



GLOBAL
INNOVATION
CHALLENGE
2023

OUR IMPACT



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A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDERS...

Now, more than ever, we need hope.

Stories of war, mass migration, extreme weather, economic inequality, and human suffering fill our daily news feeds. Faced with this, we often feel like passive spectators, powerless and waiting for our world leaders to respond.

In these dark times, it is the next generation of leaders that are increasingly shining the light of hope; young people that are bringing passion, energy and fresh solutions to the social and environmental issues that matter to us all.

Our Global Innovation Challenge has again mobilized these young leaders in ever larger numbers and focused them on society's toughest challenges.

This large-scale response has only been possible with the support of leading companies like Amazon, Fitch Group, CEMEX, Rathbones Plc and 1000's of employee volunteers who have helped make 2023 another milestone year.



David Haddow
Co-Founder



Jonathan Coburn
Co-Founder





SOCIAL SHIFTERS

Young people are increasingly anxious about the future. They are mobilizing around the climate crisis, voting in record numbers, volunteering for their communities, and choosing careers with purpose. But they are also losing trust in business to be part of the solution.

Social Shifters is an international charity that works with leading companies to help the next generation of young leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs tackle the world's most pressing social and environmental issues in new ways.

We are showing that business can be a force for good.



GLOBAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE

The **Social Shifters Global Innovation Challenge** is a fast, effective and scalable way of bringing the world's leading companies alongside this next generation of young leaders (18–30 years) to achieve targeted impact.

The Global Innovation Challenge accelerates youth-led solutions through:

- ❖ Defined **Partner Challenges** that we co-design with leading businesses, and which change year to year.
- ❖ An **Open Competition** that invites bold ideas that contribute to each of the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

The success of the Global Innovation Challenge is underpinned by our **Launchpad program**; a world-class learning experience enabling young leaders to learn together, develop new skills, and get their ideas off the ground.

Our Special Partner Challenges in 2023:



GLOBAL REFUGEE CHALLENGE



RATHBONES

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHALLENGE



Fitch Group

GLOBAL EDUCATION CHALLENGE



CEMEX

GLOBAL WATER CHALLENGE

2023 AT A GLANCE ...

In 2023, the Global Innovation Challenge has reached more young people than ever, and created greater impact. This year, we supported young founders (and their big ideas) from Peru to the Philippines, and everywhere in between!

