

PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION OF TRANSITION OF I-TECH OFFICE TO LOCAL OWNERSHIP

I-TECH, with the extensive support of UW, has developed a robust network of country offices which are a key element of our strength and success as a network. Under extraordinary circumstances, it may be necessary to consider transitioning a country office out of the UW/UWorld legal structure, to launch the office as a locally governed entity. This local entity would remain a strong partner of I-TECH/UW but would be a legally separate entity. The I-TECH Executive Team has the ultimate authority to take such a step. Transition would only be considered under specific circumstances such as demands of a changing funding environment, and with the baseline of sufficiently robust administrative, programmatic, and operational systems within the country office. The process described below outlines the necessary steps to take to assure the need, readiness, and capacity of the local team and environment to justify the transition of ownership of an I-TECH Country Office.

Background

- ✪ The **I-TECH Executive Team**, in consultation with the **core faculty** and **affected PIs**, are the decision makers on any transition, will lead the process and may delegate tasks to others.
- ✪ The focus of this process is specifically on **I-TECH Office Transition** and not the broader topic of organizational capacity development.
- ✪ Many useful tools are available via the internet and elsewhere. We have included recommended tools and resources to assist in this process. To the extent they are applicable, we have prioritized the **NPI Tools** as developed by FHI360 and JSI, and funded under the PEPFAR New Partner Initiative (NPI).

STEP 1: PROMPTING CIRCUMSTANCES

If at any point a country office identifies a potential need or advantage to consider transitioning the I-TECH country office to a local entity, the I-TECH Executive Team (ET) and relevant Principal Investigators (PI) should be informed. The ET and PI will jointly decide if further investigative actions are appropriate.

STEP 2: BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

With ET approval, the Country Director (CD) will assess the factors that contribute to considering a transition. ET will inform associated PIs and other relevant stakeholders as appropriate. The CD will work with the local leadership team to assess the following factors and submit a report to the I-TECH Executive Director.

Expected time frame for this phase is at least 1 - 2 weeks. Items to consider for the analysis should include the following:

- FUNDING
 - i. What is the PEPFAR funding situation and priorities for the country?
 - ii. Are local entities actually receiving more awards? Has I-TECH lost opportunities because we were not a local entity?

- iii. Are there other funding opportunities to be explored (e.g. non-PEPFAR or other funding that favors local entities)?
- PERSONNEL
 - i. Are there likely candidates for a local ‘champion’ for the transition process?
 - ii. Are there likely candidates for board of director membership? How easy or difficult might that recruitment process be?
 - iii. Do current staff have the bandwidth to take on the transition process? Are they well positioned to take on increased responsibility once a local entity is established?
- LEGAL
 - i. What are the basic options for an organization’s legal structure?
 - ii. Is this a situation where dual registration (maintaining UW entity, partnering with a new local entity) is a viable option?
 - iii. What are the factors around nationality as it relates to board makeup and executive director roles?
 - iv. Is there an existing local entity that we might partner with instead of establishing a new independent entity?
- OTHER FACTORS
 - i. What is the level of urgency and/or timing for such a transition?
 - ii. What other information or factors should be considered at this stage?

The CD will compile a report containing the information found during the analysis process and submit to the ET for further consideration. (There is no template for this report – just assure that all critical elements are addressed.) I-TECH’s Executive Director, in consultation with impacted PIs, will determine whether it is necessary to move to Step 3 of the assessment process, a more in-depth Contextual Analysis.

STEP 3: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

If the I-TECH Executive Director approves proceeding to further analysis, the next step will be to conduct a more in-depth contextual assessment of relevant factors. At this point, we will begin to broaden our circle of communication, assuring that staff are kept involved and informed as appropriate, as well as key external stakeholders.

This phase is more detailed and time intensive, so a Lead for this process should be identified and given time to complete these steps. If necessary, I-TECH HQ *may* support the identification and funding of a lead for facilitation of these steps and writing up the report. The Contextual Analysis (CA) Lead will work closely with the CD and other local staff as identified during the process.

Expected time frame for this phase is at least 5 – 10 weeks.

