

CMS Business as Mission

CMS Business as Mission Strategy Development Outcomes

Background

CMS has had an active interest in Business as Mission for many years and currently the organisation is involved in co-sponsoring a number of practical Business as Mission initiatives around the world. Specifically, CMS has been exploring ways in which businesses can be started and expanded in order to provide assistance to the poor and the unemployed in developing countries. As it is business people who have the experience and expertise in running businesses, ideally it is they who should be underpinning this initiative.

In order to test the water and see what interest there might be in gaining support from Christians in business, CMS held a series of Focus Groups earlier this year. The concept of exchanging 'Capital' was explored: Capital being the God given abundance in the developed world of business skills and finance and the God given abundance in the developing world of natural and human resources and spirituality. In facilitating an exchange of Capital, poverty in all its forms and wherever it is – spiritual, social and financial, can be

addressed. The feedback received was extremely valuable with many different views and ideas being shared.

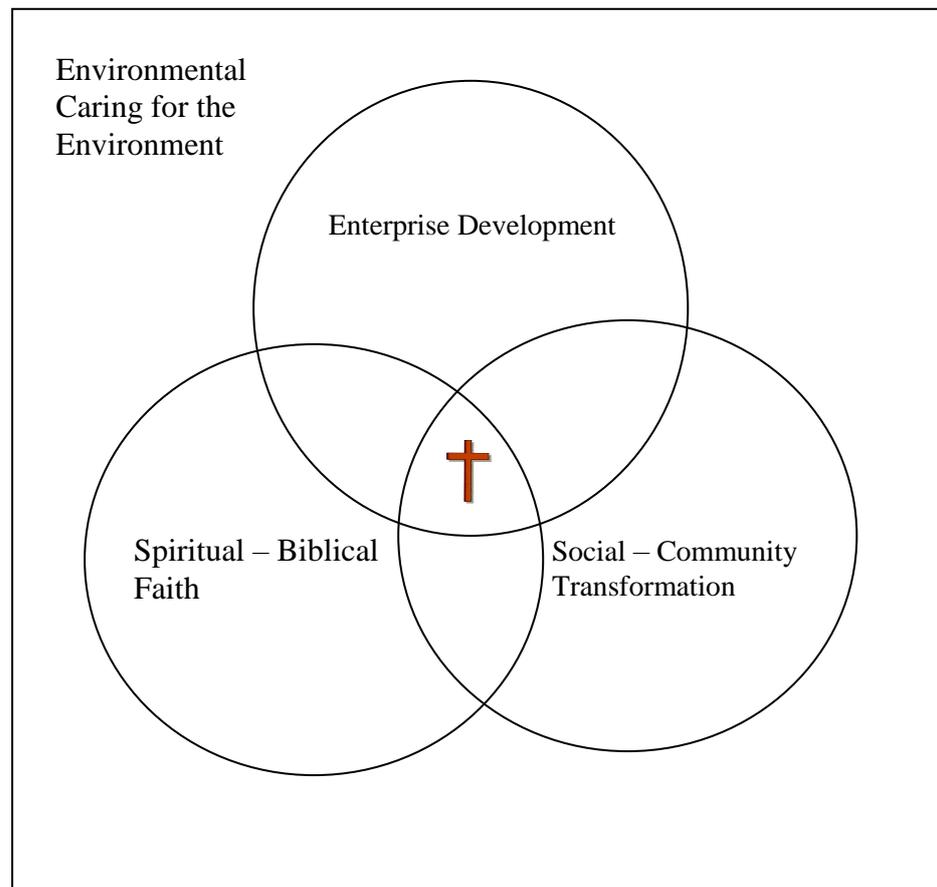
What has resulted after blending the output from the Focus Groups with the ideas and existing work within CMS has led to a practical strategic four point plan being formulated.

1. The QBL

CMS has identified and is developing a Quadruple Bottom Line business model, this is where businesses are started and expanded to bring benefit to all the needs of people and their communities.

- (i) **Financial** – Start and expand sustainable profitable businesses in order to assist the development of the remaining three elements of the model.
- (ii) **Spiritual** – Build our relationship with God by identifying and expanding our understanding of His presence in every aspect of our lives, especially our working lives.
- (iii) **Social** - Build up communities and community facilities.
- (iv) **Environmental** – Care for God’s creation so it can continue to care for us by ensuring all business activities are undertaken with environmental protection built into the *'Modus Operandi'*.

Diagrammatic Illustration of the 'Quadruple Bottom Line'



2. Affirming the Christian Business Person, creating groups and releasing for the Kingdom

CMS has already recognised the need to affirm Christians who work in business, thus releasing them to use their talents for the Kingdom. In order to gain focus on the specific objective to help start and expand QBL businesses, CMS wants to establish and resource small groups of like minded Christians with business skills. Once established and resourced, each group will be linked to a suitable project in a developing country – a start up or an expanding QBL business – in order to help that business grow.