3 MILLION

Young people reached online

5,412

Teams participating from 144 countries

2,112

Project submissions

1,325

Startup projects and businesses incubated

1,774

Volunteers supporting young people and projects

22 MILLION

People being impacted through projects

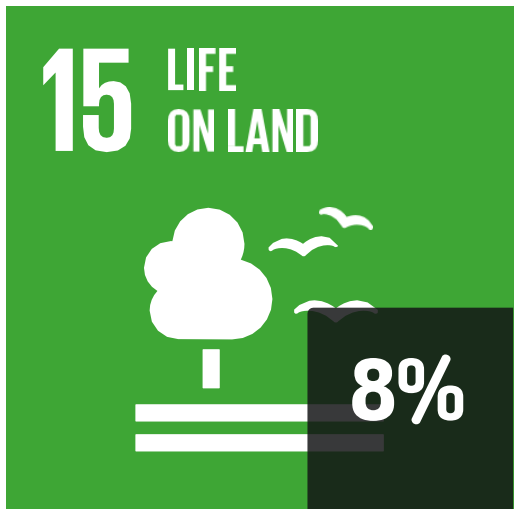
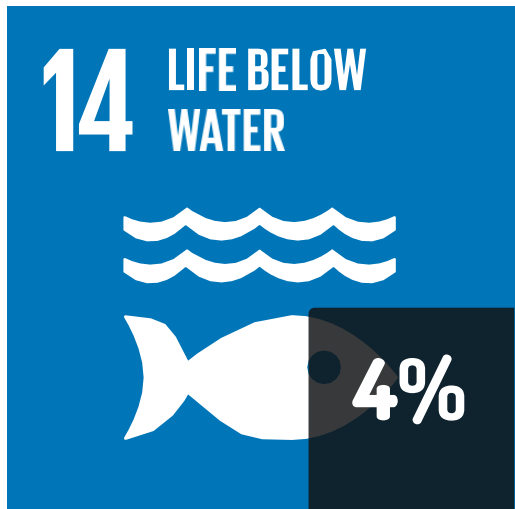
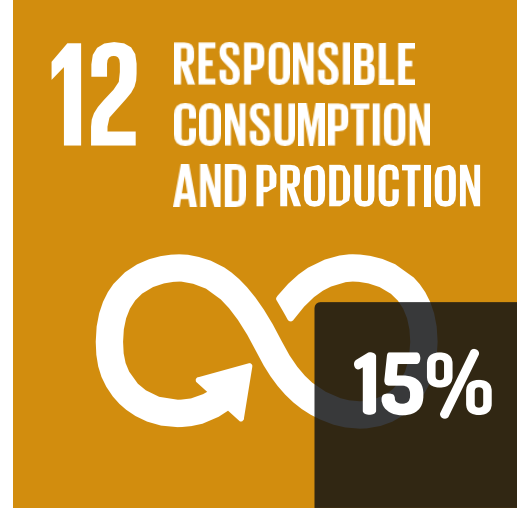
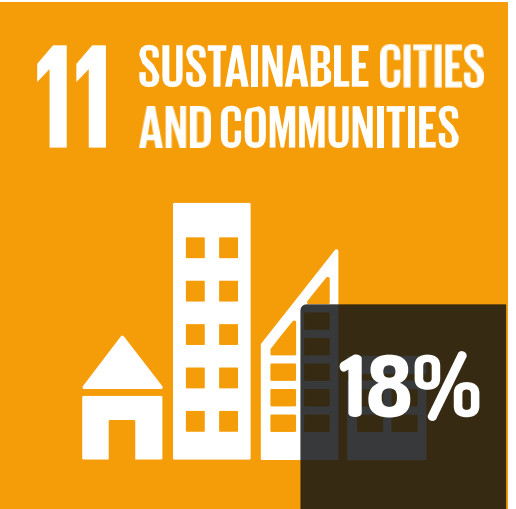
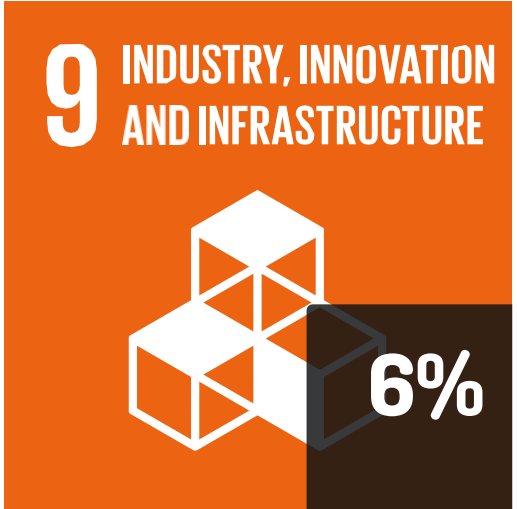
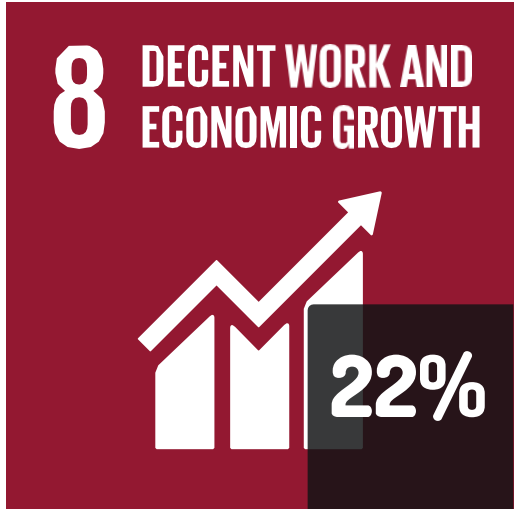
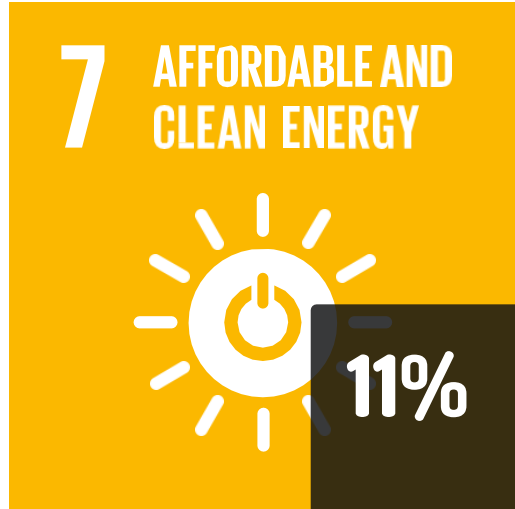


