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Our Mission

EquipSent (ES) is a volunteer based organization founded in 2017 in Zurich, Switzerland, with the goal to extend the life-cycle of scientific equipment and at the same time enhance the quality of education around the world by enabling hands-on training. These two goals are simultaneously achieved by matching donors of out-of-use, but functional devices, to educational institution receivers with limited financial resources.

The goals of EquipSent are:

- Minimizing waste - by reducing the disposal of out of use yet functional scientific equipment in well-funded research institutions.
- Improving education - by supporting universities & schools with limited funding to attain access to such functional equipment.
- Reducing global inequality - by establishing collaborations between research institutions in high-income and low-income countries.
- Fostering international collaboration - by building a network of donors and recipients which facilitates the achievement of the above goals.

EquipSent bridges the gap between two worlds and acts as a facilitator. We are focused on Sustainable Development Goals 4, 9 and 12.
Elected Board

The annual general assembly was held online on 6th of May 2020 via Zoom. The board was elected as follows:

President: Marcela Giraldo Castaño.
Vice-presidents: Katharina Keller & Jannick Griner.
Other board members: Daniel Klose, Dorothea Wiebecke, Sarah Rowan, Jan-Georg Rosenboom, Irina Ritsch and Anna Thumann.

EquipSent Members

In 2020, we were 24 EquipSent members!

In alphabetic order: Alena Bundiska, Allen Puente-Urbina, Anahit Torosyan, Anna Galea, Anna Thumann, Carolin Gold, Céline Ly, Daniel Klose, Dorothea Wiebecke, Gregor Jotzu, Irina Ritsch, Jan-Georg Rosenboom, Jannick Griner, Jörg Fischer, Katharina Keller, Lea Cebulla, Marcela Giraldo Castaño, Marie Tai, Mohammad Ismail, Nourreddini Halvae, Peter Zedekia, Selver Pepic, Sarah Rowan, Timo Niepel, Wilfred Eiegla.
Social activism in times of pandemic

The year 2020 was marked by the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, which rapidly changed the lives of people, and operations of businesses worldwide. Also ES has been affected, since in-person meetings became unfeasible, and online co-working became the norm. However, we are glad to report that due to many preparations and efforts for online co-working already in the preceding years, ES managed to remain almost fully operational even in these challenging times, and we are proud of the successes we achieved together in 2020, and the support we shared with each other in continued online social events.

Cases

In its fourth year of operation, EquipSent is proud to report that we handled equipment transfers in various stages of execution.

Concluded & follow-up phase

The early prototype cases of equipment donation to Bosnia, as well as to DR Congo and Liberia were already physically concluded in 2020, and thus progressed to the follow-up and usage monitoring stage.

• Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

The first follow up report of a concluded donation was received in May 2020, concerning the donation to Sarajevo initiated in 2017. Prof. Sabina Zero reported to ES that the mass spectrometer and polarography were in use, and nearly 70 students had already directly benefited from hands-on training in two subjects: environmental and analytical chemistry. In addition, two master’s thesis have been carried on.

Furthermore, the graphite furnace was used to conduct research which recently led to the first publication with ES-donated equipment, in which the donors were kindly acknowledged.
Here, the researchers report on the concentration of toxic heavy metal particles (Pb, Cd, and Ni) in the area of Sarajevo and also made a health risk assessment on various pathological conditions such as cardiovascular, respiratory diseases and cancer for their population.


Unfortunately, we also learned that one of the transferred devices is not in operation (the digestor) because vessels are missing, and replacement parts are being locally screened.

The successful execution of Sarajevo case was also evaluated in retrospect, to find suggested operation procedures for future cases. This analysis, spear-headed by the Case Management team, led to improve the ‘How to Case’ guidelines developed in 2019, as well as a new specific ‘case leader’ job profile, which will be used to recruit future volunteers for specific donation handling.

