



G O N G

COMMUNICATIONS

Impact Report

2020

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to help purposeful organisations communicate their positive impact.

INTRODUCTION

Communications is having a ‘moment’. There has never been a time in history when there has been so much information so freely available. The flip side to the constant noise and ‘always on’ digital connectivity is that it’s often really hard for the important stuff to get through. Without accurate information we can trust, we are all constrained in our choices.

One of the positive effects of global communications connectivity, is that we are all empowered to make a difference, as workers and as citizens. Business communications (our main focus) has become much more activist and engaged in issues in a wider context. The last twelve months have been extraordinary in unleashing people power: The Black Lives Matter movement created powerful ripples that are gaining momentum every day in society and at work. Imperative 21, (the global network of business networks that includes the B Corp movement) amplified the calls for capitalism to be ‘reset’ to create a more just society where the needs of all stakeholders, including the

“We can’t in good conscience work for big carbon emitting organisations with their heads in the sand who aren’t committed to a Net Zero future.”

environment and biodiversity, are balanced with the interests of shareholders.

To play our part in shaping a better future, we look for clients working to solve the ‘wicked’ problems facing society and the planet and use our expertise to help accelerate their impact. We like to think we can help move the needle on the ‘new’ so that it has a chance to become the ‘new normal’.

Alongside the big themes such as renewable energy, food security, ethical investing, ESG, carbon markets and climate risk, we are also privileged to work in sectors such as diversity & inclusion at work, global health and economic development.

Being a B Corp and being independent means that we can say ‘no’ to certain types of brief. We can’t in good conscience work for big carbon emitting organisations with their heads in the sand who aren’t committed to a Net Zero future. Ditto gambling, factory farmers and payday lenders. This is important to everyone at Gong.



OUR CLIENTS

We can characterize our client work over the last 12 months with some common recurring themes:



FINANCE

Growth capital investors in emerging markets; private equity firms helping scale well led local companies, creating employment, always with a keen eye on environmental, societal and governance best practice (ESG).

Development finance from institutions like the IFC and at the individual country level, the UK's FCDO, plays a key role in these markets, supporting local economies to help build capacity and encourage stability.

At the venture end of the market, we support early stage investors in emerging & frontier markets like Novator – experts in building telecoms challenger brands in underserved markets, to open up competition to create more choice and keener pricing for customers.



INFRASTRUCTURE

This segues neatly to the second theme in our client portfolio - infrastructure: The safe and reliable supply of renewable energy, safe, sustainable water, digital connectivity, roads, schools, homes, even 'green' shopping malls.

Our client Garden City in Nairobi, was the first LEED certified mixed-use development in Africa. A new client in the last year is global battery company, Systems Sunlight, winning awards for its circular economy lead battery recycling and promoting electrification of industrial vehicle fleets to help companies reduce their carbon emissions.



NATURAL RESOURCES

The third pillar is what powers us beyond energy – food and its sustainable production. Protecting smallholder farmers' livelihoods as part of global supply chains; reducing waste through solar powered cold chain, biochar as carbon sink and crop yield improver, vertical urban farming to reduce food miles and lower carbon footprints, crop risk protection and nature-based solutions to climate risk damage.



HUMAN CAPITAL

The final theme is us. People and how to get the best for, and from them. Elimination of preventable diseases of poverty, culture and its importance in society and at work; ethical governance and leadership, diversity and inclusion, capacity building, training and development.

There's one other theme that we are very proud to pursue, and that is to work in and among the B Corp community. In the last 12 months that has included Volans, Unreasonable, Danone & Sustenir – and to influence other firms to pursue certification. We can't say who (that would be stealing their thunder) but watch this space.

CLIENTS AND SDGS

How our focus & clients map to the SDGs:

- 2. Zero Hunger
- 3. Good Health and well-being
- 5. Gender Equality
- 7. Affordable and Clean Energy
- 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth
- 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- 10.Reduce inequalities
- 13. Climate Action
- 15. Life on land
- 17. Partnerships for the goals



STRETCH GOALS

Work with more changemakers and innovators using business as a force for good.





