



## **UNITED NATIONS REFORM**

A PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY WITH ASHOKA'S CHANGEMAKERS

MAY 2008



# UN-Ashoka Partnership

## Engaging an innovators community

### The Opportunity

The United Nations has a formidable task ahead to advance its agenda on peacekeeping, internal reform, pre-emptive diplomacy, climate change and improving the lot of poor countries. Its success in many of these areas will depend on forging deeper ties with communities to better communicate its goals and role. The UN must position itself not as the instrument of the will of a few powerful countries, but as the platform for global consensus.

A partnership with Ashoka represents a powerful opportunity for the UN to publicly open itself to input from, and collaborate with, communities themselves. The transparency, openness and cooperation inherent in our online competitions will reinforce internally and externally the values that the UN is striving to embody. A partnership around a series of competitions with Ashoka would deliver the following:

- New solutions from social entrepreneurs to the challenges that the UN has taken on, most notably, climate change
- A widespread, targeted multimedia outreach campaign to tens of thousands of social innovators and thought leaders around the UN's goals and work
- Stories of innovation, positive change and hope to inspire people to support the UN's agenda
- Specific action around which to build a media campaign about UN progress

#### THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

**“The [bombing of UN offices] in Algiers also strengthens our resolve to explain even more clearly and consistently to the public the role of the United Nations, wherever we operate – why we are there, what we are doing, what we stand for and what we don’t.**

**“We must make clear we are not there to represent any one group of nations over another. We are there to clear landmines, build schools, run clinics, advance the rule of law, provide emergency relief, help protect the environment, promote human rights, keep the peace in troubled lands – in short, build better lives for the men, women and children we exist to serve.”**

**- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon  
January 2008**



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# The Approach

## Combining Social Innovation and Open Sourcing

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### What is Changemakers?

Ashoka's Changemakers ([www.changemakers.net](http://www.changemakers.net)) is an online community that connects investors with social solutions from around the world. Through ongoing competitions, Changemakers identifies and convenes the best social innovators and implementers to create a transparent and action-oriented global community. This vibrant interaction and feedback provides often-isolated or little-known entrepreneurs the safe space, advice, and contacts to blossom and scale.

Participants in Changemakers online competitions compete to surface the most promising solutions, and then collaborate to refine, enrich, and implement them. The competition community comprises a rich network of ground-breaking social organizations, social entrepreneurs, and business entrepreneurs, as well as interested innovators from academic and government institutions.

Our ability to open-source social innovation, along with Ashoka's unique framework analysis, make Changemakers a laboratory for social innovation with an ability to partner with both corporate and foundation clients interested in breakthrough change.



# Open Sourcing Innovation: The Changemakers Competition

1.

Create the context.

We analyze the work of social entrepreneurs in the chosen topic area to distill design principles of innovation and barriers to solving the problem. The resulting framework of innovation provides competition entrants with a context to understand how their work relates to the field as a whole.

2.

Call for entries.

We use our network of philanthropists, academics, NGOs and the Changemakers community to solicit applications from qualified entrants. Typical competitions generate more than 250 entries.

3.

Discussion.

Our community of more than 25,000 social innovators reviews and comments on the proposals. Expert moderators keep the conversation lively, providing invaluable transparent feedback for entrants.

4.

Judging.

Drawn from the foundation, NGO and corporate worlds, our recruited panel of experts narrows the entries to 12 or so finalists.

5.

Community Voting.

Changemakers social innovators vote, selecting the three winners, who receive cash prizes.

6.

Change Summit.

Competition sponsors, finalists, Ashoka Fellows and others in the field convene to share knowledge and outline future collaborations.

→ Approximately 4 months from start to finish.



# Creating the Framework: The Anatomy of Social Innovation

The framework is a method for understanding social innovation. First, it creates a current snapshot of innovation, used as context for the competition. It also produces insights that can guide philanthropic investment, identify areas ripe for collaboration, gauge the maturity of a cluster of social solutions, and predict the next steps necessary for a field to achieve greater levels of impact. This technique was developed using the knowledge Ashoka has derived its 28 years of analyzing theories of change and searching for social entrepreneurs in more than 65 countries.

