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Global Water Challenge and Ashoka's Changemakers Announce Worldwide Search for Social Entrepreneurs with Solutions to Water Challenges

The Coca-Cola Company Commits \$1 Million (US) to Support Innovators Working to Solve Water and Sanitation Crisis

DAVOS, Switzerland--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

Global Water Challenge (GWC) and Ashoka's Changemakers have partnered to launch Tapping Local Innovation: Unclogging the Water and Sanitation Crisis, an online collaborative competition to discover and support entrepreneurs large and small who offer groundbreaking approaches to the most pressing water and sanitation challenges. The Coca-Cola Company is contributing a lead grant of \$1 million (US) to support the collaborative effort to find and fund truly innovative solutions that address the water crisis.

Most people do not think about water; they turn on a tap and clean water flows readily. But for more than 1.1 billion people around the world, access to safe water is a constant concern. Suitable sanitation facilities are in even shorter supply. A lack of basic bathroom facilities deprives 2.6 billion people of human privacy and dignity.

"We have both the resources and the will to live in a world in which everyone can drink clean water and use a safe toilet," said Paul Faeth, Executive Director of GWC. "This open source competition is unique in allowing social entrepreneurs working in the farthest corners of the world to connect with a dynamic community of experts and funders that can improve and expand the impact these entrepreneurs can have."

"Global Water Challenge seeks to make existing projects even stronger and connect local innovators with global investors who can bring solutions to scale. By partnering with Ashoka's Changemakers, Global Water Challenge has a platform to challenge the world's entrepreneurs to use their substantial talents to solve the world's water and sanitation crisis," says Charlie Brown, the executive director of Ashoka's Changemakers. Brown notes that the Changemakers Web site encourages collaboration and discussion to draw out and strengthen the most effective ideas.

Innovators can post their applications on the Ashoka's Changemakers Web site at www.changemakers.net now through March 26, 2008. During this time, applications will be available to anyone for review, comment and discussion. Once the entry period has closed, a panel of judges will select finalists and the global online community will vote for the winners. The winners will receive funds in recognition of their work. Judges include: Ed Cain, Vice President-Grant Programs, Hilton Foundation; Ian Callaghan, Head of Microfinance Institutions Group, Morgan Stanley; Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Chief Medical Correspondent, CNN; and Tanvi Nagpal, Director of Water and Sanitation Initiatives, Global Water Challenge.

About Global Water Challenge

Global Water Challenge (GWC) is a coalition of leading organizations, which have joined forces to catalyze transformational change in the water and sanitation sector. We believe that we have both the resources and the will to live in a world in which everyone can drink clean water, and use a safe toilet. Our mission is to generate a global movement to meet the urgent need for safe water and sanitation by spurring collective awareness and investment in innovation by corporate, public and nongovernmental actors. GWC focuses on collaborative learning, connecting leaders, and investing in sustainable, replicable, and scaleable projects.

For more information, please visit us at www.globalwaterchallenge.org

About Ashoka's Changemakers

Ashoka's Changemakers is building the world's first global online "open source" community that competes to surface the best social solutions to the world's most pressing issues. We focus on thematic, collaborative competitions, inviting innovators from around the world to profile and collaborate with a global community of investors, thought leaders and enthusiasts. To date Changemakers has launched 14 successful collaborative competitions and attracted more than 2,000 high-impact solutions from more than 125 countries. Changemakers builds on Ashoka's 26 year history identifying and selecting leading social entrepreneurs and its belief in "everyone a changemaker" global society.

Get involved. Find out more about how to nominate, enter, comment and vote in our collaborative competitions www.changemakers.net.

Source: The Coca-Cola Company