SEED Initiative

Supporting entrepreneurs for sustainable development

SEED - a brief overview

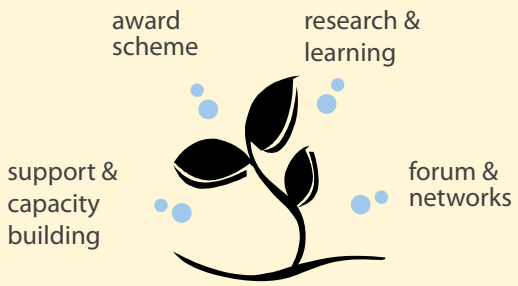
SEED Initiative is a global network for action on sustainable development partnerships, founded by IUCN, UNDP and UNEP to deliver concrete progress towards the internationally-agreed, aspirational goals in the UN's Millennium Declaration and the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002.

SEED focuses on locally-driven, entrepreneurial partnerships in developing countries. Its goal is to inspire, promote and build capacity to support the many innovative ways in which diverse groups are working together to improve livelihoods; tackle poverty and marginalisation; and sustainably manage natural resources and ecosystems.

There are four main activities in SEED's programme:

- **SEED Awards:** through an annual, global awards scheme SEED reveals a wealth of novel ways of doing business through partnerships and provides international recognition to the most promising enterprises.

An integrated programme



- **SEED Support:** Award Winners then receive a tailored package of support services to help them to become more established and to increase their impact. This includes access to relevant expertise and technical assistance, building new relationships and networks, developing business plans and identifying sources of finance.
- **SEED Research and learning:** by tracking their progress as they grow, SEED also seeks to increase technical knowledge and understanding of these small-scale, locally-led activities. It studies what partnerships like these need to succeed and grow and how successful ideas can be replicated elsewhere.
- **SEED Forum and network:** using its extensive network, publications and events, SEED promotes innovative approaches, disseminates its findings to partnerships practitioners and policy and decision-makers and provides a platform for shared learning and collaboration.

SEED is also working with other partners to develop a new website - **www.entrepreneurstoolkit.org** - so that social and environmental entrepreneurs around the world can support and strengthen others who share their vision, and share experiences of setting up and running their ventures.

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SEED has broken new ground from its inception, supporting and promoting innovators like:

- **"Cows to Kilowatts"**, which won a SEED Award in 2005 for its work on a biogas plant which uses abattoir waste to provide clean, affordable cooking gas and fertiliser to local communities in Nigeria, and at the same time tackles greenhouse gas emissions and water pollution. About 5000 households and about 15,000 low-income farmers are expected to benefit every month for 15 years. There are now plans for six further plants across Nigeria and in other countries.

- **"The T'ikapapa Initiative"** which won a 2007 SEED Award after developing a market chain linking supermarkets in Peru with small-scale farmers in the Peruvian Andes, the original home of the native potato. These organically farmed potatoes - of which there are over 3000 varieties - attract a higher price when marketed effectively, thereby increasing farmer incomes. With SEED's support, the T'ikapapa Initiative is aiming to develop the international market for native potatoes.

SEED is itself a partnership between governments, international organisations, research and capacity building institutions, and businesses. New partners are always welcome. There are a number of different ways to engage: full SEED Partner, or Associate; facilitating contacts for SEED winners and finalists; sharing research; or providing advice and support directly to individual Award Winners.

SEED Partners

Current partners in SEED are: the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (the International Union for Conservation of Nature); and the governments of Germany, India, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

UNEP UNDP IUCN

Further information

Information about SEED Award Winners, as well as more detailed descriptions of SEED's programme, events, support tools and research publications can be found at **www.seedinit.org**

Alternatively, please contact:

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