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Belize Cookbook Project

by

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Advisor: Dr. Amy Farmer

**An Honors Thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Bachelor of
Science in Business Administration in Accounting**

Sam M. Walton College of Business

University of Arkansas

Fayetteville, Arkansas

May 11, 2012

Table of Contents

Purpose	3
Culture of the Stann Creek District of Belize	3
Current State – Economic Aspect	4
Graph 1 – Annual GDP Growth Rate from 1999-2007	
Current State – Social Aspect	5
Current State – Crime Aspect	5
Current State – Health Aspect	6
Productive Organization for Women in Action	7
The Cookbook	7
Printing the Cookbook	8
Table 1 – First quote from FedEx	
Table 2 – Second quote from FedEx	
Table 3 – First quote from BRC Printing	
Table 4 – Second quote from BRC Printing	
Table 5 – Pricing from Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship	
Shipping the Cookbook	10
Total Cost Comparison	11
Graph 1 – Cost Comparison of the 8.5x5.5 format	
Graph 2 – Cost Comparison of the 8.5x11 format	
Selling the Cookbook	12
Pricing the Cookbook	13
Graph 3 – Pricing Breakdown	
Plan for Sustainability	14
Summary of Recommendations	15
Conclusion	16
Executive Summary	16
Appendices	19

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to create a realistic, meaningful plan to print, ship, and distribute a cookbook for the ladies of the Productive Organization for Women in Action (POWA), located in Dangriga, Belize. I will begin with background information and data about the current state of Belize and Dangriga, then discuss the need for POWA and their commitment to their community, and the bulk of this document will be explanation about options and my suggestions for completing, printing, shipping, pricing, and selling the cookbook. Many of my decisions have been made on fact and few on opinion. My desire is to equip the ladies of POWA with what they need to make this cookbook profitable for their organization. I believe in what they do and I know my part is very small, but I am confident even the most miniscule amount of help can result in huge growth.

The majority of the cookbook is complete, however the recipes are still being tested and perfected by the women in Belize. Studying abroad in Dangriga through the University of Arkansas gave me the opportunity to meet the ladies of POWA during the summer of 2011. I was on a team, which helped construct the cookbook along with the POWA women, but when we left the country, it was not ready to be sold yet. I decided to take a long term role in the cookbook by committing to do the research and find a plausible path for its production. Belize is facing developmental problems that have slowed the economy and business in the region. My goal for this project is to give the ladies of POWA truthful and credible proposals that they will use to make the cookbook a revenue generator to promote their undying dedication to the empowerment of others.

Culture of the Stann Creek District of Belize

The Stann Creek District of Belize makes up about 10% of the Belizean population and is the 2nd largest rural population in the Central American country. In addition it is home to the largest city in southern Belize, Dangriga. While most people in Dangriga speak English, it is known for its ethnic Garifuna culture. The Garifuna people are decedents of shipwrecked slaves and native Caribs. They have maintained their African culture, which makes Dangriga home to the exclusive Caribbean music called Punta Rock. Other interesting activities in Dangriga are beautiful hiking trails full of waterfalls and scenic wildlife, the Gulisis Garifuna Museum, Garifuna drumming and doll making, as well as Maria Sharp's hot sauce production facility and two citrus production plants that support much of Belize's agriculture industry.¹

After having the privilege to visit the Stann Creek District in person, I understand the community's strong feelings of comfort and respect. Everyone I met in Dangriga was friendly and genuinely wanted to know more about me. They were helpful when I was lost, interested when I had time to talk, and confused when I was unable to stop and relax. The people of Dangriga live on "island time." Although, Dangriga is not technically an island, many small cays are located directly off the coast and the citizens relish in relaxation and comfort. Often, when I was running to a meeting, shop owners and passersby would say, "Slow down, relax!" In addition, there is a sense of admiration for family, friends, fellow Belizeans, and tourists.

At the time, it was difficult to understand their culture, which has a popular and marketed slogan of, "Life happens when you slow down." I was very caught up in my work of helping the community. Looking back, I wish I would have slowed down more often and developed relationships with more people. Nevertheless, when I re-visit Dangriga someday in the future, I know the same people will probably be there, relaxing and enjoying life as it is meant to be.

Current State – Economic Aspect

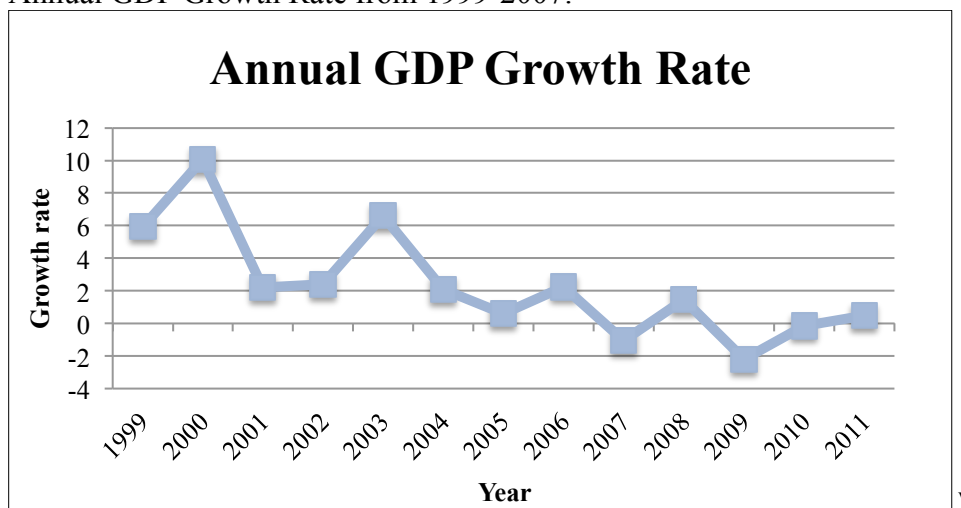
The economic state of Belize has deteriorated in recent years. The market downturn in the United States has greatly affected other countries that Americans do not think about on a regular basis. If Americans do not have extra spending money for vacations, the communities of coveted get-away destinations around the world suffer significantly. Not only do the large condominiums and tourism companies take a hit, but also local families that own gift shops, taco stands, and scuba diving services see intense slumps in their business as well.

