

Higher Education Capacity Building in Moldova

Business Plan

1. The Basics

Sector

• Agriculture and Rural Development	• Land and Real Estate
• AIDS	• Law and Justice
• Anti-Corruption	• Macroeconomics and Growth
• Business, Economy and Trade	• Mining
X Education and Training	• Participation
• Energy	• Poverty
X Environment	• Private Sector Development
X Evaluation Monitoring	• Public Sector
• Financial Sector	• Social Development
• Gender	• Social Protection and Labor
• Globalization	• Transport
• Governance and Public Sector Reform	• Urban Development
• Health, Nutrition and Population	X Water Resources Management
• Information and Communication Technology	• Water Supply and Sanitation
• Infrastructure	• Other
• Knowledge Sharing	

Explain Unallocated/Unspecified (50 words)

Business Plan Period: From __ 1 __ / __ July __ / 2003 __ to __ 1 __ / __ July __ / 2005 __

Total amount of funding needed:

Total amount requested through DevelopmentSpace:

Contact Information:

Name: Steve Butkus

Title: President, Living Earth Institute

Address: 1930 Woodland Creek Street NE, Olympia, WA, 98516, USA

Telephone: 360-493-1063

E-mail: info@Living-Earth.org

Keywords describing your plan (15 words) – to be used by the search engine.

Moldova, Distance Learning, Higher Education, Water Quality, Pollution, FSR

2. Mission and Objectives

Mission

What's your social enterprise's mission statement? (50 words)

To expand the educational opportunities of environmental vocational college students in Moldova, a former Soviet Republic, by providing computers and laboratory equipment for use in an integrated curriculum to be provided on the internet.

Objectives

What objectives will you accomplish in the business plan period?

Objectives	Year	Year	Year
Install computers and collect water quality model calibration data	2003		
Develop and web publish integrated curriculum	2004		
Offer on-line courses and water quality workshop	2005		

Activities

What are the main activities you will undertake to achieve your objectives? (100 words)

Purchase and set up computers at the Ecology Vocational College, Chisinau, Moldova.
Collect water quality data from the Bac River for model calibration
Publish an on-line course on water quality by integrating other existing curriculum
Offer the course on-line to Ecology Vocational College students
Conduct workshop on water quality management using scientists from the USA

3. Enterprise Description

Legal Status

Project or program of an existing parent nonprofit organization

independent registered nonprofit For-profit subsidiary of nonprofit organization

What is your social enterprise stage of development?

New Idea Pilot Start up Expanding Mature

Value Statement

What is the value statement of your social enterprise? (100 words)

Moldova has been sinking deeper into poverty with the distinction of becoming Europe's poorest nation. Because of the desperate economic situation, the government cannot provide much funding for existing educational institutions. Due to this lack of funding, it has become impossible for many educational institutions to function effectively. An assessment conducted in 1996 by USAID has shown the need to improve infrastructure in environmental monitoring. USAID recommends greatly

enhancing training to provide environmental analytical capabilities and to procure laboratory equipment for environmental monitoring. This project will provide support the Ecology Vocational College to develop on-line curriculum and obtain analytical equipment to train professionals with skills needed to protect their environment.

History

Give a brief history of your social enterprise. (200 words)

The **Ecology Vocational College** was founded by the Moldovan Ministry of Education in 1998. The goal of the College is to train professionals in trades related to the environment and its protection. The **Living Earth Institute (LEI)** was formed to provide environmental education on the protection, restoration, and sustainable development of natural resources. In 2002, LEI and the College formed a partnership to develop new curriculum to integrate existing coursework and procure modern computer and laboratory equipment for new courses. The Ministry of Education has recently revised the College's mission in order expanded the goal of the College to include training in computer sciences. Starting in the next academic year, the College will introduce new courses for a degree in "Computers and System Administration". The proposed project will allow the College to pilot a "distance learning approach" program that will integrate their existing coursework into a web-based accessible format. To achieve this integration, a new course will be developed focused on the theme of "Water Quality Assessment and Management" that will tie together other disciplines taught at the College.

