

BUILDING THRIVING BUSINESSES

ANNUAL REVIEW 2019

A woman with a blue headwrap and a plaid shirt is shown in a lush green forest, reaching out to harvest a cocoa pod. The background is filled with dense foliage and trees.

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...and breaking the cycle of poverty.

Naigaga Farida harvests cocoa for Pink Foods Industries in Mukono District, Uganda.

Welcome

This year, I am pleased to report Shared Interest Foundation has seen 12 months of positive progress in supporting producers in disadvantaged communities.

Thanks to donors, grant-giving bodies, and trusts, Shared Interest Foundation, has continued to provide business support to small-scale producer groups in Africa. Over the year, we have delivered five projects, which supported the development of new businesses, provided a vital income source to rural communities and enabled existing businesses to become stronger, and more resilient, increasing income and improving the quality of life for farmers and artisans.

This year saw us conclude our four-year project in Eswatini, formerly Swaziland, in partnership with Swaziland Fair Trade Network (SWIFT). This project has supported over 7,600 individuals during its lifespan, helping handcraft producers to develop or diversify their businesses.

Another important milestone was the end of our 12-month project, Crafting Fairer Futures, delivered in partnership with SWIFT. This project supported 100 women, who traded their products at the Manzini bus station, a small marketplace in central Eswatini.

In Burkina Faso, we helped a group of 50 female beekeepers in a rural community, to buy equipment and improve their honey production bringing a better and more secure income.

Meanwhile, our project in East Africa saw us support 20 tea, coffee, cocoa, and handcraft co-operatives across Uganda and Kenya, with the aim to improve their governance and financial systems. We continue to work in Malawi, in partnership with Malawi Fair Trade Network (MFTN) to reduce poverty levels amongst their producers, supporting five member co-operatives. The key objective was to increase their yield, improve quality and the value of their product while also becoming sustainable.

Chair, Mary Coyle

Amarasti are a SWIFT member group based in Eswatini, producing handcrafts >



PROJECT 01

Bees for Business

In September 2018, we launched Bees for Business, a beekeeping project in rural Burkina Faso, funded by an individual donor, Mr T. M. Dickety. It was implemented in partnership with Plateforme Nationale du Commerce Equitable (PNCEB), the Burkina Faso national fair trade network.

The group of 25 women were already producing and selling their honey but each woman was only earning about £40 per year. By providing training and equipment, we have helped the group double in size to 50 beekeepers, and supported them in improving the quality and the quantity of the honey produced. The women have two guaranteed markets for the honey: the local market, which has the dual purpose of increasing the nutritional intake of local households, and the export market, which the project assisted them to secure.

“Through this project I have learnt how to become a professional beekeeper. I have improved my skills; I know how to attract bees into the hive and the right location for the hive. I have learnt honey harvesting techniques and how to monitor the honey production process.

I have also learnt the advantages of being in a group and working as a team. The other women in the community have recognised the need to be organised and work as a team and they now want to join this beekeeping group.”

ABIBTATA, DAKORO BEEKEEPER



Bees for Business

The first harvest was achieved in May 2019, with the resulting honey and bees wax being sold on the local market and to an export buyer in the nearby town. Total group sales of £1,300 were generated. Alongside saving a proportion to re-invest into the business, the women have used this income to purchase materials to grow food crops for the local market and for personal consumption.

With support, the women have established a savings account and are receiving support from PNCEB to develop the skills to manage their finances independently. Community members supported this project by donating 10 hectares of land to house the beehives. The land will also be officially registered to ensure that it remains in the possession of the group for generations to come.

To conclude this project, the group planted 1,050 Moringa trees in the forest area close to the hives, with the aim of reforesting sparse areas of land, increasing the stability of the soil, and naturally encouraging bees to the hives. The trees will also provide the women with an additional source of income as the leaves and fruit produced can be sold on the local and export market.



Following this project:

82%

believe they have the knowledge and skills to support and provide for their family.

58%

feel more positive about their future.