GLOBAL
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2023

PROJECTS

SUBMITTED

IN 2023



GLOBAL REFUGEE CHALLENGE WINNER

WOMEN SMILES - UGANDA

PROBLEM:

In Uganda, 6 out of every 10 people living in underserved communities are chronically hungry, the most affected being women, young mothers and their children. The situation is particularly severe for women in urban slums who live at the intersection of challenges caused by climate change, social inequality and patriarchal structures

SOLUTION:

Women Smiles Uganda, has designed adaptable, innovative, climate resilient vertical farming units using cost effective and eco-friendly material that grow sustainable crops in areas of limited space. With these vertical farms, they are seeking to eradicate hunger and poverty in underserved urban communities by offering food security programs and agro-entrepreneurship opportunities to women and youth.

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“

Upon graduating from University, I founded Women Smiles Uganda to can change the livelihoods of women, children and displaced people by offering them an alternative source of income through vertical farming to promote food and nutrition security.

”

Lilian Nakigozi

Founder of Women Smiles Uganda



amazon

SOCIAL SHIFTERS
GLOBAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2023

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

SUPPORTING NEXT

GENERATION LEADERS

The **Challenge program** is tapping into a global pool of talented young leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs that are motivated by purpose and driven by an entrepreneurial mind-set.

TOP 5 LIFE GOALS

Making a contribution to society

80%

Finding purpose and meaning in life

28%

Being successful in work

25%

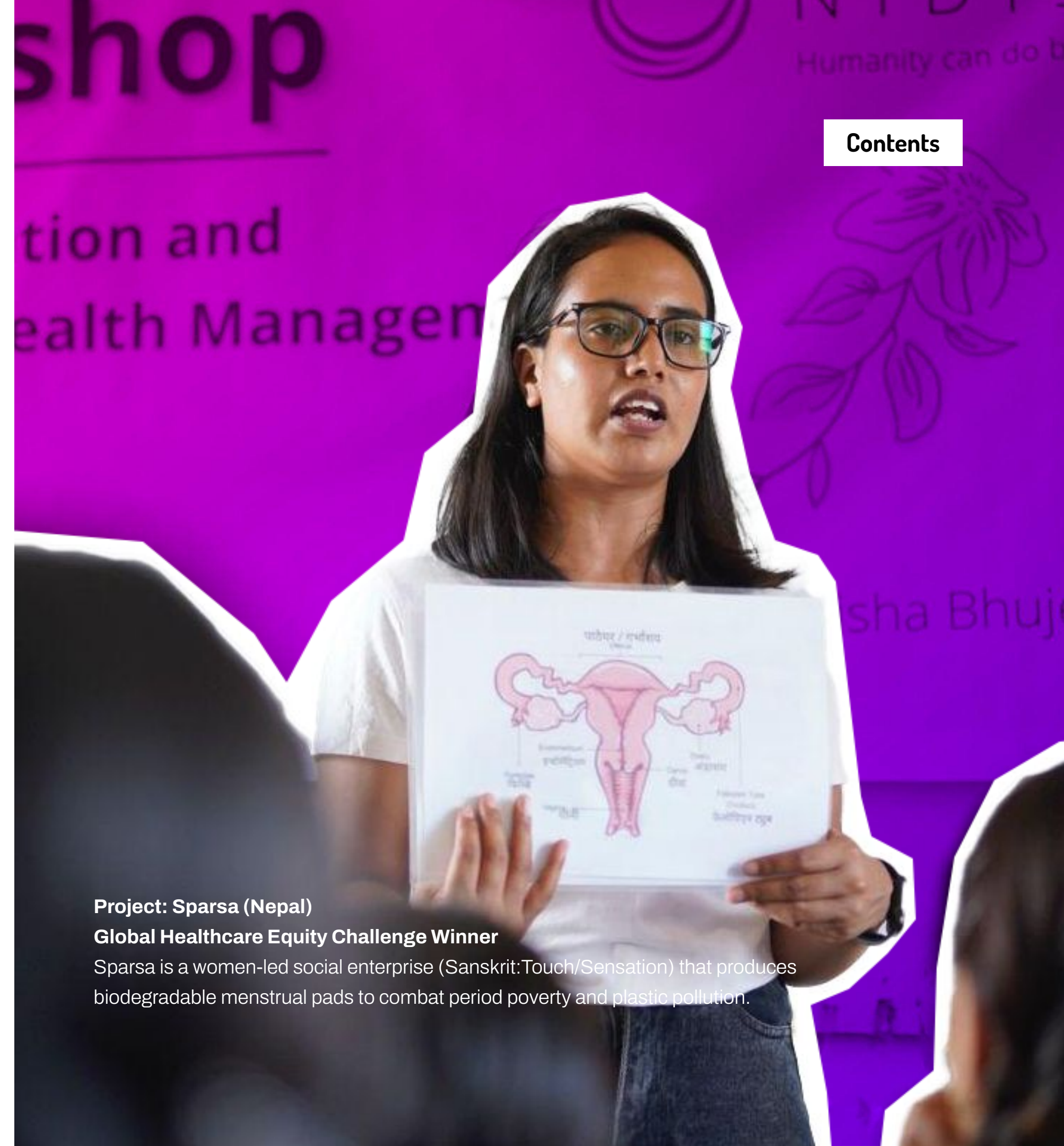
Participating in local community affairs

23%

Having a lot of different experiences

19%

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Project: Sparsa (Nepal)

Global Healthcare Equity Challenge Winner