Future Strategy

Summarize the future strategy for your social enterprise. (150 words)

The new coursework will be offered annually and adopted into the required curriculum for several of the degrees programs offered at the Ecology Vocational College. The computer and laboratory equipment will be used for other courses taught at the College.

4. Markets and Competitors

Beneficiaries

Who are your beneficiaries? Describe their main characteristics (demographic, geographic, etc.). Are you reaching different beneficiary groups? If so, what are their defining characteristics? (150 words)

The Ecology Vocational College teaches at two academic levels. There are currently 300 students at the College level and 350 students at High School level. The High School graduates receive Baccalaureate diploma after successful completion of the coursework. The High School curriculum primarily focuses its attention on courses such as chemistry, biology, geography, math, computers and foreign languages. At the College level, the curriculum is focused more specific to vocational disciplines. The college offers a two-year program for holders of the Baccalaureate diploma and three-year program for those

who do not have a Baccalaureate diploma. After successful completion, the students receive a College degree in disciplines such as "Environmental Protection", "Forestry", and "Law". As an example, listed below are the current course requirements for the Environmental Protection Degree: Chemistry, Biology, Microbiology, Biotechnology, General Ecology, Human Ecology, Methods of Environmental Components Testing, Methods and Systems for the Purification of Environmental Components, Methods for Nature Conservation, Restoration and Improvement, Waste Treatment Technologies, Ecology Expertise, Assessment and Management of Ecological Risk, Environmental Impact Assessment, and Eco-statistics.

Situation Assessment

Who are the donors or investors funding the same or similar social ventures to yours?

Donors	Grantee Organizations
Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation organization is developing a three-year \$1.5 million program to enable universities across the Pacific Rim to partner with secondary schools in developing Distance Learning materials	USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant and Loan Program (DLT)
Stranahan Foundation of Toledo, Ohio	USDE Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)
Distance Education Coordinating Committee (DECCO) IPFW Distance Learning Development Grant	USAID Higher Education Community Partnership Grants

What barriers may exist that may prevent your social enterprise from becoming a successful player? Check all that apply.

- High costs that must be paid in advance
- A long time to establish your enterprise
- Expertise that is hard to find or expensive
- Lack of suppliers or distributors
- Other organizations providing the same service
- Regulations and laws
- Lack of high-quality staff
- Beneficiary resistance to use the service

How will you overcome these barriers? (100 words)

To overcome the initial high costs, most of the work on developing the curriculum and establishing an internet domain is currently being developed by LEI. First procuring the computers and laboratory equipment will allow them to be used in other courses while the integrated curriculum is completed. Baseline water quality data will be needed to calibrate the water quality model to be used in the course workshop.

Other Organizations Offering a Similar Service

What other organizations offer similar services? How are their services the same or different from yours?

Other Organizations	Similarities and differences of their services
Technical and Vocational distance learning schools	Organizations such as ZD Net University, Cyberstate University, and Learners International offer courses on-line to remote students. These organizations do not offer

	the specific type of needed training identified by USAID for Moldova
College and Universities offering courses over the internet	Many higher education institutions offer courses and degree programs on-line. The cost of tuition for these courses are prohibitive to Moldovan students.
International Center for Distance Learning	Provides information and promotes collaborations between all distance learning institutions. The organization will not provide resources to work on specific projects and acts only in an advisory role.

What are your social enterprise's comparative advantages compared to other organizations offering similar services and vice versa? (150 words)

Members of the Living Earth Institute have established a good working relationship with the College President by working to acquire needed instructional materials. Books and laboratory equipment donated in the US have been shipped to the College. In addition, three computers have already been donated by LEI members to the College. This previous work with the college has helped develop a strong personal trust between the College and Living Earth Institute. Experts have shown that in the cultures of Eastern Europe, the building of personal trust is the most important aspect relating to success of NGO projects in the region (Resources for the Future: Bell (2001)).