PROJECT 02

Improving producer livelihoods

This year, we concluded our four-year Comic Relief funded project, delivered in partnership with Swaziland International Fair Trade (SWIFT). This project contributed towards poverty alleviation in Eswatini through supporting the development of enterprises, strengthening businesses and the creation of sustainable employment opportunities.

In addition, the project increased the capacity of the SWIFT network to support their member businesses and increase their sustainability.

PROJECT IMPACT AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

We enabled 45 businesses to increase their collective sales by an average of 2,186%, raising their levels of resilience and sustainability. Thirty of these businesses were brand new, and our business training, mentoring and market linkage helped them set up and grow. The remaining 15 were established but still in their infancy when they joined the programme. The training used a graduated approach where the producers were recruited and trained. Newly established

businesses, were trained on customer service, social media marketing, practical product development and the process for creating mini catalogues to inspire new designs. The training improved their business operations and increased their capacity to access new markets: attracting more customers.

With the increase in production and sales, the businesses employed 72 new producers (38% women), providing them with a sustainable source of income to meet their livelihood needs and support their families.

SWIFT
IN NUMBERS...



4^{OUT OF} 5

THE CONFIDENCE LEVEL
OF BUSINESS OWNERS
(UP FROM 2/5)



119

PEER EDUCATORS TRAINED TO
PROVIDE HIV/AIDS AND WELLNESS
COUNSELLING. 890 EMPLOYEES
ACCESSED THIS SUPPORT



2,186%

INCREASE IN SALES FOR
SMALLER BUSINESSES



3,214

PRODUCERS WERE PAID ABOVE
THE MINIMUM DAILY WAGE



PROJECT 03

Crafting fairer futures

This year, we concluded a 12-month project delivered in partnership with SWIFT and funded by the Evan Cornish Foundation.

The project supported 100 women, who traded their products at the Manzini bus station. A small marketplace in central Eswatini. Poor product quality and high competition for sales meant that customers paid a low price, and the women were struggling to make profit, to support their family and re-invest back into their businesses.

Participants received training in product design and development and customer service. SWIFT also co-ordinated market tours, visiting the shops and studios of their

members. The participants gained a valuable insight into how other producers develop and display their products.

As a result of linking the women with new markets, two major orders were secured with a total value of £2,535. One order for 100 wall mats was from a boutique hotel in Cape Town, South Africa and seven beneficiaries were involved in their production. As a further indicator of quality, these mats were featured in the South African design magazine, Visi.

Following this project:

97%

of respondents reported an increase in business skills, knowledge and confidence.

At the start of the project, 62% of beneficiaries felt confident designing and selling new products and developing their business. This score increased to

100%

“I can safely state that I am now seeing the light. Though there are challenges, my business knowledge has improved and the fact that I managed to supply an order for the first time since I started selling is so encouraging.”

THULI, SWAZI ARTISAN



PROJECT 04

East Africa

In May 2018, we launched this two-year project, funded by Maxwell Stuart Charitable Trust, to support 20 tea, coffee, cocoa, and handcraft co-operatives across Uganda and Kenya. The aim of the project was to improve their governance and financial systems. This year, we concluded our governance training and mentoring and focussed on increasing the finance skills, knowledge and capacity of each co-operative.

Working with local consultants, we delivered a workshop in financial management to 68 co-operative representatives. Some of the areas we identified for improvement included maintaining accurate financial records, interpreting financial statements, risk and debt management.

Following the workshops, participants reported an increase in their financial literacy level from an average score of 1.5 (very low) to a score of 3 out of 5 (acceptable).

All of the co-operatives are now holding quarterly board and management meetings.

Following this project:

The confidence level in the management team has increased from 70% to

90%

80%

of co-operatives have developed or reviewed new organisational policies.

Tea leaves being picked in East Africa >

PROJECT 05

Malawi

In Malawi, we are working in partnership with Malawi Fair Trade Network (MFTN) to reduce poverty levels amongst their producers. Declining sales were affecting the farmers ability to support their families, as well as the overall resilience of MFTN.

