



## Engineers Without Borders – International

### A Humanitarian Engineering Network for a Better World

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June 4, 2010

Dear EWB/ISF Organization and Partner:

Your organization has been identified as an Engineers Without Borders organization or as an interested partner to those individual organizations. We are requesting your feedback on a Proposal being put forth by the existing Engineers Without Borders – International (EWB-I) Steering Committee as described in the attached document.

It has been the continuing intent and purpose of the EWB-I Steering Committee to create a strong, cohesive EWB/ISF global community to facilitate collaborations, partnerships, mutual support and mentorship of new EWB's to serve more effectively our common goal of providing solutions to the critical needs of the poorest and most underserved communities of the world and to protect the earth's life support systems. In recent years, this imperative has become not only urgent but a do-or-die responsibility from which the engineering community cannot turn away.

We are encouraged by the response of the international business community – major MNC's, to the proposal to create more coordination among the EWB's so that the community development work of each would lead to a major, well-coordinated effort towards global sustainability, equity and poverty alleviation.

The attached Proposal addresses the need to strengthen the global bonds amongst the individual EWB organizations and provide a more robust platform which will identify, facilitate and fund the sustainable and appropriate community development work and educational resources and tools for the EWB-I member organizations and its partners. More detail is provided in the Proposal.

If you are interested in joining this effort, please indicate your interest and we will ensure that you are included in the efforts moving forward.

If you are interested in providing feedback, please provide your comments to Claes Helgesson at [c.helgesson@telia.com](mailto:c.helgesson@telia.com) by August 15, 2010, end of day. Upon receipt of the comments, the EWB-I Steering Committee will review the comments and vote whether to move forward with this Proposal.

We greatly appreciate your time as you review this Proposal. If you have any questions concerning this request, please feel free to send inquiries to Claes Helgesson at [c.helgesson@telia.com](mailto:c.helgesson@telia.com).

With great regards,

EWB-INTERNATIONAL

Ali Ansari  
Chair, EWB-I Steering Committee

EWB-INTERNATIONAL

Claes I. Helgesson  
Vice Chair, EWB-I Steering Committee

## **Proposal To Establish EWB-Global**

### **History of EWB-International**

Engineers Without Borders - International (EWB-I) is an existing network of 47 in-country EWB/ISF member organizations established to work together and to share knowledge in their efforts to improve quality of life for developing communities. Individually or in partnership, EWB organizations deliver a wide variety of infrastructure projects to improve the quality of life in a sustainable, appropriate, and equitable manner. Since forming in 2002, EWB-I member organizations have supported people moving out of poverty by providing clean water and sanitation, building roads and bridges, delivering electricity and lighting, and otherwise contributing to sustainable development initiatives.

### **Need**

The individual EWB-I member organizations are committed to the delivery of high quality programs under the unique banner of their respective in-country organization. In its current role, the EWB-I network provides a value to its individual member organizations. This value is seen in two major areas:

- Facilitation of the collaboration between EWB/ISF member organizations on community projects. This type of collaboration amongst the member organizations occurs across political, social, and economic boundaries. Individual member organizations have begun to form partnerships and work collaboratively on programs which better leverage their individual resources and relationships.
- Sharing of knowledge and information. As EWB/ISF member organizations work in communities around the world, it is important to capture and share the work that is being done, the lessons learned, and the effectiveness of the work. The EWB-I network brings together its member organizations to provide for these information exchanges and educational opportunities.

It is apparent that there is a significant need for additional community programs, more collaboration amongst EWB-I members, and more resources to support the wide variety of infrastructure projects which improve the quality of life in a sustainable, appropriate, and equitable manner. It is clear that there is a need for an expanded EWB-I network which can not only continue the work that has been done to date but also proactively:

- Work with EWB-I member organizations to provide additional resources, information, and tools such that each member organization has the tools to succeed. This will support the sustainable growth of each member organization.
- Work with EWB-I member organizations to develop country-specific business plans with their own goals and deliverables. This business plan will serve as an internal roadmap for the growth of the member organization, as well as provide a strategic plan by which results can be measured.
- Coordinate between member organizations, corporations, NGO's to establish partnerships, community programs, and educational resources. This is necessary especially when multiple member organizations many times work in another member organization country.

