EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The WAU Plan proposes expanding Acumen's existing work in East and Southeast Asia by formally establishing an independent subsidiary in Singapore. The subsidiary would build on Acumen's leadership and entrepreneurship programs by adding regional fundraising, equity investment, and lending, with the aim of reaching 16 countries within 10 years.

THE OPPORTUNITY

The plan estimates that 387 million people in the region live in poverty, even before counting those in China. It also estimates that companies across East and Southeast Asia earned US$4.2 trillion in after-tax profits in 2022. The plan urges Acumen to persuade capital owners in East Asia to commit to impact investment. If only 0.01% of that US$4.2 trillion were directed toward impact investment, it would mobilize US$420 million. In recent years (2022–2024), Acumen raised US$1.08 million earmarked for regional expansion. In 2025, Acumen also reported a surplus of US$5.5 million and raised US$43.2 million. In that context, the report emphasizes that launching WAU is both reasonable and feasible with support from donors and Acumen headquarters.

LAUNCH FUNDING

The estimated cost to launch WAU is US$2.9 million, which is also the total cash requirement for Year 1, rounded to one decimal place. The forecast assumes no revenue in Year 1. The model projects a pre-tax deficit of US$1.78 million in Year 10, so the expansion would require continued funding alongside portfolio income. An alternative would be to set higher fundraising goals for management, aiming to break even by Year 6 by raising US$3.5 million in contributions that year.

The plan proposes a team of 7 during the establishment phase and 13 during operational planning and early operations, gradually growing to 17 in the medium term.

ACTUALS AND 10-YEAR PROJECTIONS

Amounts expressed in USD

RAISED FUNDS

Cumulative since Acumen began operating in East Asia

TODAY		IN 10 YEARS
$0	→	$14,151,864

REVENUE FROM PORTFOLIO INTEREST AND DIVIDENDS

Cumulative since Acumen began operating in East Asia

TODAY		IN 10 YEARS
$0	→	$267,335

COMPANIES INVESTED IN

Cumulative since Acumen began operating in East Asia

	TODAY		IN 10 YEARS
Larger-ticket investments	0	→	13
Small-ticket funding	7	→	43
Total companies	7	→	56

CAPITAL INVESTED IN PORTFOLIO COMPANIES

Cumulative since Acumen began operating in East Asia

TODAY		IN 10 YEARS
$0	→	$7,800,000

ENTREPRENEURS AND LEADERS TRAINED

Cumulative since Acumen began operating in East Asia

TODAY		IN 10 YEARS
159	→	419

IMPACTED LIVES

Cumulative since Acumen began operating in East Asia

TODAY		IN 9 YEARS
102,000	→	3,902,000

ROADMAP


PHASE 1
ESTABLISHMENT
3 to 6 months
PHASE 2
OPERATIONAL PLANNING
6 months
PHASE 3
EARLY OPERATIONS
2 years
PHASE 4
MEDIUM -TERM OPERATIONS
7 years
Semester 1
Year 1
Year 3
Year 6
Year 10
GOAL 1
Build the initial team.
GOAL 2
Define the legal and organisational structure and establish the organisation.
DELIVERABLE 1
List of team members.
DELIVERABLE 2
Legal incorporation documents
PARALLEL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROJECT
Focussed on all operations in addition to the establishment phases dedicated knowledge transfer project.
GOAL
Develop a detailed operational plan covering all departments, team responsibilities, timelines, specific goals, key performance indicators (KPIs), and a financial plan.
DELIVERABLE
Written report, executive summary, and presentation of the operational plan.
GOALS AND KEY MILESTONES
(cumulative)
FUNDS RAISED
US$1M
US$5.2M
US$14.1M
OF COMPANIES INVESTED IN
5
21
49
CAPITAL INVESTED IN PORTFOLIO COMPANIES
US$500k
US$3M
US$7.8M
OF LEADERS TRAINED
40
140
260
IMPACTED LIVES
200k
1.1M
3.8M
TEAM
PHASE 1
7 team members
PERMANENT POSITIONS
1. Director
2. Deputy Regional Director & SSA
3. Administrative Assistant
4. Finance Manager and Accountant
5. Accounting Assistant
TEMPORARY INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS
- Legal Establishment Lead
- Human Resources Manager
EXTERNAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER CONSULTING TEAM
1. Establishment Adviser
2. Knowledge Transfer Lead
3. Knowledge Capture and Process Documentation Specialists
4. Training and Learning Content Specialist
5. Multimedia Learning Producer
PHASE 2 AND 3
13 team members
Phase 1 team, plus:
6. Fundraising Manager
7. Investment and Portfolio Manager
8. Academy Manager
9. Operations Manager
10. Marketing Manager
11. Communications Manager
12. Media Producer
13. Designer and Video Editor
TEMPORARY INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS FOR SPECIFIC PERIODS AND ASSIGNMENTS
- Legal Adviser
Permanent Digital Marketing Consulting
PHASE 4
Team to expand progressively from 13 to 17 members
LEADERSHIP
1. Regional Director
2. Deputy Regional Director & SSA
OPERATIONS AND PERFORMANCE
3. Operations and Performance Manager
EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
4. Executive and Administrative Assistant
FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING
5. Finance Manager
6. Accountant
7. Accounting Assistant
FUNDRAISING AND PARTNERSHIPS
8. Fundraising and Partnerships Manager
9. Institutional Funding and Grants Officer
INVESTMENTS, LENDING AND PORTFOLIO SUPPORT
10. Investment and Portfolio Manager
11. Portfolio Support Manager
12. Credit and Lending Officer
ACUMEN ACADEMY
13. Fellowship and Programme Coordinator
MARKETING, CREATIVE AND COMMUNICATIONS
14. Marketing Strategist and Creative Director
15. Designer and Video Editor
16. Media Producer, Camera Operator and Photographer
17. Communications Manager
Permanent Digital Marketing Consulting