Partners and Collaborators

List strategic partners and service provider organizations involved:

Current Partner	Benefit
Ecology Vocational College	The goal of the College is to train students in professional trades related to the environment and its protection.
Living Earth Institute	LEI focuses on efforts to help provide education and technical assistance services at no cost to groups that do not have the financial resources to hire consultants.
Future Partnership	Projected Benefit
Pierce College (Tacoma, WA)	Collaboration with the Ecology Vocational College to bring students to the USA to study.

Opportunities and Threats

Legal and regulatory policies

X Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

The Moldovan government provides tax credits and preferential credits to organizations which contribute to pollution reduction per the national law.

Economic environment

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

Since the terrorist attack in the US in 2001, donations to non-profit organizations have drastically declined. Interest has declined in funding civil society projects in the former Soviet Republics, as well as the funding of projects for economically disadvantaged people.

Political instability or insecurity

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

The existing tensions between Moldova and the Transnistria region could grow into violent conflict, possibly causing the expulsion of foreign aid. Since the 1991 civil war in Moldova ended, a rump administration of extremists have controlled the area of Moldova east of the Dnestr River, the heartland of the nation's industrial and manufacturing capability. Propped up by the presence of Russia's 14th Army, the Transnistria regime has sapped the economic strength of the country. The conflict has minimized the amount of foreign investment in Moldova, so that since 1992 through the close of 2001, Moldova managed to attract only \$584 million in foreign investment.

Infrastructure

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

The communication infrastructure in Moldova could interfere with student access to the internet and the course material being offered on-line.

Transportation & communications

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

The communication infrastructure in Moldova could interfere with student access to the internet and the course material being offered on-line.

Climate

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

Technology

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

Even new computers will become obsolete in the future requiring purchase of new hardware to continue the project using modern technology.

Raw materials

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

Demographics

Opportunity Threat Both Neither

Explain (50 words)

What strategy will you use to maximize opportunities and tackle threats facing your social enterprise? (150 words)

We are attempting to obtain funding for capacity. All other curriculum development work is being offered in-kind.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Internal Condition	S	W	Explanation (15 words)
Products and services	X		Living Earth Institute has provided environmental educational services in many developing countries
Image and Reputation	X		Ecology Vocational College is known as an excellent school in Moldova
Mission statement	X		The project directly meets the mission statements of both Living Earth Institute and the Ecology Vocational College
Financial resources		X	Governmental financial support of the Ecology Vocational College is not adequate to meet the infrastructure needs to develop distance learning programs without outside support
Infrastructure		X	The communication infrastructure in Moldova could interfere with student access to the internet and the course material being offered on-line

Human resources	X		Living Earth Institute and the Ecology Vocational College both have adequate staff resources to develop the project with in-kind services
Capacity		X	Governmental financial support of the Ecology Vocational College is not adequate to meet the infrastructure needs to develop distance learning programs without outside support
Partnerships	X		Previous work with the college has helped develop a strong personal trust between the College and Living Earth Institute.
Location	X		Ecology Vocational College is located in the capital of Moldova where the highest population of perspective students live
Beneficiary relationships	X		Having new technology and access to education from rural areas will help attract more students to attend the Ecology Vocational College
Leadership	X		Ecology Vocational College is the leading institution for environmental education and computer sciences in Moldova
Technology		X	Ecology Vocational College needs hardware and laboratory equipment to provide needed training in the use of modern technology
Innovation/creativity	X		Ecology Vocational College is well known for its new approaches in instruction and offering unique curriculum.

5. Market and Services/Products

Services and Products

List of services and products offered

Service/Product	Features	Benefits	Stage of Product Life
Environmental Education	Distance Learning	Sustainable development	Project is in the startup stage

How do you measure the benefits of your products and services to your beneficiaries?
(150 words)

The number of students that will successfully complete the curriculum offered through distance learning program each year.
The number of students who are able to find jobs in their chosen field each year.
The ability of the College to build on its success and find the fund to maintain and expand this program.

