

Companies or organizations interested in partnering with WDI on a BoP or a Healthcare project should contact wdi-mapinfo@umich.edu. Project proposals are accepted for consideration each September through early December. Projects take place during a seven-week period between early March and late April. Sponsors receive top-notch deliverables and data-driven recommendations from a team of MBA students with diverse skills, knowledge, backgrounds and work experience. More information can be found at: <http://wdi.umich.edu/students/MAP/Info>.

WDI MAP Teams Help Partners with Operations, Strategy

In keeping with its mission to support international activities at the University of Michigan, WDI sponsored seven Multidisciplinary Action Project (MAP) teams this year. The projects, in conjunction with the Ross School of Business, allow MBA students to work with international organizations to create new business models, research new directions, and strategize for the future.

WDI identifies and develops international projects with host organizations to create impactful projects in emerging economies. The Institute also provides financial and faculty support.

One WDI research partner that hosted a student team was Abt Associates. Jeffrey Barnes, portfolio manager and principal associate, said Abt benefitted from the MAP work in Benin in two main ways.

“The team was able to take a very broad look at all of the issues we have been working on with the community insurance groups and really look at it from all angles,” he said. “In addition, they brought fresh thinking and some innovative ideas. While not all of the ideas are workable, some may be workable in the future and in general, the assessment helped us to think more out of the box and to stimulate broader reflection for more creative solutions.”

He said the student team worked very well together, was very adaptable and sensitive to the context they were put in, “and their work was appreciated by our partners and clients.”

“This has been another very positive MAP experience for Abt and we will certainly be applying for another team next year,” Barnes said.

Here is a brief synopsis of each of this year’s projects.

Abt Associates

// Benin

DIRECTED BY: Ted London, WDI and Ross School of Business; James Walsh, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Susan Allen, Sander Dolder, Matthew Downer, Preeti Gupta

Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and economic policy, and international development. Abt has worked for several years to build up a viable system of community-based health insurance schemes, but enrollment remains low. Abt asked the MAP team to prepare a business plan for a regional model that included strategies for increased enrollment, improved financial management and data collection, and required investments from all stakeholders. This is the third time WDI and Abt collaborated on a MAP. Last year, students developed positioning strategies and value propositions for priority market segments that are most likely to become advanced cook stove users. Two years ago, the students helped develop a commercially-viable BoP strategy to chlorinate water in Indonesia.





Philips Ultrasound

// India, Indonesia

DIRECTED BY: Ted London, WDI and Ross School of Business; Jeffrey Sanchez-Burks, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Diogo Elias, Molly Mehaffey, Carlos Mendez, Michelle Osterman

Royal Philips Electronics is a diversified health and well-being company, focused on improving people's lives through timely innovations. Philips Ultrasound is a business unit of the Philips Healthcare sector, and has made and is marketing a low-cost ultrasound for the base of the pyramid (BoP). Philips asked the MAP team to develop a business model for distribution of the product, and a business model for the training and education of midwives or community health workers.

VisionSpring

// India

DIRECTED BY: Ted London, WDI and Ross School of Business; Ted O'Leary, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Calvina Cheng, Elvira Mah, Prithviraj Sharan, David Yang

VisionSpring is a non-profit social enterprise that alleviates poverty in the developing world by broadening access to affordable reading glasses. It currently operates 20 mobile vans in rural India that conducts free vision screenings and provides on-site prescription eyeglasses. VisionSpring is having difficulty attracting people in the

north regions of India to attend their campaigns. They asked the MAP team to use focus groups, demand generation activity prototyping, and the monitoring of field metrics to increase demand for these campaigns in the northern villages. In 2010, the MAP team, under London's direction, developed a field market study and a sales and marketing strategy document for VisionSpring in El Salvador. In 2009, the student team developed a field market study, a sales and marketing strategy document, including pricing suggestions and sales channel strategies, and marketing materials for the sale of sunglasses for the organization in India.

RTT Trans Africa

// South Africa

DIRECTED BY: Prashant Yadav, WDI, Ross School of Business, School of Public Health; Ravi Anupindi, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Andrew Chow, Duy-Khiem Le, Samir Malviya, Alonso Razetto

RTT is Africa's largest, privately owned supply chain management organization. A South African-based organization with a Pan-African network, RTT offers end-to-end supply chain services through regional and local distribution centers in South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Swaziland, and Malawi covering southern, east and west Africa. The MAP project consisted of developing a framework and methodology for benchmarking and mapping the current private sector supply chain, and investigating the viability of the regional distribution center model for vaccines in several countries.

CARE Bangladesh/ CARE USA

// Bangladesh

DIRECTED BY: Ted London, WDI and Ross School of Business; James Walsh, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Patrick Huang, Orson Kerrigan, Rachel Smeak, Julie Young

CARE Bangladesh looks to achieve lasting impact at broad scale on underlying causes of poverty and social injustice. For the past four years, CARE has been trying increase the incomes of small dairy farmers. One challenge has been improving access to inputs and veterinary services. With that in mind, CARE initiated a microfranchise pilot project. The organization asked the MAP team to review the current model, compare it with other models globally, conduct market feasibility on the ground in Bangladesh, and develop a preliminary business plan. Additionally, the team reviewed business training materials and operational manuals for the shops to be tested in the microfranchise. Last year, a MAP team drafted a business plan and a set of recommendations for scaling CARE Bangladesh's workforce training and empowerment model for local female garment workers. In 2009, WDI and CARE teamed up on a MAP in Uganda exploring the feasibility of applying the BoP distribution model for clean energy equipment in Uganda.

ITC Limited – Agri Business Division

// India

DIRECTED BY: Ted London, WDI and Ross School of Business; Venkat Ramaswamy, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Alvaro Ore, Ashwin Vishwanathan, Kevin Wooster, Michael Yates

ITC Limited is one of India's largest exporters of agricultural commodities and is known for its strong and enduring farmer partnerships. ITC's eChoupal initiative is an internet-based intervention that facilitates the flow of goods and services in and out of villages. To extend the reach of eChoupal, ITC wants the MAP team to study the micro irrigation financing requirements of the eChoupal farmers and develop an appropriate business model.

Procter & Gamble

// India

DIRECTED BY: Ted London, WDI and Ross School of Business; James Walsh, Ross School of Business

MAP TEAM: Rocío Cardenas, Dishank Kamath, Eduard Mikinberg, Pallavi Suresh

P&G is a U.S.-based consumer goods company with some of the most recognized household brands. The company tasked the student team with designing a "go-to-market" model to enable Procter & Gamble brand presence in India to reach 8 million stores by 2020. Presently, P&G brands are in 5.7 million stores in India.