

**ROBERT A. BORTNER**  
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Over 25 years of experience as a specialized generalist with big-picture, bird's-eye perspective mixed with strong critical thinking that has enabled me to meet cross-functional challenges in many sectors, including ICT for development, community-based development and mobilization, community-based ecotourism, smallholder agriculture, micro-business and SME development, private sector development and economic growth. I have had particular success cultivating strong, productive relationships with private, public, NGO and community partners and stakeholders in a variety of corporate, public and NGO capacities. I have also enjoyed considerable success managing, coordinating, and planning economic development and infrastructure projects, as well as assessing and evaluating project impact.

### **COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENT**

**Founder, Director and Board Member** – The Community Empowerment Network – Ferndale, Washington (2004 until present)

- Developed, designed and managed Community Empowerment Network's (CEN) Self-Reliance Through Empowerment Approach™, a comprehensive and holistic strategy for community development that strengthens essential basic skills and mindsets through developmental education, as well as builds entrepreneurship and removes barriers to development. Through these efforts, communities become socially, environmentally and financially sustainable over the long term, while maintaining their unique way of life.
- Co-developed, piloted and evaluated the effectiveness of CEN's PRATICAR methodology for strengthening individuals' basic skills and mindsets that are a prerequisite for building their self-reliance. Participants retained and built upon skills and mindsets three years after the project ended, and several participants have more than tripled their income.
- Implementing an eight-year-old community-led program to create sustainable livelihoods for families in the Brazilian Amazon, based on community-based ecotourism that reflects social-cultural needs, promotes and drives economic security and growth, and retains the local ecology.
  - Successfully engaged, organized and mobilized 16 rural communities in the region.
  - Facilitated the communities' grassroots efforts to elaborate their vision for regional development based on ecotourism as well as the creation of a comprehensive Regional Development Plan which details five programs and 44 separate projects, including specific objectives; priorities, responsibilities and actions; and metrics and evaluation criteria.
  - Developed the communities' organizational capacity to drive the initiative, which also strengthened their civil society.
  - Organized and led the first group of foreign visitors to the region, resulting in stronger local leadership and management skills, as well as the generation of revenue for the communities.

**President** – Acumen International – Seattle, Washington (2001 until present)

- **Kgautswane (South Africa) Digital Community Center** – (2001 – 2006) Mentored and strengthened the capacity of a key village leader to organize community-led development initiatives, such as:
  - Establishing an orphanage
  - Setting up a bakery that uses a solar oven to provide bread for the orphanage
  - Achieving financial sustainability for a community computer center
  - Providing access to electricity for 50,000 residents

- Employing over 200 residents through a biodiesel project
- Expanding community-based tourism in the village by building partnerships with other South African private and public organizations.

**Board Member** – Vishal Himalaya Foundation – Seattle, Washington (2003 – 2008)

- Advised on the placement of over 100 computers, facility improvements, teacher capacity development, and the delivery of a roaming video on wheels program to schools in several communities in Maharashtra State, India.
- Promoted community mobilization and citizen involvement through several community beautification projects.
- Created a vocational training program in carpentry and student placement service in one village in Maharashtra State, India.

**PRIVATE SECTOR AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Founder, Director and Board Member** – The Community Empowerment Network – Ferndale, Washington (2004 until present)

- Developed, designed, and managed a program that diversified and built the resilience for vulnerable smallholder farmers through community-based ecotourism as well as increased their production of a variety of products, including those made from essential oils, handbags made from natural latex, and handicrafts.
- Supervised a team of Wharton students to study, evaluate and make recommendations for improving the production, marketing and quality control of a small worker-owned handbag producer.
- Formulating and overseeing the execution of retail, online and wholesale strategies to market handicraft and tourism products from Amazon communities.
- Overcoming key structural obstacles that would otherwise compromise the long-term social and economic sustainability of the region's tourism initiative by:
  - Stimulating social capital
  - Developing local, regional, national and international markets
  - Strengthening local commercial value chains;
  - Improving key infrastructure in the region.
- As result, sales have doubled so far in the first twelve months and entrepreneurs have become less dependent upon our direct efforts.