OUR PEOPLE

We constantly hear from people who send us their CVs that they want to work for a B Corp.

It's clear that when thinking about a new job, comms professionals are motivated to find an employer that shares their values.

How do we strut our B Corp stuff where the team is concerned?

- **Transparency** – Every quarter we have a business update where we share the company's financials.
- **Sharing the upside** – We share 10% of our profits with everyone on the team and additional bonuses for the people who contribute most to new business growth
- **There's a share option scheme** to create opportunities for ownership participation



STRETCH GOALS

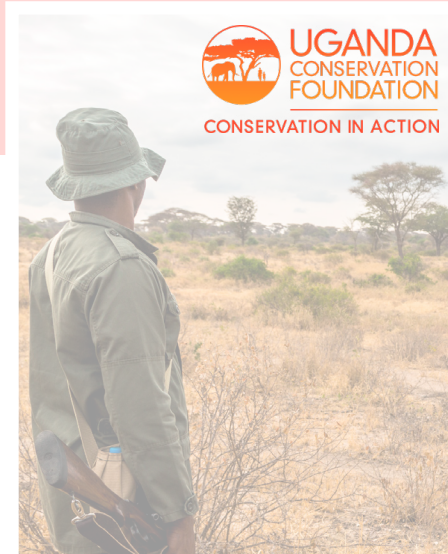
We know that our industry often struggles to bridge the social mobility gap. By 2021 we plan to take part in a Government backed apprentice scheme, supporting greater social mobility.

- **Our company benefits** include health insurance, a 4% contribution to the stakeholder pension, a day off on your birthday and a day off for activism.
- **Training and development** – At regular intervals throughout the year our team take part in internal training sessions in which team members are empowered to run a training session in their specialist subject. We also support external training which can be anything from writing a good op-ed to sustainability qualifications.
- **Board Diversity** – 80% of our Board are women and 40% are from Ethnic Minority backgrounds.

SOCIETY

We may be small, but we know we can have a big impact on the society around us. That's why we take our corporate social responsibility seriously.

We donate **2% of our profits** to support causes that we care about.



We also donate 150 hours of pro-bono time each year. In October that led to us working with the incredible charity, Refugee Support, to help them engage much needed corporate sponsors to raise funds for the work they do delivering aid with dignity to thousands of refugees. Tapping into our experience of the corporate diversity and inclusion space, we created an event that refocused the conversation on refugees as people with latent talent who can make a valuable contribution to the economy.

The event featured an evening of inspiring stories designed to shift attitudes: Paul Hutchings, Co-Founder of Refugee Support; Dina Nayeri, author and a child refugee at the age of eight and Mike Butcher, editor at large of Techcrunch, chronicler of technology entrepreneurs and founder of Techfugees.

This year we put our pent-up lockdown energy to good use by running, walking and galloping in support of the Uganda Conservation Foundation for their Run for Rangers sponsored run. The Galloping Gongers' ran, slipped and slid a collective total of 100 km in the rain and raised over £1,500. Further support through media coverage and social media is helping the charity reach new (and much needed) donors at a time when the charity is experiencing a 90% loss in income due to COVID-19. In the year to come we plan to raise more funds to support both UCF and Refugee Support.

Flexing our event-management muscles once more, we held a joint event with B Lab and UKSIF to shine on a light on ethical and impact investing and the B Corp movement. The event was chaired by Financial Times journalist Billy Nauman and attended by a great mix of professionals and interested individuals.

