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# Salt!

■ THE **CHRISTIAN AID**  
BUSINESS NETWORK

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# MORE THAN TOIL

## SMALL GROUP SESSIONS FOR EVERYDAY DISCIPLES IN BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

The Christian Aid Salt Network is committed to equipping the church and Christian business leader to put faith into action in the workplace. More than Toil is a 5 session discipleship tool for individuals and groups to think actively about your faith and your business leadership.

Each session will give you an opportunity to reflect on scripture, review your leadership and explore new ways of operating so that not only you and your work flourishes but you are inspired to go beyond the bottom line and transform the world for good too.

Each session can be run as a small group, larger workshop with external speaker or as an individual discipleship tool.

# General Session Summary

	<i>Duration</i>
<b>1.0 Networking</b> <i>The session opens with refreshments and networking</i>	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>2.0 Welcome</b> <i>Welcome all delegates to the session, allow introductions and set ground rules</i>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>3.0 The Salt Network</b> <i>Give a brief overview of the Salt Network, its history, vision and mission</i>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>4.0 The Topic</b> <i>Introducing the topic.</i>	<b>15 mins</b>
<b>5.0 Reflection</b> <i>This section allows time to reflect upon the topic before moving in to discussion</i>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>6.0 Small group breakout session</b> <i>This section draws together sections 4.0 and 5.0 and allows time for the group to discuss the topic from their context.</i>	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>7.0 External Speaker</b> <i>Overview of work they have done in relation to the topic.</i>	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>8.0 Coffee Break</b>	<b>15 mins</b>
<b>9.0 The Topic 2.0</b> <i>This section outlines the scope of actions that businesses can take in relation to the topic.</i>	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>10.0 Small group break out session</b> <i>This section allows time for the delegates to discuss section 9.0 and the possible steps they could take.</i>	<b>20 mins</b>
<b>12.0 Close</b> <i>AOB and Closing prayer</i>	<b>10 mins</b>

## 1.0 Networking

The session opens with refreshments and networking

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- Allow at least 20 minutes for all the delegates arrive and network with one another.

## 2.0 Welcome

Welcome all delegates to the session, allow introductions and set ground rules

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- Introduce yourself and other leaders
- Have each delegate introduce themselves.
  - **Optional:** use Blob person image. Ask the delegates which blob person they feel like the most when considering the topic. Allow a few minutes for delegates to choose. Ask each delegate to introduce themselves and which blob they chose.
- Set the **Ground Rules**.
  - Chatham House rules
  - All things discussed within the group will stay within the group
  - We respect one another even though we may disagree

## 3.0 The Salt Network

Give a brief overview of the Salt Network, its history, vision and mission

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### Christian Aid's Work

Christian Aid aims to end poverty and injustice worldwide by focusing on seven key areas. (1. *Gender, Power and Inclusion* 2. *Voice and Governance* 3. *Community Health* 4. *From Violence to Peace* 5. *Humanitarian* 6. *Inclusive Markets* 7. *Resilience and Climate*)

This involves working in partnership with local organisations, as well as with governments and the private sector.

Our work includes helping people to:

- claim their rights and access services such as healthcare and education
- ensure they are not discriminated against for any reason
- become more resilient to shocks and disasters such as drought, climate change and hurricanes
- make the most of opportunities, such as being able to sell their produce for a fair price.

Most simply our work can be broken down into 1) *long term development programmes*, 2) *Humanitarian assistance* and 3) *Advocacy and campaigning*.



## Christian Aid and the Private Sector

Christian Aid's Vision is to end poverty however this cannot be done alone.

- It cannot be done without the support of national and international businesses committed to responsible business and investment practices.
- What's more business plays an essential role in job creation, technological innovation and economic development.
- When done in a sustainable way, business can be a ladder out of poverty for the developing world.

This is why the private sector is at the heart of the partnerships that Christian Aid seeks to build. We've always worked with the private sector, but the Salt Network is pioneering this partnership and taking a fresh look at equipping the private sector to play a vital role.

Historically Christian Aid has

- worked with multinational companies, often through coalitions (particularly tax, climate and health) to support and encourage them to adopt more sustainable & ethical policies
- Adopted a name and shame approach to bad practice – Set high standards through our policy work

## The Salt Network takes a new approach

The Salt Network is about supporting, equipping, growing together and praying for one another. It is about joining together as Christian business people to start the conversation about the multifaceted power of business as a tool for good in the world. It is about offering peer-to-peer challenge about current practices and steps towards taking positive ones. It is about education of key issues facing the world today and what is available to support business towards being an answer and positive force both locally and globally.