**Co-Owner** – Bear Raven Collectables – Ferndale, Washington (2008 until present)

- Generating an average of 20% annual increase in sales of rare garden plants since 2008 by improving product mix, marketing and building strong customer relationships.
- Establish, handle marketing, inventory management, and business management for online antique store, resulting in a 400% increase in year-over-year sales in the last 12 months.

**President** – Acumen International – Seattle, Washington (2001 until present)

- **Rio Tapajós ICT Center and Community Development Project (Brazil)** – (2002 – 2003)  
Managed a set of projects in the Brazilian Amazon that were funded by US Agency for International Development (USAID) and Sandia National Lab.
  - Oversaw the construction of two solar-powered, Internet-enabled rural telecenters, *both of which are still in operation over 10 years later.*

- Created a knowledge management portal which utilized ICT to provide locally relevant resources and information for the support of microenterprise, cultural preservation, primary education and health.
- Expanded access to digital and print resources for the local library, resulting in improved reading skills and educational opportunities for children and youth.
- **Kgautswane (South Africa) Digital Community Center** – (2001 – 2006) Engaged former South African rural township to establish a community-owned microenterprise to record and commercialize traditional culture using the Internet and other digital resources.
- **E-waste in Asia** – (2005) Researched and made recommendations for options for USAID involvement to reduce toxic waste from computers in Asia. Report resulted in the review of e-waste policies and projects by USAID's Asian missions and generally raised their awareness of risks.
- **Tarahaat Tele-Kiosk Information System (India)** – (2002) Helped develop internal information reporting and feedback processes for franchise-based information kiosk business in India. Within two years, the organization successfully deployed over 60 economically sustainable, entrepreneur-owned information kiosks.

**Corporate and Channel Account Representative and Territory Manager for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses** – US Headquarters Sales, Microsoft Corporation – Redmond, Washington (1990 – 2001)

- Delivered strategy and product-specific marketing messages to medium-sized accounts and channel partners in the southeastern United States through the use of telephone, online and printed tools. Contributed to a 55% growth in revenues and a greater than 100% increase in Business Systems products market share in the region during FY96.
- Led internal task force to develop and implement tools and processes for automating sales reports and account management for 80-person department.
- Member of three-person task force responsible for highly successful program targeting, seeding and coaching influential corporate end users and their workgroups to adopt Microsoft desktop applications. Collaborated in the development of logistical systems, the establishment of a training program, and the development management of a pilot sales program for over 100 employees.

**Independent Economic and Marketing Consultant** – Washington, D.C. and Seattle, Washington (1986 – 1987 and 1990 – 1995)

- **Miscellaneous International Economic Trade and Policy Analyses and Research** – Washington, D.C. (1987) Researched and interpreted a wide range of analyses for the World Bank, IDB and D.C.-based think tanks, including one market analysis of temperate-weather fruit. The resulting report formed a key part of the World Bank evaluation that became the basis of its support of Chile's very successful export push of peaches and nectarines into the US market.
- **Dominican Republic Offshore Data Services Feasibility Studies** – Arlington, VA (1987) Researched and co-authored studies involving data services, including the utilization of satellite telecenters in the Dominican Republic, for an Arlington, VA-based consultancy.
- **DCRDoer® Software Development** – Seattle, Washington (1991 – 1993) Developed and marketed a custom sales management and reporting application based on Microsoft Visual Basic and Access for employees at New Jersey-based Stonhard Corporation.

**Investment Promotion and Economic Development** – Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration – San Juan, Puerto Rico (1987 – 1990)

- Responsible for promoting over \$500 MM in US, Far East and European investment in five-nation Caribbean territory and managing relationship between the Puerto Rican government and those

counties over a two-year period. Met regularly with key government officials in the region, including the chief ministers and top Puerto Rican officials.

