

# QUARTERLY RETURN

shared-interest.com | AUTUMN 2023

ISSUE **129**

**TACKLING  
CHALLENGES  
WITH  
TECHNOLOGY  
IN THE  
PERUVIAN  
AMAZON**

Full story on page 7



**SHAREDINTEREST**  
INVESTING IN A FAIRER WORLD

# WELCOME TO YOUR AUTUMN NEWSLETTER



Hello and welcome to your autumn issue of Quarterly Return. In this edition, we bring you stories of our customers embracing digital technology to overcome the challenges they face, including the impacts of climate change, supply chain traceability, as well as developing better relationships with buyers.

In Ivory Coast, cocoa farmers are being trained in the use of a digital mobile tool, which enables them to track the entire cocoa production process from the pods being picked, to the beans sorted and ready for export. This technology has the potential to transform the process, and is being adopted by cocoa co-operatives across the country.

In Peru, Cuenca del Huallaga cocoa farmers are benefitting from higher prices thanks to technology, which is ensuring 100% of their cocoa meets organic standards.

Coffee farmers in Nicaragua are utilising technology to monitor weather patterns, enabling them to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. You can read more on these stories on pages 4 to 11.

Our focus remains on widening our support, continuing to work where other lenders are less keen to operate. With this in mind, we explore our partnership with the Aceli Africa programme in East Africa where one female-led Rwandan co-operative has been able to build a warehouse and begin coffee processing and roasting.

You can read more about this on page 12.

I would also like to thank you for your overwhelming support to help us encourage more ethical investors to join our global community. We have developed a Resource Pack to provide you with the tools to spread the word further, and these are free and available to order via our membership team.

**If you are interested in supporting us to tell more people about Shared Interest, please contact us at [membership@shared-interest.com](mailto:membership@shared-interest.com) or call 0191 233 9101.**

Until next time,

**Patricia Alexander**  
Managing Director

## INTEREST RATE TO MEMBERS

**As of 1st October 2023, the interest rate offered to members will raise to 0.25%.**

We know that a great many of our members waive or donate their interest, but our Board of Directors felt that it was important to increase our rate in order to help attract and retain more investment.

You will have indicated your interest preferences when you invested with us, but you can alter these arrangements at any time by contacting our membership team on 0191 233 9101. Interest is credited to members' accounts on 31st March for the previous year ended on 30th September.



**Kerrey Baker.**

**Dear Member,**

I am delighted to announce the co-option to the Board of Kerrey Baker as Member Engagement Director.

Kerrey has been with Shared Interest for over 12 years and will continue to manage the Member Engagement Team and Shared Interest Foundation.

Kerrey is an experienced and qualified marketing professional with a proven track record in delivering effective communications across a variety of sectors, including financial, not-for-profit, logistics and manufacturing.

Kerrey has led the Membership Team since 2011 and during that time, she has played a key role in engaging with our members and growing investment levels. In addition to her current role, Kerrey is also a non-Executive Director of North East based Millin Charity, which engages women in community-based enterprise to drive sustainable social change.

This appointment represents a significant reinforcement of our Executive Team, placing the

members' perspective at the heart of all Board discussions. Kerrey will of course be put forward to the membership for formal election during the AGM process.

**Dr Yvonne Gale (Chair)**



**Dr Yvonne Gale.**



# MEMBERSHIP

Through our member events, which took place over the spring and summer months, we were pleased to be able to meet many new and longstanding members. Following on from some of these discussions, we thought it would be useful to feature some of the regular questions that we encountered:

## Why is the money I invested still in my Share Account and not lent out to an organisation?

By opening a Share Account, you are investing in withdrawable shares in Shared Interest Society and your statement shows the value you have invested with us.

We pool your investment with funds from other members and purchase the currencies required for our lending. We use these funds to make loans to farming and craft organisations as well as some fair trade buyers. The loans typically fund seeds, plants, materials, crops, equipment or finished goods. Once the crops or crafts are sold, the organisation repays Shared Interest the capital plus interest. The funds can then be recycled and lent out again.