Salt believes that spirituality is an asset in business and Christians can be a valuable voice for ethical and sustainable business...Business is a force for good.

## The Sustainable Development Goals

The role of business in overcoming poverty isn't just recognized by Christian Aid. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are clear about the essential role business has to play in the alleviation of poverty.

**Resource:** Read more on <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

## Transforming Business, Transforming Community

The Salt Network is working towards growing a community of likeminded business leaders committed to being the change we want to see in the world. As a community of action, we come together around 3 principles to:

- 1) **Lead Change** *\_In our own businesses, how can we be leaders of the change.*
- 2) **Provoke a community of change** *\_Amongst our communities, how can we be influencers of the change that needs to be made.*
- 3) **Resource change** *\_With our finances and skills, how can we resource the change through partnership with Christian A*



# Business and Society

*Building a business community that transforms lives*



*May we be the paintbrush in  
the artist hands of God  
– Mother Teresa*



## 4.0 The Topic

Introducing the topic.

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### Business & Society

We live in a world where trillions of dollars in assets, goods and services are traded daily impacting everyone of us around the globe from the wealthiest to the poorest communities and individuals. All our lives are shaped by business and trade whether it is the price of fish in the market; the accessibility of fuel to fill our cars or the trust within financial, political and commercial markets to enable business viability. Business is far from suited executives in fancy city offices; business is and has always been a key part of human interaction and the fabric of society.

It is no surprise therefore that 45 of Jesus' 52 parables are set in the market place. Jesus calls his disciples to be active ambassadors of his gospel in everything we do. To be as Salt and light in the market place.

The question is, in a sector that impacts so many lives, communities and environments; how does God call us to live out our Christian faith within the market place and within the business world?

What does it mean to develop a business that complements the whole of society?

- How can we ensure that we run businesses that produce 'Good' goods and services which benefit those who purchase them?
- How do we foster an environment of 'Good' work that ensures flourishing for our employees and supply chains?
- How do we ensure that the wealth generated is distributed in a fair and equitable manner?

There are three key categories through which you can begin to address the questions above.

#### Responsible Products and Services

- By producing and delivering products and services that meet human needs and serve the common good
- By taking active steps to reduce social and environmental impact of production and service delivery
- By adapting your business model to help local and global communities thrive

#### Decent Work

- Recognise and implement strategies to ensure the dignity of employees and their right to flourish in their work
- Address employment inequality by actively including those from the margins of society within the work force

#### Good Wealth & Governance

- Using resources wisely, both to create profit and well-being
- Producing sustainable wealth
- Re-distributing wealth justly, fair and equal wages, honest cost structures for customers & suppliers, transparent taxes practices, imbedded social responsibility practises.

## Inequality & Society

Inequality is the root cause for many societal issues.

Everyday we can read a different headline about issues facing our society whether it is obesity, teenage pregnancy, crime or something else. For the most part, these issues are regarded as separate from each other. Obesity is treated as a health issue, crime a policing issue and so on.

However ***The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*** suggested that many these issues share a single root cause: ***inequality***.

Such studies suggest that it's not absolute levels of poverty that create social issues, but the differentials in income between the rich and the poor. Just as someone from the lowest-earning 20% of a more equal society is more likely to live longer than their counterpart from a less equal society, so too someone from the highest-earning 20% has a longer life expectancy than their alter ego in a less equal society.

- **Do you agree that social inequality is the root course of our most pressing sociality issues?**

## The nature of inequality

We often tend to think of inequality mainly through the lens of income. However there are many different axes of inequality and it is important to remember that poverty and inequality are not just about income but also about disempowerment. Therefore, poverty and inequality have personal, social, economic and political dimensions.

Christian Aid addresses different forms of inequality depending on the contexts it works in but we tend to understand inequality as an imbalance of power, dignity and justice. Therefore poverty is a process – people are made poor and improving the lives of people living in poverty depends on addressing the systems and structures that make and keep people poor.

**Highlight the systematic and structural influences that shape the inequalities below.**

- **Income inequality** often leads to power imbalances undermining the voice and participation of people living in poverty and leading to their exploitation by those more powerful.
- **Gender inequality** is a form of power inequality which underpins the inequalities of poor income such as health and education.

***The fact is*** measuring poverty and inequalities is a real challenge because those who are most disempowered are often also invisible to the systems and processes that could help address the issue. For example, household level data doesn't tell us much about the situation of women for instance. Equally census data often excludes information about migrants.

