

Ethical Investment: Does Social Outweigh Financial Return?

Here at Shared Interest the answer is unequivocally yes!

As an ethical investment co-operative we are proud to arm our investors with the knowledge that however their day is going their money is having a positive impact on businesses in the developing world.

During a time when most high street banks are unable to provide much in the way of interest, we see our social return as a fantastic example of positive impact investment.

One example of a fair trade business that has benefitted from working with Shared Interest is Kenyan-based Namayiana; a handicraft group who first applied to Shared Interest for an export credit facility with which they could pre finance their orders. Before Namayiana existed there was no real role for women in the local community. Now they are able to provide an income for their families, paying for their children's education, as well as food, clothing and other household items. Namayiana Project Manager, Catherine Mututua said, "With Shared Interest behind us, we have more courage to work harder and feel we can go far in our business".

So how does it all work?

We currently have almost 9,000 members, all of whom invest anything from £100-£20,000. This money is then pooled and lent out to groups like Namayiana, enabling them to sell their locally grown produce and handcrafted goods and help in them pay fair wages and protect against poor working conditions.

The Society only accepts investments and investors are able to withdraw their money should they need it at another time. As it celebrates its 20th anniversary, Shared Interest is happy to say that, even though its lending is unsecured, no investor funds have ever been compromised.

If you would like to find out more about Shared Interest and how you can get involved, please visit the website www.shared-interest.com or call 0191 2339100.