## What is the difference between microfinance and the Shared Interest loans?

Organisations offering microfinance are ultimately providing money to individuals and advancing very small loans. This is different to our lending as we support businesses, such as co-operatives and other corporate structures. Although our money is still destined for small scale producers this is facilitated through their organisation.

## Why do you ask me to confirm my identity when making a withdrawal?

We are sure you will have seen reports on the escalation of fraud cases in the news. In fact, UK Finance, the collective voice for the banking and finance industry recently reported that over £1.2billion was stolen by criminals through authorised and unauthorised fraud in 2022.

Operating in this landscape, it is vital that we take every precaution with your investment and, as such, we will often ask you to provide additional information for security purposes when you wish to make changes to your Share Account or make a withdrawal. You will also see from the letter enclosed with this issue of QR that we will be introducing a password system to elevate security on your Share Account further.

**If you would like to discuss this or any other aspect of your investment please do get in touch on 0191 233 9101 or email [membership@shared-interest.com](mailto:membership@shared-interest.com)**

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

- 1 A Share Account is opened
- 2 Money goes into the Shared Interest pot
- 3 A loan is made to a fair trade business
- 4 The loan is used to buy equipment or pre-finance orders
- 5 The loan is repaid to Shared Interest

RETURN TO STEP 2

# TECHNOLOGY LEADING THE WAY

Technology and innovation were cornerstones of our latest strategic review. You can read more online by scanning this QR code.



The pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital technologies across global business, digitising internal operations, as well as customer and supply chains. It also created a large shift in people adopting online methods of communication. In fact, consumer research carried out in 2021 described a desire to overcome any social differences with digital connection as a common purpose - yet, there remains a global digital divide.

According to the World Bank, at the end of 2021, nearly three billion people remained offline, the vast majority concentrated in developing countries.

Our team on the ground have seen some truly innovative applications of technology recently and many of our customers have adopted new approaches to improve supply chain traceability, developing better relationships with their farmers, as well as monitoring weather patterns to mitigate against the impacts of climate change. In this article, we explore these tools and methods used by our customers in Ivory Coast, Nicaragua and Peru.

## 2022-2027 STRATEGIC GROWTH



### TECHNOLOGY

We will use digital solutions to create efficiencies and improve communication with and between our customers and members.



### INNOVATION

We will research and embrace new ways of working, collaborating where necessary to increase our expertise, build capacity and strengthen our resilience.



### PARTNERSHIPS

We will build strategic partnerships to broaden our knowledge base and enrich our support to customers.



### KNOWLEDGE

We will work collaboratively and professionally, sharing knowledge and skills. We will continue to celebrate the diversity of different cultures, attracting and retaining the best talent and maintaining the highest level of integrity, commitment and expertise.



# CONNECTING A WORLD OF COFFEE



Coffee berries.

Nicaragua is a globally recognised origin country for speciality coffee, ranked as the 12th largest producer in the world. The industry is economically and socially important to the country, providing around half of all agricultural jobs, and contributing over 20% of agricultural GDP.



Aldea Global farmer and Secretary of the Board of Directors Flor Idalba Mairena, using the app to check the quality of her coffee plants.

**Today, Aldea Global supports 14,000 producers; 27% of whom are women.**

Nestled in a small northern pocket of the country, Nicaragua's coffee regions offer unique microclimates and diverse terrain, ideal for coffee farming. Jinotega, sitting in the heart of the coffee region, boasts a long history of shade-grown coffee. While sun-grown coffee has higher yields, shade-grown coffee easily outperforms in sustainability measurements. It is proven to improve soil health by replenishing aquifers, reducing soil erosion and storing more carbon, as well as improving wildlife habitats and acting as a natural pest repellent.

During the current dryness caused by the El Niño climate phenomenon, shade-grown coffee was proven to retain more soil humidity allowing small farmers to successfully maintain their crop.