***The question is:*** how do we as leaders in our organisations look beyond the lack data and motivated by our faith, offer solutions such as jobs, equal employment, flourishing workplaces and just supply chains?

*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

**Galatians 6:2**

## 5.0 Reflection

This section allows time to reflect upon the topic before moving in to discussion

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### Read

**Amos 2:6 - 16**

### Think

Amos has a lot to say about oppression and the plight of the poor in Israel. Nowhere in whole book of Amos does the God ever suggest that poverty in some way the fault of those in poverty. Rather it is difficult not to assume from the book of Amos that God looks sternly on those in positions of power who use their position to take advantage of and fail to care for the poor.

Interestingly the book of Proverbs illustrates individual diligence and stresses the important connection between our appetite for work its impact on our respective wealth or poverty (10:4-5, 26; 12:24, 27). However Amos does not do this rather opting to stress that poverty and inequality is directly related to the actions of others and in particular the actions of the wealthy and powerful.

What is clearly seen from Amos is that God does expect a certain type of behaviour from one to another and he will not tolerate injustice. Interestingly note that he treats both Israel and other nations similarly in this regard (1:11; 2:1; 2:6). Justice is universally applicable and desired by God for all.

**Do you think justice and equality look different depending upon the context?**

### Reflect

We have explored the fact that unequal distribution of power and abuses of power are instrumental in perpetuating inequality and poverty. It is right that we strive for a more inclusive world where everyone can thrive irrespective of who they are.

**Reflect on the following 2 passages:**

*“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus”*

**Galatians 3:28**

*“I came so that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.”*

**John 10:10**

- How do these passages influence that way you see the world?
- How might you implement these passages into your business?
- How do you think you might have inadvertently acted in an oppressive or bias manner in your business?

### Pray

- Consider thanking God for his heart and call for equality and justice.
- Consider repenting to any bias or oppressive actions you've taken in your business activities.



## 6.0 Small group breakout session

This section draws together sections 4.0 and 5.0 and allows time for the delegates to discuss the topic from their context

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In groups consider one or more of the following questions

Equity is often thought of as positive discrimination or affirmative action. It is the process of actively levelling the playing field for those who might be systemically discriminated against because of some distinguishing characteristic.

- Do you agree with affirmative action?
- What are the challenges on becoming more equitable?
- How does your business help or hinder equity:
  - in relation to your employees
  - in relation to the products or services you supply?
  - in relation to the way you re-distribute wealth?

## 7.0 Coffee Break

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- Allow at sufficient for all the delegates to network with one another.

## 8.0 External Speaker

Overview of work they have done in relation to the topic.

Allow time for Q&A

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At each event we recommend that you invite a speaker to present their view on the topic in relation to what they have in their own business practice. Ensure that you allow time for a presentation and questions.

### Recommended Time

- 15 minutes for the presentation
- 5 - 10 minutes for questions

### Selecting a speaker

- You may wish to invite an external expert or experienced practitioner / business leader.
- You may wish to invite someone from the group to share their experiences. Depending upon the group size you may wish to use this space each time you meet for a group member to explore the topic through their eyes.
- Invite a Salt Network Staff member.
- Use further Salt Network media resources.

## 9.0 The Topic 2.0

This section outlines the scope of actions that businesses can take in relation to the topic

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### Case study: Responsible Business and Inequality in India

Marc Benioff the Chairman and CEO of Salesforce.com has demonstrated significant ways through which business can be a powerful catalyst for positive change in society whilst securing financial return. It is because of the financial value generation of business that he suggests

*“Business in the best platform for change”*

- Do you agree?

Christian Aid has been working with Inclusive Economic Development Programmes in a number of contexts for many years because they share this belief that business offers the ability for individuals and communities to become self-sufficient and valuable contributors to the wider societal ecosystem which in turn begins to address many other inequalities.

However we have found that whilst Small-scale food producers in India contribute to production, they do so on very unequal terms. They are often operating under circumstances which exclude them from the benefits of integration into mainstream value chains. Those from very marginalised communities such as Dalit, Adivasi and religious or ethnic minorities have limited bargaining power and often very low incomes which leave them vulnerable to exploitation by middlemen or traders who force sales of produce causing the producer to miss opportunities of maximising market rates.

***Whilst the merits of business might offer one of the best platforms for change and progress, without equity the theoretical levelling power of business remains out of reach of the poorest and most marginalised.***

Christian Aid's Inclusive Development Programme worked with gatherers of honey and other forest produce in Rajasthan and organic turmeric producers in Odisha, to help them to develop market linkages, reduce their vulnerability and enhance their productivity, establishing producer organisations linked to 'common interest groups' (often comprised of collectors, manufacturers and marketing intermediaries) to increase producers' bargaining power and achieve economies of scale.