Sparsa is a women-led social enterprise (Sanskrit: Touch/Sensation) that produces biodegradable menstrual pads to combat period poverty and plastic pollution.



Project: ConEducación (Colombia)
Global Innovation Challenge Open Competition Winner

ConEducación contributes to social mobility in Colombia by fostering a successful transition to higher education for high school students from rural areas, providing them with academic preparation, psychosocial and vocational training, and personalized mentoring during their Senior year in high school.

YOUNG PEOPLE

PARTICIPATING

48%

Of the young people are female

69%

Are using STEM skills to solve societal problems

50%

Of the young people are currently students

63%

Are directly affected by the problems they are tackling

77%

Are located in urban areas

67%

Are from an under-represented or marginalized groups

THE BENEFITS

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Our evaluation results show that the **Global Innovation Challenge** is a highly effective and scalable way of enabling young people to progress their social impact startup projects quickly and with confidence.

90%

Overall programme satisfaction

95%

Of the young participants benefited from the experience

Increased knowledge	96%
Better understanding of the startup process	95%
Feel part of a supportive community	92%
Developed new skills and techniques	92%
Enabled career development	93%
Have a stronger project or business solution	94%
More confident in launching an idea	95%
Encouraged to take action	94%
Feeling motivated and inspired to move forward	96%
Able to progress a startup/project idea faster	94%

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHALLENGE WINNER

LOME - GERMANY

PROBLEM:

Soil degradation is a worldwide issue, with a staggering one-third of the Earth's soils already degraded and an estimated 60% of agricultural soils in Europe currently degraded. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has warned that we might have as little as 60 harvests left if current rates of soil degradation continue.