- Educate individual member organizations as to “best practices” in areas of the globe. One of the potential educational opportunities is the creation of Centers for Sustainability located in different areas which can provide workshops or courses on indigenous sustainability or appropriate technologies within the region.
- Develop an infrastructure where EWB-I member organizations around the world are held accountable for wearing the EWB-I logo. Transparency will be required and is earned through the delivering of appropriate and sustainable community programs where results can be measured.
- Collaborative Fundraising and Stewardship. Working with the global donor community to clarify the roles of the member organizations and to establish common stewardship practices.
- Serve as an umbrella for regional projects in sensitive areas (such as the Middle East for example).

### **Proposal**

To enhance synergies on a global basis among EWB organizations for the ultimate benefit of developing communities, EWB-I must strengthen its global bonds and act as a role model in creating change which involves intensive resource conservation, equitable resource sharing and reduced consumption. Through this change, a more robust platform will emerge which will identify, facilitate and fund the sustainable and appropriate community development work and educational resources and tools for the EWB-I member organizations and its partners.

In support of this effort, the existing EWB-I Steering Committee sent a Memorandum to the Executive Director of EWB-USA proposing that EWB-USA act as the Secretariat and operating arm of a new EWB global (EWB-Global) organization for a period of two to four years as the organization emerges and stabilizes. The Memorandum is attached.

### **Moving Forward**

EWB-Global will require the creation of formal processes and organizational structure during its startup year of operation. The initial action will be for the EWB-I Steering Committee to formalize the transition of the organization. To accomplish this action, it is proposed that the following actions be taken:

- Distribute a formal document in June, 2010, to all existing EWB-I members as well as EWB-groups that do not participate in EWB-I. The purpose of the document is to present the proposed reorganization of EWB-I and to solicit feedback from interested parties. Comments will be accepted until August 15th, 2010.
- The EWB-I Steering Committee will consider comments and determine if there is consensus to move forward. This is anticipated by September 15, 2010.
- The EWB-I Steering Committee will vote to either move forward with the transition or return to business as usual. If the EWB-I Steering Committee votes to move forward, the EWB-I Steering Committee, with assistance from the EWB-USA Executive Director, will begin to solicit funding to create EWB-Global as well as to support community programs and some initial educational

initiatives. In addition, an agreement will be completed between the Secretariat and the existing EWB-I Steering Committee to determine the roles and responsibilities of each organization as it moves forward. It is then anticipated that EWB –Global will start its operation on January 1, 2011.

### **In Summary**

Engineers Without Borders – Global has the potential to become recognized and respected as one of the leading international organizations whose membership can deliver appropriate and sustainable solutions to developing communities worldwide and that provides transformative educational opportunities for its members leading to the solutions of critical problems affecting the health of our planet and its occupants.

The creation of EWB-Global partnerships have the ability to transcend political, cultural, generational, and geographic boundaries allowing people to work together to solve critical problems affecting the health of our communities and our environment.



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**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: February 9, 2010

TO: Cathy Leslie, Executive Director of Engineers Without Borders –USA

FROM: The Board of Directors of Engineers Without Borders-International

SUBJECT: Creation of Engineers Without Borders-Global

The purpose of this letter is to initiate discussions with the member organizations of Engineers Without Borders-International (EWB-I) regarding the formation of a new organization tentatively named Engineers Without Borders-Global (EWB-Global). EWB-Global would replace the current EWB-I organization, changing from what is now a loose network of in-country EWB organizations to an association of EWBs working in harmony on projects across the world. The EWB-I Board believes that acting soon on this matter will be of great benefit to all the EWB-I members, as it will better leverage member resources and open up new opportunities for partnership for assisting developing communities around the world. This letter specifically requests that Engineers Without Borders-USA (EWB-USA) work with the EWB-I Board to begin the tasks of setting up the EWB-Global organization and that the EWB-USA headquarters operation act initially as the EWB-Global Secretariat. The first tasks will include the creation of a steering committee composed of EWB-I representatives and key staff members of EWB-USA. Work should begin immediately with the intent to establish EWB-Global as an operating entity by late 2010.