SUPPLIERS

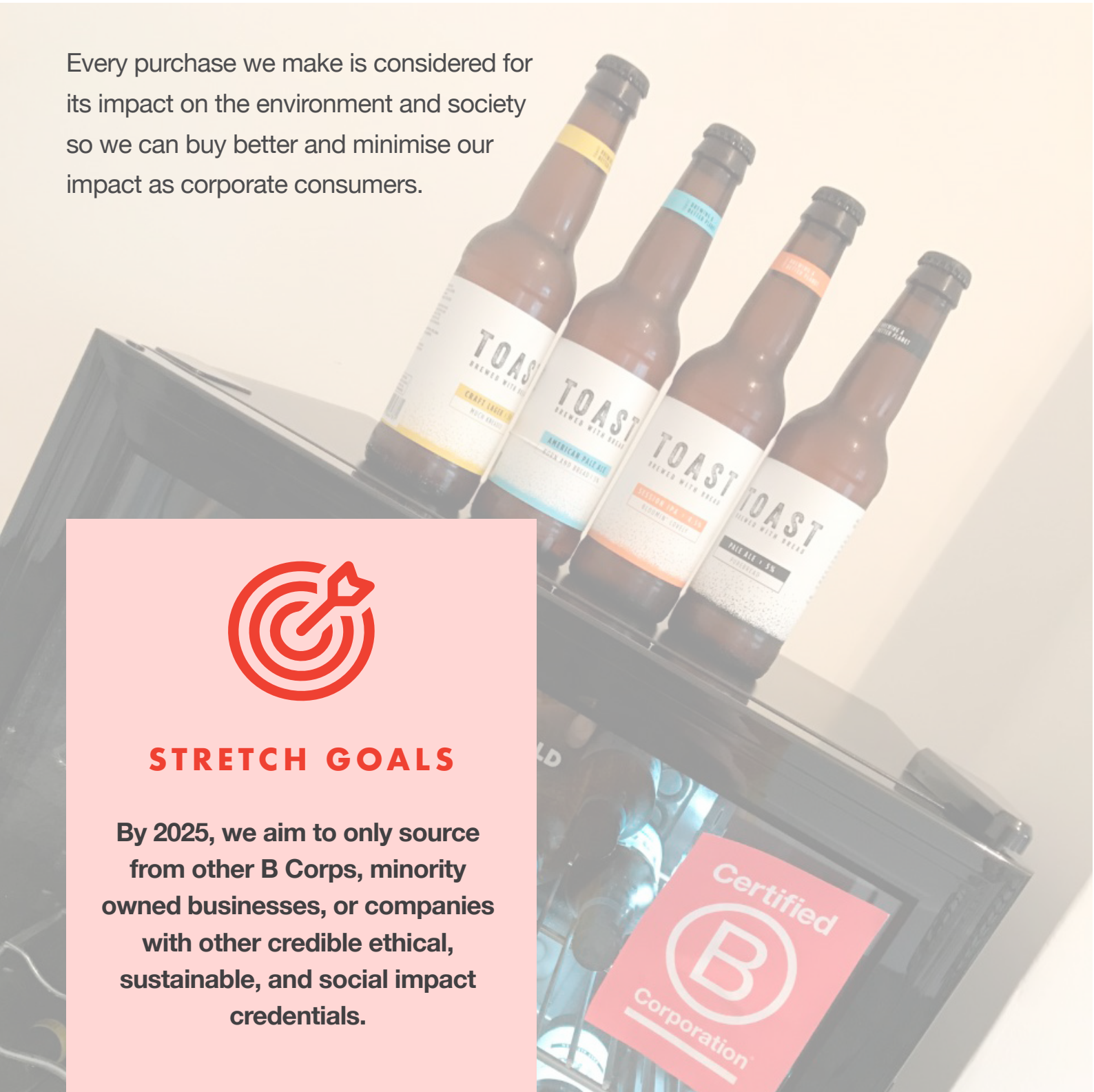
To ensure that our suppliers share our values, we make every effort to work with other B Corps. To date, that includes our IT services supplier (Fluid IT), our energy suppliers (Bulb) all the way through to the beer in our fridge (Toast Ale, don't mind if we do!).

Every purchase we make is considered for its impact on the environment and society so we can buy better and minimise our impact as corporate consumers.



STRETCH GOALS

By 2025, we aim to only source from other B Corps, minority owned businesses, or companies with other credible ethical, sustainable, and social impact credentials.



GOVERNANCE

We are proud to boast a diverse board with 80% female and 40% black and ethnic minority members.

