



### **Mission and Brief History of the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation**

The Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation is a 501c3 affiliate of Lex Mundi, the world's leading association of independent law firms (for more information about Lex Mundi, see [www.lexmundi.com](http://www.lexmundi.com)). Utilizing the talents and resources of Lex Mundi's powerful network of 160 top tier business law firms with more than 500 offices in the United States and 99 other countries (a total of over 21,000 lawyers), the Foundation finds experienced lawyers who provide first class legal advice to social entrepreneurs on a *pro bono* basis, enabling them to carry out their missions of positive social change to improve communities and the lives of the poor and disenfranchised.

Recognizing that this global network of law firms could become a powerful vehicle for the delivery of *pro bono* legal services, the idea for the Foundation was conceived in 2005 and it began operations on January 1, 2006. It was decided that the Foundation could meet the greatest need and have the greatest measurable impact if it focused on providing *pro bono* legal services to those in the social entrepreneur movement. The Foundation defines its target social entrepreneurs as individuals and organizations that use entrepreneurial and innovative ideas to improve communities and the lives of the poor and disenfranchised. Because Lex Mundi member firms are leading business firms in their jurisdictions, they have the experience and expertise to provide critically important assistance to social entrepreneurs, thus helping them build their organizational capacity and become successful agents of positive social change.

### **The Foundation is Unique**

There is no other global organization that is focused exclusively on providing *pro bono* legal services to social entrepreneurs. No organization other than the Foundation has the ability to tap into Lex Mundi's extensive network of top tier law firms and staff multi-jurisdictional *pro bono* projects. The Foundation aspires to become one of the world's premier *pro bono* legal services organizations, to engage many more lawyers in *pro bono* projects and to reach many more social entrepreneurs. It is off to a fast start and continues to build capacity and expand the volume, value and impact of the *pro bono* services provided.

### **How the Foundation's Program Works**

The Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation is a matchmaker; it does not practice law. The Foundation identifies effective social entrepreneurs through close partnerships with 23 “Collaborator” organizations such as Ashoka, Acumen Fund, Schwab Foundation, Skoll Foundation, Echoing Green, Draper Richards Foundation, Global Fund for Children, Mercy Corps, Lemelson and others. The Foundation continually explores additional collaborative relationships with partners who support and work with the most innovative and effective social entrepreneurs in the U.S. and around the world. Many of the social entrepreneurs that the Foundation has assisted are involved in economic and community development, social service delivery, innovative technologies, and innovative approaches to health care. In addition, many of the entrepreneurs we work with and support are women and minorities.

Once a social entrepreneur's legal needs have been identified, the Foundation then finds a Lex Mundi member law firm or multiple firms that have the expertise to assist the entrepreneur in the jurisdictions where legal services are needed. By managing this relationship as it progresses, the Foundation ensures that entrepreneurs receive the top quality legal services they need to succeed and advance their mission.

The Foundation also mobilizes teams of Lex Mundi lawyers to strengthen laws supporting both *pro bono* practices and social entrepreneurs, and it uses the Lex Mundi network to provide instruction and training to social entrepreneurs in basic business law and how to use lawyers effectively.

### **Success to Date**

The Foundation has had great success to date in engaging the *pro bono* resources of Lex Mundi member law firms. Since the Foundation began in 2006, lawyers from 70 Lex Mundi member law firms in 40 countries and 30 states have provided *pro bono* legal services on more than 340 separate legal projects for social entrepreneurs. The Foundation estimates that through its efforts during its first 30 months, Lex Mundi firms provided more than \$3 million in free legal services to social entrepreneurs. By strengthening social entrepreneurs and helping them achieve their objectives, these legal services have indirectly impacted and improved the lives of thousands of poor and disenfranchised people.

## Some Example Projects



### **Team from Ali Budiardjo, Nugroho, Reksodiputro Helps Mercy Corps Create Indonesia's First Microfinance Wholesale Bank**

Mercy Corps is a US-based nonprofit that works to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression by helping people build secure, productive and just communities. Using a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mercy Corps is leading a consortium of investors, which also includes IFC, Cordaid and HTF, to create Indonesia's first microfinance wholesale bank – a “Bank of Banks”. It aims to bring stability to Indonesian microfinance institutions and allow them to expand their services beyond microloans to savings accounts, insurance, mortgage financing, remittance services and mobile banking. Mercy Corps believes that this innovative new institution will help to move tens of millions of people out of poverty in the next decade and create a new economic-development model.