When comparing Belize's gross domestic product (GDP) of \$1.5 billion to Guatemala's GDP of nearly \$75 billion one can see there is an obvious disparity. Guatemala is Belize's closest Central American neighbor with shared cultures and industries and it is natural to believe that the states of their economies should be more similar, but Belize's economy has suffered in recent years. Tourism is Belize's largest industry and over 70% of all Belizeans work in service positions.ⁱⁱ Many of these workers heavily rely on international tourists coming to Belize to explore the beautiful rain forests, relax on the pristine beaches, and enjoy the exciting nightlife. With the current worldwide economic downturn, Belize has felt the penny pinching. For Americans, vacations are one of the first things to be taken off the list when a family has to cut down on expenses; especially traveling internationally which is now considered quite an extravagant way to vacation.

One stimulus to the economic problem in Belize is the government's public debt. It is equal to 83% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).ⁱⁱⁱ As a United States citizen, I hear every day about how outlandish America's debt amounts to. According to the CIA Factbook, the United States public debt is equal to 69% of its gross domestic product.^{iv} If the administration of a country cannot set forth a responsible and trustworthy example for its citizens, it will not encourage an atmosphere of growth and development, as well as sustainability.

Belize's gross domestic product growth rate over the past 12 years is an indicator that intense problems have hit the country. Before the global slowdown that took place in 2001, Belize was experiencing large increases in growth. The graph below exemplifies the point that Belize's growth rate has been very inconsistent and unpredictable in recent years jumping up and down, sometimes even into the negatives.

Graph 1 – Annual GDP Growth Rate from 1999-2007:



The nationwide economic growth rate has affected life in every part of Belize. Due to the Stann Creek District's rural structure, tourism does not directly impact the district, but if the rest of the country cannot flourish, Stann Creek also feels the pain.

The unemployment rate in Belize has seen similar problems. While Belizean men have an unemployment rate of 13.8%, 28.8% of Belizean women are currently unemployed.^{vi} Women hold only 7% of governmental and high-powered jobs in Belize, showing a serious sexual bias in regards to hiring.^{vii} These issues have caused problems for women when trying to enter the workforce and provide for their families.

The economic disruption has caused problems throughout Belizean society. Next are some data referring to different aspects in Belize, specifically social, crime, and health. I believe that the economic difficulties regarding the government, GDP growth, and unemployment or underemployment have created snags in all of these different aspects.

Current State – Social Aspect

As mentioned earlier, life in the Stann Creek District is calm and enjoyable, which may explain its recent increase in population. Stann Creek's population has risen 24% since 2000, similar to Belize's total population increase of 30%. Stann Creek has not seen as great of an increase of growth because of its small tourism industry. The makeup of society in the Stann Creek District is mostly families and fewer individuals who move there solely to work. Meaning, the population growth may be solely due to relocation to be near family or procreation.

In 2010, 57% of Belizean people had never been married, 37% were married, and a surprising low 1.6% had been divorced.^{viii} This data shows that once married, couples do not separate, and if they do, they do not go through the legal proceedings to make a divorce official.

According to prolitteracy.org, women in developing countries who have an education are more likely to send their children to school than mothers who are not educated.^{ix} There is an obvious cycle that evolves from parents to their children. Only 77% of women in Belize, compare to 99% in the United States, can read and write.^x Secondly, 15-24 year-old Belizean women have an 89% literacy rate; meaning 11 out of 100 young women cannot read. This causes major hindrances for chances of a successful future for them as individuals and their families. According to statistics from 2002, 33% of women dominated households are below the poverty line, as opposed to 23% male dominated households.^{xi} Based on these statistics, there is a serious sexual unfairness between the men and women in Belize, women dominated households suffer more and have fewer opportunities for successful futures. The causes of these conditions are unknown but while women are trying to overcome the obvious inequality, they face many problems of crime and disease.

Current state – Crime Aspect

The only available statistical information shows that the crime rate of Belize decreased by 13.8% from 1999 to 2003, but it is obvious that there is still major crime in Belize. Men contribute to 90% of all crime in the country.^{xii} According to the United States government, "Crime is a serious and growing problem throughout Belize, particularly in Belize City and remote areas."^{xiii} The danger of travel and tourism in Belize is obvious to everyone who researches the country.

I had the privilege of studying abroad in Belize in the summer of 2011 through the University of Arkansas. In our two weeks of preparation before we actually started the

adventure, the faculty informed us of how serious the issue of crime is in Belize. We were told to bring nothing of large value; I left all of my simple, and very inexpensive, jewelry at home as well as my cell phone and handbags. We were told that a student in the past was robbed for her jewelry, but the team now understands how to prevent becoming victims of crime. We always traveled in groups of 2 or more and never walked around outside at night. On the other hand, it is very important for Americans to maintain a balance of friendship and safety when traveling or working in Belize. The mission of our trip was to promote the growth and development of the community of Dangriga in any way the people of the city needed us. We only began projects that the members of the community asked for us to do. Since all of our work was centered on Belizeans, we built very strong relationships with them and I am very happy to admit that I did not see one act of violence or crime for the three weeks I was in Belize.

However, realistically crime in Belize is a very dominant factor that has deterred many tourists from visiting the country. Much of the crime is a result of drug and human trafficking that has been dragged through the country. The government and police forces of Belize have made large attempts to combat the problem of crime, but the limited amount of resources, technology, and communication have seriously set back the country's officials. Recently, Belize has relied on help from the United States and Britain for reinforcement with anti-trafficking operations but experts believe that the problems will not cease until the illegal profit generating has been brought to a halt.^{xiv}

Current state – Health Aspect

Due to a lack of relevant information, current statistics regarding the health and medical situation in Belize are very difficult to find, although, there is a small amount of data available. In 2004 the Stann Creek District of Belize, which at that time had a population of 27,900 people, had 20 general practitioners (including 10 volunteers), 12 registered nurses (6 of which were volunteers), 1 pharmacist, and 1 dentist.^{xv} There are currently health programs in place to help educate, prevent, detect, and treat sicknesses in Belize but the lack of resources makes distribution of these services very difficult.

