

EICC-GeSI Supply Chain Mapping Project Update

July 22, 2009

This research project will investigate the supply chain for tin (solder), tantalum (capacitors and deposition targets), and cobalt (batteries and magnetic recording media) used in electronics. The purpose of this project is to create a picture of the electronics supply chain for these metals; 2) assess suppliers' use of codes of conduct addressing social, environmental, health, and labor issues; and 3) identify the challenges of collecting this data and consider ways to enhance and maintain transparency of the supply chain.

In late spring, EICC/GeSI selected RESOLVE to lead this project. RESOLVE (www.resolve.org) is an independent, non-profit 501-c3 organization, based in Washington D.C. RESOLVE has worked for over thirty years with clients and partners in all sectors (corporate, government and civil society) on projects where multiple parties require information and analysis but where elements of that information or analysis require confidentiality.

As RESOLVE designs and conducts the project, they are seeking input from companies, associations, NGOs, academics, agencies, investors, and other stakeholders. RESOLVE initiated and will work with a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) of these diverse organizations to seek feedback on the research approach, supplier request for information, desk-based review of related initiatives, and to give advice on addressing research challenges such as addressing breakage in the supply chain. The SAG was convened by phone on June 23rd and July 10th to discuss the project's objectives, anticipated supply chain challenges and strategies, and identify similar existing initiatives. A third SAG call is anticipated in August. In addition, RESOLVE has held calls at the request of additional stakeholder groups including NGOs and investors.

On July 21st RESOLVE began contacting suppliers to start gathering information about the sourcing and supply of tin, tantalum and cobalt. First contact is being made via a supplier letter which requests information on supply chains, sourcing codes and standards, and mechanisms ensuring supplier compliance with codes and standards. Suppliers were identified based on a "seed list" of supplier companies identified by EICC/GeSI members. This list of suppliers represents first points-of-contact; RESOLVE will trace (from end-use to mine) back to additional tiers of the supply chain from the seed list companies.

For more information on this project, please see RESOLVE's project webpage: <http://www.resolve.org/eiscm/>.