Jinotega is home to Aldea Global, a co-operative with a deep commitment to sustainable solutions, which enable rural communities to thrive through coffee farming. Founded by 22 farmers, the group's vision was to build an organisation able to access credit, improve agricultural practices, and export their coffee at higher prices.

In one of the world's most undeveloped regions, Aldea Global is breaking down barriers through the integration of tailored information and communication technology to improve transparency in their coffee supply chain. A core component of their strategic plan is technological innovation, which is enabling the co-operative to improve their monitoring of harvests and export volumes. Alongside this, they offer technical assistance to the farmers, improving the coffee quality and enabling them to earn a higher price.

## COFFEE SUPPLY CHAIN



**Variable Prices** following the contract price at the Stock Exchange

**Stable Prices** that follow supply and demand

Coffee prices are variable in the early stages of the supply chain due to market influence. Global events, from weather to politics and economics, have an impact on the price of coffee at the Stock Exchange.

In the latter stages, coffee pricing is based primarily on supply and demand, and pricing is more stable.



**"Technology is not the solution without quality operational processes."**

**Aldea Global  
Business Manager  
Diedericks Gadea  
(pictured left)**



**General Manager Warren Armstrong.**

With a focus on providing greater support to their members, Aldea Global have introduced a mobile application (app) to achieve this. The app enables farmers to monitor weather patterns, supporting them to adapt to the impacts of climate change, while receiving personalised technical assistance to improve coffee yields.

General Manager Warren Armstrong (pictured right), said: "We no longer use pens in our coffee receiving centres nor our coffee mill since implementing ICT solutions to increase efficiency and empower decision-making with real-time information analytics. In addition, all projects developed by the Foundation Aldea (sister non-profit organisation) must include an ICT component to promote the development of our producers and communities in the 21st century."

Aldea Global are confident this innovative solution will be transformative for farmers, their families, and their coffee plantations. According to their statistics, 80% of producers have a smartphone, and over 20% of coffee farmers are already using the app, which was launched in 2019. The co-operative aims to have all producers using the app by 2027.

President of the Board of Directors Rosa Olivia Rizo Ubeda, said: "Steering an organisation with a majority of men - not such an easy task, but I lead with the Board and supporting committees, and consensual decision-making is possible thanks to the smart use of technology in our management, production and agribusiness activities."

In addition, Secretary of the Board of Directors Flor Idalba Mairena, highlights: "Aldea automated its systems with a team of young programmers from Jinotega. It allows the Board of Directors to monitor in real time the behavior and compliance with key indicators for our micro-finance, agricultural supplies and coffee businesses divisions." Rosa and Flor are also producers' members from the region.

Endorsing their commitment to sustainability, Aldea Global also implemented a paperless policy, across all internal processes, as well as a lending and coffee traceability system and a key performance indicator platform to monitor their activity. It is clear that they understand their success lies behind a committed team of coffee farmers.

Business Manager Diedericks Gadea, said:

***"Technology is not the solution without quality operational processes. Technology renders these processes efficient. If you believe that technology will resolve poor internal processes, you will fail to achieve your desired results. One must align the right people, processes and technology for success."***

Shared Interest Customer Representative for Central and North America Karolina Jiménez, said: "It is inspiring to visualise the impact that technology has had on their business and producers' lives thanks to their visionary leadership and commitment with continuous improvement. Aldea Global is also promoting the use of technology by sharing its experience with other coffee organisations. Their experience will definitely inspire other co-operatives to follow the same path."



Nena Perez (R) and her mother Estefita Sifuentes (L), members of Cuencas del Huallaga, work their cocoa plantation in San Martin, Peru.

