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## Community Enterprise Solutions: Replicating the MicroConsignment Model

Greg Van Kirk picked up the report about CE Solution's potential for global expansion. The company's Social Entrepreneur Corps (SEC) interns had examined potential growth paths for Community Enterprise Solutions (CE Solutions) and the MicroConsignment Model (MCM). The model had proved successful for CE Solutions, and the organization's key metrics showed increasing and sustainable impact for its operations in Guatemala. (**Exhibit 1** lists some of these accomplishments.) Van Kirk wanted to expand the MCM to other locations to help the rural poor gain access to durable goods that improved lives, but he wondered what the hidden challenges of moving to a new country were. The interns' report focused on the organization's expansion into Ecuador, Nicaragua, and South Africa. With a board meeting in the next two weeks, Van Kirk began to sift through the report to clarify his thinking and to craft an expansion plan to present to the board.

### CE Solutions: Early History and Founding

Greg Van Kirk graduated from Miami University (Ohio) in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in marketing. His course work included a semester abroad in Luxembourg, where he studied international economics. After graduation, Van Kirk taught English courses in Japan, but he changed his career path two years later, taking a financial services job at the Principal Financial Group in San Francisco. Van Kirk spent the next four years working his way up the career ladder in investment banking, eventually winning trade group Asset Financial International's 1999 Deal of the Year award while working at UBS for his work on a joint US/Swedish/German power-generation facility. After reading David Bornstein's *The Price of a Dream*, the biography of Muhammad Yunus, founder of Grameen Bank — a development organization that had extended small loans or microcredit for self-employment to more than two million women villagers and had helped lift hundreds of thousands of people in the developing world out of poverty — Van Kirk began planning his next career moves.



"I had just turned 30 and knew I wanted to work in economic development, but I knew nothing about the field. I joined the Peace Corps to gain grassroots experience,"<sup>1</sup> he said.



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Paul C. Godfrey, Professor of Organizational Leadership and Strategy, Marriott School prepared this case with the assistance of Casey Green, Royce Riddle, and Todd Manwaring of the Marriott School at Brigham Young University as a basis for class discussion and not to illustrate either effective or ineffective practice.