Social Innovation: all over the map

“Fair Trade is not enough,” Dr. Matt Murphy told the audience at CSSI’s Social Innovation Jam on May 26.

Matt felt so strongly about the shortcomings of Fair Trade that in 2008 he co-founded Value Added in Africa (VAA) to improve trade in consumables like tea, fruit spreads and sauces made from locally grown produce and processed in the same region.

Matt, who is still on the board, explained that VAA’s goal is to help farmers and processors connect with European importers. So far, they’ve been successful in UK and Irish markets but it isn’t all money for jam.

“It’s not as easy as finding a good product in Africa and a good buyer in Europe,” he said.

The sellers and brokers have to be on the same page when it comes to preparing and receiving quotes; they must both be happy about quality assurance measures; consumer awareness has to be developed in order to create a market.

Part of that awareness is coming from VAA’s Proudly Made in Africa logo.

*The Guardian* cites Proudly Made in Africa as a model in *Drinking an ethical cup of coffee: how easy is it?*

The big-picture business case:

Fair Trade producers of, for example, tea or cocoa earn about four percent of the retail price. If the tea is bagged, the producer gets 15-20 percent of the retail price.

Then for each job created in agri-processing, 2.8 indirect jobs are created, with attendant skill-building and community development.

Energy and economics

Economist Jeff Rubin will be *in Victoria on June 16* to talk about Canada’s national economic future as he describes it in his new book *The Carbon Bubble*. 

*Munro’s Books* has given CSSI several complimentary tickets to the event, which we want to pass along to keen Gustavson faculty, staff and students. Contact Rachel if you’re interested.

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Entrepreneurship, International Business, SMEs

According to the World Bank’s *Doing Business 2015* report, Pakistan’s business indicators dropped from 60th position in 2006 to 75th by 2010 and further plunged to 128th in 2015.

Federal Minister for Finance Senator Ishaq Dar has created a committee to improve Pakistan’s rating on the ease of doing business index by reviewing Pakistan’s ranking, developing a plan for doing-business indicators, and advising government on reforms.

The story is all over Pakistani news media, including this article in *Pakistan Today*.

*Doing Business 2015: Going Beyond Efficiency*

This World Bank Group publication is the 12th in a series of annual reports that measure the regulations that enhance business activity and those that constrain it. *Doing Business* presents quantitative indicators on business regulations and the protection of property rights that can be compared across 189 economies—from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe—and over time.

It measures regulations affecting 11 areas of the life of a business. Ten of these are included in this year’s ranking on the ease of doing business:

- starting a business
- construction permits
- getting electricity
- registering property
- getting credit
- protecting minority investors
- paying taxes
- trading across borders
- enforcing contracts
- resolving insolvency

Here’s a two-and-a-half-minute video that summarizes the findings of *Doing Business 2014: Understanding Regulations for Small and Medium-Size Enterprises*.

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