Belize has the highest risk of malaria in Central America, as well as active cholera and hepatitis risks.^{xvi} These dangerous threats of disease and infection have deterred many tourists from the beautiful country as well as sickened many citizens. The Ministry of Health recently made this statement on their website, "Even though the age group mostly affected is still between 20-39 yrs, these numbers have been gradually spreading to virtually encompass all age groups."^{xvii} Regarding disease fighting, the 2009 Annual report on HIV/AIDS of Belize stated, "The single biggest challenge remains like in previous years, that of human resources although some additional staff has been forthcoming in the TB (tuberculosis) programme." The additional staff in the tuberculosis program is a wonderful accomplishment, however, tuberculosis is only a portion of the medical problems in Belize.

Recently, Belizean officials have called for international help with fighting the sexually transmitted disease epidemic. For example, the Clinton Foundation created a tool to prevent stock outs for certain medication. The year that this instrument was implemented Belize saw zero stock outs of antiretroviral medication. They have also participated in World Aids day by setting up modules around the country for free disease testing.^{xviii} Evidently, the people and officials of Belize and international groups have been working diligently to combat sickness and disease

throughout the country. Success is a very likely outcome, if support dollars and services are given to Belize in a timely manner.

Productive Organization for Women in Action

POWA is an acronym for Productive Organization for Women in Action located in Belize, Central America. POWA is a community-based non-profit group of diverse women who have banded together to support healthy living. They are fighting issues such as family violence, HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse, and exploitation. The women involved in POWA range from single, married, household heads, employed, unemployed, in addition to women with histories of abuse, disease, addiction, and neglect. These women have made a collective decision to no longer sit back and watch disease run rampant through their community or witness domestic violence destroy lives and families. Instead they are promoting a life that is free of discrimination and turmoil. POWA's mission statement is this, "We as POWA members, use the guiding principles of respect, human rights, and gender equity to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, all forms of violence, stigma, and discrimination and gender equity. We accomplish this by giving confidential referrals, educating, being role models, promoting, inspiring, and advocating. We do this for our families, our communities and ourselves." POWA's vision statement is three fold, including: working in unity to educate and advocate for women's personal and economic empowerment and gender equality, empowering people to use their creativity to reach their potential, and eliminating all forms of violence and promoting the well-being and betterment of their community.

POWA empowers women to take control of their futures by doing door-to-door visits, producing carts and tables to handout resources, HIV/AIDS testing and support, as well as referral services.^{xix} These women have been reaching out in their community through more specific activities like *Women's Night Out*, movie nights, school visits, and radio talk show appearances. POWA is primarily a women's organization but all of their activities are directed to the entire community, including men, children, and entire families. Currently, POWA is developing many new programs to raise funds in order to support their community more. They are working on a juice business where all proceeds would be put into the organization as well as regular meetings where they bring in speakers to educate and serve the women of Belize.

The University of Arkansas and POWA have had a relationship for over five years, working on many different projects. I became acquainted with POWA in the summer of 2011. I worked with the women of POWA on the juice business as well as the creation of a cookbook. The current objectives that the women of POWA are striving for are as follows: to develop and maintain a Family Outreach Center where women and children are supported through programs, information and training, thus creating a community that promotes positive living, to establish and maintain community dialogue with at-risk and neglected communities, to develop POWA's family continuing education institute with a focus on remedial and tutorial programs for vulnerable children, and to continue toward the establishment of micro enterprises where members of POWA can continue to produce and train community members in handicraft development such as jewelry making, basketry, bags, dolls and drums.

The Cookbook

Though, communication with the people of Belize is difficult, I have been determined to help these women by giving them realistic advice and strategies about how to reach these

objectives through the selling of the cookbook that we have created. The goal of the cookbook is to get it ready and available to sell to retailers in Belize. The cookbook consists of authentic Belizean and Garifuna food as well as personal stories of women that POWA has helped. The University of Arkansas students interviewed the specific women that were willing to tell their stories and wrote summaries of how their lives have been changed by POWA to include in the cookbook. We knew that if we included evidence that POWA is working hard to better their community, it would be more likely to sell and become profitable for POWA.

During the summer of 2011 both the students from the University of Arkansas and the ladies of POWA completed a rough draft of the cookbook. Since November of 2011 the women in Belize have been working on perfecting the recipes in order to make the cookbook ready for printing and selling. Meanwhile, I have been editing the cookbook to make it aesthetically pleasing and ready for printing. I have created two different drafts of the cookbook with the same information, in different formats. The original format is an 8.5 by 11 inch document with white paper including some pictures but mostly black ink. The newer format is 8.5 by 5.5 inches and is considerably longer but organized equal to the first format. I used both formats when getting pricing and shipping quotes.

Recently, I have contacted 10 gift shops, resorts, hotels, and travel agencies to inquire if they would be willing to carry and sell the cookbook. Some of the companies I contacted have responded positively and want to know more information about the cookbook as well as see an example of it. Due to the long process of verifying all of the recipes, the cookbook is still not completely ready but I have prepared some plans that the POWA women can use to sell the cookbook and utilize the profits to reach the objectives and mission of POWA.

Printing the Cookbook

Printing is the first step of actually getting the cookbook in a physical form and ready to be sold. After talking to many different printing companies, both in Belize and the United States, I have found a couple different options for the POWA women. We need the printing to be affordable so it can be sold at a reasonable price to consumers, but elevated enough so both POWA and the retailers will receive a meaningful profit. By deciding on a reasonable price we will be able to better market the cookbook to the retailers, so they will have the flexibility they need to decide their price to consumers.

If the cookbook is printed in Belize the shipping costs would be dramatically lower, however printing is more expensive in Belize than in the United States. After one conversation with FedEx in Fayetteville I quickly learned that I am not very educated about professional printing in large quantities. Thanks to some very nice workers at multiple different printing companies, I now feel very comfortable with talking to printing companies and making decisions regarding quotes. One of the first things I learned is that plastic spiral binding for the cookbook will add almost \$3 per book. I assumed this would be our best option in binding without thinking about the price of the binding to the printing companies. This cost surprised me because of other low-cost books I have seen that had spiral binding. Obviously, I needed to do more research before making this decision.

I also learned that the larger the order quantities, the cheaper the overall price. I first started getting quotes for both formats of the cookbook with plastic spiral binding in 100 unit orders. I later decided to get quotes for both formats with stapling in the center instead of spiral binding and in 250 order quantities. This substantially lowered the price per book. Also, when I

told the companies that the cookbook would be supporting a non-profit organization, the United States companies offered considerable discounts.