Drawing from our portfolio of more than 2,000 Fellows (as well as the work of innovators outside our network), we analyze patterns of innovation to create:

**DESIGN PRINCIPLES.** These are insights we distill from the work of leading social entrepreneurs. They do not encompass tools (like technology or education), nor do they name specific organization-level approaches. They are clarifying insights that identify levers of change.

**BARRIERS.** These are core components of a problem that, if changed, could allow for a true shift in paradigm and behavior. Barriers are not market conditions or underlying causes that merely describe a situation. They must be moveable and specific to the problem.



## How to Improve Health for All

PRINCIPLES	MAIN BARRIERS		
	Cultural taboos and health illiteracy	High cost of providing quality health products and services	Limited reach of healthcare infrastructure
Emerging from Innovative Solutions			
Adopt market-based models as a scaling-up strategy	<b>Foster demand for healthcare</b> PSI, Global	<b>Change the logic of your distribution model</b> Srinivasan, Locost, India  <b>Put customers first</b> Rebeca Villalobos, ASEMBIS, Costa Rica	<b>Establish micro-franchise model</b> SHEF, Kenya  <b>Provide health-related consumer products</b> Unilever, Ghana
Design inclusive systems	<b>Run effective prevention campaigns through cross-sector partnerships</b> BASICS and EHR, USAID, Guatemala  <b>Address poverty-health vicious circle</b> Vera Cordeiro, Renascer, Brazil	<b>Introduce disruptive competition through preventive care</b> David Green, Project Impact, Global  <b>"System-wide" cost savings through preventive care</b> Jeff Palmer, Coordinated Care Network, US	<b>Co-create indigenous programs</b> Abhay and Rani Bang, SEARCH, India*
Leverage abundant resources at the community level	<b>Piggyback on established local practices</b> Fidela Ebuk, Nigeria*  <b>Use peer networks for behavior change</b> Linzi Smith, South Africa	<b>Build economies of scale</b> Aravind Hospital, India  <b>Community-Based Health Financing</b> Mutual Health Organization, Sub-Saharan Africa	<b>Barefoot doctors</b> Fazle Abed, BRAC, Bangladesh  <b>Self-reliant primary health care</b> FRLHT, India
Introduce novel uses of technologies	<b>Establish multi-service Internet kiosks</b> Satayan Mishra, Drishtee, India	<b>Leverage existing technologies for low-resource settings</b> Victoria Hale, OneWorld Health, Global	<b>Hotline for emergency services</b> Subroto Das, India  <b>Provide tertiary care through telemedicine centers</b>



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# Collaborative Competition: Why is Open Sourcing so Powerful?

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- 16 competitions have been hosted since 2004 sourcing over 2,500 social innovations
- Clients engaged in past 18 months include Habitat for Humanity, Global Water Challenge, Knight Foundation, National Geographic, Nike, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Changemakers community includes over 25,000 registered users from over 115 countries

“The competition turned out to be an extraordinarily effective platform for sharing information about our work within the UCLA community and with our colleagues elsewhere. The process stimulated some great discussions about our organization and increased the project’s visibility significantly.

The idea of a disruptive innovation is exactly how we have been conceiving of the project, but until we prepared for the competition we had not put it in those words exactly. This new theoretical context continues to inform our thinking as we shape the next phase of our work.”

Diane Flannery  
Family Coaching Clinics  
Finalist, Young Men At Risk Competition

## It’s an invitation to unexpected guests and new conversations.

In 2006 as voting began for the How to Improve Health for All competition Competition, the Changemakers webmaster alerted the rest of the team: A high number of votes were coming from one computer in India, all for a health services program called e-Choupal directed at farmers. It looked as though someone were cheating—a program had clearly been written to spam the site with votes. But after investigating, the Changemakers team in India discovered that e-Choupal, a for-profit endeavor, had informed its customers of the voting. More than 2,500 Indian farmers, few of whom spoke English, trekked up to five miles to one Internet-enabled computer in the region to cast their votes. For Changemakers, those e-Choupal voters represented the largest influx of supporters for any collaborative competition entrant to date. Additionally, more than 50 of the farmers joined the online review to show support and ask questions of e-Choupal.