• Beni, Democratic Republic of Congo

Follow-up communication with Prof. Benjamin Lawson at Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC) in DR Congo has been fluent, and ES is delighted to report that the applied sciences lab was set up in 2020. However, due to the outbreak of the pandemic, on-site teaching was suspended. We expect to follow up with Prof. Lawson as soon as universities can go back to regular operations.

• Duazon, Liberia

The successful transfer of glassware to the Liberia Renaissance Education Complex (LREC) school in partnership with DEAR Foundation was completed at the end of 2019. Communication was re-established in 2020 to assess the potential for a second shipment of equipment. The response from the LREC was very positive and a detailed request list was sent. Screening of EquipSent’s current inventory showed that we have no matches between the request list and the existing equipment. Following this, a “call-to-donation” will be sent out & advertised aiming to fulfill the requested equipment list for the newly open classrooms.

ubcsceince Three years ago the chair of applied sciences told me that their biggest need was to have equipment for a practical, hands-on education. Now after the effort of many at UCBC, our construction team, and your generosity, our new electronics and chemistry lab space is ready!

Before

New applied sciences lab at Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC)

After

ucbcsceince Three years ago the chair of applied sciences told me that their biggest need was to have equipment for a practical, hands-on education. Now after the effort of many at UCBC, our construction team, and your generosity, our new electronics and chemistry lab space is ready!

Applied sciences classrooms at Liberia Renaissance Education Complex (LREC)
Ongoing execution

Yerevan State Medical University, Armenia

In 2020, a case that was initiated at the screening stage in 2019 was moving to the execution phase. ES is organizing a shipment of chemistry devices to help a pharmaceutical lab in Yerevan State Medical University getting started and do own research as well as hands-on teaching. Research will be enabled for 20 researchers and the donation will improve education for 200 students. In 2020 the list of items to be donated was finalized, and logistics were arranged. Active equipment shipment options were being evaluated for equipment donations to Armenia. Excitingly, this was ES first partially decentralized case, since the requested devices were sourced from two different locations, Zurich in Switzerland, and Manchester in the United Kingdom. This combination of donors allowed ES to compile a complete list of required devices to equip the lab. Sadly, the outbreak of war between Armenia and Azerbaijan prevented that the equipment was shipped in 2020. We look forward to finalizing this case in 2021 and equip the Armenian team.

Planning phase

ES is excited to report that the available contacts and inventory for equipment offers and requests are continuously growing, as is the number of active cases being handled. For example, novel donation cases were emerging, for example a follow up shipment with additional equipment to Liberia (see 'Follow-up' section above), as well as equipment screening for other promising destinations in Africa (Cameroon, Nigeria. South Africa and Asia (Myanmar). On the contrary, a few initially screened locations were decided to be discontinued or put on hold in 2020, for example due to the target equipment being in worse condition than expected, or due to insufficient communication abilities with potential recipients. However, also in these instances ES could make valuable new contacts and develop operational processes to facilitate future donations. These experiences will serve as a valuable information for a dedicated effort to streamline future ES-internal processes for donation screening.
This implies that not every case can be featured in detail in future annual reports, and therefore in 2020 ES renewed the efforts to compile cases-specific information after conclusion of the executive stage of donation cases in the form of ‘Success Stories’. These will be made available online in the future.

The map below summarizes and provides an overview of EquipSent’s global impact at the present time. The white marks with orange contour correspond to the locations of finalized cases were the equipment is already tested, installed and in use. The orange marks correspond to ongoing and forming cases. Here, we also present relevant numbers as hard basis to estimate the impact and the current target education/projects we are fostering. This list follows the most recently selected recipients.

Equipment Donations

Even in the challenging times, our team managed to receive equipment donations which were suited to specific requests from selected recipients.