Three of the companies that responded to my inquiries were FedEx in Arkansas, BRC Printing in Belize, and Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship in Florida. Each company had their own idea of how the cookbook should be printed and their own routine of giving quotations. Because we are so flexible in regards to the details of this project, I allowed them to advise me on what they think would be best. For this reason, some of the following quotes might be different in detail. The first quote FedEx gave me is for both formats with plastic spiral binding printed in 100 unit quantities.

Table 1 – First quote from FedEx:

Formats	Price per book
8.5x5.5 (half)	\$14.63
8.5x11 (full)	\$18.45

After seeing this quote, I began to worry that this cookbook was not feasible cost-wise to produce. I knew this would be detrimental to the success of POWA in Belize. The second quote from FedEx was also for both formats but with stapling instead of the spiral binding and printed in 250 cookbooks per batch.

Table 2 – Second quote from FedEx:

Formats	Price per book
8.5x5.5 (half)	\$3.71
8.5x11 (full)	\$6.27

Through FedEx, the half format would be much cheaper to print compared to the 8.5x11 size. Depending on how each company runs their production regarding paper sizing, cutting, and formatting, these prices seem to differ by relatively large amounts between companies.

BRC Printing, located in the Cayo District of Belize, also gave me two different sets of quotes. The first quotation is for 100 copies of the cookbook in both types of formats with plastic spiral binding.

Table 3 – First quote from BRC Printing:

Formats	Price per book
8.5x5.5 (half)	\$9.70
8.5x11 (full)	\$12.27

This quote appears to be cheaper than the first FedEx quote, however, still not feasible to produce. The second quote from BRC Printing includes both formats of the cookbook but printed in 250 order quantities of 100 and with stapling instead of plastic spiral binding.

Table 4 – Second quote from BRC Printing:

Formats	Price per book
8.5x5.5 (half)	\$6.48
8.5x11 (full)	\$10.50

This quote from BRC Printing does not have the dramatic decrease from the changes like the FedEx quote has. This could be due to the technology or the price of the spiral binding, but the savings are not near as intense. It is possible that BRC does not have the machinery to do the folding and stapling as efficiently as FedEx or produce the cookbooks as efficiently. Whatever the reason, BRC does not seem to be the best option for printing the cookbook.

The best opportunity that I have found for printing the cookbook is through Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship in Florida. The owner, Mr. Clayt Thompson, and I have had multiple hour-long conversations regarding the cookbook and he was able to give me the most detailed and accurate quote out of all of the companies that I talked to. He advised me that the 8.5x5.5 format would require his company to hire a graphic designer to work with the layout before the book goes to printing. None of the other companies saw this as a problem, however Mr. Thompson seems more credible in my opinion due to his willingness to explain complex information and dedicate his personal time to this project. He printed two copies of the cookbook and sent them to Fayetteville from Florida so we can have a hard copy to look at. Because none of the other companies actually printed a copy of the cookbook, I do not believe they fully understand the obstacles of printing the 8.5x5.5 format. Therefore, I decided to focus on the 8.5x11 format because it is easiest to print and is more aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Thompson also offered to give us a 75-cent discount per book when we place an order of at least 250 cookbooks solely because he wants to help support POWA. The quote from Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship includes only the large format (8.5x11) with stapling down the center.

Table 5 – Pricing from Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship:

	100 units per order	250 units per order
Total price	\$378	\$770
Price per book	\$3.78	\$3.08

These prices are comparable to the quotes from FedEx and BRC Printing regarding the smaller format of the cookbook. From Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship POWA can print the same quantity of cookbooks but in the larger format, which I believe would attract more attention because of the size primarily. Due to Mr. Thompson’s expertise, generosity, and professionalism I recommend that POWA print the cookbook through Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship.

Shipping the Cookbook

Shipping is also very important to the success of the cookbook. I advise the POWA women to have the cookbooks shipped to their office and then disperse them to retailers themselves. This summer when the University of Arkansas students travel to Belize they are also willing to deliver the cookbooks to the retailers at no charge to POWA. Since I recommend the printing be done in the United States, I think shipping to a central POWA location is most cost efficient.

FedEx in Fayetteville could not give me an exact price to ship the cookbook but they projected that it would be between \$500 and \$800 to send the cookbooks to Belize. For 250 books, this would cost somewhere between \$2.00 and \$3.20 per book, almost doubling the cost per book for POWA. (For comparison purposes, I will use the middle of the range, \$2.60 per book, for shipping costs through FedEx.) According to the FedEx website, the first sentence of their mission statement is this: “FedEx Corporation will produce superior financial returns for its shareowners by providing high value-added logistics, transportation and related business services

through focused operating companies.”^{xx} Obviously, they are a highly advanced and strategic international logistics company that is very successful at what they do. I understand shipping will be expensive, however, I do not think shipping through FedEx is the best option for POWA in regards to this particular project.

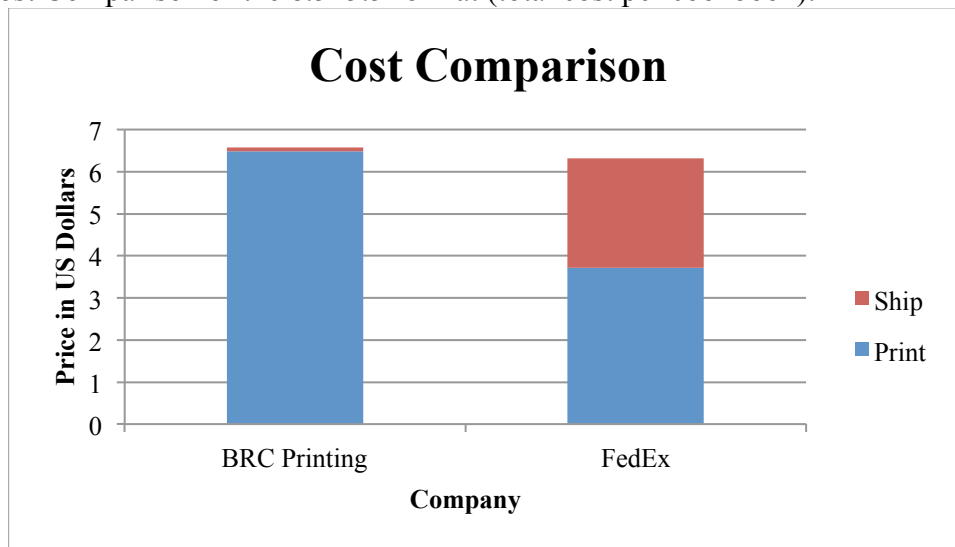
Since BRC Printing is located in Belize, POWA will face relatively small shipping costs if they choose to print the cookbook through them. Belmopancityonline.com gives rates for domestic shipping in Belize. After running some calculations, I have roughly estimated that shipping would be about \$25 in total or 10 cents per book when shipped in bulk. Apparently, shipping within Belize is considerably cheaper than shipping from the United States; nevertheless, the dramatic difference in printing does not make up for this difference.

Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship appears to be the best option for shipping also. Mr. Thompson recommended that the ladies of POWA ship through the United States Postal Service. In his opinion, shipping through a large company like FedEx, UPS, or DHL would be best for very large jobs that will need detailed shipping reports with exhaustive specifications. Since the POWA women will be making these orders on an irregular basis and relatively small in size, the United States Postal Service offers the most economical option. Mr. Thompson was able to calculate a price of 45 cents per book for shipping from Florida to Belize through the USPS without a tracking number. This price is less than 20% of the cost forecasted by FedEx. I recommend this option for the women of POWA. Below are comparisons for both formats, to make clear exactly which one is cheapest and by how much.

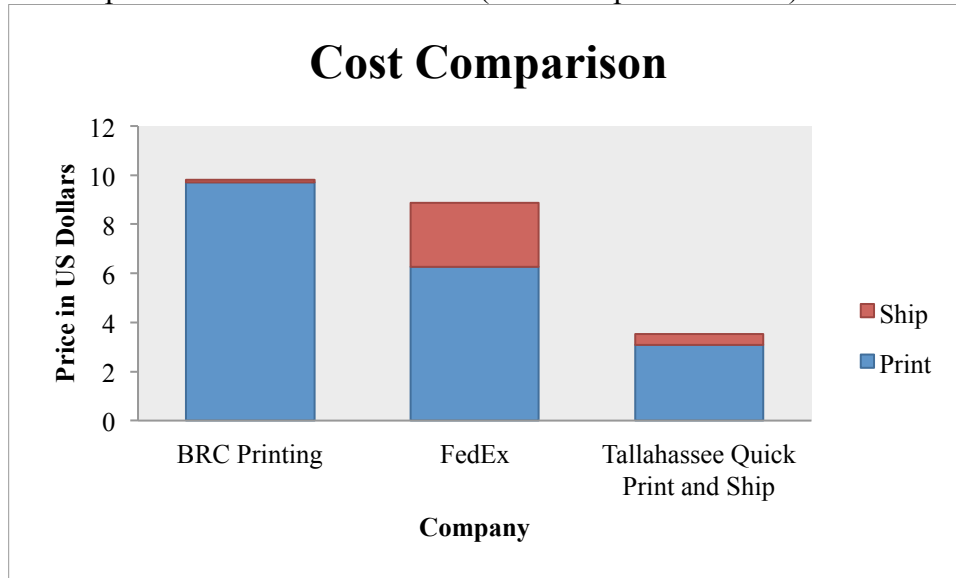
Total Cost Comparison

I have created two charts in order to better compare the prices of printing and shipping. Below, it is very clear which printing company has the best offer for POWA. Based on price alone, we can determine the best option for POWA, but we must also look at quality, reliability, and consistency.

Graph 1 – Cost Comparison of the 8.5x5.5 format (total cost per cookbook):



Graph 2 – Cost Comparison of the 8.5x11 format (total cost per cookbook):



According to the above chart, Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship is the obvious cheapest option regarding printing and shipping combined. In addition, based on my conversations with the owner, Mr. Thompson, I believe Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship will produce the best quality cookbook. While conversing with Mr. Thompson, his genuine concern and availability to help is evident. The first page of the company’s website holds a letter from Mr. Thompson himself. The most important sentence of the letter is bolded and centered for everyone to see: “We actually fancy ourselves as problem solvers for business and individual consumers who appreciate accomplishing multiple tasks in a “one-stop-shop” atmosphere.” Also, the company’s motto is, “Expect to be impressed!” Many companies say these things to get customers in their doors without actually performing at high standards, but I know that this company is credible and will assure success for the POWA cookbook.

Selling the Cookbook

I recommend the ladies of POWA sell the cookbook outright to retailers. POWA will be acting as a wholesaler instead of selling on consignment. Selling on consignment will create complexity and delays of payment that is not necessary for this project. Since the mission of this cookbook is to create profit for POWA, it is in POWA’s best interest to get the money as soon as possible. Also, due to the fact that the women do not have a professional accountant or finance manager, the simplest process would prove best for POWA. In addition, selling on consignment would add problems with keeping track of the stock of cookbooks as well as receiving payments from retailers.

If POWA is unable to deliver the cookbooks to certain retailers, they should ask for the retailer to pay for shipping. I do not believe this would be a major hindrance to the retailers because they can simply add that cost into the price of the cookbook to customers. It is natural for when someone orders something to pay shipping and handling. In addition, the shipping through Belize will be a very inexpensive.

Creating an Amazon.com account to sell the cookbook is a great idea for the POWA ladies. By doing this they could ship the cookbooks straight from their central office in Belize to wherever the customer is located and charge that customer for shipping. This would be a simple

and quick transaction for both the buyer and the seller. This would attract an entire new market of customers who are searching for specialty cookbooks that include traditional foods. The non-profit aspect of this cookbook may also inspire more international customers to make the purchase.

Since the University of Arkansas team that will be serving in Belize in the summer of 2012, I recommend, that the students carry cookbooks with them after they have been delivered from the printing company and hand-deliver them to the retailers based in the places they visit. Also, the team is able to help POWA organize their office and prepare them to handle the transactions that will occur once the cookbook begins selling.

I do not think that selling an electronic copy of the cookbook would be profitable to POWA as of right now. We would need some type of high-end technology needed to prevent fraud and stealing. Therefore, POWA would not benefit due to the costs of preparing and selling an electronic copy of the cookbook.