- Advised large private sector corporations in the pharmaceutical, chemical, electronics, metallurgy and other industries on investment sites and relocation issues.
- Chaired a task force of engineers, government representatives and private investors to identify and promote petroleum and petrochemical trade and investment in region.
- Dramatically improved department's communication resources. Developed master plan and coordinated production of highly effective series of promotional collateral within a limited \$30,000 annual budget. Wrote several well-received speeches delivered by director, secretary of state and myself.
- Oversaw and managed all aspects of the participation by four Puerto Rican government agencies and 10 exhibitors in international trade show in Trinidad. Successfully overcame a number of challenges, including limited infrastructure and a highly restricted budget.

### **PARTNER DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

**Founder, Director and Board Member** – The Community Empowerment Network – Ferndale, Washington (2004 until present)

- Develop the capacity of partner organizations in Brazil to execute projects more effectively, as well as transferred our key social technologies and methodologies. As a result, partners are now much better able to replicate our work on their own, and we expect to be able to redeploy resources to serve other communities.
- Provide organizational capacity, such as finance management and grant-writing, for Grupo Verde, a small community-based NGO in the Brazilian Amazon, so it can focus its resources on executing projects on the ground, rather than build duplicate resources.
- Develop and manage dynamic cross-functional virtual teams of 50+ volunteer staff members, private and public partners, and paid consultants across many time zones responsible for executing most of the organization's operational tasks.
- Develop and direct most of the organization's relationships with prospective individual, corporate and institutional donors.

**President** – Acumen International – Seattle, Washington (2001 until present)

- **Rio Tapajós ICT Center and Community Development Project (Brazil)** – (2002 – 2003) Located, recruited, negotiated the contract and supervised local implementation partner used to build two USAID-funded solar-powered, Internet-enabled rural telecenters in the Brazilian Amazon. This project came in under budget and *both telecenters are still in operation over 10 years later.*

**Corporate and Channel Account Representative and Territory Manager for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses** – US Headquarters Sales, Microsoft Corporation – Redmond, Washington (1990 – 2001)

- Identified customer information technology needs, built customer and channel relationships, negotiated contracts and closed business for corporate accounts and channel partners for the headquarters-based component of fast-paced, virtual team.
- Recruited, established and managed high-functioning cross-functional virtual service team composed of Microsoft Solution Providers, resellers, internal and field-based resources, and customers to identify and address the needs of nearly 2400 large and medium-sized corporate accounts in the US and close sales.

- Strengthened the business development capacity of over 300 solution provider and reseller partners by collaborating on sales calls, helping to build their sales pipeline, accessing skills, and providing training opportunities. District's channel management efforts contributed to an average of 95% growth in service revenues at participating partners and 125% growth in technical certifications.
- Designed, maintained, implemented and measured results from detailed action plan for each partner.
- Gathered, shared and implemented best partner development practices from around the country.
- Well-respected by both customers and channel partners due to my detail, strong customer focus, and integrity.

**Investment Promotion and Economic Development** – Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration  
– San Juan, Puerto Rico (1987 – 1990)

- Oversaw and enhanced the relationship between the government of Puerto Rico and the governments of Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, the British Virgin Islands, and Aruba for a wide range of investment and trade-related issues. This was in lieu of the existence of official direct diplomatic relations.
- Built and nurtured private/public partnerships between the governments of Puerto Rico and the five Caribbean nations in my responsibility, and corporate investors from around the world. These partnerships resulted in investments worth over \$50 MM and the employment of over 1000 people.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**Founder, Director and Board Member** – The Community Empowerment Network – Ferndale, Washington  
(2004 until present)

