



**Ebony Consulting International (Pty) Ltd**

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Monsieur Musoni James  
Director  
Ministry of Sport, Art and Culture  
Kigali  
Republic of Rwanda

Dear Mr. Musoni,

It was a pleasure to meet you last night. As promised, attached please find "Ebony Consulting International" profile.

We are an African Consultancy Firm with professional ties in United Kingdom and United States of America. One of our principal equity holders, Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI); has an extensive experience of several years in Rwanda and several other countries over its 28 years professional history.

ECI is currently working in South and Southern Africa. Our practice is largely based on the provision of financial and non-financial services to the SMME sector. Other areas of focus include business linkages, public sector restructuring and trade.

As you know better than I do, Rwanda, in her effort to rebuild after such a horrific disaster, is faced with great challenges. The basic resources such as human resources have been wiped out by the war. The key skills to put the country back to work are missing. The financial resources to boost development at the grassroots level are very limited if not impossible to access. The restructuring of the public and private sector as well as the reorganisation of the economy as a whole are some of the priorities Rwanda has to deal with.

We, at ECI, think sincerely that we can add value in assisting in the economic development the country is tasked with.

For further details, we refer you to the attached company profile. Should you need any more information, please feel free to contact me or Dr Adam Saffer, ECI Managing Director.

Kind regards,

Prosper M. Nyirumuringa  
Consultant

**Directors:**  
Juneas Lekgetha (Executive Chairman) • Adam Saffer (Managing Director) • Roland Pearson (Executive Director),  
Clement Mannya • Tony Barclay (USA) • Matthew Gamser (UK)  
Reg. No. 94/01560/07





**EBONY CONSULTING  
INTERNATIONAL (PTY) LTD**

(Profile Document)

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Our role as an intermediary is not to impose solutions, but to provide the information that facilitates good decision making and to help translate decisions into action. To be effective, we must find common ground among interest groups, treating all of them as clients with legitimate needs and expectations.

When clients engage ECI's services, they expect technically qualified personnel, access to a broad base of experience, strong management support, and high professional standards. But what they value most of all are the results we leave behind, which are evaluated by three critical measures:

- **Increasing productivity and income / shareholder value** by introducing more efficient technologies and management systems, and by opening up new markets.
- **Empowering people, communities, and firms** to take control of the decisions affecting their livelihoods and make better choices in ways to access opportunity and utilise scarce resources.
- **Sustaining benefits beyond a project's life span**, the ultimate consulting and development challenge. Our clients are impatient when quick fixes based on subsidies or preferential treatment evaporate, and they no longer tolerate experts who foster dependency instead of building indigenous capacity. One of ECI's key organising principles is building an emphasis on ownership and sustainability into every project.

With our internationally diverse and multi-sectoral practice, ECI is uniquely positioned to draw lessons from real-world experience and adapt them to fit new situations in South and southern Africa. In doing this, we sustain ECI's character as a learning organisation, and encourage internal and external debate on critical economic development issues.

### The Spirit of Transformation

In addition to the changing economic landscape and an adjustment to globally competitive practices, ECI also recognises and participates in the need for social change emphasising previously disadvantaged groups and the increasingly important role of the civil society. Our participatory structures and leadership models support the ideals and values of social and economic transformation in southern Africa. Our emphasis and proven track record in employing and developing local capacity has differentiated ECI in terms of attracting and retaining staff, adding cost efficient value, and providing a culturally- and politically-sensitive approach and set of recommendations. In addition to our internal staff development curriculum, we are also involved in a variety of professional and community-based organisations. For example, ECI's Chairman Juneas Lekgetha received a Black Management Forum award in 1997 for being a champion of black economic empowerment.

### ECI Areas of Expertise

ECI is organised into the following practice areas – Financial Advisory Services, SMME Sector Development, Business Linkages, Public Sector Restructuring, and Trade and Investment. We understand the symbiotic relationship amongst these practice areas, and their critical and unique inter-relationship in economic development. Political and economic reform evolves hand in hand. Emphasis on increasing efficiency and cost reduction in the public sector often leads to procurement reform, outsourcing and other forms of business linkages emerge. However, the public sector cannot and should not be expected to provide sufficient jobs for burgeoning societies. International experience shows the private sector must also act as a catalyst for change and opportunity. A



common ingredient in most successful regional and international competitive strategies is a commitment to the growth and expansion of the SMME community. ECI's advantage to our clients is that we see and comprehend this complex set of economic, social and political inter-relationships – across sectors and within disciplines and approaches.

