



SEED Initiative

Supporting entrepreneurs for sustainable development

Statement by the SEED Award Winners

SEED Reception, 12 May 2009, New York.

I am here today to represent the winners of the 2008 SEED Awards. We come from diverse backgrounds but we share a common vision - that locally driven initiatives like ours can make a significant contribution to achieving the MDGs - and we all work towards improving livelihoods by increasing social, environmental and economic sustainability. We work in a range of areas: from renewable energy, to protecting and marketing biodiversity, health through natural products, ecotourism, agriculture and rural development, and adaptation to climate change.

We are practicing and demonstrating the principles of the “triple bottom line”: our activities are proof that it is possible to ensure economic sustainability and at the same time seek environmental and social benefits. Through dynamic partnerships which include those most in need, at the same table as public and private sectors stakeholders. We are delivering solutions which are more socially integrated, have longer-term viability and are locally appropriate.

We were selected for the SEED Award because of our inspiration, innovation and success. It is enabling us to spring to the next level of development by increasing visibility and credibility in our communities and internationally, and providing access to opportunities and technical assistance.

Policy Recommendations

- Create an enabling environment that supports the development and scaling-up of locally driven enterprises, and more formally recognizes hybrid models of doing business.
- Encourage and support partnerships between the public and private sector and those involving academic institutions. The subsequent exchange of knowledge and skills, between sectors and from local to global levels would improve the overall effectiveness of our collective efforts.
- Promote partnerships with local communities and organizations. Such partnerships can provide the social integration, continuity and local-appropriateness necessary for long term success.

More consideration should be given to:

- policies, funding and regulations that encourage innovation, replication and cross learning at the local level
- mechanisms by which the examples of these experiences can reach the main stream
- support processes which are open to start-up ventures and ideas and look to securing their transition into mature, stable businesses
- better integrating economic, social and environmental factors, including the development of improved Social Benefit Indicators