

Finalists of the 2008 Social Entrepreneur Award for South Africa Announced at the World Economic Forum on Africa

3 June 2008

Cape Town, 4 June 2008: Five finalists for the Social Entrepreneur Award for South Africa 2008 were announced today at the opening plenary of the [World Economic Forum on Africa](#) in the presence of South African President Thabo Mbeki. The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, in partnership with Ernst & Young, recognized the individuals for their innovative and sustainable approaches to tackling unemployment, education and health with significant social impact.

In her speech at the World Economic Forum on Africa, Hilde Schwab, Chairperson of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, referred to the social entrepreneur finalists as a "vital and essential part of society" and noted that "while they have built profitable and sustainable institutions, their primary motivation is not profit maximization, but maximizing the benefit for society and the environment, often revolutionizing entire industries or creating systemic change in the process."

The finalists were announced a day after a meeting of the Africa Social Entrepreneurs, the first gathering of more than 100 social entrepreneurs and resource providers in Africa. The gathering provided a unique platform for social entrepreneurs to interact with senior leaders of foundations, investment banks, private equity firms, corporations, media companies and academic institutions engaged in Africa.

In addition, 16 leading social entrepreneurs from Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States are active participants in the sessions of the World Economic Forum on Africa, taking place in Cape Town from 4 to 6 June. The primary focus of the social entrepreneurs is to influence and educate decision-makers on the continent to innovative pro-poor business models in various fields such as energy efficiencies, fair trade, health, disability, education, youth and rural development.

The Social Entrepreneur finalists recognized for 2008 are:

Jacob Lief and Malizole Banks Gwaxula, who founded the Ubuntu Education Fund in 1999 in Ibhayi, a township near Port Elizabeth, to help schools set up computer centres and libraries. As part of a holistic approach to community-based development, Ubuntu focuses on filling the gaps and increasing the capacity of existing delivery services; its school feeding programmes support nutrition and learning, and its health programme supports HIV counselling, testing and treatment as well as promotes medicinal gardens, workshops at clinics and counselling at schools. The organization's approach is based on the tenet that all communities have within them an array of resources and capabilities, while Ubuntu has the responsibility to facilitate the mobilization and utilization of these assets. (<http://www.ubuntufund.org>)

Shane Immelman, who through his social business, Lapdesk, has brought more than 300,000 ergonomically-designed portable school desks to schools across South Africa in just three years. Lapdesk has been able to elevate the learning conditions of underprivileged children by providing them with an effective writing and working surface, both in the classroom and at home, by leveraging an innovative business model using corporate sponsorship. Lapdesk has already distributed approximately 50,000 of these desks to children in Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Kenya, Tanzania, Swaziland, Malawi, Ghana and Sudan, and plans to distribute another 165,000 in 2008 elsewhere in Africa. (<http://www.lapdesk.co.za>)

Charles Maisel, a social innovator who creates sustainable organizations with market-based principles to tackle social challenges such as unemployment, housing and HIV. Men on the Side of the Road, with 100,000 members throughout South Africa, is the only organization to train and place unemployed men who usually wait on the side of the road for contract employment. Linked to this is a unique HIV/AIDS incentive-based but voluntary testing model for unemployed men that has proven highly effective. The "5 in 6" organization is a domestic violence model using male prevention programmes. Black Umbrellas is the only full support service programme for black individuals who want to start a small business. And, Shoebox Homes was created as a social business to design and create products that completely change how housing and furniture is designed for people living in small spaces where typical furniture does not fit. (<http://www.lapdesk.co.za> and <http://www.shooboxhomes.co.za>)

Trevor Mulaudzi, the creator of The Clean Shop, a company that conducts daily cleaning and hygiene services for hundreds of schools, universities, mines, supermarkets, petrol stations and others so that more than 40,000 people can benefit from clean ablution facilities and hygiene education. The Clean Shop employs 350 people with a turnover of over 1 million rand. It is poised to operate in many more schools in partnership with the South African government.

Patrick Schofield, who has revolutionized and formalized the informal wire and bead market, not only by growing the social business of the Streetwires Artists Collective and its craftsmen and craftswomen, but by lifting the status of these crafts into art forms giving it its true aesthetic and economic value. By creating innovative and formal systems of craft development, team cooperative manufacturing, quality control and marketing to local and international audiences, Streetwires ensures the producers a fair price for their art, making it the first fair trade craft organization in South Africa. Through government certified training programmes, its member wire artists and students trained in outreach projects empower the individuals with qualifications and skills to create their own enterprises in the industry. (<http://www.streetwires.co.za>)

The winner of the Schwab Foundation Social Entrepreneur Award for South Africa will be selected in November 2008 at the Ernst & Young World Entrepreneur Award ceremony. The winner will gain access to the meetings of the World Economic Forum as well as the Schwab Foundation's global network, providing unprecedented opportunities to engage global decision-makers from the public, corporate, media and academic sectors to strengthen and expand their models. Jury members choosing the winner included Professor Gill Marcus, Chairperson of ABSA Bank; Ravi Naidoo, Group Executive of Development Bank of South Africa; Futhi Mtoba, Chairperson of Deloitte; Garth Japhet, Founder of Soul City and Heartlines and other prominent leaders.

The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship was started by Klaus Schwab, Founder of the World Economic Forum, and his wife, Hilde. Since its inception in 2000, the Foundation has been searching for the world's leading social entrepreneurs, who implement innovative and pragmatic solutions to social problems by tackling the root causes and creating a social transformation. The current network of the Foundation spans 140 social entrepreneurs and their organizations from more than 40 countries. A recent evaluation study showed that the budgets and the number of beneficiaries reached of the selected social entrepreneurs grew three times faster while part of the network. In one year alone, the Schwab Social Entrepreneurs raised close to US\$ 80 million as a direct result of the contacts and opportunities offered by the Foundation.

Further information on social entrepreneurs can be found at: <http://www.schwabfound.org>

The World Economic Forum is an international institution committed to improving the state of the world through public-private cooperation in the spirit of global citizenship. It engages with business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Incorporated as a not-for-profit foundation in 1971 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the Forum is independent, impartial and not tied to any interests. It cooperates closely with all leading international organizations (www.weforum.org).



World Economic Forum, 91-93 route de la Capite, CH-1223 Cologny/Geneva
Tel. +41 (0)22 869 1212, Fax +41 (0)22 786 2744, <http://www.weforum.org>