#### *Financial Advisory Services*

Undeveloped financial services remain a major impediment to economic stability in South and southern Africa. ECI's financial advisory services are driven by a clear mandate: to help financial institutions operate by market principles and to provide businesses with financial vehicles that enhance **shareholder value**. Our services position banks, non-bank financial institutions, entrepreneurs, joint-venture partners, and recently privatised companies to pursue new, profitable business opportunities. Through our sister firm, MAS International, we offer bank restructuring, staff training, and credit product development services to the rapidly growing financial services sector in the SADC region.

#### *SMME Sector Development*

The growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (SMMEs) is a key element in economic reform and poverty alleviation in many countries throughout the world. Our approach to enterprise development **links SMEs to promising market opportunities, information, skills, and finance**. Along with its parent firms, ECI draws from over 30 years of SME business development experience in over 60 countries. We are best known for our work with the relevant government organisations and regional and local intermediary service providers. This includes programme design, organisational development, strategy, monitoring and evaluation as well as baseline research, subsector analysis, and policy reform activities.

#### *Business Linkages*

A tremendous amount of economic potential remains isolated within the historically disadvantaged small business community. Building linkages between South Africa's SMEs and foreign and domestic corporations, financial institutions, government, and parastatals not only makes economic sense but is a cornerstone of current policy and legislation. ECI has extensive contacts and history throughout the SME sector and experience in working with large firms in designing and implementing their small business programmes and/or procurement policies. Whether through joint venture partnerships, public procurement tenders, or other forms of transactions, ECI uses best practices to foster **sustainable job creation and international competitiveness**.

#### *Public Sector Restructuring*

Many countries have embarked on the treacherous passage from authoritarianism to democracy and from centrally planned economic systems to free-market economies. Through the marketplace and civil society organisations, newly liberated and energised populations are placing increasing demands on public institutions to be more responsive and efficient. Increasing participatory democracy has become an objective of governments throughout the world.

Our approach to improving government operations focuses on three essential elements: **institutional restructuring, human resources development, and improved financial management**. Using comprehensive and participatory methodologies, coupled with a keen sense of the political winds, we ensure the effort will be cohesive and lead to measurable results, whilst at the same time recognising the broad base of stakeholders involved.



### *Trade and Investment*

South and southern Africa provide a fertile bed of opportunity for both foreign direct investment (FDI) and export trade. With respect to the former, investors are becoming increasingly discriminating in selecting their sites. Whilst the legal and regulatory frame work, finance options, and incentives remain significant, there also has been a distinct shift in rationale from low cost labour to access to markets and a skilled labour force. Export growth, a must for SADC countries, has yet to achieve a level close to its real potential. In order to be internationally competitive, several areas need to be addressed including foreign trade policies, export promotion, trade finance and credit insurance, quality management, business linkages and marketing.

ECI's expertise is focused in three areas: 1) Providing *technical assistance to firms* interested in exporting their products (quality standards, liability and regulatory issues, marketing and packaging, identifying and selecting appropriate trade finance options, etc.); 2) Acting as a *local network point* for domestic and foreign corporations looking for historically disadvantaged joint venture partners, suppliers, distributors, franchises, or other business relationships; and 3) Sector specific *market research* for investors and exporters.

### *The ECI Network Approach*

ECI prides itself as being atypical in a world where practically everyone is a consultant. At ECI, we have established a network of industry and sector-specific leaders who are equally committed to the growth and development of South and southern Africa. Drawing on expertise from academia, industry, government, and a variety of professional disciplines, ECI offers a customised, focused, and cost effective approach to assisting you meet your targets. The key, and our strength, is not to prove how smart we are but rather to understand and address client needs in a way which a) utilises a participatory approach involving all relevant stakeholders, b) results in recommendations which are applicable, implementable, measurable, and affordable in the near term, and c) leads to increased awareness, consensus and commitment to the chosen solution(s).