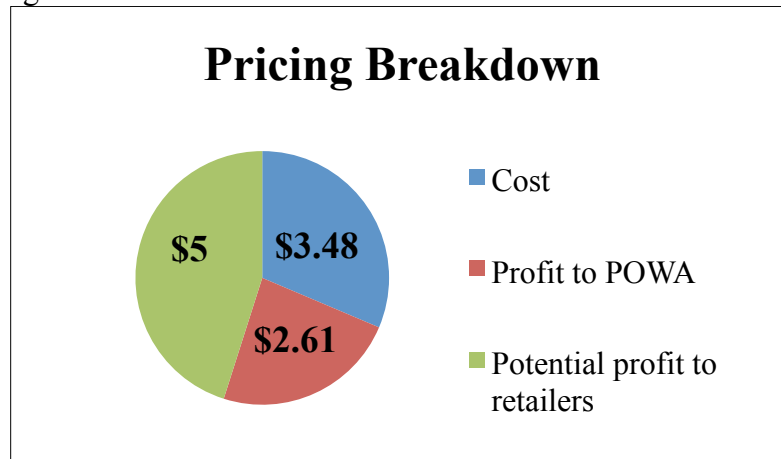
In the future, I hope POWA is able to sell the cookbook to retailers in the United States, however, immediately I do not think this is a viable option for them. Due to the fact that the printing and shipping costs are so much cheaper when done in bulk orders, making smaller orders would prove much more costly for POWA. Also, making and receiving payments internationally is very complex and difficult which would result in a smaller probability that POWA will receive funds for their mission.

Pricing the Cookbook

On amazon.com, Belizean cookbooks are selling for anywhere between \$9 and \$30.^{xxi} Since neither professional chefs nor graphic designers have created this cookbook, I believe the price should be on the lower end of this scale. Also, due to the fact that this cookbook will be sold primarily in gift shops and tourist areas, consumers will most likely be looking for a lower priced souvenir rather than if someone were to search for a Belize cookbook on the internet, in which case they may be less price-sensitive. If a potential customer were to Google “Belizean cookbooks” because they had a serious interest in buying one in order to fulfill their needs, they are probably willing to spend more on a cookbook than a tourist strolling through retail stores in Belize.

Assuming the women decide to print and ship the cookbook through Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship, the total cost per book to POWA will be \$3.48. Due to the relatively low cost, I recommend that POWA sell the cookbook to retailers at a 75% markup, making the selling price \$6.09. Using this pricing strategy, POWA will receive \$2.61 per book sold to retailers. After all 250 cookbooks are sold; POWA would be profiting \$652, giving them a substantial return. However, if the loan option from the University of Arkansas is utilized, POWA will pay \$50 in interest, giving them a total net profit of \$602. In reference to the retailers, I believe \$6.09 is a very reasonable price, meaning their investment is relatively small, allowing them a potentially large return when the cookbook is sold to consumers. The retailers could then add their own markup of between \$3 and \$5 making the price of the cookbook to consumers between \$9 and \$11. This would give them a 50% to 85% profit margin. If the ladies of POWA decide they want the cookbook to sell for the same retail price throughout all of Belize, they can give a recommended or a required fixed price for all retailers to sell the cookbook at. The pricing breakdown on the next page shows the structure of the revenues and expenses of the cookbook for both POWA and the retailers.

Graph 3 – Pricing Breakdown:



Plan for Sustainability

Development from the inside out is the best option for Belize to become a competitive country. Individual entities must become empowered to create a better future for them, resulting in a better future for the entire country. In order for POWA to fulfill their goals of bettering their community, this cookbook project must be sustainable well into the future. The University of Arkansas students can help with the first round of printing, shipping, and delivery, but the responsibility ultimately needs to be given to POWA after this summer. I do not believe running this project will take mass amounts of time for two or three of the ladies of POWA to manage. Also, since the printers and retailers have already been contacted and the business process is very simple, someone with finance experience would not be needed to fulfill this role.

To begin, POWA needs to identify a few women who can be dedicated to continuing the success of the cookbook. I believe this will only take a few hours of work a couple times a year, depending on how quickly the cookbook sells, this might even be a once a year commitment. These individuals need to have a way to communicate with the retailers and printing company, such as an email address where they can be contacted. This will allow retailers to contact POWA when their stock runs low, so POWA knows to order more. This person also needs a mailing address to receive the payments from retailers. They need to verify that all retailers have paid and deposit the profits into the POWA bank account.

Secondly, they can communicate with the printing company via email since it is located in Florida and international calling is very expensive. Also, if the women of POWA decide to change the format of the cookbook, add recipes, or include more pictures, they can send an electronic copy of the new version to the printing company so they have the updated draft for the next print order.

I recommend a minimum of two ladies should cover these responsibilities, when money is involved there needs to be a checks and balances system to assure all of the resources are accounted for. This will also increase the sustainability of the cookbook incase one of the ladies cannot fulfill her duties. Additionally, this back-up person can do quality control and double check that communications between retailers and the printing company are flowing smoothly and positively. Representatives from the University of Arkansas can train the ladies this summer when they are working in Dangriga. They can walk them through what making an order looks like, editing the cookbook, and receiving payments from retailers and making the loan payments.

The University of Arkansas has funds available to loan to POWA in order to pay for the first round of printing and shipping of the cookbook. This \$1,000 US (\$2,000 BZ) 5% simple interest loan will give POWA the resources to pay for the printing and shipping before the payments are received from the retailers. The tentative terms of this agreement is Appendix 4 of this document. In the future, more funds may become available to POWA as the cookbook becomes more popular and more printing orders need to be made.

Summary of Recommendations

My previously stated recommendations can prove successful for POWA and the people of Belize in the very near future. My plan consists of the simplest and most straightforward procedures, in order to serve POWA the best way possible. The selling procedure starts with the ladies of POWA contacting the retailers with the exact price and an electronic draft of the cookbook so the retailers can decide if they officially want to sell it in their stores. To begin the process of creating the physical cookbook, the leaders of POWA need to have a conversation with University of Arkansas faculty and students either in person or virtually in order to agree on a contract for the loan. As Appendix 4 states, I believe it is best for the loan to be dispersed to POWA approximately 10 days prior to the printing order being placed. Then 60 days after the receipt of delivery of the cookbooks to POWA headquarters, POWA begins making payments of \$87.50 US (\$175 BZ) monthly to pay back the loan. This timing will allow POWA to transfer the cookbooks to the retailers and accept payment before the process of paying back the loan. The cost of this financing to POWA will be \$50 in interest over the life of the loan. It is possible that not all 250 copies of the cookbook will be sold in the first year, in this case the ladies of POWA and the representative from the University of Arkansas will re-negotiate a different time period for the payments of the loan.

