

Development Consultancy Case Contest 2013

Target Village: Obodan, Ghana

OVERVIEW

Delta GDP and Engineers Without Borders – Columbia Chapter are proud to announce their Development Consultancy Contest 2013. For the past seven years, EWB - Columbia's Ghana team has been involved with the village of Obodan in Eastern Ghana providing technical solutions for the community. They have done some great work, and are constantly looking for ways to strengthen their impacts. On such a note, Delta GDP began working with EWB to give Columbia students the opportunity to get further involved into the cause. Welcome to the Development Consultancy Case Contest 2013

This competition aims to give students the opportunity for hands on experience in consulting, both in the formation of a platform and in coming up with a creative solution to a real, detailed problem. Students will form groups and prepare to deliver a **15 minute presentation along with a written summary** of their ideas and research, with their project being based around how to stimulate jobs through entrepreneurship strategies in the village of Obodan in Eastern Ghana.

1. OBJECTIVES

The locals have expressed a desire for more job opportunities, and a positive change is very possible. Participants do not need to give a comprehensive, day-by-day plan to be implemented over a certain period; this is beyond the scope of our expectations. Instead, all consultants should keep in mind that EWB will send a small team to Obodan this winter for preliminary research, and send their full team of students there this summer to begin their annual work.

The goal at hand is to use this winter trip to research possible implementation of a consulting platform, to create a comprehensive plan over the next semester, and then follow the same during the summer. Therefore, consultants should work on a proposal for an idea that could be pursued at a future date.

The platforms do not need great detail for immediate execution, but should show viable paths towards such execution when enough specific details can eventually be gathered. It would be best if consultant teams firstly tried using their available resources to the fullest to make their platforms, at which point they may come across gaps in information stopping them from reaching completion. When such gaps or lack of specifics come, teams can express a need for research in the presentation.

2. HYPOTHETICAL BUDGET

Teams should work currently with a hypothetical budget of \$3000 which they can plan to allocate as per their consulting platform. Actual amounts for implementing a consulting platform would be planned out later, and smaller budgets will be looked at more favorably.

3. CRITERIA

Effective presentations will include:

- A deep understand of the situation, supplemented by reading the report well and doing any further research necessary.
- Good usage of the available information, rather than a focus that which is not available.
- Innovation, creativity, some way of approaching the situation using a unique idea or idea not used in this situation before.
- Outline of what kind of research of specifics would be necessary to pursue over the winter break in order to bring the plan to fruition.
- Feasibility, as even if the plan cannot be pursued immediately, it should be logically sensible to pursue.
- Explanation of both strengths and benefits of any ideas; a full understanding of how a solution may or may not work is more impressive than a pitch which tries ‘selling it’, ignoring the difficulties.

THE COMPETITION

From the information session on October 30, Wednesday to Nov 20, Wednesday, groups will have the time to plan out their presentations. The judging day will be shortly after or on Nov 20.

Each group will be assigned an advisor; an EWB student who has been to Obodan and can give them personal experience or information which will prove very helpful. Groups will be able to ask any kind of specific questions and even discuss their ideas with advisors, though they will mostly be there just to help clarify rules and conditions of the competition as well as provide any missing information.

Students will be able to sign up at any time up to three days to the competition, and we ask that any groups who regretfully decide to drop out let us know that much in advance as well.

4. EVALUATION

A small judging panel including graduate students, professors and possibly professional consultants will be put together to evaluate consulting platforms, using criteria described in what “Presentations should have”. Members of Delta GDP and EWB will also be present to give feedback.

Our first confirmed judge is Danielle Goldman, a graduate student acting as the SIPA representative of CUPID, Pursuing a Master of Public Administration in Development Practice Degree.

5. PRIZE

The winning team will receive a \$100 cash equivalent to be shared amongst the group, and prizes for the 2nd and 3rd place teams are being planned out as well. The winners will also get a chance to further involve themselves in implantation of the plan over the next semester, and in a sense to get legitimate experience as consultants.

6. PROGRAM

a. **Wednesday, October 30, Pupin 214, 8-9pm**

Information Session where students can first sign up and learn about the competition and take down any important details.

b. **Sunday, November 17, 11:59 pm**

Deadline for registering teams online at columbia.edu/deltagdp

c. **Wednesday, November 20, ~8pm**

Deadline for presentations and summaries to be submitted, and possible judging day (if not, later that week).

7. CONTACT US

Submissions of work, questions regarding the contest and any other relevant communications can be sent to either deltagdp@columbia.edu or EWB: Ghana's Program Managers: Mira Armstrong, mira.armstrong@cuewb.org, Mike Escobar, mike.escobar@cuewb.org. Teams involved will be emailed by us regarding any changes in dates or details.

8. COSPONSORS

CUPID: Columbia University Partnership for International Development

www.columbiacupid.org/

*The format of this outline is taken from Economic Transformations Group, Inc., a Development Consultancy firm which Delta GDP has worked with previously in a similar competition.

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