# A TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTION IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON

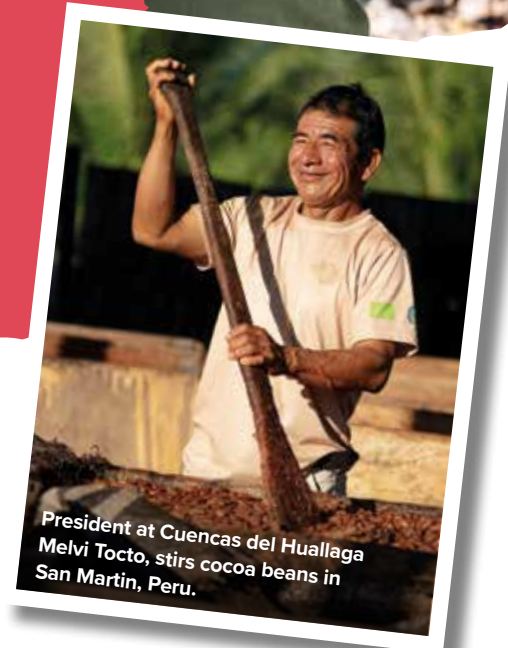
Nestled approximately 400m above sea level in the picturesque region of San Martin, Peru, a dedicated group of almost 800 farmers lovingly nurture their crops. They specialise in cultivating high quality Fairtrade and organic cocoa and they span the vast territories of Campanilla, San José de Sisa and Pucallpa - a testament to the far-reaching impact of Cuencas del Huallaga.

This strong association extends its support to fellow farmers, ensuring that even those who were once left with no choice but to sell to local intermediaries at low prices, are now part of a more empowering solution.

Cultivated in Peru for almost 2,000 years, cocoa is an important player in the country's economy, with over 50,000 indigenous people earning a living through this precious commodity.

Founded in 2018 by 24 farmers, Cuencas del Huallaga are a fairly new co-operative. Since their formation they have expanded their operations and now work with 800 farmers. They have also increased the amount of cocoa they export to international markets, now exporting 98% of their produce.

The cocoa beans collected by the farmers are classified as grade 1, allowing them to be sold to international buyers in the UK, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium.



President at Cuencas del Huallaga Melvi Tocto, stirs cocoa beans in San Martin, Peru.

The co-operative have been a Shared Interest customer since 2019 and we have been able to prefinance these cocoa contracts.

Thanks to the implementation of their organic programme, Cuencas del Huallaga have been able to expand their production. As a result of this expansion and following recent technological advances, they are now able to offer a higher price to cocoa farmers for their product.



Melvi Tocto (L), Segundo Tapullima (C) and Diego Córdova (R), members of Cuencas del Huallaga using the AGROS application.

The association gathers most of the dried cocoa beans from the members in ten gathering centres. Six of them are located in the San Martín region with an average production of 1,700 MT per year, while four are placed in Pucallpa district with a capacity of 400 MT per year. Unfermented beans are processed in the gathering centres for final selection, packing and storage. The product is later shipped through the Port of Callao.

In 2022, Cuencas del Huallaga faced a temporary suspension of their organic certification, after traces of pesticides were found in their cocoa, meaning that the cocoa harvested was unable to be sold as organic, forcing them to sell at a lower price.

General Manager Michel Valles told us: “The suspension of the license hit us hard. Some of our farms are very close to non-organic farms and we suspect cross-contamination with their use of pesticides.”

Following this, the organisation revised their strategy by introducing a satellite tool to monitor farms and preserve organic production. This tool is in the form of a mobile application (shown in the above image), called AGROS.