Equipment members collecting equipment. Left to right: Jörg Fischer & Ségol Kuzmin
As initiated in 2019, the updating of the ES statues was concluded in 2020. The new statutes are effective since approval by the General Assembly (GA) on the 6th of May 2020. The main changes reflect a better representation of membership types, as well as organizational structures introduced in 2019 in EquipSent. In short, minimal requirements for becoming full member were formalized, and associate members (who have no voting rights at the GA) were introduced. The leading bodies of ES were identified as the GA, the board, and the auditors. Some formulations were adapted to clarify that ES operates as a non-profit organization with the potential to apply for tax exemptions and become a charitable organization following the unanimous vote during the General Assembly 2020.

Teams: This year we were organized in six teams as follows,

- Team Strategy (head: Daniel Klose)
- Team Case Management (co-heads: Katharina Keller, Sarah Rowan)
- Team Equipment Management (head: Jannick Griner)
- Team Recruiting/HR (head: Dorothea Wiebecke)
- Team Corporate Relations (head: Anna Thumann)
- Backoffice/Administration support (OMA) (Irina Ritsch)

- Team Marketing (head: Marcela Giraldo) Note: The marketing team head was vacant after GA elections 2020. Our president Marcela Giraldo C. acted as interim solution for EquipSent.

Organizational workflow

The workflow within ES was slightly updated. Board meetings are now scheduled monthly, and protocol writing was better formalized to keep track of important decisions and self-update for non-attendees. Individual teams also hold approximately at least monthly meetings, and document their progress individually in the shared google drive account (e.g. by adding corresponding information to so-called ‘Rolling-docs’ (team specific), slack or newly designed trello boards per team).
New roles
During the development of the ES organigram, a new role of ‘ES experts’ was defined. Experts have specialized knowledge in their respective fields, and support ES on demand. A non-public) database is being maintained to secure a large pool of expertise in the future. Experts may be full ES members if they wish, but are not required to be so.

Digital restructuring
The push towards online co-working led to a digital restructuring of the ES online channels. The slack channels were organized to suit the new operational structure, and found active usage in team operations. Trello boards per team were developed. All ES documents and media were re-organized in a collaborative effort, to better structure document storage in a centralized Google Drive structure under a corporate Google account.

Databases
With the growing number of contacts and information, ES formalized its knowledge databases in 2020. The most relevant created databases were:
- Milestone sheets for cases
- Equipment inventory
- Recipient (applicants) database
- News feed for social media
- Screened strategic partners
- ES connections to companies
- Impact reporting
- Experts database

Updated donation forms
Especially in times when personal commuting and international travel are tedious, it was important for ES to have a robust procedure for intermediate storage of donated devices before delivery to the final target locations. Therefore, updated donation forms were developed in 2020, that formalize the option of a preliminary donation of equipment to ES as an intermediary prior to donation forwarding to the final recipient. This allows more convenient tracking of donated equipment that is in intermediate storage with ES.

Brand Key
Following up on input from the Impact Academy 2020 (see section below), ES set out to develop a better brand, which was summarized in the Brand Key. We identified core principles, common visions, competences, core values, beliefs, strengths and goals, which will guide the growth of ES in the future.
Tax-exemption

The decision to develop ES in the direction of a non-profit organization was voted and unanimously approved at the General Assembly 2020. Furthermore, the decision was made to apply for tax-exemption status. The formal application documents were compiled, including the generation of detailed annual & financial reports of the previous three years (2017-2019) which were voted electronically by the General Assembly in 2020. The complete application was submitted to the Swiss authorities in November 2020 and is now pending review. A positive judgement of the authorities will open the gates for ES to apply for NGO-focused social enterprise funding.

Impact Indicators

In 2020, with the process of physical donations being significantly hindered, ES invested substantial effort into further refining a sustainable and ethical framework for donations and donation monitoring was refined from the existing model in several hours-to-action, and workshops, which will continue to guide ES operations in many future cases. A suitable framework for social-driven impact are the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for ES donations were developed.

In addition, EquipSent aims to promote goals 5 and 10 by pref. selecting receivers that foster gender equality and reduce inequalities.