Outreach Plan

Check all that apply.

Fliers / posters

Brochures

Public Relations (free media stories featured in the newspaper or on television by journalists)

Events, demonstrations and Trade shows (e.g., **Open House at the College**)

Displays

Billboards

Information meetings with beneficiaries (held in markets, villages, community center, schools or social enterprise's offices, these meetings inform potential beneficiaries about products and services offered).

Gifts (free enticements such as lunch, T-shirts, samples, etc. to get potential beneficiaries to try a product or service).

Personal contact (visits made by community development workers or village leaders to potential beneficiaries' homes or work sites).

Partners or collaborators that help get the word out to their beneficiaries or community about your social enterprise's products and services.

Referrals (word of mouth)

Broadcast (public service announcements or paid advertising on radio or television)

Print Advertising (paid ads in newspapers, magazine or other print medium)

Other

Other Explain (25 words)

The distance learning curriculum will be offered to all students of the Ecology Vocational College. Course offering will be published with other courses offered by the Ecology Vocational College. The national television station has broadcast other news about the College and will do the same with this project.

What is your outreach strategy? (150 words)

The President of the Ecology Vocational College will recruit students of high achievement for the first offerings.

Describe how your social enterprise gathers information from its beneficiaries on what they want and how it uses this feedback to improve the products and services it provides. (150 words)

Students have an open communication with the President of the Ecology Vocational College about their educational needs. The project focus was influenced by the USAID Environmental Policy and Technology Project which recommends greatly enhancing training to provide environmental analytical capabilities (Report PN-ACB-143) and to procure laboratory equipment for environmental monitoring (Report PN-ACB-144).

6. Internal Operations and Alliances

Operations

Describe the program or delivery methodology of your social enterprise. Are you using an established methodology or developing a new one? (150 words)

Distance Learning is a well established approach to education. There are numerous organizations providing assistance to build distance learning programs. Numerous colleges and Universities worldwide offer curriculum over the internet, greatly expanding the access to higher education.

Internal Control

Explain the controls your social enterprise has put in place to deter problems of theft and fraud. (100 words)

The project budget has a line item allocating funds for an independent financial audit of the project expenses.

Management and Staff

Who are the key people on your social enterprise’s team?
Please post team member’s CVs in the Project Library.

Name	Title and Position in Enterprise	CV in Project Library? (Y/N)
Dumitru Danu	Director of the Ecology Vocational College	Y
Vitale Coica	Principle of the University of Ecology and Social-Human Sciences	Y
Steve Butkus	President of Living Earth Institute	Y

What are the relevant experiences, skills and qualifications of the key team members? Have you successfully implemented similar projects in the past? (150 words)

Dumitru Danu will provide the administrative tasks of curriculum administration.

Vitale Coica will serve to coordinate and provide translation between the College and LEI.

Steve Butkus will develop on-line coursework and will teach the annual water quality workshop.

Governance

Who are your top advisors or board members? Indicate board members and give their contact information.

Name	Title & Company	Contact (email preferred)
Pam Elardo	Treasurer LEI	elardoshaw@mindspring.com
Jeanne Koenings	Advisor LEI	jlkoenings@attbi.com
Sue Butkus	Vice President LEI	suziebutkus@attbi.com

Recruitment Plan

What are your plans to hire new management or staff within your social enterprise? (100 words)

LEI works with the in-kind services provided by volunteers. No additional staffing is needed to implement the proposed project.

Consultants and Contract Services

In which areas of your social enterprise do you need help from service providers and consultants? (Check all that apply).