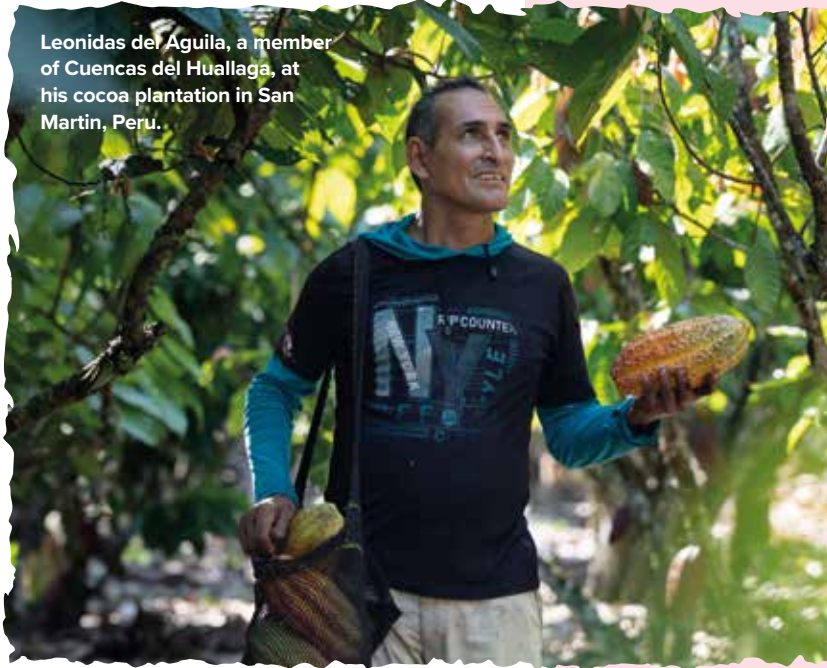
An audit earlier this year restored their organic certification and they are confident their cocoa will meet the certification standards going forward, thanks to this new technology.

The AGROS technology has enabled Cuencas del Huallaga to strengthen its control system. Michel said: “The app gives us greater control in ensuring our cocoa is fully traceable and organic. We can now track the movements of farmers, we know exactly where the farms are located, and the practices the farmers are undergoing to harvest the cocoa.

***“The technology is enabling our co-operative to sell cocoa at good prices, ensuring 100% of the cocoa we produce meets organic standards. It has improved our communication with farmers and has opened up new markets for us.”***



Leonidas del Aguila, a member of Cuencas del Huallaga, at his cocoa plantation in San Martin, Peru.



"The app gives us greater control in ensuring our cocoa is fully traceable and organic. We can now track the movements of farmers, we know exactly where the farms are located, and the practices the farmers are undergoing to harvest the cocoa."

General Manager  
Michel Valles

Cocoa farmer Nena (pictured on the front cover) said: "Nowadays we have very good schools. Also, we have a kindergarten, with the initial level for children, and thanks to God, because of the product we harvest, which is cocoa beans, we have a better income from agriculture. The main crop we manage is cocoa and thanks to that, as farmers, being partners with Cuencas de Huallaga.

"I have been a partner for four years. Thanks to having cocoa agriculture, I am a partner of Cuencas de Huallaga. I live with my parents, and I have two beautiful children. Thanks to God we have our cocoa agriculture.

"My father is an old partner of Cuencas del Huallaga, he taught us how to cultivate, to maintain cocoa. Formerly, we used to harvest manually, using mostly a machete. Today, we have the facility of having a farming machine to help us cultivate and harvest. We are grateful for this technology. Sometimes we have two, three, or five hectares to work and we cannot with just a machete, it is too difficult for a family. Now that we have the support of the machines, it helps us with the crops in our estate.

"Well, the importance of cocoa crops is, for us as farmers who live in Campanilla Peru. Therefore, cocoa crops are our sustenance as settlers, as a family, and as a home. Then cocoa is important because thanks to cocoa, we can sustain the nourishment of our home."

PERU



The AGROS application.

Ten gathering centres. Six of them are located in San Martin region with an average production of 1,700 MT per year, while four are located in Pucallpa district with a capacity of 400 MT per year.

SAN MARTIN

Pucallpa

UCAYALI



Jamil Arteaga (L) and Segundo Tapullima (R), stir cocoa beans at the processing plant in San Martin, Peru.



# FOR TOMORROW'S HARVEST, SOW TODAY

In the heart of Ivory Coast, where cocoa cultivation plays a crucial role in both livelihoods and economies, a ground breaking digital transformation is reshaping the way cocoa co-operatives operate. The Farmforce digital application is emerging as a game-changer, seamlessly integrating technology into the cocoa production process and bringing a host of benefits to cocoa producers across the region.

The application is designed to enhance the operational efficiency of cocoa co-operatives in Ivory Coast by leveraging technology to streamline various aspects of their cocoa production process.