- Successfully conceptualize, plan and execute ideas while managing multiple and changing priorities in a fast-paced, dynamic environment with very limited resources.
- Serve as leader of the project management team, overseeing all home and field activities and ensuring effective and efficient coordination between the two offices.
- Prepare work plans, operations budgets, and monthly and annual reports for the project performance monitoring system.
- Supervise recruitment, training and management of all staff, including 40-55 volunteers, Brazil field office, and a board of directors.
- Collaborate with other board members and multiple stakeholders to formulate our organization strategy as well as annual and quarterly execution plans.
- Developed and continue to manage and evaluate a complex eight-year-old community-led program that creates sustainable livelihoods for vulnerable families in the Brazilian Amazon, based on community-based ecotourism that reflects their way of life, improves economic resilience, and retains the local ecology.
  - Successfully engaged, organized and mobilized 16 rural communities in the region.
  - Facilitated the communities' grassroots efforts to elaborate their vision for regional development based on ecotourism as well as the creation of a comprehensive Regional Development Plan which details five programs and 44 separate projects, including specific objectives; priorities, responsibilities and actions; and metrics and evaluation criteria.
  - Developed the communities' organizational capacity to drive the initiative, which also strengthened their civil society.
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- Co-developed, piloted and evaluated the effectiveness of CEN's PRATICAR methodology for strengthening individuals' basic skills and mindsets that are a prerequisite for building their self-reliance. Participants retained and built upon skills and mindsets three years after the project ended, and several participants have more than tripled their income.

**President** – Acumen International – Seattle, Washington (2001 until present)

- **Rio Tapajós ICT Center and Community Development Project (Brazil)** – (2002 – 2003)
  - Accountable for working with both USAID and the prime contractor (Sandia National Labs), including working with Contracts Unit, overseeing approval requests, contractual quality assurance, control and compliance.
  - Responsible for providing USAID and prime contractor with occasional status reports and writing the final report. This required knowledge of USAID's financial and management systems, regulations and reporting requirements, and the ability to be creative and flexible within those requirements.
  - Oversaw the establishment of two solar-powered, Internet-enabled rural telecenters, *both of which are still in operations over 10 years later.*
  - Worked with the communities and local partners to utilize the technology to promote development, including the creation of a knowledge management portal to provide locally relevant resources and information on microenterprise development, cultural preservation, primary education and health.
  - Expanded access to digital and print resources for the local library, resulting in improved reading skills and educational opportunities for children and youth.
- **Greenstar Foundation (South Africa)** – (2002) Organized and attended Greenstar Foundation's booth at the World Summit in South Africa, which resulted in extensive exposure for the organization and led to several new projects.

**Investment Promotion and Economic Development** – Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration – San Juan, Puerto Rico (1987 – 1990)

- Managed task force of engineers, government representatives and private investors to identify and promote private-sector petroleum and petrochemical trade and investment in region. Coordinated the creation of a report identifying specific areas and potential corporate investors to target. This resulted in several investments worth over \$50 MM and generated employment for over 1000 people.
- Oversaw and managed all aspects of the participation by four Puerto Rican government agencies and 10 exhibitors in an international trade show in Trinidad. Successfully overcame a number of challenges, including limited infrastructure and restricted budget.
- Coordinated and led investment missions to Barbados and Trinidad, resulting in over \$50 MM in new investment.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Founder, Director and Board Member** – The Community Empowerment Network – Ferndale, Washington (2004 until present)

- Oversee the synthesis and execution of baseline evaluations establishing the initial status of key performance indicators (KPIs) in order to analyze the long-term impact of CEN's projects and programs. Baseline data includes institutional assessments and participative evaluations obtained through observation, household and individual interviews, field surveys and local government socioeconomic data.
- Established and continue to manage the organization's grants M&E systems.

- Conducting in-depth assessment of one of the sole rotating savings funds in the Middle Amazon region by performing and interpreting all interviews with organizers and members in the field, administering the development of key metrics, and gathering all required data. The final report will document the project from inception to the present, assess how well the bank met the objectives of its organizers and members, and make recommendations for improvement for potential future funds in the region.
- Conducted market assessment and analysis designed to identify obstacles in agricultural value chains, as well as cost-benefit and impact analysis for jewelry, purses and ecotourism from the Brazilian Amazon.
- Collaborated with a team from the University of Washington to develop the quantitative and qualitative metrics and other indicators, including demographic statistics, needed for longitudinal as well as point-in-time impact and outcome evaluations.
- Integrated metrics into a comprehensive M&E plan for programs and projects.