3. Funding QBL businesses

A key resource for all QBL businesses will be start up and expansion capital. There are potentially many sources for this type of funding, but securing the capital, managing it, ensuring an appropriate match with each need, and also ensuring there is full accountability will require dedicated professional resource.

4. Project Management

Finding suitable QBL business start-ups, training personnel involved and ensuring regular, open and clear communication with their support group will require well trained and highly competent personnel in the field. Through its unique relationship with the worldwide Anglican Church, CMS supports a comprehensive network of people in Mission across the developing world. With appropriate recruitment it is well placed to train and support field staff for the type of role required facilitating QBL field project management roles.

In summary, the four point plan requires the following:

- o Establish small support groups of Christian business people
- o Develop resource materials to enable groups to be affirmed and released to use their business skills for the Kingdom
- o Fully develop the QBL model/models, test, refine and rollout
- o Set up an investment vehicle to facilitate the start up and expansion of QBL businesses
- o Create project management roles in key overseas locations to facilitate the recruitment and support of fledgling QBL businesses – linking these businesses with partner support groups

It will also be vital once the groups are set up and engaged with projects to set up a communications vehicle to promote the stories of QBL businesses and the work of their support groups.

Next Steps

CMS is now actively engaged in the planning process to undertake the above and is seeking to identify which areas of activity can be facilitated in-house and which will need to be sourced externally.

An immediate and essential resource will be individuals who would like to be group leaders/members. These will be set up as pilot groups who will not only link to and support a QBL business overseas, but also evaluate and monitor their own progress.

CMS encourages anyone with an interest in this initiative who may be interested in becoming involved in the planning process and/or pilot groups to get in touch in the first instance with:

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FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK - SOUNDBITES

If we do not mix business and spirituality it becomes fragmented.

Making younger entrepreneurs interested in BAM.

Capital exchange – a different kind of missionary.

Perception that being branded as CMS comes as a disadvantage.

Suggestion of a partnership with TBN.

Strength of CMS – international / in country networks and relations with field partners.

Capacity development.

Paradigm shift. BAM as a sustainable method of keeping the mission going.

Church as a key partner in delivering BAM.

BAM as tool to reach and value Christians who feel disengaged from the church as they are busy working and their business skills are not being recognised by the church.

Question of the identity and core business of CMS (whether it is sending people in mission or something else).

If BAM to become a key part of CMS work, the need for it has to be explained in a clear way.

Recognising that most successful businesses focus on people much more than on profit only.

Passion to change lives in a holistic way.

Importance for the businesses to have a vision.

Dominance of Western business models.

Need to prove that doing good in business does good for business.

Christians should develop interest in economy and articulate what kinds of businesses should be run.

CMS as providing a range of possible options for hands-on experience in developing world for the UK business people.

CMS credibility in providing opportunities for investing in overseas businesses / contributing in some way.

Possibility of creating an investment fund which would engage a wider circle of people (not only major donors, but also churches as collective investors).

Creating sustainable local economies (Aloe vera project; glass factory in Romania).

Many international corporations are interested in sustainable development.

Personal transformation should go together with economical development.

Importance of communicating to businesses in a consistent way.

Issue of trust: churches in the global south are often the only trusted establishment;

Christian behaviour as trusted behaviour. CMS history has brought trust with it (schools).

Idea of BAM is a huge concept – where do we start?

Support for the new businesses to get started; support for existing businesses to change thinking.

Christian selling point should be honest.

Larger companies look for triple bottom line now with environmental factor becoming crucial.

What does UK gain from the BAM process?

Consultancy roles for UK business people (sets of skills which are not available in the global south at the moment).

Need to emphasise CMS as organisation, not as a Christian body.

Rise of Islam in Africa due to creating jobs and manipulating people into becoming Muslims.

What is a Christian business – is it run on business grounds or Christian grounds?

Christian business needs to be established as a practical example of Christian way of running business and break the feeling of hostility on the way.

Key word – sustainability.

Question of accountability (especially dealing with businesses in Africa).

Transparency of QBL businesses. Set of measures for QBL businesses – do we need them and how would you define the bottom line?

Issue of criteria of a QBL business. QOL (quality of life) accounting (Stephen Lloyd) – often done in different cultures, often subconsciously.

Balance between evangelism and creating jobs (part of the wider holistic approach of living a Christian life).

Questions about the type of projects and the results they would achieve.

Investment fund – not charitable donation but an investment.

High risk investments but also possibilities of generating equity funds.

Good practice in identifying projects and not coming with own agenda. Branding in country and internationally.

Using web for marketing such products and concepts.

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