# The Online Experience Connecting the Community

## The Changemakers + National Geographic Geotourism Challenge

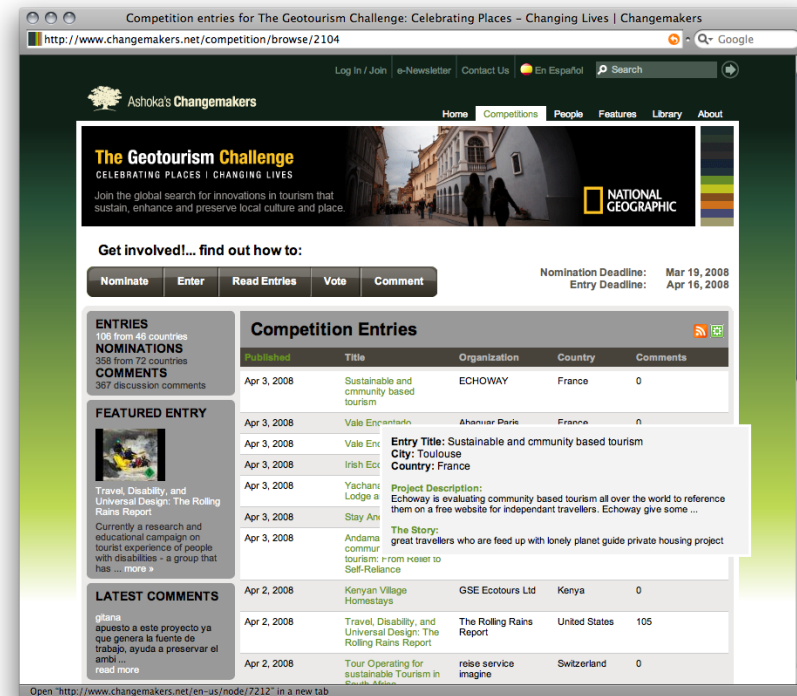
COMMUNITY MEMBERS can nominate entries, comment on proposals, add favorite entrants to their user profiles, and vote for finalists.



“This is really pretty exciting! For the past 13 years or so we have been working like “mad scientists” trying to “crack the code” of restoring a sense of wonder and hope in our young men and boys and awakening them to their innate, creative ability to change life challenges into possibilities. What a tremendous process you guys at Changemakers have created—for us to share our journey and learn from those who are engaged in this work from around the globe!”

Mary E. Brown, Executive Director,  
Life Pieces To Masterpieces, Inc.; Finalist, Young Men at Risk Competition

ENTRANTS have ongoing dialogues with the community: pitching ideas and responding to questions. These interactions lead to real-world collaborations and connections.



“This competition has been such a great source for networking. It helps those of us working on our individual efforts feel as though we are part of a bigger whole all working to do good. It’s really encouraging.”

Lydia Dean  
Travel with Conscience  
Entrant, Geotourism Competition



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# Social Solutions Design Initiative

## A Process of Inquiry and Innovation

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### A New Way to Problem Solve

Based on the framework we develop for competitions, Ashoka can also lead clients through a process of solution invention that draws on the insights of thousands of social entrepreneurs and a cutting edge methodology for collaborative design strategy.

Our approach to social (and organizational) problem solving combines a deep understanding of how change comes about in the world, how human behavior assists or impedes that change, and how systems can be re-designed to “unstuck” positive change.

We use our analysis of thousands of social solutions created by our Ashoka Fellows to distill what we call “design principles” for change. We also delve into the relationship between social entrepreneurs and the needs they’ve addressed to parse a problem into its component pieces, as identified by the “customers” themselves. That framework allows us to identify gaps in the sector’s approach to change, neglected strategies, and fertile ground for innovation.

Using that framework as a guide, we work collaboratively with our client partners, as well as social entrepreneurs and other players in the orbit of the identified issue, to design a set of possible solutions. Those could include: blueprints for new initiatives, guidelines for recognizing aligned grantees, prototypes for media or consumer campaigns, or recommendations for collaborative initiatives.

Our approach derives from a belief that the best answer to every social problem is not always a grant. Sometimes it is a story better told, a problem re-framed, a partnership struck. We look for client partners who share that belief and want to travel with us on this creative journey.

