



Green Schools in Africa give kids Smart Water

Geneva, 10 March 2010 – In Africa 2 out of 5 people live without adequate water supply systems needed for basic sanitation and hygiene. The building of reliable and long-lasting rainwater harvesting systems and ecological latrines in schools are cost effective and efficient means to secure water supplies and improve water sanitation for an entire school community.

Green Cross International (GCI) today announced the launch of the Smart Water for Green Schools project together with Pureology Serious Colour Care®. By encouraging exchanges between schools in the same river basins, the partnership aims to promote smart water systems and water conservation at the local, national and international levels. The project also ensures hygiene and sanitation education. The first schools started the pilot phase in February 2010 in Ghana with the aim of reaching 1,987 school children and 67 teachers in the five communities. Over the next 24 months the project seeks to expand to 40 schools in 4 river basins, specifically the La Plata, Volta, Mekong and Jordan River Basins.

Today 45% of the land surface is covered by river basins that are shared by more than one country and 40% of the world's population resides within internationally shared river basins. Providing water and sanitation services to schools is an important step to engage children and communities in improving their water security and maintaining their role as guardians of healthy and vital river ecosystems.

“Selected pilot beneficiary schools and communities are faced with waterborne diseases such as malaria, bilharzia and diarrhea due to the lack of clean water. These diseases pose a serious threat to child enrolment in schools and their ability to receive basic education. Smart Water for Green Schools will go a long way in helping address the water situation in schools and communities in Ghana and around the world where GCI is present. The support of Pureology is much needed and timely,” said Mubarick Masawudu, President and CEO of Green Cross Ghana.

“Pureology's support for this project stems from one of the central aims of the partnership, namely to garner support for select initiatives relating to conservation of water, a resource that salon professionals make use of,” observed Nathalie Tang, Vice President and General Manager of Pureology worldwide. “In addition, the partnership aims to help encourage salon professionals to support sustainable practices and generate awareness of GCI projects, spreading this message to their clients.”

This announcement comes in the run-up to World Water Day, held annually on the 22nd of March and is closely aligned with this year's UN selected theme “Clean Water for a Healthy World.” With less than 1% of the world's freshwater accessible for human use, the Green Cross National Offices and Pureology are planning events around the world to highlight the importance of water conservation and the concept of celebrating World Water Day every day. Pureology salons will be educated on how to adopt habits to conserve water and will pass this message onto their clients.

"Every day should be world water day. We are happy to work with Pureology to help foster a more sustainable planet. By protecting water resources we protect ourselves," said Green Cross France Chairman, Jean-Michel Cousteau.

The first initiative ahead of World Water Day that Pureology and GCI have started is the fundraising campaign for Smart Water for Green Schools. A special edition of a Pureology-GCI water bottle will be available in select Pureology salons. The bottle is designed by SIGG, a company specialising in reusable water bottles. This is especially important given that less than 20% of the world's plastic water bottles are actually recycled. In the US it is estimated that over 100 million plastic bottles end up in rubbish bins or landfills every day.

About Green Cross International

Green Cross International (GCI) is one of the leading environmental organisations. Founded by President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1993, this non-profit and non-governmental organisation promotes a combination of high level advocacy with key international stakeholders, runs campaigns and manages local projects to address the inter-connected global challenges of security, poverty eradication and environmental degradation. GCI is present in over 30 countries and has its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. More information about GCI is available at www.gci.ch

About Pureology Serious Colour Care®

Pureology is a professional hair care brand in North America. The brand emerged as the authority in professional colour care in 2001 in Irvine, California. It was launched internationally in 1Q 2009 with 100% Vegan formulas and packaging comprised of up to 25% post-consumer recycled plastics. Continuing their commitment to the wellbeing of the environment, Pureology is proud to partner globally with Green Cross International to help foster a more sustainable future. To learn more about Pureology, please visit www.pureology.com

About SIGG

Founded in Switzerland in 1908, Sigg produce eco-friendly, reusable water bottles. For more information please see www.sigg.com

Contact

For interview requests, photos or more information, please contact:

Green Cross International

Michelle Laug
+41 22 789 0817
michelle.laug@gci.ch

Green Cross Ghana

Mubarick Masawudu
+233 267 763 036
mubarick.masawudu@greencrossghana.org

Pureology

Sam Cheow
+1 212 984 4127
scheow@pureology-usa.com

SIGG

Jeannine Huegli
Jeannine.Huegli@sigg.com