



## Press Release - Launch

*For additional information, please contact:*

*Gastón Wright*

*Co director Community Team*

*Ashoka Changemakers*

*Email: [gwright@ashoka.org](mailto:gwright@ashoka.org)*

### **Leveraging Business for Social Change - Building the Field of Social Business**

(Washington DC – March 15<sup>th</sup> 2010) Changemakers.com and Artemisia are launching an online competition to find the best social business models in order to build this new field, and scale-up the reach and impact of social business initiatives. These are mission-driven ventures that are sustainable and profitable while improving the quality of life and reducing poverty for people at the bottom of the pyramid. The “*Leveraging Business for Social Change- Building the Field of Social Business*” competition on Changemakers.com invites people from anywhere in the world to submit the most successful social business models in developing markets. It will spark learning by helping discover how social businesses invent ways to apply technology and techniques so that a growing number of people at the base of the pyramid reap benefits in areas such as nutrition, housing, education, healthcare, insurance, energy, and small-scale agriculture.

Ashoka’s Changemakers and Artemisia believe that social businesses are a powerful engine for serving vulnerable and low-income communities by delivering the critical goods and services they need to improve their lives and lift themselves from poverty. The field of social business is an emerging culture that harnesses smart business techniques for building financially viable social ventures with the potential to grow to achieve huge impact.

“Over the past few years, the development of the social business field has accelerated,” said Kelly Michel, founder of Artemisia. “More and more people are discovering that market mechanisms can help solve social challenges in pragmatic, scalable ways. The “*Leveraging Business for Social Change- Building the Field of Social Business*” competition will shed light on catalytic social business practices around the world, and inspire a new generation to apply its business skills to improving quality of life at the base of the pyramid.”

Social businesses are a new breed in every respect: they creatively apply market forces for social benefit, and they can offer more inclusive participation in ownership, management, and profit distribution. Social businesses are pioneering new forms of distribution, pricing for affordability and community participation all along the value chain.

“This is an exciting blend of Ashoka’s pioneering expertise from the field of social entrepreneurship, delivered through its Changemakers initiative, and Artemisia’s leadership in developing social business globally,” said Charlie Brown, Changemakers Executive Director. “It will spark connections between a new generation of social business entrepreneurs and investors, workers, consumers, experts, and entrepreneurs. Their combined resources, insights, and skills will accelerate the emergence of the field of social business.”

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## **About Artemisia**

**Artemisia** is an entrepreneurial organization with a global outlook that inspires, develops, and connects people to build a new generation of mission-driven businesses whose products and services contribute to reducing poverty. These social businesses leverage market mechanisms to improve quality of life at the base of the pyramid while becoming financially independent and profitable.

Artemisia helps develop human capital for the field of social business both in Brazil and further afield, encouraging an entrepreneurial culture with a social purpose. Past collaborations have included such countries as Argentina, Colombia, Senegal, Mali, France, England, India and Vietnam. Artemisia offers experiential learning programs that integrate both behavioral and technical development and connect networks of entrepreneurs, students and specialists.

Since launching operations in Brazil 5 years ago, Artemisia has participated in the increasing momentum of the sector. Together with other players in the field, Artemisia is contributing to the creation of a Brazilian cluster for social business that attracts talent, innovations and investment at home and abroad.

[www.artemisia-international.org](http://www.artemisia-international.org)

## **About Changemakers**

Changemakers is an initiative of Ashoka, an organization with over three decades of finding, funding, and expanding the work of social entrepreneurs across the globe. It is a global online community of action that connects people to share ideas, inspire and mentor each other, and find and support the best ideas in social innovation. The Changemakers online community builds on this history and expands the Ashoka vision by creating an “Everyone a Changemaker” world through networking, relationship-building, and the sourcing of funding opportunities.

Through its open and transparent competition and collaboration process, Changemakers is creating one of the world’s most robust online communities for launching, refining, and scaling innovative ideas to help solve the world’s most pressing social problems.

[www.changemakers.com](http://www.changemakers.com)