



MICROFINANCE SOLUTIONS

a program of Christian Aid Ministries

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Loans, Restaurants, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Samay* and his wife Kareena from India spent much of their time separated by many miles. Samay worked in a large city over 700 miles from home to provide for his wife and children. Men in India commonly travel hundreds of miles to find jobs.

While Samay was working away from home, Kareena joined a SALT Savings Group in their home community. At the savings group meetings, she began saving money and learning the importance of managing finances.

Recently, Samay decided to find a job close to home to spend more time with the family. While looking for a local job, he learned that the government was providing funds to help people build houses for themselves. Samay decided to use this opportunity. To supplement the government's funds, he and his wife took a 10,000 rupee (\$120) loan from Kareena's

savings group. But when Samay tried to claim his money from the government, he found that his name was not on the list.

Now Samay and Kareena had a \$120 loan they couldn't use as planned. If they weren't careful, it could easily be squandered. What should they do?

While Samay worked in the city, he was employed at a restaurant. With that experience, Samay and Kareena decided to start a small restaurant. They used the savings group loan and some of their own savings to buy the needed cooking utensils. This past July, they opened their small rustic eatery, working together to serve their customers.

SALT provided an opportunity for this couple that many Indian families only dream of having. One can only imagine the blessings Samay and Kareena's family experiences with having him close to home and a business to call their own. With the earnings from their business, the couple plans to buy land.

Pray for Samay and Kareena that the spiritual truths they hear at the SALT Savings Group meetings will have an eternal impact on their lives.

**Names changed to protect identities*

Laban requests prayer:

- That he would have much wisdom to share Jesus with the people of Bangladesh.
- That he would live the life of a holy follower of Jesus.
- That the Holy Spirit can live in him and empower him.



UKRAINIAN FATHER *studies finances through SALT*

Volodymr and Nadiya struggled with debt that had been snowballing since the beginning of their marriage. When they were born, the USSR controlled almost everything, including business and commerce. They were taught that money was evil. So they paid little attention to finances until it became a huge problem.

“When I faced a new reality, I realized that it was necessary to study this issue more deeply,” Volodymr said. “So I started reading books . . . Unfortunately, there was no good Christian literature on finances at that time.”

As Volodymr and Nadiya’s five children grew, the couple longed to teach them how to earn and spend money wisely. Volodymr began beekeeping after receiving five beehives from his deceased father. He confessed, “Although I intensely studied beekeeping, I still knew very little. I was afraid of bees.” Despite the failure of losing all his bees the first winter, he kept going and helped two of his sons start their own beehives.

After joining SALT this year, Volodymr tried to properly prepare the bees for the winter and hopes to expand to 30 beehives next year. “This requires substantial funds, which I do not have yet,” Volodymr said. “But I have a new tool, the SALT program, that offers the strict discipline of savings . . . Also, I



Volodymr and his son work together on their beehives.

hope this program will help me teach proper Christian values about finances to my children so they do not repeat my mistakes in their lives.”

Volodymr dreams of eventually providing for his family by selling honey products like beeswax candles and health items. He shared, “I understand that earning money is important, but it is more important to manage it wisely. I hope the SALT program will help all of us.”

SALT FACILITATOR SPOTLIGHT

Laban* from Bangladesh has been serving in the SALT program since 2021. His favorite aspect of being a facilitator is the opportunity to share Jesus with SALT members. He does this by spending time with them and building relationships. He also enjoys sharing with others who are not SALT members but seem interested. Whenever possible, he looks for opportunities to talk about God.

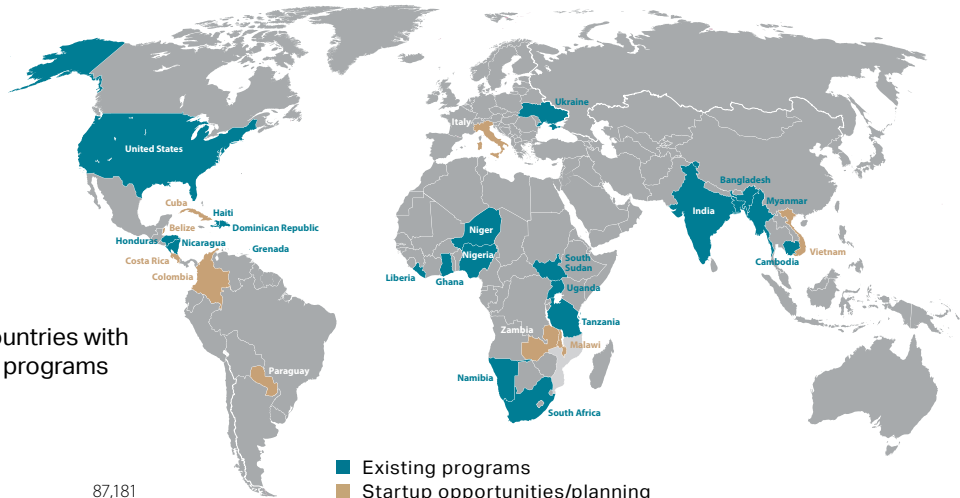
Laban and his wife Faria married in 2010 and now have two sons, ages 12 and 6. Laban became a follower of Jesus in 2017. His journey to faith in Jesus began in 2015, when a SALT Savings Group started in his community. His mother joined the SALT group and brought the SALT teaching manual to their home. One day Laban started reading the manual. He recalls the story about the woman who lost a

coin and, after searching for a long time, found it again. He did not know the story's meaning. However, since the weekly savings group meetings were held in their courtyard, Laban started asking the facilitator questions after the meetings. Over time, the two men formed a close friendship and discussed many things. Today he, both his parents, and his wife are born-again, baptized believers in Jesus.