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting and Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer Systems and Information Technology
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal and Regulatory	<input type="checkbox"/> Governance and Board Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Outreach and Sales	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic and Business Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Research
<input type="checkbox"/> Audit and Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Report and Proposal/Business Plan Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Operations	<input type="checkbox"/> Production or Manufacturing
<input type="checkbox"/> Training of Trainers	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Management Training and Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry or Technical Specialty
<input type="checkbox"/> Administration and Clerical	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Explain Other (20 words) To save on shipping costs, computer equipment will be purchased in Chisinau, Moldova. Local sales agents will be used to procure the equipment.

7. Financials and SROI

Social Return on Investment (SROI)

What is the social return on investment that your social enterprise is offering its investors?

Social Return:

- Year 1: 6 students will be recruited to help install the new computers
- Year 2: 25 students will participate in distance learning courses
50 students will acquire computer skills.
10 locations will be tested for water quality and information entered into a database.
25 students will learn how to use water quality testing equipment
25 students will learn computer modeling skills.

Capacity Building:

- Year 1: 4 computers will be procured
10 water quality laboratory testing supplies will be purchased
8 teachers will be trained in accessing distance learning sites.
- Year 2: 8 teachers will be trained in use of water quality testing equipment.
8 teachers will be trained in constructing a water quality database
8 teachers will be trained in conducting water quality modeling

College will share water quality data and modeling results with appropriate government officials to work on reducing sources of water pollution.

Measurable Returns Per \$	Base line Date:	Period 1: Date:	Period 2: Date:	Period 3: Date:	Period 4: Date:	Period 5: Date:
Social return	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:
Total return						
Financial return	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:	1: 2: 3:
Total return						
Capacity Building	1: 2:	1: 2:	1: 2:	1: 2:	1: 2:	1: 2:
Total return						

Fundraising Plan

What is the total amount that your social enterprise needs to raise now? \$ _15,000_____

How much of this funding are you seeking through DevelopmentSpace? \$ _15,000_____

This amount will cover period: from: __July__/_2003__ to __July__/_2005__

For what specific purpose(s) will money be used? (50 words)

Funds will be used to purchase computers and laboratory equipment, and fund travel. No salary is required since all professional services will be provided in-kind.

What funders supported your social enterprise in the past? What type of funds did you receive and what were they funds used? Fill out the chart.

Previous Funders	Type of Funds	Use of Funds	Period Covered
Vanderbush Family Foundation	Foundation Grant	Establishment of sustainable development project in Dhanusha District, Nepal.	January 2001 to July 2002
Vanderbush/Dominik	Private Donation	Support sustainable development project in Dhanusha District, Nepal.	April/May 2001
Audrey Shaw	Private Donation	Support sustainable development project in Dhanusha District, Nepal.	April 2001
Diane Bell	Private Donation	Support sustainable development project in Dhanusha District, Nepal.	November/ December 2001
Mark A. Elardo Family Foundation, Inc.	Foundation Grant	Continuation of sustainable development project in Dhanusha District, Nepal.	July 2002 to February 2003

From whom will you raise the money your social enterprise needs in the future? What type of funding do you need, for what purpose and when? What is the likelihood that you will receive funding from the donors you identified?

Future Funders	Type of Funds	Purpose	Dates:	Potential (E-G-F-P) ¹
Unknown				

Assumptions

Living Earth institute pays a professional fund raiser to assist in solicitation of project funds.

Financial Plan

How will your social enterprise generate revenue to achieve sustainability? (250 words)

The computers and laboratory equipment are expected to last for some time. The integrated curriculum is planned for use well into the future.

Give historic figures for 1-2 years and projects.

	Past	Past	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Year			2003	2004	2005
Expenses			10,100	0	4,900
Revenue			15,000		
+/-			4,900	4,900	0

Sustainability

When will your social enterprise achieve sustainability? Year: __2005__

Budget

What is the budget of your social enterprise? Fill out the table using budget categories.

Social Enterprise Budget					
Expenses	Past	Past	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Operating Costs					
Post-project audit					\$300

¹ E= excellent; G = good; F = fair; P = poor