**Background**

EWB-I is a network of 47 in-country EWB member organizations wishing to work together and share knowledge in their efforts to improve quality of life for poor communities. Individually or in partnership, people in these EWB-I members deliver a wide variety of facilities and infrastructure projects designed to meet important community needs. Formed in 2002, EWB-I members have helped move people out of poverty by providing clean water and sanitation, building roads and bridges, delivering electricity and lighting, and otherwise contributing to improving the quality of life. In its current role, EWB-I is acting as a global facilitator, providing a web-based resources, communications and information exchanges, and by hosting educational conferences.

Recognizing the power of the network, many of these in-country EWB groups have formed partnerships, working together on projects in order to better leverage their resources and to take advantage of important in-country relationships. Many of these partnerships are quite remarkable, transcending normal political boundaries. For example, EWB-Palestine, EWB-Israel, EWB-Egypt, EWB-Jordan are working with the Abraham Path Initiative, the development



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of a route that retraces the journey made by Abraham through the heart of the Middle East some four thousand years ago. Other similar and equally remarkable partnerships have formed.

### **The Need**

All of these member organizations have and continue to deliver high quality projects under the banner of their respective nations, and it is important that these efforts continue. EWB-USA, a founding member of EWB-I, has been doing so for over eight years and has 400+ projects in various stages of completion. At the same time, EWB-USA has been developing relationships with many donor organizations, many of which are large multi-national corporations. Their leaders recognize the importance of alleviating poverty and see exceptional value in the EWB engineering project delivery models for community assistance. Importantly, in their global view of the world, they see that such assistance is country neutral, that is, not needing to be aligned with or attributable to any particular in-country group.

Therefore, in order to capture and retain the interest and support of these donor organizations and to better meet its long term goals, it is proposed that EWB-International be strengthened and raised in status to that of a global organization (EWB-Global). This change will create a new platform and offer a more effective global reach from which donors and supporters can provide technical expertise and deliver projects which build capacity and improve the lives of underserved communities around the world.

### **The Proposal**

Therefore, in order to capture and retain the interest and support of these donor organizations and to better meet its long term goals, it is proposed that EWB-International be strengthened and raised in status to that of a global organization (EWB-Global). This change will create a new platform and offer a more effective global reach from which donors and supporters can provide technical expertise and deliver projects which build capacity and improve the lives of underserved communities around the world.

In the start up phase, it is proposed that EWB-USA acts as the secretariat for and operating arm of the new EWB-Global organization for a period of two to four years starting in mid-2010. Working as secretariat for (and operating arm of) EWB-Global, EWB-USA would then write a business proposal and operational plan to present to potential donors to allow for sufficient staff and resources to provide administrative services for the new EWB-Global organization.

Once the resources become available, it is anticipated that some of the outcomes will be:

- The facilitation of partnerships between individual EWB's and best practices being developed. These partnerships will be true partnerships with ongoing projects funded by donor dollars.
- Educational and training conferences where individual EWB's can come together and share best practices.



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- Provision of resources to support the growth of individual EWB's.

#### **EWB-I Board Discussions**

All EWB-I Board members were contacted about the EWB-Global concept. The Board members who responded, agreed that replacing EWB-I with a stronger EWB-Global made good sense and decided that further discussions were warranted. Soon after, other EWB-I Board members who were not on this conference call were contacted and informed about the discussions and the decision of the EWB-I Board. They too unanimously agreed.

#### **Next Steps**

Upon reaching agreement between EWB-I and EWB-USA, these organizations should establish a task committee charged with the formation of the EWB-Global organization. The purpose of this committee is to determine all the steps necessary to create the EWB-Global organization and to resolve any issues that may arise. The first meeting of the task committee will take place in Denver, CO during the EWB-USA International Conference from March 18-21, 2010.