When asked why Bangladesh needs the SALT program, Laban replied, "SALT is very essential. If SALT would not have come to Bangladesh, then I would not know about Jesus and would not have the light of Jesus in my heart. God uses SALT to share His message. God opens the door to spread Jesus' message."

**Names changed to protect identities*

MICROFINANCE DASHBOARD



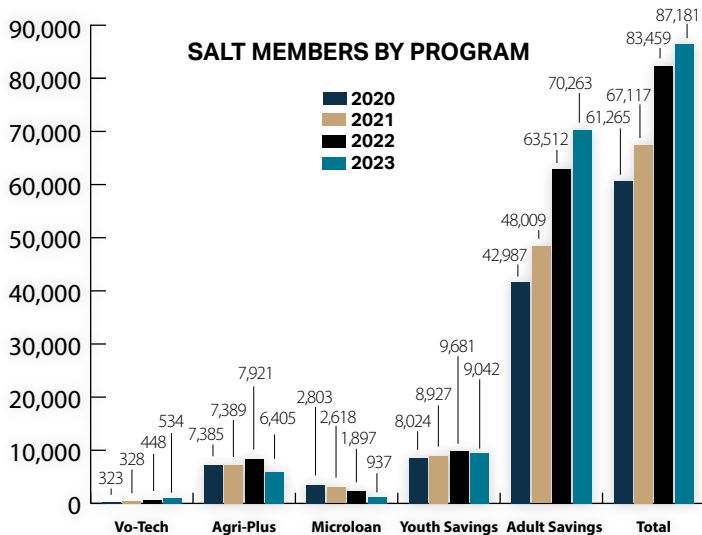
AT A GLANCE



87,181 SALT members worldwide



23 countries with SALT programs



■ Existing programs
■ Startup opportunities/planning

In addition to the countries listed here, SALT operates in three closed and restricted countries.

SPOTLIGHT | SAVINGS GROUPS IN INDIA

Average savings per week per member	\$2.58
Average loan size from group savings	\$91.21
Meeting Attendance	76.7%

SAVINGS GROUPS STATISTICS WORLDWIDE

	Jan. 2023 - Nov. 2023	Jan. 2022 - Nov. 2022
Avg. savings per week per member	\$2.33	\$2.50
Avg. loan size from group savings	\$163.41	\$173.89
Meeting attendance	82.18%	82.37%

Dollar amounts listed are in USD. A few members may be in multiple SALT programs, so the total does not equal the sum of individual programs.



New opportunities

Over the past 15 years, the Lord has given SALT Microfinance the privilege of working with many ethnic groups in 23 countries. We are very thankful for this tremendous opportunity to teach practical, Biblical truth to struggling people who are open to a better way. In 2023, SALT started in Liberia and a restricted country in Asia.

We are in various stages of start-up planning in more than ten additional countries. Some of these open doors come from difficulties related to displaced people, dysfunctional governments, or those seeking escape from pain and hardship. SALT works in several frameworks; the most common is partnering with Anabaptist missions. Practical teaching from the SALT manuals allows Anabaptist missions access to difficult or restricted regions for the purpose of building relationships and planting churches. Currently, we are working on the following opportunities:

Belize: An Anabaptist church is considering if SALT can be effective in reaching out to their communities.

Costa Rica: SALT has been a blessing to Christians in Ukraine. Now they desire to take SALT to Costa Rican communities where Ukrainian missionaries are serving. In addition, Anabaptist churches in the southern part of the country desire to use SALT teaching material in their communities.

Cuba: An Anabaptist church working in Cuba will start savings groups as soon as the teaching materials are printed in the local language.

Colombia: An Anabaptist mission is focusing on their long-term work in Colombia and is pondering if the SALT program can help achieve their goals.

Paraguay: Local Anabaptist churches have started a

small pilot project to determine whether teaching-based savings groups can meet their needs.

Zambia: An Anabaptist mission working here for several years is starting a new organization and plans to start savings groups soon.

Malawi: CAM plans to start a “light footprint” base in the country to serve southeast Africa. We hope SALT can be a blessing in Malawi and surrounding countries where there is a great need for long-term development. Another Anabaptist mission has planted a small church in Malawi and desires SALT for stewardship teaching.

Italy: An Anabaptist mission has been looking for tools to help refugees in long-term sustainable methods. They plan to use what SALT is calling a “bridge project” to bless those who are transitioning from crisis to sustainability.

Vietnam: Some parts of Vietnam are very restricted. Recently, doors opened for teaching in mountainous rural regions.

Other countries: We are in the early stages of conversations with Anabaptist organizations from several other countries who are considering the SALT program.

Pray that the SALT team could discern the will of the Lord in these opportunities.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?

See the enclosed response coupon to give a one-time donation or start a monthly sponsorship.



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