

## **From Bank Counters to Rural-Based Small Enterprises, Why Ashley Aarons Stories Can Help You Start Your Leadership Path on Development Sectors.**

Graduating from Cambridge University in England an 800-year history which makes it the fourth-oldest surviving university in the world doesn't hinder Ashley from sharing his expertise to Rural Communities from developing countries ranging from East Africa to South-East Asia.

This personal development doesn't come out of the blue, Ashley actually started his career path on Corporate Banking, from his time working on Banks Ashley felt that he needs to make more impact towards social change of the world. The urge to make a change motivates Ashley to become UN Volunteers which marks the beginnings of his leadership path in development sectors. Right now, Ashley has tenths of Years of Experience working on in finance, investments, markets system and employment programs for rural communities.

From Discussion with Ashley, I learn that when you want to make social change by working on development sectors the set of skills and knowledge can be learnt from unexpected sources, from Ashley I learn that even working from Corporate Banking can have its fair share of takeaways that can be Implemented towards making a social change from people in the rural areas.

Previously my understandings that I got from my activism journey where I have a lot of Involvement with Student Organizations and Rural Communitas I have learnt that some of the times the Banking systems are found *vis a vis* with Civil Society Movements but with the Coffee Talk with Ashley I found a ray of hope.

From his knowledge and skills that he gained from corporate banking makes him an expert in finance, investments, markets system and employment specialist with experience in supporting programs develop, improve and measure market systems ranging from sharing challenges and emerging good practices among market system practitioners in East African Countries, market systems approach to address the root causes of farmers' poor access to veterinary services in remoter rural areas in the South of Georgia which resulted to over 466,299 farmer households now have better access to veterinary services, and bringing diverse range of stakeholders ranging from small-scale producers to large businesses to make more impacts towards communities Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investments in Southeast Asia (GRAISEA).

Moral of the story is it is not too late whenever you feel that you want to make social change through your expertise, even if it is not directly related to the development sectors you can always contribute your knowledge and skills to make a change. In Ashley's story, corporate banking and rural communities are two whole different worlds but in Ashley's case he felt that it's not too late to shift from corporate banking to the development sector because he can use his expertise to drive impactful market systems, enhance employment programs, and foster private sector engagement, all of which are essential for sustainable economic growth in rural communities.