SOLUTION:

Lome is a groundbreaking solution that brings together the power of artificial intelligence (AI) with cutting edge soil ecology to accelerate soil regeneration. More than just a technological leap, it's a technology that will connect us more deeply to the earth, letting us understand its intricate microbial fabric. Illuminating the problems beneath our feet, Lome hopes to inspire solutions that nurture the land for generations to come.

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“ The global innovation challenge gave me access to the tools and resources I needed to create a convincing pitch. Not only did it help with developing the structure and content of my pitch, but more importantly gave me the space to gain confidence in sharing my ideas with the world. ”

Ceri Flook
Founder of Lome

 RATHBONES

 SOCIAL SHIFTERS
GLOBAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE 2023



We are empowering next generation leaders to create jobs, improve lives, transform communities, and tackle climate change.

93%

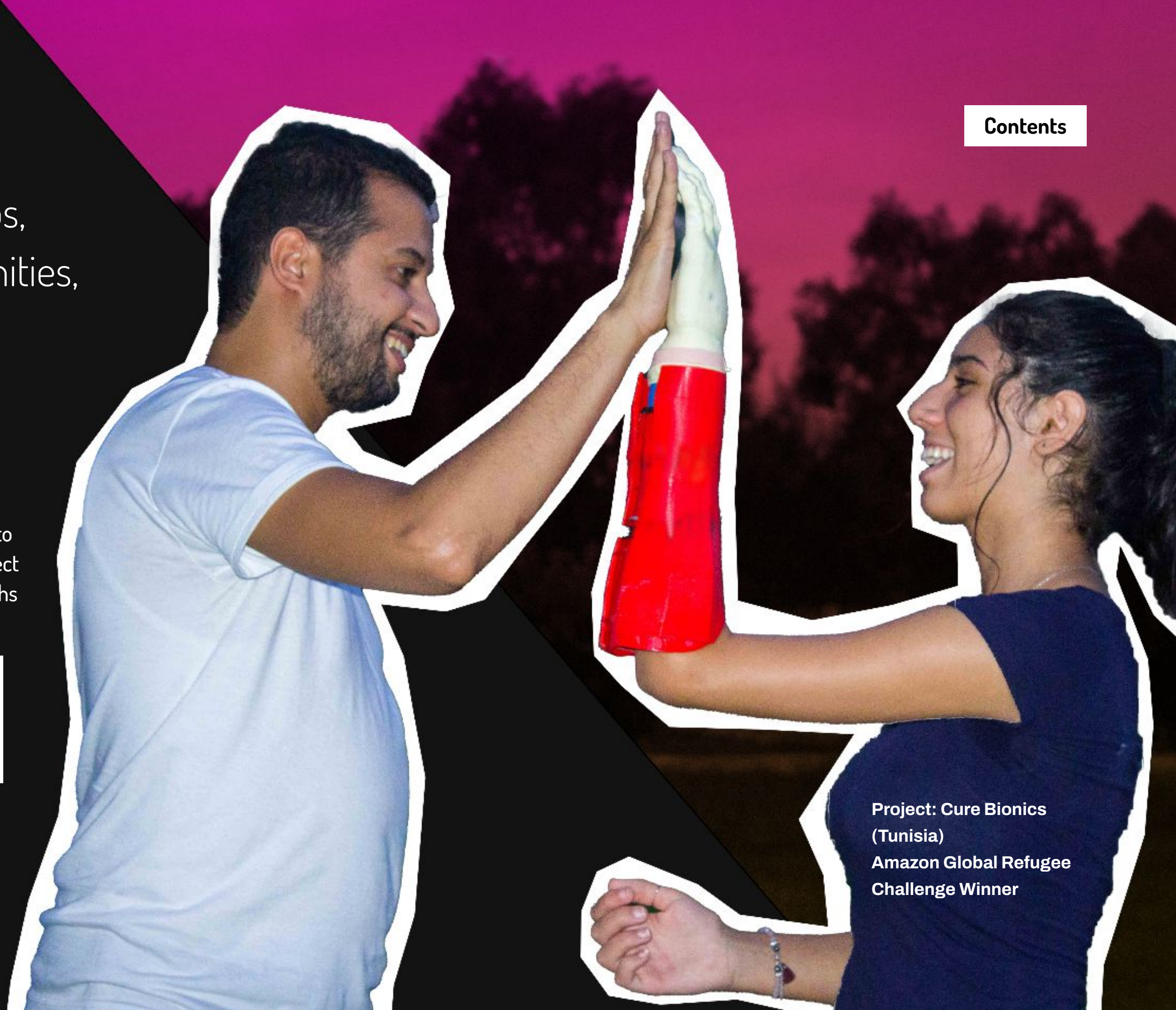
Report increased prospects of project success as a result of the Launchpad program

