

# Using technology as an enabler for good works:

## Moyee Coffee

by Killian Stokes

**Our global food supply chains are incredibly unfair and broken but BlockChain technology has the potential to help fix this.**

Today on our planet there are 7.5 billion 'eaters', 1.5 billion farmers but just 300 large food companies who control our food supply system. These food companies are earning billions in profits each year while 500 million of the worlds farmers, farmers working in the supply chains of these companies who provide us with our everyday products like tea, coffee, chocolate, fruit and cotton, struggle to survive on less than two dollars a day.

In 2018, Oxfam's "Ripe for Change" report noted that in South Africa, over 90% of surveyed women workers on grape farms stated that they did not have enough to eat in the previous month and nearly a third said they or a family member had gone to bed hungry at least once in that time.

These are the people who grow our food but cannot afford to feed their own children and many earn so little they resort to recruiting child labour to help bring in their harvest.

At Moyee we're involved in coffee. It's the world's favourite drink. Each day we consume 2 billion cups of the tasty drink and annually coffee is an industry worth \$100 billion dollars. Yet 90% of the world's coffee farmers and their families (that's 90 million people) earn less than \$2 a day. While 100% of all coffee is grown in and around the equator, 99.99% of the coffee we drink is roasted, bagged and branded in Europe and the US so that all of the value adding activities such as the

jobs, the profits and the income are exported out of the coffee belt.

We're still small but Moyee Coffee is creating a new business model. We believe simply paying farmers a few cents more is not enough. The French don't export green grapes, instead they sell bottles of wine so why should the Ethiopians export green beans when they could be roasting their own coffee? By harnessing the power of craftsmanship and technology we aim to overhaul the sector and see 50% of what you pay for your coffee stay in the country of origin. We call this FairChain Coffee.

Right now we roast, bag and brand the bulk of our coffee in Ethiopia to create five times more impact in terms of local jobs and incomes created, to cultivate a local coffee roasting industry. We're also working to reform the value chain, to remove middle men and inefficiencies, to promote land reform and forest protection, to upskill farmers and shift ownership of resources and value adding activities back into farming communities. At a practical level we are training our farmers in sustainable organic agricultural practices to help them improve the quality of their coffee and double their yields while protecting the forests where they live. Our goal is to move our farmers from \$400 a year to more than \$1,000, to help them earn a living wage.

Ok so where does BlockChain fit

into all this? We talk about using BlockChain to create a "shared value coffee chain with positive externalities" and by this we mean three things:

### 1. Providing 100% Transparency

Well everything we claim in the paragraph above sounds great but how can we prove it? At Moyee Coffee right now we are using BlockChain and other technologies to build an end to end digitalised coffee value chain. To record and capture data on every transaction throughout our value chain from the farmer to your cup. BlockChain can provide 100% transparency on every transaction and at every stage.

The hardest part is the first mile (farmers) and the last mile (consumers). We're giving our farmers mobile wallets, tap cards, unique ID numbers and barcodes so we can pay them digitally and we're geo tagging their farms and our washing station to prove location. This means we can put every stage of production and payment on the BlockChain. Meanwhile were putting QR codes onto the side of our coffee bags so that consumers can pull out their mobile phones while still in the shop and check out a website and see exactly who gets paid what for the coffee they're about to buy – from the farmer, the women at the washing station to the team at the roastery, the bagger, the transport



guy, Killian and Shane at Moyee Coffee Ireland down to the store or supermarket. 100% transparency.

We're also going to note where the carbon and pollution is added so consumers can see how environmentally friendly our farming is (or not), while learning that it's actually our transport or our unrecyclable bag that is doing a lot of the damage. This means we can share our green intentions, our environmental roadmap, stay accountable and bring our customers on the journey with us.

## 2. Engaging the Ethical Consumer

Consumers are increasingly concerned about the ethics of their goods. They want to know that everyone involved is getting paid a fair wage so we're helping them to contribute towards changing our broken value chains. When

consumers buy our coffee, they'll receive 50 cent back in an online token (like loyalty points that are actually monetised!) which they can either keep or share. Get money back off their next online purchase or send these funds back down the value chain to 'tip the farmer' – to support the farmer co-op, help fund a micro loan or pay for seeds, tools or farmer training.

## 3. Creating Positive Externalities

We know that economics alone won't lift our farmers out of poverty. Their families lack access to clean water, electricity, proper healthcare and good schools so we're partnering with NGO's operating in the region like Self Help Africa and empowering our consumers to channel their monies to fund these social projects. So rather than tipping the farmer or getting money off the next purchase, a Moyee customer might help fund

the construction of a well at a local school, vaccines for kids or fund a women's community group.

Ultimately, we believe our brand has to be more than just the colour of our bag or our logo. Our supply chain is our brand and what we do at every stage of our supply chain reflects on the integrity of our brand. It's who we are, it's what we stand for and it's why our customers will want to support the brand or not. If a small profit driven company like ours can use BlockChain to share value fairly then so too can the giant supermarkets and food brands.



### Killian Stokes,

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Moyee Coffee Ireland, a speciality coffee company providing Ethiopian FairChain coffee to workplace environments across Ireland and the UK.