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Contact: Nancy Baker, Communications Director, 1+ 540-533-7490, nbaker@inmed.org

INMED Launches Bold New Enterprise for Big Social Impact



<https://inmed.org/inmed-ase/>

STERLING, VIRGINIA, USA (February 24, 2021): INMED Partnerships for Children announced today that it is launching the **INMED Aquaponics® Social Enterprise (INMED ASE)** to address global food security, climate-change adaptation, inclusion, sustainable livelihoods and other intertwined causes of systemic poverty. The purpose of the INMED ASE is to transition historically disadvantaged populations, including people with disabilities, women and youth, from subsistence to commercial (market-based) agricultural production using climate-smart aquaponics to help them become food-secure and economically self-sufficient.

“We are committed to addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” said Dr. Linda Pfeiffer, founder and CEO of INMED Partnerships for Children. “Our INMED Aquaponics® initiative addresses all 17 of the SDGs, with food security and sustainable livelihoods at its heart.”

Aquaponics is an intensive form of agriculture, combining hydroponics and fish farming in a closed symbiotic system that produces at least 10 times more crops than traditional farming using a tenth of the water, with no chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Over the past 10 years, INMED has developed an innovative, simplified form of aquaponics and a unique

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implementation model to deliver inclusive and sustainable food production in regions hard hit by climate change. This model has been tested on three continents, with operations in more than a dozen locations in South Africa, including in schools and with cooperatives led by women and people with disabilities, and is ready to scale nationally and beyond.

“The global pandemic has heightened awareness of the critical need for local food production that can be adapted to local conditions, even where scarce water, soil and space conditions exist—mitigating the effects of climate change and significantly reducing the carbon footprint of production,” noted Unathi Sihlahla, Director of INMED South Africa, which will be the first INMED affiliate to implement the INMED ASE. “More than just providing food security, our INMED Aquaponics® model was designed to transform struggling communities into thriving climate-smart hubs of self-reliance,” added Pfeiffer.

The INMED ASE is a new type of incubator of entrepreneurial agro-enterprises for climate-smart food production. The first INMED ASE hub (or center), is located in Vanderbijlpark, outside Johannesburg, South Africa. It houses commercial aquaponics systems that will be used for food production, training and research. It also will serve as a consolidation center for the growing number of aquaponics farmers to sell their harvests at higher market rates as well as purchase inputs, such as seedlings and fingerlings, at bulk prices.



What makes the INMED ASE unique is that it is designed to facilitate the entire value chain of technical and business training, access to financing and links to markets to help small-scale farmers and traditionally marginalized populations overcome the barriers to entry, sustainability and scale. INMED South Africa is already partnering with restaurant and grocery chains to purchase the aquaponics products of the INMED ASE and its network of aquaponics farmers.

For the INMED ASE, sustainability is key, generating revenue from the sale of crops and fish from its own aquaponics systems as well as earning reimbursements for training and consolidation services. Its business model also establishes satellite centers to provide localized training, resources and production to scale the venture nationally and internationally. INMED South Africa has already launched satellite centers run by farming cooperatives, schools and communities in Gauteng, Eastern Cape, Free State and Northern Cape provinces.



Mondelēz Global LLC, via the Mondelēz International Foundation, is the first to invest in the INMED ASE under its new *Sustainable Futures* impact investing platform to incubate, finance and support self-sustaining ventures that address key challenges in the world.



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Sustainable Futures seeks to co-invest in projects addressing climate change, as well as making seed investments in social ventures that aim to improve livelihoods and build healthy communities—something INMED Partnerships for Children has been working toward around the world since 1986.

“We’ve worked in partnership with Mondelēz in South Africa and Brazil for more than a decade to foster meaningful and sustainable change for the people who need it most,” said Pfeiffer. “The INMED ASE takes this partnership to the next level, allowing us to scale the impact globally.”

About INMED

INMED Partnerships for Children is an international humanitarian development organization that has improved the lives of vulnerable people in more than 100 countries for 35 years. Through multisector partnerships and in-country affiliates, INMED builds effective systems that deliver innovative approaches to break complex cycles of poverty for current and future generations. INMED’s programs in climate-smart agriculture and aquaponics, maternal and child health and nutrition, and economic development have made a sustainable impact on the lives of millions of children and their families. For more information about INMED Partnerships for Children’s programs and partners, visit <https://inmed.org>.

About INMED South Africa

Since 2006, in-country affiliate INMED South Africa has been working in collaboration with a wide range of corporate, foundation and government partners to transform the health, lives and futures of South Africa’s most vulnerable children. INMED South Africa’s programs focus on food security, child and community health, and economic and social development via climate-smart agriculture and participatory education. Incorporated under Section 21, INMED South Africa is a registered non-profit organization (NPC/PBO) recognized by the Department of Social Development and the South African Revenue Service (SARS). For more information, visit: www.inmed.org.za.

Please contact Nancy Baker at nbaker@inmed.org to schedule interviews with Dr. Linda Pfeiffer and other leaders of the INMED ASE in South Africa.