95%

Of participants have plans to create jobs from their project activity in the next 12 months

22 MILLION

People to directly benefit from the work of the social impact startups in the next 12 months



Project: Cure Bionics (Tunisia)
Amazon Global Refugee Challenge Winner

“ It's been an incredible learning journey, and I'm eager to apply these skills to drive positive change in my community. A big shout out to the team at Social Shifters for their guidance and support. Together, we can make a real difference! ”



“ My sessions with my mentor were super insightful. They were ever ready to answer my questions and help me polish my pitch. Social Shifters Global Innovation Challenge is a gift that never stops giving! ”



“ The learning sessions sharpened our thinking, pitching materials and propelled the scaling of our initiative. The community, my personal favorite, provided invaluable support. Connecting with other founders instilled encouragement and inspiration, fostering a profound sense of belonging and camaraderie akin to a second home. In essence, being part of the Global Innovation Challenge is a source of immense pride for me. ”



“ As someone who strives to expedite the transition to net zero in our environment, I am honored to be a part of this incredible network of Social Shifters. Even in week 2, I've already encountered a lot of social innovators and ground-breaking projects. ”



WHAT OUR YOUNG LEADERS SAID IN 2023

GLOBAL WATER CHALLENGE WINNER

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SAFESIP STRAWS - TANZANIA

PROBLEM:

The essence of life, water, has become the essence of despair for almost two billion people globally. The core of this crisis is water contamination, and it is low-income communities and children that are at greatest risk. Annually, hundreds of thousands of young lives are lost to diarrheal diseases linked to contaminated water and inadequate sanitation.

SOLUTION:

SafeSip Straws is an ingeniously designed drinking straw that saves lives.. Embedded with advanced filtration technology, the straw instantly filters out contaminants, enabling users to drink directly from natural sources with confidence and safety. Priced affordably, even low-income households can access clean water using SafeSip Straws. Its lightweight and portable design make it a staple for every household, school bag, or travel kit.

“ I am immensely proud of the successful distribution of our innovative straws, which have directly improved access to safe drinking water for thousands. Witnessing the reduction in waterborne diseases and the rejuvenation of communities fills me with immense pride. ”

Winnie Mathew
Founder of SafeSip Straws



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ENGAGING

VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERS

The Global Innovation Challenge couldn't happen without the help of our volunteers. This year we engaged 1,774 volunteers from some of the world's leading companies. Contributing as virtual judges, mentors and coaches, they put their professional experience to good use, unlocking the potential of young people and accelerating their projects ideas.

1,774

Employee volunteers participated

57

Country markets supported by employee volunteers

18%

Of volunteers had rarely or never taken part in volunteer activity before the Challenge

MOTIVATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

Wanted to help young people	85%
Interested in solving world issues	77%
Task sounded interesting	56%
Could carry out the volunteering flexibly	54%
A modest time commitment	50%
It was 100% online	46%

BENEFITS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Our evaluation evidence shows that from an initial commitment of just 2 hours, volunteers came away informed, inspired, and with a renewed impetus to work on sustainability issues.

99%

Of volunteers satisfied or very satisfied with the experience

97%

Interested in volunteering with Social Shifters again

Inspired by the ideas of young people

84%

New insights into world issues

76%

Motivated to contribute more

70%

Feel they are making a difference

65%

Using skills in a useful way

55%

Challenged beliefs and assumptions

35%

Renewed sense of purpose

35%

Feel more pride in where they work

25%

Bring back new ideas to the workplace

15%

Source: Data from Global Innovation Challenge 2023



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WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE SAYING



“

Contributing to Social Shifters is **the easiest way to help make a difference to thousands of young people** and the societies in which they live.