**President** – Acumen International – Seattle, Washington (2001 until present)

- **Laos ICT Assessment** – Part of a two-person team that analyzed the public policies and economic conditions of the Laos PDR ICT sector and made formal recommendations to the USAID and other US agencies to support policy, human development and the private sector.
- **Rio Tapajós ICT Center and Community Development Project (Brazil)** – (2002 – 2003) Assessed the impact of the implementation of two USAID-funded telecenters in the Brazilian Amazon using primarily qualitative indicators.
- **Fundação CDI Pensamento Digital** – Porto Alegre, Brazil (2003) – Mentored a team of six University of Washington Foster School of Business students to assess and develop a business plan for an educational center that provided citizenship training and information technology skills to at-risk youth.

**Independent Economic Consultant** – Washington, D.C. (1986 – 1987)

- **Miscellaneous International Economic Trade and Policy Analyses and Research**
  - Conducted market assessment of temperate-weather fruits using qualitative and statistical assessment for the World Bank, which became the basis of its support of Chile's very successful export push of peaches and nectarines into the US market.
  - Researched and compiled a comprehensive set of socioeconomic indicators from a wide range of international organizations covering every nation of the world for inclusion in an annual publication by a D.C.-based think tank.
  - Reviewed and analyzed data for the Conference Board's consumer confidence index.
- **Dominican Republic Offshore Data Services Feasibility Studies** – Researched and assessed a wide range of qualitative and statistical data on offshore data services in the Dominican Republic for an Arlington, VA-based consultant firm and co-authored the final in-depth assessment report.

**Corporate and Channel Account Representative and Territory Manager for Small and Medium-Sized Businesses** – US Headquarters Sales, Microsoft Corporation – Redmond, Washington (1990 – 2001)

- Developed, maintained, implemented and measured results from detailed action plan for over 350 Microsoft Solution providers and resellers.
- Gathered and analyzed a wide range of raw sales data for over 2400 medium-sized end-user accounts and over 300 channel partners, identifying important trends and sales opportunities. Efforts resulted in a 55% growth in overall revenues and a greater than 100% increase in Business Systems

products market share in the region in just one year, as well as a significant decline in software piracy.

- Led internal task force to develop and implement tools and processes for automating sales reports and account management for 80-person department. Personally developed, deployed and maintained a Microsoft Access database prototype of the system that remained in production for nine months while a corporate-wide sales management tool and database was under development.

**Investment Promotion and Economic Development** – Puerto Rico Economic Development Administration – San Juan, Puerto Rico (1987 – 1990)

- Co-authored an exhaustive report to the US Congress on Puerto Rican policy and programmatic efforts to promote investments in the region.
- Created an in-depth 250-page assessment of the footwear manufacturing industry in the Caribbean that resulted in the government focusing extensive resources to promote new investments in the industry.

### **SELECTED VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

- The Johns Hopkins University, Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, International Development Global Alumni Mentorship Program (2011-2012)
- Advisor, Digital Partners Social Enterprises Laboratory – Seattle, WA (2003-2004)

### **EDUCATION**

- MA, International Affairs, with emphasis in International Economics, Social Change and Development. The Johns Hopkins University, Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Washington, D.C. and Bologna, Italy (1987)
- BA, Chemistry, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, with one year in Canterbury, England (1983)

### **LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL SKILLS**

- Highly proficient in Spanish. Communicates effectively in Portuguese and Italian. Has studied German, French and Arabic.
- Lived in the USA, Puerto Rico, Israel, Venezuela and England. Extensive travel in over 60 nations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, South Africa, India, Southeast Asia, Australia, the Caribbean and Latin America.
- Very effective at working with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

### **SELECTED AWARDS**

- Semifinalist, Echoing Green Fellowship (2008)
- Finalist, World Bank Development Marketplace (2005)
- Finalist, Stockholm Challenge (2005)
- Invited participant, Global Social Business Incubator of the Santa Clara University (2004)