Found along the Sassandra river in south west Ivory Coast is the Abedem region - home to a diverse landscape of tropical rainforests, savannas, hills and plateaus - and also CADESA (Coopérative Agricole pour le Développement de Sassandra), an exporting agricultural co-operative society established in 2003.

CADESA supports over 2,200 members with the collection and marketing of their products - 300 of which are women. Their main activity is the production, collection and export of cocoa beans, however they also grow coffee, cashews and harvest rubber, all of which are cultivated on over 10,000 hectares of agricultural land.

A Shared Interest customer since 2017, CADESA have used our support to construct a central warehouse, purchase two new tractors and one new truck, helping to transport cocoa to processing units. They have also used the finance to purchase more cocoa from their members.



Esther (C) with CADESA members.

Managing Director Esther N'goran (pictured above-centre, holding a certificate), said: "Shared Interest started supporting us when we had no relationship with any other financial Institution, it shows the confidence they had in us. Now a lot of other partners are chasing us up for collaboration every day."

CADESA are acting on their slogan: 'for tomorrow's harvest, sow today' by harnessing this technology to improve traceability in their supply chain.





Shared Interest Lending Manager, Divine Buo (C) and Customer Representative Kwami Dekonor (L) meet with CADESA in Ivory Coast. Cocoa farmer Nemlin Amand is pictured standing between Divine and Kwami.

Esther explained that Farmforce helps CADESA to:

- Collect accurate and real time data directly from cocoa farmers, including farmer profiles and land sizes
- Improve traceability by tracking the movement of cocoa beans from farm to warehouse
- Ensure transparency and verification of the bean origin and quality
- Facilitate digital payments to producers and farmers through mobile or bank transfer
- Reduce risks, inefficiencies and insecurities associated with cash transactions
- Manage inventory and stock levels by arranging logistics
- Provide analytical data insights and compile various reports, accounts and forecasts

She said: “Partners call us for different reports every time and we sometimes have to call field offices and producers to get these reports, but with the Farmforce, all reports including financial reports are available at the touch of a button.”



CADESA farmers following their AGM meeting earlier this year.

Training in the use of the application is taking place now and it is hoped Farmforce will be introduced for all CADESA farmers later this year. The technology will bring a range of benefits to farmers including transparency, quality assurance, access to finance, better negotiations with buyers as well as access to data and harvest projections.

Cocoa farmer Nemlin Amand (pictured above), said: “We sometimes struggle to compile our stock supply reports and reconciliation for payment purposes, but with Farmforce, it records and calculates everything automatically. This prevents any cheating or fraud.”

**“Shared Interest started supporting us when we had no relationship with any other financial Institution, it shows the confidence they had in us. Now a lot of other partners are chasing us up for collaboration every day.”**

**CADESA Managing Director Esther N’goran**

# DEEPENING IMPACT

**Shared Interest cannot achieve its mission in isolation, and we place partnership at the heart of everything we do. Working in collaboration with a peer network of like-minded organisations with shared goals and objectives, we know we can work more effectively and broaden our impact.**

One example is the Council on Smallholder Agricultural Finance (CSAF). Shared Interest is a founding member of CSAF, which celebrated its 10th Anniversary last year. This forum for social lenders shares learning and includes 20 members and affiliates committed to market growth and impact.

Like Shared Interest, these members lend to agricultural small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These enterprises vary in size and structure from small farmer co-operatives to larger businesses. However, all CSAF lenders share one guiding principle; to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

#### **CSAF seeks to:**

- **Facilitate market growth to meet a greater share of the vast financing need for agricultural SMEs globally**
- **Promote responsible lending practices and social and environmental standards to ensure that market growth contributes to positive impact on agricultural businesses, smallholder farmers, enterprise employees, and the natural environment**
- **Build the ecosystem for inclusive and sustainable financial markets and agricultural value chains that supports our vision and mission**

In addition to financial institutions, CSAF works with 'Field Building Partners', which are like-minded institutions that support their work in building a responsible financial market for agricultural SMEs.



