



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Jessika Fruchter (415) 633-9321 / jfruchter@techsoupglobal.org

Krista Van Lewen (303) 963-5530 / kvanlewen@gmail.com

**MOBILE APPLICATIONS ADDRESSING SOCIAL CHANGE AND COMMUNITY ACTION
COMPETE IN FOURTH ANNUAL NETSQUARED CHALLENGE**

**Fifteen Project Finalists Use Mobile Technology to Respond to Critical Social Issues
from Sustainable Agriculture to Human Rights Abuses**

SAN FRANCISCO – April 29, 2009 – The NetSquared Year Four (N2Y4) Mobile Challenge, a \$50,000 competition designed to identify and fund mobile innovations that deliver a social benefit, today announced its 15 project finalists (<http://www.netsquared.org/n2y4/featuredprojects>).

Each of the finalists received peer review, and voting was based on the project's viability and potential impact. The project finalists come from five countries, including Cameroon, Chile, India, Sweden, and the United States, and range in scope from a secure hub for citizens to document human rights abuses in Burma to an SMS newsletter run by high school students who have failed classes or dropped out of school. Project finalists will showcase their work May 26-27 at the N2Y4 Conference, hosted by Cisco in its Vineyard Conference Center in San Jose, where the participating community will vote to choose the top three projects. All 15 projects will receive some money and in-kind resources.



“The work submitted to N2Y4 highlights the convergence of mobile technologies and 21st century activism,” said Billy Bicket, director of NetSquared, an initiative of nonprofit organization TechSoup Global. “The field this year represents mobile innovations from around the world that address some of our most pressing social issues. We’re slack-jawed at the sophistication and ingenuity of the projects nominated in this year’s competition.”

The NetSquared Mobile Challenge, unlike other models for social innovation, is open to any individual or organization, regardless of its for profit or not-for-profit status. N2Y4 requires only that the project be a mobile application designed to address a social benefit. It could be in any sector (e.g., sustainable agriculture or humanitarian assistance) and at any stage of development. Earlier this year, NetSquared partnered with the [United States Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#) and [the University of California at Berkeley Center for Human Rights \(UCB\)](#), among others, to launch similar challenges. Top vote-getters have ranged in author and impact area, and have included such projects as the [Mother Jones Magazine Human Rights Citizen Investigation Project](#), which was submitted to the UCB Challenge and uses mobile technology to connect investigative reporters to communities and individuals directly affected by a particular story after it goes to press.

“Technology and the collaborative nature of today’s Internet are contributing to an entirely new way of building community and making progressive change,” said Michael Yutzenka, director of Corporate Affairs, Cisco. “NetSquared Challenges are based on the power of collaboration and result in viable projects that are changing how the world responds to critical social needs.”



remixing the web For social change

The N2Y4 conference is open to the public. To see detailed descriptions of the 15 project finalists, visit <http://www.netsquared.org/n2y4/featuredprojects>. To register for the conference visit:

<http://www.netsquared.org/conference/n2y4>.

About NetSquared

Headquartered in San Francisco, California, NetSquared – an initiative of nonprofit [TechSoup Global](#) – has worked internationally since 2005. NetSquared educates individuals, communities and organizations about the power of social media tools, and provides funding and networking opportunities for the use of these tools to propel positive social change. Visit www.netsquared.org for more information.