- STAFF ENGAGEMENT: It will be important to initiate this phase with an extended all-staff meeting. This will lay the framework for communication with the staff and will get their valuable input
 - i. Inform all staff of activities to date, including making the initial Background Analysis report available.
 - ii. Conduct a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis

- iii. Identify roles for various staff members during this phase and clarify what further communication and opportunities for input there will be.
- ORGANIZATION CAPACITY ASSESSMENT
 - i. Implement the NPI Organizational Assessment Tool (available on intranet).
- LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS
 - i. Conduct a landscape analysis, starting with the facilitated process outlined in Mapping and Mobilizing Resources (available on intranet).
- EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER INPUT
 - i. The CD and CA Lead will consult with key external stakeholders to communicate about our considerations of transition, and to get their input to the extent appropriate. Stakeholders could include a combination of current sponsors (CDC, HRSA), potential USG sponsors (USAID), potential sponsors from Europe or elsewhere, MOH, and other local funding sources. Other stakeholders to consider:
 - Tax authorities
 - Government ministries: Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Finance and Economics, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 - Civil society registration or body that manages NGO registration

The CA Lead, with extensive input from the CD, will produce a report summarizing the finding for submission to the I-TECH Executive Team. ET and relevant PI will review and determine next steps. There are three possible conclusions at this point:

Transition Not Appropriate At This Time: No further steps toward transition will be implemented at this time. When and if relevant circumstances change, the Executive Team may decide to return to earlier steps.

Transition May Be Relevant, But the Country Office Is Not Ready: Transition may still be a consideration, but the assessments in Steps 1 and 2 identified key gaps that need to be addressed before any further consideration. The Executive Team will work with the Country Director to develop a remediation plan.

Transition Appears Relevant, And Conditions Seem To Support Taking Concrete Steps In That Direction: The process will continue, moving to the next step, in which the ET will work with key internal stakeholders to obtain concurrence and/or approval as appropriate.

STEP 4: INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

The ET will initiate the process of obtaining concurrence from other high-level key stakeholders, to include the following.

Expected time frame for this phase is at least 3 – 4 weeks.

- **Relevant PI(s)** - Any PI implementing a program in the country office where transition is being considered will need to be consulted and concurrence obtained.
- **PI Council** - Informed
- **DGH, SPH and SOM Leadership** - Informed

- **Attorney General Office** - Consult
- **UW Global Support Project** - Informed
- **UWorld Board** - Approval required
- **Relevant Sponsors** (HRSA, CDC, etc.) - Informed

STEP 5: TRANSITION WORK PLAN

Once all I-TECH and UW stakeholders approve the concept of transitioning the country office to local ownership, the I-TECH Executive Team or their designees will work with the CO to develop a work plan and timeline for implementation.

Expected time frame for this phase is at least 4 – 12 months.

- The I-TECH Executive Team will be **A**ccountable for design and implementation of the plan and will develop a key team of others at HQ and CO who will be **R**esponsible for various tasks.
- An oversight team consisting of key HQ and CO leadership will be formed and will use the Oversight ARCHI & GANTT as the working tool. This oversight team will assure that the I-TECH ET and relevant PIs are kept informed.
- Eleven Task Lists have been developed to help guide the process, in topics ranging from Finance to Legal to Budget Management. The CO Transition Team will review these lists, determine which tasks are relevant to their specific circumstance, and transfer those tasks to an ARCHI specific to that content area (using the CO Transition ARCHI template). Please note:
 - Items on these lists which are in **bold** are the criteria that will be used by the I-TECH ET to determine final readiness to transition. Each of these items must be completed.
 - These Task Lists are not exhaustive. There may be additional steps that are necessary to address specific local needs.
- The Task Lists are for issues related to **transitioning** a current I-TECH country office to become an independent, locally owned entity. Please note that such a transition includes the likely possibility that the UW-owned I-TECH office will close¹. For all tasks related to I-TECH office closure, please consult the [ARCHI for Closing an I-TECH Country Office](#).

The I-TECH ET, in consultation with relevant PIs, will make the final decision about readiness for transition, using completion of the **bolded** tasks as their criteria.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

We have included many resources on the Transition Toolkit page on the intranet. Where applicable, each of the Task Lists developed for STEP 5 have included helpful tools and resources.

¹ In some cases, I-TECH/UW may want to keep a legal presence and minimal footprint.