Aceli Africa (Aceli) is one of these partners, who we are working with to support our lending in East Africa. Aceli evolved out of conversations and research conducted by CSAF and is symbolic of the role that CSAF plays in the market, offering lenders incentives and support to work with the agricultural business sector.

Sixty-five per cent of the population in East Africa depends on agriculture for their livelihood, yet only 5% of bank lending goes to the sector. SMEs have the potential to drive inclusive agricultural growth - but three in four lack reliable access to finance. Aceli aims to bridge that gap by facilitating lending to smaller, more vulnerable groups, in areas where lenders are less keen to operate.

Agriculture is viewed as a much riskier sector for lenders with lower returns compared to other sectors such as manufacturing and real estate. The sector can only grow with adequate financing which is currently lacking. Therefore, by supporting these businesses, CSAF lenders can deliver deeper impact by building resilience to climate change, improving food security and nutrition, promoting environmental sustainability, and advancing social inclusion. Aceli incentivises this by awarding impact bonuses across four key impact areas: food security and nutrition, climate and environment, gender inclusion and youth inclusion.

## IMPACT IN RWANDA

As part of research to analyse the impact of the Aceli programme, 60 Decibels (dB), a global impact measurement company, is conducting baseline and follow-up studies across 50 SMEs in East Africa.

In Rwanda, coffee is grown on small farms mostly of less than one hectare, high on the mountain slopes. Here, the rich and acidic, volcanic soils, high elevation, seasonal rainfall and cool mountain climate provide perfect conditions for growing specialty Arabica coffee.

A study carried out with one of our customers in southern Rwanda, states; 'Access to finance has enabled the co-operative to increase the purchase of coffee from smallholder farmers by 30%. The SME has also been able to hire more casual workers. The SME plans to seek for more finance to build a warehouse and also start coffee processing and roasting.'

One farmer interviewed as part of the study said:

***"Before, I used to struggle finding basic needs for my family, but now I can pay for my family's basic needs."***

Another farmer stated: "The income from my farm is increasing due to the increased market access and adequate price."





YOU CAN READ MORE ABOUT  
THE WORK OF ACELI AFRICA HERE:  
[ACELIAFRICA.ORG](http://ACELIAFRICA.ORG)



Fresh coffee berries collected  
on a farm in East Africa.

"I want to empower other  
women to change their lives  
through specialty coffee."

**Farmer of a Rwandan  
coffee co-operative**





Shared Interest stall set up at the Greenbelt Festival in 2022.

# HELP US EXPAND OUR GLOBAL COMMUNITY

**At the core of Shared Interest is our community of members coming together to achieve a shared goal. Standing together to make positive change.**

Through the stories featured in this magazine, as well as our other methods of communication, we aim to help you understand the true impact of your investment. This impact does not just focus on the outcomes of the businesses we support, but also the people involved and their wider community, as well as broader global issues in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Word of mouth is extremely powerful as a means of communicating the collective impact that you, our members, help us to achieve by opening a Share Account. This impact is something we want to share further, welcoming more ethical investors to our global community.

Following feedback from our volunteers, we have developed a new Resource Pack, which is available to all members. This pack contains a suite of materials specifically aimed to provide information about what we do, and the positive impact our work has, thanks to the support of our loyal members.



**Our Resource Pack contains:**

- A selection of past QR magazines
- A copy of our Annual Review
- A copy of our Directors' Report and Accounts
- A selection of A5 inserts featuring customer stories
- A selection of our Enquiry Packs



# COUNCIL COMMENT

**As a newly elected member of Council (2023 AGM), I have been undergoing a thorough induction, meeting key Shared Interest team members, in addition to attending my first full Council Meeting (of which there are at least three annually). It is through these mechanisms that Shared Interest ensures members of Council are briefed on all aspects of the organisation's operations.**

This is important because Council exists to try to be representative of the views of the wider membership to the Board, ensuring the Society's strategy and the interests of members remain aligned. I think it is a testament to the extent to which Shared Interest takes its social responsibilities seriously, that they make this investment in time for the Council, who in turn will use this knowledge to support members' interests.

