshop—Putting Values to work (Manchester)
- Saturday 9th February 09:30am– 3:30pm, **Festival of Transformation**, Bristol [MORE INFO](#)
- Monday 11th February 3.00-6.00pm: **Salt West Midlands** Workshop—Developing a Values Based Business (Birmingham)

March

- Friday 15th March 10.00am-1.00pm: **Salt Exeter** Workshop
- Friday 15th March 7.00pm– Sat 16th 5.00pm: **Thrive Conference 2019**, Aberdeen [MORE INFO](#)

To register for your place at any Salt events just visit our events page [HERE](#)

SAVE THE DATE:

2019 Salt Conference: will be held on Friday 11th October

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 team to find out more.

- Helen Howe, Salt Network Lead, hhowe@christian-aid.org
- Samuel Williams, Salt Network UK Manager, swilliams@christian-aid.org

Follow the Salt Network on Twitter on [@NetworkSalt](#)