

**NEWS FROM THE TEAM AT ECOVENTURES INTERNATIONAL**



### Message from our Director

Over the past year, EVI has continued to increase our impact on environmental enterprise development in low-income communities worldwide. EVI has achieved this through working closely with communities, continuing research on innovations that can be applied in different contexts, and exploring sustainable market-centered approaches that will ultimately make a difference in the lives of youth and adults in the communities in which work.

Our small team has worked tirelessly to continue deepening our learning, and humbly question the role we most need to play. We have expanded to new regions, worked with new staff, volunteers and partners, developed new tools and curriculum, spoken at more conferences and events worldwide, learned about countless more ways we can work with communities to make an impact. We thank those who join us on this journey to sustainability...

*Margie Brand*

### Expanding impact: Working with the IDEJEN program in Haiti

EVI recently conducted market research and an assessment of sustainable employment and enterprise opportunities for the IDEJEN (Initiative Pour Le Developpement Des Jeunes) livelihood development and vocational training program for out-of-school youth in Haiti.

an industry, and ways that youth involvement can strengthen the sector. Examples of such opportunities include aquaculture, biomass briquetting, and solar technologies. The ability for youth to apply skills beyond their job allows for mobility in the market and is an added value to the training of IDEJEN centers.

The project is funded under USAID's EQUIP3 program, run by Education Development Center. The IDEJEN centers are scaling up their operations to train an additional 10,000 youth in job and entrepreneurship skills by 2010. To support this, EVI is identifying key environmentally sustainable sectors with the most demonstrated potential for growth, suitability to youth, and potential for youth employment and inclusion.

As a second part to this program, EVI is developing market analysis tools for use by implementing partners and the youth they serve so that they can continue to assess the markets and are able to change and adapt activities and programs to reflect the evolving markets.

From January through August, EVI conducted a detailed market survey of growing sectors in Haitian communities and their potential for youth contributions. Value chain methodologies were utilized to identify constraints and opportunities within



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*"With an estimated 15,000 young people entering the Timor Leste workforce each year and a mere 400 private sector jobs available, it is absolutely critical that we link youth to emerging sectors and help them create the formal business arrangements that will enable them to generate income over the long-term, while providing sustainable products and services to their communities."*

*- David Sturza, EVI*



## Prepara Ami Ba Servisu: A youth training program in Timor Leste

EVI Team Member, David Sturza, was in Timor Leste earlier this year, where EVI was assessing economic opportunities for Timorese youth involved in the USAID/Prepara ami ba Servisu (Preparing Ourselves for Work) project implemented by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC).

David worked with over 45 local and international NGOs, private sector actors, and government officials to do a preliminary assessment of youth livelihood opportunities in ten different sectors, including bamboo, silk, aquaculture, biodiesel, solar, and integrated coconut processing, among others. Some 2,500 Timorese youth will

participate in the program over the next three years and we are excited to see the impact that they will have in growing and supporting the sectors they begin to work in.

During his time in Timor, David worked with the EDC curriculum development and education team to adapt EVI's Marketplace Simulation Game to fit in with their entrepreneurship curriculum. Timorese facilitators were trained on this newly adapted curriculum, which will be used to help foster basic business and financial management skills for the 2,500 youth, further strengthening their capacity to improve their livelihoods.

## Green Enterprise Development for Community Revitalization

Over the past year, EVI conducted a series of Green Business Training Workshops in Maryland, Delaware, and New York State. These regional workshops, sponsored by the USDA, were hosted in collaboration with Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore.

Within these regional communities, small business owners, local government officials, non-profit leaders, farmers, academia, students and members of the community gathered together to explore local opportunities and strategies for green enterprise development. Expert green business practitioners and EVI expert Kate Davenport led a series of presentations and dialogues ranging from renewable energy to sustainable agriculture, and from green building design and construction to waste management in efforts to link participants with region-specific sustainable business opportunities.

As part of the training, EVI developed a Green Business Resource CD for workshop participants, including hundreds of key resources for sustainable business development, which has since been requested frequently by colleagues of participants and other organizations.