Indicator: Parity indices (see SDG 4.5.1)
Partnerships

Also in 2020, ES proudly collaborated with partner organizations of various backgrounds that helped us in all aspects of organizational operations from recruiting to physical donations. In addition, new forming partnerships are coming up and being formalized for 2021.

Organisational collaborations

Student Project House (SPH) at ETH Zurich remained a powerful partner for coaching, access to opportunities, develop ES procedures and promote the idea of ES with a broad audience of science and technology-based students and researchers. While access to the facilities in Zurich was unfortunately limited in 2020 due to the pandemic, SPH also moved many of its operations to online channels, which we are thankful for being included in.

The association of AVETH was also a strong partner for ES in 2020, and supported us in 2020 for example by highlighting our project in their news channels, and sponsoring the pizza break during our online PubQuiz.

Upcoming

- In 2020 ES pursued the establishment of multilevel collaboration with an industry partner in the insurance sector. Discussions have been successful with the corporate social responsibility team. Towards the end of 2020, our Marcela Giraldo led the preparation of a list of volunteer engagements & description per engagement in the quest of skilled volunteers, mentors for dedicated workshops in strategic topics for our organization and volunteers in land via their corporate engagement program for employees. As starting project, their media department edited one of our video success stories. We are excited to see how this partnership will develop in the future. Stay tuned!

- In late 2020, ES was contacted by the Teaching and research in natural sciences for development in africa (TrEND) organisation, inquiring about the possibility of future collaboration in Africa-focused donations. ES is excited to follow up on this promising collaboration at the level of our core operations in 2021. Irina Ritsch is leading the establishment of common ground between both organizations.
As the number of cases handled by ES grows continuously, ES is in need of better tools to track the process and in particular to track the impact per donation after successful equipment transfer. To this end, existing follow-up questionnaires were further refined, and excitingly, in 2020 a partnership with EvalEA (https://evalea.de/) was initiated. EvalEA will provide ES free access to their software, originally developed as a personnel development service toolbox, to strongly facilitate case monitoring in the follow-up phase. Testing of the tool commenced in late 2020, and a full roll-out is expected in the following year. Aria Kaleda from our team is in lead of the development of this partnership.

**Programs for social innovation or sustainability**

**Clinton Global Foundation CGI U commitment maker**

For third consecutive time, ES was selected as commitment maker for the prestigious Clinton Global Initiative University (CGIU).

In contrast to previous years, this time CGIU was not a two-day event but one-year-long commitment with set milestones by the commitment makers, and included virtual classes and webinars. CGIU brings together leaders in politics, philanthropists, NGOs, social enterprises, members of media, etc. to discuss pressing global challenges and find effective solutions.

The EquipSent representatives – from left to right - Sarah Rowan, Dorothea Wiebecke and Marcela Giraldo. Marcela prepared the proposal with defined milestones as group leader and the 3 woman team prepared the final report to CGIU. The two day event scheduled to take place in Scotland was unfortunately cancelled and instead was held online due to the ongoing pandemic.

**U-change: marketing material & awareness events**

In 2020, EquipSent receives its first grant from the Swiss Academy of Arts and Sciences under the program U-Change, Category A: Student initiatives for sustainable development. ETH supported us as host institution with Student Project House and AVETH as main partners. The ES team focused on outreach activities, spreading awareness, marketing and recruiting strategies to address target audiences for EquipSent to lift up operations, i.e. volunteers and strategic partners. However, the year of 2020 was marked by the the Covid 19 pandemic which imposed difficulties to execute one of the milestones of the proposal: an image film. The ES team lead by Marcela Giraldo, Jannick Griner and Katharina Keller developed a film concept which we hope to execute in 2021 if the pandemic situation allows us. The final report to U-change is in preparation and will be handed in early 2021 according to the grant deadline.
**Impact Academy (SEIF)**