Through this project, funded by The Marr-Munning Trust, we are supporting five member co-operatives, (three tea producers in the south of the country, two nut producers in the north). The key objectives were to increase their yield, improve quality and the value of their product while also becoming sustainable.

“This training in business planning had a very big impact because it is like an opener tool to all of us. Initially we did not know that we could use the business plan to source funds from other sources like banks. We are now equipped that we can prepare and develop a good business plan that can assist us to access loans to improve our production.”

Princwell Pendame, tea farmer at Sukambizi Tea Association

“From this training we have learnt a lot about how to control the finance of our society and how to prepare a proper budget. This training has empowered us to make a winning project proposal.”

KEVIN MWAURA, AFRICA Y.
ETU CREATIVE CENTRE



Using money wisely

Shared Interest Foundation receives grants from donor organisations, which enable us to deliver our projects. Over the last eight years these funds account for almost half of our income, with the balance coming from the generous donations of individuals, groups, trusts and legacies. These donations are vital as they allow us to develop and grow new projects based on robust need’s analysis.

Over the years, we have received support from the following trusts and organisations and we would like to thank them for their contribution to our achievements:

- Comic Relief
- Evan Cornish Foundation
- The Marr-Munning Trust
- Mr T Dickety
- Mrs K M F Maxwell Stuart Charitable Trust
- Souter Charitable Trust

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	Year ended 30 September 2019			Year ended 30 September 2018		
	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total Funds £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total Funds £'000
Donations & grants	134	9	143	129	137	266
Interest income	1	-	1	1	-	1
Total income	135	9	144	130	137	267
Cost of fundraising	13	-	13	17	-	17
Charitable activities	110	130	240	86	85	171
Governance costs	3	-	3	3	-	3
Total expenditure	126	130	256	106	85	191
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	(6)	6	0
Net surplus/(deficit)	9	(121)	(112)	18	58	76
Funds brought forward	157	128	285	139	70	209
Funds carried forward	166	7	173	157	128	285



Gone Rural are a SWIFT member group, based in Eswatini, producing baskets

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees’ role is to determine and monitor the implementation of the strategy for the Foundation, make sure that risks are managed appropriately and provide a proper account to donors of the financial and social results of the Foundation.



PATRICIA
ALEXANDER



DAVID
BOWMAN



PAUL
CHANDLER



MARY
COYLE



MARTIN
KYNDT



PAULINE
RADCLIFFE



KEITH
SADLER

2020 and beyond

In January 2020, Shared Interest Foundation will embark on a strategic review. The review will involve full stakeholder consultation and will set the direction for the next five years, ensuring that we fulfil our mission.

Work is already underway on a pilot project focussing on young people aged between 18 and 35 in Eastern Ghana. The “Growing Fairer Futures” project has been made possible with the support of Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust and will contribute towards the long-term sustainability of cocoa growing communities surrounding Fanteakwa, a local fair trade cocoa co-operative. Agriculture is the primary economic activity in the region and therefore support in this area is key to developing strong and resilient communities. Over the past two years, Fanteakwa have been supporting a small group of young farmers with training to improve their cocoa farming and as a result, their cocoa yield is set to double. We now want to expand this established programme to reach more young people.

We are also delivering a new project in partnership with UCA SJRC, a coffee co-operative in Nicaragua. This project will contribute to the reforestation of land through planting 3,000 trees and reduce the pollution from coffee production wastewater through the construction of 55 water treatment filters. This will support the development of the local ecosystem, as well as reducing soil erosion and local environment pollution. This project is being funded through the Shared Interest Carbon Offset Fund.

In addition to this, we are exploring new areas to roll out a similar project to the successful Bees for Business, delivered in Burkina Faso.

Everyone
deserves the
chance
to provide
for themselves
and their family





Find out how you can
support our work:
**[shared-interest.com/
foundation](http://shared-interest.com/foundation)**

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