

PRESS RELEASE

8th February 2011

Archbishop of Canterbury refers to Five Talents as “A Gift to the Anglican Communion”

The Archbishop of Canterbury attended a lunchtime session on the fringes of the Church of England General Synod meeting in London today. He spoke of Five Talents as a gift to the Anglican Communion saying:

“This really is a gift. It has been a privilege to be involved with this [Five Talents], to hear the good news that it brings and to see the excellent modelling of the development work ethic. This is a deeply creative and constructive way forward. I am delighted to be involved with Five Talents and so pleased to see so many people join in this event to hear more about what is going on currently”.

Tom Sanderson, UK Director of Five Talents, told the meeting that Five Talents is now serving over 27,000 people with business training, small savings and loan schemes (microfinance). This enables people to run their own small informal businesses from which they can meet their household needs and improve their living standards.

The Five Talents initiative was started following commendation at the Lambeth Conference 1998 and now has offices in the UK and the USA, and programme delivery partners in 12 developing countries. Each microfinance programme is closely aligned with the local Anglican Province, with work currently stretching over 11 Provinces and 26 Dioceses.

The Bishop of Birmingham, Rt. Rev. David Urquhart, chaired the session and spoke of his admiration for the work.



Mrs Shona Passfield (pictured left), a Trustee of Five Talents UK, spoke of her first hand visit to Southern Sudan to see Five Talents in action. One group of women had saved their own money and borrowed an additional sum to develop their version of “Body Shop Sudan” - producing and selling women’s fragrances (pictured right). The ladies claim that one such fragrance “prevented men straying from the marital bed”. Shona thought there could be a worldwide market for such a product!



END.

“Master,” he said, “you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.” (Matt. 25:20)

Notes to Editors

Five Talents is the microfinance initiative of the worldwide Anglican Church, working with local microfinance partners. Microfinance is acknowledged to be a highly effective contribution to the UN Millennium Development Goals. Microfinance develops local economies and encourages independence and self-empowerment, rather than dependency on grants.

Five Talents funds micro-credit and micro-savings programmes which provide training in business skills, including basic book-keeping, planning, appraisal, marketing and stewardship. Established businesses include farming, dress-making, retailing, hair-dressing and brick-making.

Women form, on average, 60% of loan group members. Repayment rates by project are in the range of 90-100%. Loans can start from as little as £25 and can impact as many as 10 people once family members and employees are taken into account.

Five Talents was founded at the Lambeth Conference of Anglican church leaders in 1998, created as a long term response to help the poor in developing countries based on need not creed. Five Talents works with the local church in communities to gather, train and financially equip entrepreneurs.

Five Talents was established in the USA in 1999 and in the UK in 2005. The name is taken from the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) in which the “good and faithful servant” takes the Master’s five talents and through effort and initiative gains five more.

Five Talents UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 1113969) and a registered non-profit organisation in the USA. Five Talents currently has 14 microfinance partners in 12 developing countries, directly serving 27,166 people in some of the most rural and hard-to-serve places in the world.

Five Talents’ Patron is the Archbishop of Canterbury.

For more information contact:

Tom Sanderson

UK Director

Five Talents, Park House (4th Floor), 22 Park Street, Croydon, CR0 1YE, UK

T: 0203 326 0426 E: info@fivetalents.org.uk

More information can be found on www.fivetalents.org.uk