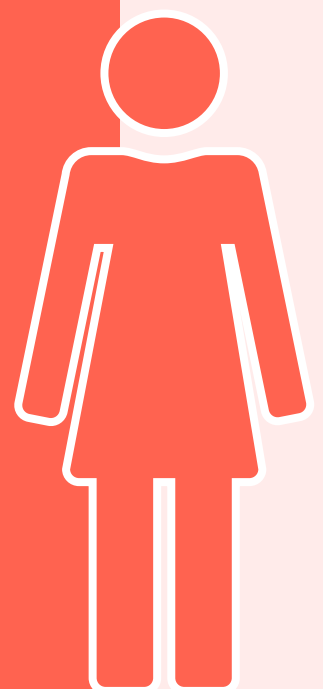


As part of our B Corp commitment we updated our memorandum and articles of association to embed our B Corp commitments.

Transparent financial reporting for the business is shared with all employees quarterly and we operate a profit share scheme in which up to **20% of profits** are shared among the team, with automatic enrolment for everyone.

80%
Female

40%
BAME



ENVIRONMENT

In December last year at COP25, alongside 499 other B Corps, Gong pledged to get to Net Zero by 2025 at the very latest. Spurred on by Covid and the imperative to Build Back Better, we made that a reality this year.

As a service provider, we already have a low carbon footprint, but we set to work doing what we could to both reduce our company and individual footprints. We switched to a green energy supplier (fellow B Corp, Bulb) and worked with our IT providers to switch to the cloud and dismantle our energy intensive server. When we were forced to close the office and work from home, we made sure that our team knew how to keep up their green habits in the 'virtual office' with guidance and a green suppliers list.

Anything we couldn't immediately reduce we offset by working with our client PURO.earth whose carbon



STRETCH GOALS

To continue to be a carbon net negative business, increasingly removing more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than we emit.

removal marketplace matches companies that have committed to get to Net Zero with companies whose core business locks away carbon for a minimum of 50 years (in products like biochar and wooden building materials from FSC certified sources).

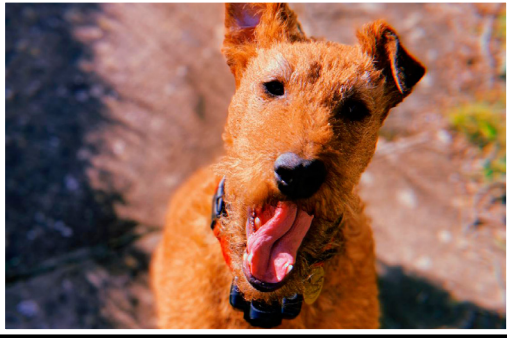
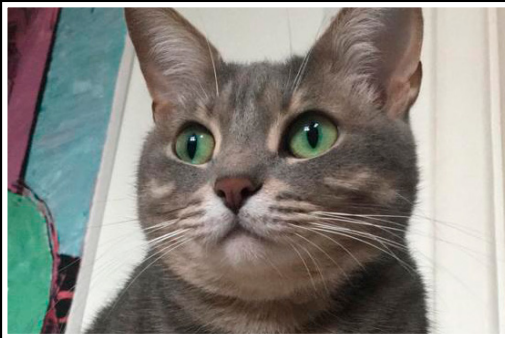
Using carbon calculations from trusted sources, we worked out that to get to Net Zero with immediate effect (and room to spare), we needed to remove 55 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. We achieved this by purchasing Carbon Removal Certificates (CORCS), certified by international registry DNV.

PETS

In the spirit of giving the final word to those closest to us (and who manage to love us regardless), we would like to say thank you to our wonderful pets.

This year has been hard and working through lockdown hasn't always been easy. Our pets have helped us maintain perspective and kept us grounded. When we felt sad, they made us laugh. No matter how sartorially challenged things became, they showed no disapproval. Even when all grooming went to the dogs, they stayed positive that things would (eventually) get back to normal.

Pets of Gong – we love you, take a bow:





G O N G

COMMUNICATIONS

If you're interested in working with us or maybe you simply want to find out more about our sustainability journey, please do get in touch with a member of our team.

Head Office

1 Blandford Street | London | W1U 3DA | United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)20 7935 4800 | E: info@gongcommunications.com

www.gongcommunications.com