#### **COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Once the framework is created, SDI works with clients and their stakeholders to surface compelling insights from the front lines of change. This work typically involves in-depth interviews with stakeholders, as well as innovation workshops designed to pull creative ideas from those closest to the problem. This collaborative approach ensures that myriad perspectives on a problem are represented. The underlying question of this exercise is imaginal: How might we.....?**

#### **Other approaches we can take, based on human-centered design:**

**Customer Journey Frameworks. Journey frameworks to help identify opportunity areas across key moments in customer experiences.**

**Point of Views Development. Experience principles developed through research can form the basis of any value proposition or incentives for players in a sector.**

**Ashoka’s partner in this phase of work is Central, a Bay Area design strategy firm with more than 20 years experience in creating and re-designing products, processes and systems.**





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# Ashoka Team

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**DIANA WELLS, PHD.**, is President of Ashoka. She joined the organization in the 1980s after graduating from Brown University. As an undergraduate, her year-long study abroad in Varanasi, India led her to see the need for local solutions to solve global problems. This insight brought her to Ashoka and inspired her to create one of Ashoka's core programs, Fellowship Support Services. Taking a leave to pursue a Ph.D. in anthropology, she was named both a Fulbright and Woodrow Wilson scholar. Her ethnographic research focused on understanding how social change happens as a local articulation of a global social movement. Diana returned to Ashoka to provide leadership for the worldwide process of sourcing and selecting leading social entrepreneurs as Ashoka Fellows. She has contributed to the field of social entrepreneurship by implementing a widely respected tool for "Measuring Effectiveness," which is one of the first standard tools to measure the impact of social entrepreneurship. She has taught at Georgetown University on Anthropology and Development and has both authored and edited numerous journal and book publications, including two compilations on social movements in the United States.

**SUSHMITA GHOSH** completed a five-year term as President and continues as a member of Ashoka's Leadership Team. She directs the highest levels of Ashoka programs for top business entrepreneurs and leads both the Global Academy for Social Entrepreneurs and Changemakers. Sushmita currently splits her time between Arlington, Virginia and Calcutta. Sushmita served as Ashoka's country representative for India from 1989 to 1997. During that time, she helped Ashoka launch its new programs in Latin America and direct its European fundraising efforts. Sushmita also founded Changemakers, a magazine for social entrepreneurship in 1992, now Changemakers.com website. Subsequently, Sushmita became International Vice President of Ashoka and Executive Director of Changemakers and then Ashoka President.

**CHARLIE BROWN** is the Executive Director of Ashoka's Changemakers. Before Changemakers, Charlie spent three years building the architecture for Ashoka's global community of over 1,700 Ashoka Fellows and directed three policy focused Ashoka initiatives: the India Sustainable Water Project, which analyzes existing links between innovation and water management policy; Advocates for Social Entrepreneurs (ASE), which is spreading the pro bono legal movement around the globe to support social entrepreneurs to influence the regulatory environment; and a partnership with the World Bank Institute to connect Changemakers online competition finalists to global and in-country policy makers. Prior to Ashoka, Charlie worked at the U.S. National Renewable Energy Laboratory on the development of climate change mitigation strategies and spearheaded innovations for land management in the National Park Service and abroad, where he overhauled the management structure for Jamaica's protected areas system.

**CHERYL DAHLE** is the Director of Ashoka's Social Solutions Design Initiative. As a journalist, entrepreneur and thought leader, she has spent nearly ten years working at the intersection of business and social innovation. She founded and led Fast Company magazine's Social Capitalist awards, a competition to surface top social entrepreneurs. As the project manager for four years, she helped design an evaluation methodology and sift through hundreds of non-profit applications each year to find top performers with compelling models for change. She has written extensively on capital markets for non-profits, sustainability, and social entrepreneurs in the U.S. and abroad. As a consultant, she has served leading organizations in the space of hybrid business/social solutions, including the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, The Skoll Foundation and the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke University.



# Project Fees & Schedule

## Activities

### Competition & Framework

Recommended topics: Climate Change, Develop Solutions that Benefit the Environment

### Solutions Design

Variable based on details of engagement

## Fees

	Duration	Fees
	4 months	\$300,000 each
		TBD



Thank you.

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