ECI maintains a small staff of full time professionals and regularly calls upon the expertise of its affiliates and corporate partners. This allows us the flexibility to react and customise our approach for each client. Further, it results in our teams being primarily locally based, which is in line with our philosophy of building regional capacity as well as a means to offer greater value for money.

ECI's strategic alliances include:

*Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI)* began operations in 1970 and has since grown into one of the world's leading international economic development firms. DAI has worked in 134 countries, maintains five regional offices (China, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Uzbekistan); and currently has over 50 long and short term projects underway. Operating divisions include enterprise development, economic policy reform, finance and banking, environment and natural resources, agriculture and agribusiness and public sector management.

*Bannock Consulting (UK) Ltd. (BCL)* is a well respected research-based economic consultancy focusing on economic development and innovation in business finance. While much of their work relates to the SME sector, BCL has also established a domestic and international presence in the venture capital and micro-finance arenas.

*MAS International, Inc. (MAS)* is a recognised authority in banking and finance. The firm specialises



in providing high quality training services to financial institutions, commercial banks, businesses and governments worldwide. With an emphasis on participant-centred and highly interactive training methods, MAS courses set the global standard for bank and business training. MAS has provided training in 65 countries and maintains offices in China (Beijing) and Thailand (Bangkok).

*Samuels International Associates, Inc. (SIA)* specialises in trade and investment matters, particularly involving the practices of American and foreign governments, economic and political risk assessments, developing investment strategies, and negotiations on trade and investment liberalisation. SIA has extensive experience in ASEAN countries and in Africa. SIA also created the Africa Trade Forum which provides a monthly platform to discuss Africa trade-related topics. SIA is led by Dr Michael Samuels who previously served as the Deputy United States Trade Representative and Ambassador to GATT as well as the U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone.

#### A Sample of ECI Projects

Provided on the next few pages are brief sketches of short and long term ECI engagements in our various practice areas.

**Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd Design and Implementation (1995 - Present):** ECI has been contracted to provide the principal consulting services in establishing Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd by the South African Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Services included full-time technical assistance to the core implementation team; financial and training product design; assistance in board structuring, selection and training; co-ordination of fund raising; and advice in management systems and controls. Our support to Khula has continued with training to new Khula Project Analysts, as well as training and other institutional support to Khula's retail financial intermediary clients.

**Swaziland Enterprise Fund Design and Implementation (1996 - Present):** On the strength of ECI's involvement with Khula and other similar projects, the Government of Swaziland (Ministry of Finance) and the Department for International Development (DfID) contracted ECI to establish the policies and procedures, and assist in initial operation, of a R44 million fund supporting Swazi micro, small and medium enterprises through local retail institutions. The Fund supports both financial intermediaries, as well as those who provide training and other forms of non-financial support to SMEs.

**European Union's Trade and Investment Development Programme (1998-present):** Managed by the Ntsika Enterprise Promotion Agency, ECI is currently developing an operating plan and procedures manual for the training component (Track 1) of the ECU 8.9 million SMME Trade and Investment Development Programme. The key objectives of this assignment are to develop a training curriculum, sign a training of trainers course, identify and evaluate potential intermediary service providers on a national basis, establish selection criteria, draft a marketing strategy, and develop key success criteria.

**Southern African Development Community (SADC) (1995 - 1996):** Under contract to SADC and the European Union, ECI investigated and analysed the trade and investment climate and regulations in each of the twelve countries in SADC, as well as assessed the vital issues concerning development of the SADC region as a trading and investment block. These activities contributed to SADC's first ever trade and investment conference, involving the international business community.

**Centre for Export Trade Information of the Indonesian Ministry of Industry and Trade (1996):** ECI researched, wrote and presented two reports for the Indonesian export promotion agency. The first provided an economic, trade and investment profile of South Africa, detailing the country's



political, social and economic environment; highlighting key economic and trade policies; analysing South Africa's trade relations with Indonesia and other countries; and suggesting a penetration strategy for Indonesian exports and possible manufacturing ventures. The second report focused on the dry battery market, and detailed that sector's structure and major players; import regulations affecting the industry; and possible strategies to export batteries to or manufacture batteries in South Africa. Both reports were presented in Jakarta, and are being followed up with more detailed analysis and implementation.