After the loan funds have been transferred to POWA, they can finally begin the printing process. I recommend using the very cheapest option, which I also believe is the best in quality and detail. Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship will be a diligent and dependable partner with POWA. I know Mr. Thompson will see that POWA is served to the best of the company's ability and the cookbook is properly printed and shipped.

Mr. Thompson will print 250 of the 8.5x11 inch format cookbook with stapling in the center for \$3.08 per book. Spiral binding was our first option for the cookbook, but this would almost double the cost of the cookbook. For shipping, Mr. Thompson estimates that delivery from Florida to Belize will cost about 45 cents per book. This gives a total cost of \$3.48 per book, which is the best estimate I have found, also paired with his professional expertise and genuine concern for this project, this option has not been beat.

I advise POWA to sell the cookbooks for \$6.09 per book to retailers in Belize. Due to the fact that shipping in bulk is cheaper than in smaller amounts, this price of \$6.09 will give POWA a profit of \$2.61 per cookbook sold to retailers, or a 75% profit margin. Then it is at the discretion of the retailers as to how much to charge for the cookbook to customers. With this relatively low cost to retailers, they will have plenty of pricing options. I think POWA should focus on retailers in Belize in order to assure delivery and payment.

After the cookbook is transported to the POWA office in Dangriga, I recommend the ladies of POWA distribute the cookbooks by hand to the retailers. Upon delivery, the retailers should pay the ladies the wholesale price of the cookbook (\$6.09). This plan will give POWA the most money at the earliest time possible, allowing for a successful cookbook business.

Conclusion

This project has been both taxing and stimulating for me. I have loved getting to help POWA over the last year and getting to know some of the ladies that they are partnered with. Assisting with this cookbook and hearing the women's stories has given me a new outlook on my life. As an American, I live very extravagantly and could live on much less, which would give me the opportunity to give back more. Some women are born into poverty and cannot break free from its strongholds. This sudden view of reality has hit me hard in the recent months.

After being in Belize, I have seen the disorder first hand. The people live on very little but love their lives. They do not seem to care about not having much technology or communication. They simply enjoy island time and living every day without stress. After seeing this kind of a lifestyle first hand, I have been trying to calm down and relax more. Worrying does not help anything, and the Belizeans have shown me this.

This cookbook project has also had its difficulties. I have lost all communication with the POWA women and an American that was down there to assist them. The American has decided to not work with POWA any more due to the frustration of missing deadlines. This broke my way of communication with the ladies of POWA. They have an email address but it is rarely checked and not considered of importance to respond to requests. Communication has been the biggest obstacle in the project. I had to make many decisions based on what I think the ladies would want. Thankfully, the costs of printing and shipping speak for themselves but many details go into printing that I did not know how to decipher. For example, paper quality and binding were two large decisions I had to make with my best judgment.

Nevertheless, not only have I helped POWA, but also POWA has enriched my life by giving me this project. I have learned so much about cookbooks and printing as well as development and sustainability. I now understand that a country cannot improve their standard of living until many facets of the country have become more successful. The economic, social, crime, and health realms of a country all contribute to its overall achievement. I am thankful for this opportunity and I hope POWA can use this plan in the years to come.

Executive Summary

The current economic and social state of Belize has impacted Belizean citizens, families, and businesses. Few people in the country have not been affected by the poverty and disease that has tormented this Central American developing country. The reasons for these issues are conspicuous and difficult to pinpoint.

The laid back and relaxed way of life paired with outlandish amounts of public debt, very small gross domestic product, and scarcity of public health services have created a stronghold that seems impossible to break free from. This is why not-for-profit organizations in Belize have such a great potential for growth. There is an abundance of people to be served, but very little help to be found. The Productive Organization for Women in Action (POWA) has brought together women from every background to build up their resources to serve their community of Dangriga, Belize. These women know what it's like to battle HIV/AIDS, be victims of domestic abuse, and see families fall apart from the stress of it all. That is why they have jointly determined to help prevent and detect disease as well as, and support other women, together with men and children.

POWA does many outreach events throughout their community like school visits, movie nights, and radio talk shows. They also create carts of resource materials about disease and abuse

to give away. A new project POWA has started is a cookbook of traditional Belizean and Garifuna food to sell to retailers in order to bring in funds for their mission of bettering their community. The cookbook is finished except for testing and perfecting the recipes. I have been investigating the market of cookbooks in order to create a plan that will best fit POWA's needs.

Once the cookbook is complete and ready for printing, the POWA women need to talk with University of Arkansas representatives in order to agree on a contract for a loan to pay for the first round of printing and shipping of the cookbook. Then, the funds can be transferred and the printing process begun.

I recommend that the ladies of POWA use Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship for the next stage of production. This company can print and ship 250 copies of the 8.5x11 inch format of the cookbook with stapling in the center for \$3.48 per book, the lowest quote I have found. The cookbooks will be produced on thick, cardstock type paper with all of the pictures in color. The owner of Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship, Mr. Clayt Thompson, gave me realistic and detailed advise on many aspects of the cookbook. He even offered to give a 75-cent per book discount and sent me two copies of the rough draft of the cookbook. Mr. Thompson truly cares about POWA and wants to see this project succeed and is willing to give all he can to show his support.

After printing is complete, I recommend the cookbooks be shipped from Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship to Dangriga. Mr. Thompson gave me a rough estimate of 45 cents per book for shipping through the United States Postal Service. Even though his store works almost exclusively with UPS, he is willing to bypass that partnership to get the best price for POWA. This is the cheapest option I have found. FedEx and other international companies would also be able to deliver the cookbooks, however their advanced technology and high satisfaction guarantees mean higher prices for POWA. Other shipping companies may be an option for POWA in the future, but for now the funds are not available to pay high prices for delivery. In order for POWA to stay committed to its community, the lower the cost of shipping means the more profit for POWA.