It also increased productivity and value-addition by providing processing technology and storage facilities, and it offered skills-training in a variety of areas.

Business development services were established to enable the groups to make informed market decisions by monitoring price fluctuations; and community-managed savings and credit schemes supported access to affordable credit.

From honey and hazelnuts to lithium and diamonds many of the raw materials of the products we sell start in the fields, mines, forests and homes of communities like those in the case study above. For us to understand the full impact of our products we must spend significant time to analyse our supply chains.

*In your group discuss the following questions:*

- Have you analysed your supply chains from source? Who is involved?
- How do you think Amos 2: 6 -7 might be relevant to our supply chains?

## Building a business of equity and Inclusion

### **Equity** adjective

: Refers to fair opportunity for everyone to attain their full potential and be included in opportunities regardless of demographic, social, economic or geographic inequalities.

Creating equity helps to address the impacts of inequality – for example the ‘free and point of use’ nature of the United Kingdom’s National Health Service dramatically reduces the unequal access to healthy lives we’d have if we all had to pay for our health care.

Equity can be achieved by putting in place enabling conditions to support those who face the greatest barriers as a priority. On a government policy level this means greater legislation which in turn means greater enforcement. In contexts where systematic bias against certain groups has been acknowledged ensuring equitable societies is particularly difficult to enforce but even more important to implement mitigating strategies.

It is important to note that because of systematic bias, unconscious bias at senior levels and an often predisposition towards homogeneity and perceived risk limitation it is often not enough to rely upon practices such as blind or competency based questioning in your employment procedure for instance. Such practices may go towards creating an absolute equality (although that is debated) however they fail to address the wider imbalance that have and will impact those from marginalised groups. That is to say:

***Equality is unfair in systematically bias societies or organisation. Fair and inclusive practices are not equal but equitable and active seek to readdress the balance.***

Creating equity neither quick nor easy, but it achieves deep and sustainable change which benefits us all as we know that over time greater diversity stimulates community cohesion and drives operational and financial efficiency and growth. However because implementing equitable policies is inherently political and often requires a shift in power, voice and resources from the ‘haves’ to the ‘have nots’ significant challenges can be encountered.

- What challenges can you foresee in imbedding equitable policies across your organisation?
- Can you identify who might face significant inequality within the workplace in your context?

*Business can help address inequality by...*

- Thinking about how practices reduce or entrench inequalities
  - Making goods and services available and accessible to all
  - Playing a wider role in society beyond core business
  - Reducing environmental impacts and encourage sustainable practices
  - Use your influence to support appropriate policies and laws
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- Can you think of other ways business can address inequality?



## 10.0 Small group break out session

This section allows time for the delegates to discuss section 9.0 and the possible steps they could take

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- Have you looked at this in your business already?
- Is there any lessons that you can share?
- If you haven't undertaken this kind of challenge before, what support do you think you might need?

## 11.0 Time for action

Time for individuals to review / reflect on the workshop. Complete feedback forms and pledge forms

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It is important that each Salt Conversation is action focused. This concluding section allows each delegate to:

- Offer closing remarks to the group. *Invite all delegates to offer any closing remarks if they have any.*
- Complete the feedback form
- Read and sign the Core Pledge or Statement of Intent.

## 12.0 Close

AOB and Closing prayer

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Allow a few minutes of silence. You may wish to:

- Invite delegates to pray in small groups
- Pray as a whole group
- Remain in silence or listen to a piece of music
- Consider using one of the prayers below.

(1)

*Lord God,*

*Thank you for the opportunity to work in the business sector.  
I trust in your wisdom as I seek to work hard to make it secure and prosperous.  
May good practice be the cornerstone of everything I do.  
Come reveal new openings and areas for expansion and development.  
May this business grow and flourish, creating great opportunity and provision for all those involved.  
In the name of Jesus,  
Amen.*

(2)

*All-powerful God,*

*you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.  
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.  
Pour out upon us the power of your love,  
that we may protect life and beauty.  
Fill us with peace, that we may live  
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.*

*O God of the poor,  
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.  
Bring healing to our lives,  
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.*

*Touch the hearts  
of those who look only for gain  
at the expense of the poor and the earth.  
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,  
to be filled with awe and contemplation,  
to recognize that we are profoundly united  
with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.  
We thank you for being with us each day.  
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle  
for justice, love and peace.*