Watching the presentations for innovative ways to drive social change was a pleasure, and being able to express my opinion on them was an honour.

The judging is easily manageable in the time given - **anyone can find two hours over three weeks**. I would recommend this to everyone.

”

ANDY BENNETT

Head of Regulatory Training
Fitch Learning



“

I am a huge fan of the Social Shifters GIC programme. This is one of the most inspirational and heartwarming programs I have encountered, giving social impact entrepreneurs an opportunity to change the world, bit by bit.

I have been honored to serve in the jury and select the most outstanding projects, although all finalists have demonstrated their hardest work, most splendid results and true grit. **I am honored and humbled to have worked with Social Shifters.** Looking forward to more adventures together.

”

ANNA DERINOVA-HARTMANN

Corporate Citizenship, Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Aid
Amazon



“

My time with Social Shifters has been an incredibly rewarding journey. I was emotionally touched by the challenges faced by communities around the world.

Throughout my volunteering experience, I had the privilege of witnessing the profound impact that our collective efforts can make. **This experience has not only enriched my own life but has also inspired me to encourage others to join this noble cause.** Together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of those in need and continue to create a better world for everyone.

”

LEE GRUBEN

Change Manager
Capita

GLOBAL EDUCATION CHALLENGE WINNER

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STAND WE SPEAK - INDIA

PROBLEM:

225 million women in developing countries have an unmet need for family planning, contributing to 74 million unplanned pregnancies and 36 million abortions every year. There are widespread misconceptions and misinformation about sexual and reproductive health and rights amongst youth in India, and there is a lack of access to urgent confidential healthcare such as contraception, pregnancy tests, and menstrual hygiene products. This is resulting in higher cases of unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortion, sexual violence, and mental health issues.

SOLUTION:

StandWeSpeak is building a 21st century sexual health ecosystem for Millennials and GenZ. They are leveraging AI technology to develop Mae - a confidential one-stop Sexual and Reproductive Health platform that empowers young people to make informed decisions about their bodies, relationships and lives. It provides personalized solutions to users based on their age, gender, location, and needs.



Priyal Agrawal
Founder of StandWeSpeak

FitchGroup

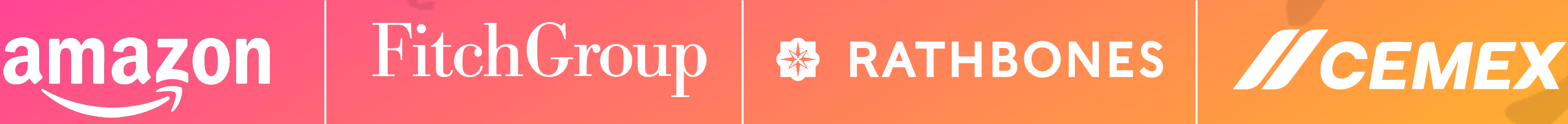


BRINGING GLOBAL

BUSINESSES TOGETHER

The Social Shifters Global Innovation Challenge is supported by a coalition of the world's leading businesses.

LEAD PARTNERS IN 2023



SUPPORTING PARTNERS



REASONS TO JOIN THE

SOCIAL SHIFT IN 2024

- ❖ Be part of a global campaign that demonstrates your brand leadership on sustainability issues.
- ❖ Tap into virtual micro-volunteering opportunities to engage employees in fast, convenient and impactful ways.
- ❖ Bring your community impact priorities to life through supporting inspiring youth-led action.
- ❖ Get access to a diverse global pool of young leaders that can deliver change in and alongside your company.

Visit socialshifters.co for more information.





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This impact report is based on program analytics and survey data produced as part of the 2023 Social Shifters Global Innovation Challenge. The data has been independently prepared and analyzed by Social Value Lab, an international centre for social sector program evaluation and impact measurement.

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