Once the cookbooks have been delivered to the POWA office, the ladies can deliver the cookbooks by hand to the retailers or they can enlist the help of the University of Arkansas students as they travel throughout the country this summer. The students can take the cookbooks with them as they tour with no charge to POWA. If need be, POWA can mail cookbooks to the retailers, but that cost needs to be covered by the retailers, as to not cut into POWA's profit. My research has shown that the cookbooks can be mailed by the Belize post office for approximately 10 cents per book; this price is bound to vary depending on how many cookbooks will be mailed at a time.

Upon delivery to the retailers, the stores should pay POWA \$6.09 US (\$12.18 BZ) per book received. This payment method will give the most money to POWA in the quickest time span possible. Then, the retailers have ownership of the cookbooks and are responsible for selling them so they can receive their profit. I believe most retailers will agree to this payment method because they too want to support POWA.

It is possible that the ladies of POWA want the cookbook to be sold at the same price throughout the country. If this is so, they can recommend or require the retailers to have a set price for the sale of the cookbook. I recommend the selling price to consumers be somewhere between \$9 and \$11. This would give the retailers a 50% to 85% return over the cost of the cookbook.

In order to assure the sustainability of the cookbook, I recommend at least two ladies from POWA have responsibility for the cookbook. They can both monitor printing, delivery, payments, and new orders. They do not need technical training, but the University of Arkansas business team can inform them of exactly how this process will work and create better organization for their office when dealing with the selling of this cookbook.

Long term more cookbooks will need to be produced and POWA might want to make changes to the draft from the first round of printing. They can do this easily by calling or emailing Mr. Clayt Thompson and he will be happy to make whatever changes they need. If they want to add more recipes they can send him those in a word document and he can add those in to the cookbook. When more cookbooks need to be printed there may be more funds available to POWA from the University of Arkansas to cover these costs. Then, the ladies will pay back the loan on an agreed upon basis in the future.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

Retailers

Art Box Belize (art and gift store)

Sell online and store in Belmopan

Website: <http://www.artboxbz.com/aboutus.asp>

Email: info@artboxbz.com

Belize Hotel Association

Website: <http://belizehotels.org/>

Email: info@belizehotels.org

***Coppolar Resorts**

Website: <http://www.coppolareorts.com/>

Email: info@blancaneaux.com

Response from: Martin Krediet martin@turtleinn.com

***Hamanasi Adventures & Dive Resort, Belize**

Website: http://www.hamanasi.com/contact_us.html

Email: info@hamanasi.com

Response from: karina@hamanasi.com

***Pelican Resort in Dangriga and South Water Caye**

Website: <http://www.pelicanbeachbelize.com/>

Email: sales@pelicanbeachbelize.com

Tropical Travel Association

Website: <http://www.tropicaltravelassociation.com/>

Email: goguatemala@gmail.com

Website of 4 gift shops

http://www.placencia.com/Informative%20_%20Page/GiftShops.html

Lola's Art: lolasart@btl.net

Beach Bazaar: beachbazaar@yahoo.com

Robert's Grove: info@robertsgrove.com

***Spectarte:** spectarte@gmail.com

* Responded positively

Appendix 3

Printing companies

BRC Printing in Belize

Website: breprinting.com

Email: sales@breprinting.com

Quotes from: sherol@breprinting.com

FedEx Print and Ship Center in Fayetteville, AR

Website: fedex.com

Phone: 479-443-5018

Tallahassee Quick Print and Ship in Florida

Website: <http://printing-shipping-tallahassee.com/?s=quote>

Owner: Clayt Thompson 850-224-9969

Email: store2281@theupsstore.com

Appendix 4

Tentative Terms of Agreement

Loan Granted to the Productive Organization for Women in Action

I. Principal and Interest

The University of Arkansas is issuing a \$1,000.00 US (\$2,000 BZ) loan at 5% simple interest rate, not continuously compounded, and based on the initial principle of the loan, to the Productive Organization for Women in Action (POWA). This loan will be a separate contract from any other loan agreements made between the University of Arkansas and POWA. Other agreements will remain unaffected by this contract.

II. Period of the Loan

The loan period will be 15 months. The loan will be dispersed to POWA approximately 10 days prior to the placement of the print order for the cookbook. The payment period will begin 60 days after the receipt of delivery of the cookbooks and last 12 months. POWA is to make \$87.50 US (\$175 BZ) payments per month.

III. Repayment

Payments will be made by POWA in the last week of each month and will be documented in the form of copies of the deposit slip made and attested to by Mr. Armando Aban of the Cooperative Department, or the individual holding his current position. Monthly financial data should be included with the copies when possible as well as any audit information that may be generated by Belizean authorities. There will be no penalty for early repayment; rather it is encouraged.

i. Method of Repayment

Payments will be made by depositing funds into Belize Bank during a business day in the last week of each month. Paper records should be given to Mr. Armando Aban, or the individual holding his current position. A representative of the University of Arkansas using online banking software will monitor payment.

IV. Additional Grants and Liabilities

In the event that POWA applies for additional lines of credit or grants, the University of Arkansas and its representatives should be notified by Mr. Armando Aban, or the individual holding his current position, and receive copies of appropriate paperwork, such as completed application, name of sponsoring organization and intended use of funds. Approval of application for additional loans for POWA must be received from the University of Arkansas and its representatives if the monthly payment of that loan, a loan or combination with other loans, represents greater than 50% of the average intended per month while POWA is making payments to the University of Arkansas.

V. Future Relationship

If POWA remains in good standing with the University of Arkansas, it will be eligible at the full discretion of the University of Arkansas and its representatives, for a line of revolving credit for future development of the cookbook as well as additional consulting. Failure to make payments in a timely manner will result in the forfeiture of the aforementioned opportunities.

VI. Provisions for Loan Agreement

The loan is to be used for the procurement of cookbooks made by POWA and students from the University of Arkansas. The purpose of this loan is to fund the printing and shipping costs of the cookbook. Upon delivery, POWA is expected to sell copies of the cookbook to retailers. The profit, excess amount of cash received from sales after loan has been paid, is expected to be invested into the Productive Organization for Women in Action.