Responding to the request of the Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, Ali Budiardjo, Nugroho, Reksodiputro (ABNR), Lex Mundi's member firm for Indonesia, provided invaluable legal advice and guidance in helping Mercy Corps establish the Bank of Banks. The first of its kind in Indonesia, the Bank of Banks posed a number of legal challenges.

Delighted with the quality of the legal work, Mary Chaffin said, “Ferry Madian and his team at ABNR have been instrumental in providing the critical support necessary to the success of this project and its potential to lift massive numbers of the poor permanently out of poverty.”

Ferry Madian commented, “We were privileged to have been selected to assist Mercy Corps in this project for the alleviation of poverty. It became interesting when the project was about the banking industry. It then became challenging when ABNR was informed that it will be assisting in the creation of a microfinance wholesale bank, a unique form of banking for Indonesia. The entire project has been an amazing experience and a good learning process for the ABNR team of lawyers.”



## **Alston & Bird and Bowman Gilfillan Assist SELF to Bring Solar Technology to Three Rural Schools in South Africa**

The Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation was introduced to the Solar Electric Light Fund (“SELF”) through one of its partner/collaborators. Using the latest solar-electric technology, SELF helps rural families achieve energy self-sufficiency and make the leap from the 19th to the 21st Century.

The Foundation reached out to Eric Weingarten of Alston & Bird LLP, Lex Mundi’s member firm for Georgia, USA, whose practice includes renewable energy. Eric agreed to help SELF draft and negotiate a contract with a South African company to supply and install off-grid solar systems to three public secondary schools in the rural Amathole Region of Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. The new power systems will provide electricity for basic applications such as lighting and audio-visual equipment to increase general educational opportunities at the schools.

The Foundation also arranged for Claire van Zuylen and Claire Tucker of Bowman Gilfillan, Lex Mundi’s member firm for South Africa, to provide valuable local counsel by reviewing the contract for a variety of legal issues under South African law.

Robert Freling, Executive Director of SELF, stated, “Eric Weingarten...was extraordinarily helpful to SELF in connection with our solar school project in South Africa. Eric was extremely diligent and thoughtful at each stage of the process. He always treated SELF with the same professionalism as he would any paying client of Alston & Bird. The fact that Eric has a strong interest in and knowledge about renewable energy made working with him all the more pleasant and interesting.”

### **Additional Information About the Foundation**

Additional information about the Foundation can be found on its website at [www.lexmundiprobono.org](http://www.lexmundiprobono.org).

The Foundation is staffed by the following attorneys:

#### **David Roll, Founder and Managing Director**

Mr. Roll brings more than 30 years experience in law, government, and business to the Foundation. While he spends substantially all of his time as Managing Director of Lex Mundi Pro Bono Foundation, Mr. Roll is also a senior partner in Steptoe & Johnson, the Washington, DC member of Lex Mundi. Mr. Roll served as Chair of Steptoe & Johnson from 1993 through 1998 and has been active in other management positions in the law firm and in private business. Mr. Roll was Steptoe & Johnson's principle contact person for Lex Mundi and he served on Lex Mundi's Board of Directors.

Mr. Roll was educated at Amherst College and The University of Michigan Law School (J.D.).

#### **Chloe Holderness, Deputy Managing Director**

Ms. Holderness brings to the Foundation a background in law, international economic development, and investment banking. Ms. Holderness has most recently been an associate specializing in corporate transactions and business law in the Washington, DC office of McGuireWoods LLP, Lex Mundi's member firm for Virginia. Prior to joining McGuireWoods, Ms. Holderness was a research associate with the Office of Economic Development of the Kenan Institute for Private Enterprise and with the Institute of Government. She was also selected by the Kenan Institute's Center for Sustainable Enterprise to write a strategic plan for the American Chamber of Commerce in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and she served as an associate in the investment banking group at First Union Securities.

Ms. Holderness was educated at Davidson College (B.A., *with honors*), The University of North Carolina School of Law (J.D.) and UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School (M.B.A.). At the University of North Carolina School of Law, Ms. Holderness was editor-in-chief of the North Carolina Journal of International Law and Commercial Regulation.

#### **Ben Greer, Vice President**

Mr. Greer is a retired partner at Alston & Bird LLP, Lex Mundi's member firm for Georgia. Before his retirement, Mr. Greer was the Founding and Senior Partner of Alston & Bird's International Practice Group. He also served as Chair of Lex Mundi in 2003 - 2004.

Mr. Greer is an Honorary Life Member of the International Bar Association and has served as its Secretary General from 2000 to 2002. He is also principal of International Legal Strategies, LLC, and he lectures and writes frequently on international business law topics and the impact of globalization on the structure and regulation of the legal profession.