Key highlights of the workshops include business-to-business linkages in green services and products, new frameworks for utilizing green marketing principles to increase revenues, and establishing key green principles to increase revenues and decrease costs across sectors and industries. The final Green Business Training Workshop will be held in Maryland on the Lower Eastern Shore in early 2009.



## Recent Activities: Youth programming in Rwanda

EVI's Executive Director, Margie Brand, recently traveled to Rwanda as part of a team of youth programming experts in order to design a pilot out-of-school youth training program.

The Rwanda Youth Project is a five-year, \$7.5 million activity directly targeting 2,500 urban out-of-school youth per year. This

activity is a cross-sectoral collaboration within USAID/Rwanda and EVI is participating in an initial assessment to determine labor market demand and trends; and review existing policies and institutional capacity of youth-serving organizations in Rwanda to provide education, training, and support services to youth.



## Bangladesh Youth Pilot Project

Youth employment is of particular interest for economic development in Bangladesh: Youth ages 15-24 currently represent 20% of the population of 150 million and 50% of Bangladeshis are employed in agriculture, fishing, and forestry, which contributes only 21% of the GDP. With the population of Bangladesh projected to reach 231 million by 2050 and the youth population expected to grow by several million over the next decade, there is a significant demand for more skilled workers.

Simultaneously, the country faces a real threat of environmental changes due to

climate change and it is particularly important to focus on environmentally restorative industries for growth.

USAID EQUIP3, through EDC, is initiating a pilot youth training program to target 350 youth in Bangladesh next year. EVI's Kate Davenport traveled to Bangladesh in November to support this by doing market research to identify growing, environmentally friendly and restorative sectors towards which programming can be directed.



## Innovative Experiential Training Curricula

In 2008, EVI continued to expand its curricula this year through adaptations and developments, working closely with its partner, SAIE. EVI adapted existing curricula to meet the needs of various age groups and has translated several curricula into other languages. Curricula are currently being used in Timor Leste, Ecuador, Kenya, Mexico,

Nigeria, Tanzania, the United States, and Zambia. These include curricula in English, Spanish, kiSwahili, Bahasa Indonesia, and Tetun.

We're looking forward to continuing to expand our impact by developing more environmental enterprise training tools.

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Learn more about our work at  
[www.eco-ventures.org](http://www.eco-ventures.org)

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EVI was selected as a finalist in the UNEP and IUCN SEED (Supporting Entrepreneurs for Environment and Development) Award in 2007.

## About EcoVentures International...

EcoVentures International is a 501(c)3 organization launched in 2002 by Margie Brand, a social changemaker, who recognized the need for intentional environmental enterprise development in low-income communities while at the United Nations' World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa.

EVI explores and implements innovations in sustainable livelihoods & sustainable development. We believe that environmental challenges can be addressed, in part, through the development of environmentally sustainable and restorative products and services that provide both business opportunity and ecologically sustainable alternatives to individuals and communities. We research and support the application and market-development of appropriate environmental enterprises, from alternative fuels in rural Tanzania and portable mini solar panels in Kenya, to organic products in local markets in Europe and water filtration systems in Washington, D.C.

EVI is recognized for new approaches to green enterprise development, effective youth programs, environmental microenterprise strategies, and collaborative community development. We run green enterprise development projects, provide direct training and training-of-trainer programs, facilitate market linkage and value chain development, manage learning networks and dialogues, and develop training curricula and other environmental enterprise learning tools.



# EcoVentures

## INTERNATIONAL

Environmental Enterprise Development

### How to Support EcoVentures International

This newsletter is just a small example of the work that has been done by a small team of dedicated practitioners, students, and volunteers. We continue to increase our impact in achieving our mission, but **WE ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT** to continue to expand this good work for which there is so much need.

To donate, please visit our website at [www.eco-ventures.org](http://www.eco-ventures.org) (click on “Donor Circle”) or search for us on [www.JustGive.org](http://www.JustGive.org). We also happily accept checks and cash. Every little bit counts and we appreciate your support – and feedback!



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