In 2020, ES was selected by SEIF as one of 38 promising impact driven initiatives in Switzerland. Our strategy team was fortunate to participate in the Impact Academy spring cycle, a series of coaching sessions hosted by SEIF, Switzerland, to promote the growth of impactful start-ups and social enterprises. During the coaching sessions, ES thankfully received valuable support from our coach Martijn Roseboom. Impact Academy and our coach helped us on impact management, finances, marketing, strategic partnerships and more. During this 6-month program, our strategy team developed targeted strategies for the different teams in EquipSent. In late 2020 these strategies started the execution phase. Moreover, our strategy team was invited by our coach to develop a long, medium and elevator pitch for the future of EquipSent and the potential presentation to an important worldwide NGO. Stay tuned on this for 2021!!!!

![EquipSent strategy team. From left to right: Daniel Klose, Marcela Giraldo Castaño, Katharina Keller, Jannick Griner](image)

**Visibility**

**Social Media**

EquipSent greatly increased its social media impact in 2020 due to targeted efforts on LinkedIn and Instagram. At the end of the year we were proud to have a constant news feed, increased number of followers and online interactions in the following channels:

- LinkedIn (167 followers)
- Instagram (111 followers)
- Facebook (145 followers)
- Twitter (31 followers)

**Events**

We hosted a very well-received online recruiting event, the digital ‘PubQuiz’. 42 people in at least four countries participated and were provided Pizza in the break. The Pizza was kindly sponsored by our partner AVETH. The contestants faced general knowledge and sustainability related questions.
We also organized a get-to-know ASAŽ, the African student association from ETH.
Other media attention

In 2020, ES was featured in several online channels. For example:

- Following a pitch from Marcela Giraldo C. to the representatives of Franke & Artemis group who visited SPH, ES was featured in the ETH Foundation magazine (edition No 5: “Outstanding talents, bright ideas”, https://ethz-foundation.ch/.../og/EN_ETH_Uplift_No5_Web.pdf)

- ES was featured by ETH for Development (ETH4D, https://eth4d.ethz.ch/.../give-equipment-a-second-life.html)
Promotional material

- The promotional video finalized in 2019 of the installation procedure in Sarajevo in 2018/2019 was incorporated into ES pitching materials, and received highly positive feedback.

- We designed a film concept targeting corporate donors, manufacturers and sponsors with a three-folded message: create social impact, brand your products and empower local changemakers.

- The first EquipSent newsletter was planned in 2020. The template was developed using mailchimp in collaboration with LIMES association. We aim to release it in 2021.

- Multiple marketing resources (digital & printed) for outreach and promotion of our activities were developed in 2020

Examples of the marketing material developed: recruiting flyer and corporate one-pager

Social & team building

Among all the productive online meetings, ES also had some fun online times together, which brought together the international team from locations in e.g. Switzerland, Poland, USA and (temporarily) Japan! Some highlighted events were: BBQ in summer at Käferberg, Game night and Secret Santa! All of them kindly organized by Katharina Keller.

Happy Holidays
FROM THE EQUIPSENT TEAM
The 2020 financial statement can be found in a separate annexed document. For independent financial management, ES opened a bank account at Graubuendner Kantonalbank, Switzerland, handled by the elected treasurer, Jannick Griner, and including our president Marcela Giraldo as authorized signatory. Importantly, in 2020 the board set up the first written guidelines for the reimbursement policy within ES, which defines the types of expenses that can potentially be reimbursed, and states that expenses must be pre-authorized.
ES in numbers 2020

We were 24 EquipSenders!


We followed up on 3-cases!

We have one case in execution

We diversified our donor network!

We initiated four equipment transfers!

ES was represented and/or promoted in at least 5-different programs, events
- CGI U Scotland
- Impact Academy
- U-change program from the Swiss Academy of Arts and Sciences
- Pitch to Franke and Artemis Group via SPH
- SPH Info & exchange events
- Peers & Beers
Thank you for a great year!
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