Of course, Council Meetings, Board Meetings and Regional Supporter Events (in May, I was also fortunate to attend the first in-person event since the pandemic), are all improved with suitable sustenance, such as a nice cup of Fairtrade coffee.

Coffee, coffee, coffee; for something as simple as a "bean" the commodity can become transformed into a variety of similar but different products with different types of added value, for example:

Instant, Caffeinated, De-caffeinated, Ground, Espresso, Cortado, Flat White, Americano, Café Mocha, Melange (and many more) each with their own different ways of brewing, filtering, steaming, pressing, dissolving.

Global coffee production in 20/21 was estimated at 10,521,000 tonnes and according to Fairtrade International, over 125 million people depend on coffee for their livelihood. Yet many are unable to earn a reliable living from this beloved crop.

From my position on Council, it has been interesting to learn that approximately 49% (by value) of the monies lent by Shared Interest are used to support the coffee supply chain (crudely 25.4 million GBP), and Fairtrade currently works with over 838,000 coffee farmers globally through 656 Fairtrade certified coffee producer organisations. Many of these producers have or are receiving support from Shared Interest because of our investment.

Numbers in millions are mind boggling to comprehend so perhaps we should consider coffee numbers at a scale we can understand? By some estimates you can get 130 shots of coffee per kilo, and seemingly a high-street Americano usually contains two shots. Shared Interest lending is clearly supporting a huge number of Fairtrade coffees per annum.

Finally, when requested to write this article, I was asked if I had ever been to an area that Shared Interest operated in. The answer is yes, but nearly 30 years ago, to Costa Rica. At that time, Shared Interest would have still been starting up globally, and it is an area where Shared Interest now has two local members of its team. It was there that I learned how to "interact" with bats using coffee beans. They hunt insects at dusk and by flicking a coffee bean up in the air and into the pathway of an on-coming bat, you can sometimes get them to swerve briefly towards your bean before they recognise that it isn't a juicy beetle. Unexpected added value you can get just from a single coffee bean and completely harmless to the bat!

**Neville Hallam**  
**Member of Council**

**"We were immediately captivated and wanted to be involved in such a good cause."**

**Shared Interest member**  
**Alex Mabbs**

We also have a 'Faith Resource Pack', which is aimed at church groups and communities.

We love that our members are engaged and want to help us to do more, and we hope these Resource Packs will enable you to do just that.

**If you are interested in sharing the news about Shared Interest with friends of family, you can order your Resource Pack by emailing [membership@shared-interest.com](mailto:membership@shared-interest.com) or call us on 0191 233 9101.**

# SHAREDINTEREST

INVESTING IN A FAIRER WORLD



**COVER IMAGE:** Nena Perez, a member of Cuencas del Huallaga, at her cocoa plantation in San Martin, Peru.

## HELP RAISE OUR PROFILE

Join us on social media to keep up to date with our activities and help share our news with others.



SharedInterest



SharedInterest



SharedInterestSociety



Shared Interest Society



Shared Interest Society Ltd

## GET IN TOUCH WITH US

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## SHARE WITH A FRIEND

Have you considered passing Quarterly Return on to a friend or family member before recycling it?

If you would like a Resource Pack to spread the word about Shared Interest, please get in touch.



If you would like to manage your Share Account online, you can register for the Member Portal by calling us on 0191 233 9101.

## PRODUCTS FROM THE PRODUCER



Belfast Coffee Roasters proudly supports our featured customer and Nicaraguan farmer association Aldea Global by stocking their Fairtrade coffee in a variety of blends and sizes. Their product is said to offer flavours of apple and raisin, with a slight dark chocolate bitterness and a hint of hot cross bun! Scan to find out more.

**BECAUSE WE CARE**



**shared-interest.com**

Shared Interest Society Ltd is registered with the Registrar of Mutual Societies, number 27093R. The Directors decide on what the interest rate payable to members will be. The interest rate since 1st October 2023 has been 0.25%