**United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) (1998-present):** In association with DAI, ECI is the team leader to provide assistance to the establishment and strengthening of business associations in Ghana, Nigeria, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. Technical assistance is being offered to help strengthen the associations' organisational capacity, improve their traditional advocacy roles, and help validate the services provided by associated intermediary service providers. The initiative also aims to contribute to the establishment of strong networks between business associations and SME support institutions.

**Impacts and Implications of the GATT Agricultural Agreement for Africa (1996):** As part of a team with DAI, ECI conducted a study on the GATT agricultural agreement's impact on South Africa and its agricultural trade patterns and policies. The overall study included six countries: Morocco, Senegal, Cote D'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi and South Africa.

**Implementing Policy Change Project (USAID) (1993-1994):** ECI and its sister firm Development Alternatives, Inc. assisted the South African Department of Trade and Industry in the drafting and refinement of three key aspects of the national SMME support strategy in the White Paper on *a National Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Small Business in South Africa*; Ntsika Enterprise Promotion Agency; the National Small Business Council; and the National Small Business Act.

**UNDP MicroStart Zimbabwe (1997):** At the request of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) MicroStart Program Director, a two-person ECI team completed the country assessment and feasibility study for implementation of UNDP's MicroStart project in Zimbabwe. The purpose of the mission was to determine: demand for microfinance services; the capacity to deliver microfinance services; and the feasibility of implementing MicroStart in the country environment.

**USAID Housing Guaranty (1997):** ECI was asked to evaluate the performance and impact of the USAID Housing Guaranty Programme, which provides US-based guaranties to two of South Africa's major banks in exchange for providing housing and microloans to low-income populations. We assessed loan usage, repayment performance, evidence of increased equity or income generated from the loan proceeds, accessibility and suitability of the program for women, and signs of other social or economic impact. The study, conducted nation-wide, will help determine whether loan products or processes may need to be refined, whether there is scope to move further down market, and whether the programme may be replicated with other institutions.

**Skillshare Africa (1997):** The purpose of this contract was to evaluate the management and institutional capacity of the Programme Advisory Committees (PACs) of Skillshare Africa, an international rural training NGO, in the countries of Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland. ECI was asked to create practical options and proposals for the future development and involvement of PACs, the local governing bodies. We established the strengths and weaknesses of the PACs; the relevance, impact, responsibility, duties and powers of the PACs in the different country offices; their potential for devolution/delegation of authority of the UK based Board of Trustees to country level; options in relation to institutional and legal framework; inclusion of



regional perspective; mechanisms in respect of accountability for assets, finance and employment at country level; nomination, representation and membership of PACs; and the path towards sustainability of current activities beyond year 2000.

**USAID Rural Financial Institutions Study (1995):** ECI evaluated and analysed the response of rural financial institutions to structural adjustment and economic reform in Anglophone Africa, in conjunction with a DAI team performing parallel analysis in Francophone African countries. With desk research and field visits to Kenya and Zambia our team undertook macroeconomic analysis, financial sector review, and interpretation of reform impact on selected economic subsectors, banking and financial systems. We formulated recommendations for formal, semi-formal and informal financial intermediaries, donors, and legislative and regulatory modifications.

**Small Enterprise Foundation (SEF) Mid-term Evaluation (1994):** ECI led a mid-term evaluation and strategic review of SEF, which is widely considered one of the few South African microfinance organisations really reaching rural communities, and doing it successfully. ECI identified key strengths and weaknesses in SEF's operations and structure, as well as its market; and advised on program changes to improve product content and delivery. Subsequent to the evaluation, SEF has implemented some of the recommendations; and one of SEF's key challenges, growth, has been overcome, while maintaining a repayment rate over 99%.

**Transformation and Organisational Change Management Review at the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council and its Local Councils (1998):** ECI's sister firm, EFS, along with Price Waterhouse have recently been appointed by the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council and its Local Councils to perform an organisational and business process review. This review encompasses the organisational structures, processes, systems, culture and communication at Johannesburg Metro.

**Business Process and Financial Management for the SABC (1997):** EFS, along with Price Waterhouse, were appointed by the SABC to perform a business process re-engineering assignment of the financial and management processes within the SABC with a view to improving performance measurement and financial reporting and thereby improving the efficiency and productivity of the corporation.

#### The Next Step

For further information on how ECI can be of assistance to your organisation, or to be on our mailing list, please do not hesitate to contact us:

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