



SEED Initiative

supporting entrepreneurs for sustainable development

Founding Partners



From Plates that Grow Food to Certified Cocoa: UN Awards Innovative Green Enterprises at Green Economy Symposium

2013 SEED Awards Honour Low Carbon, African and Female Entrepreneurs

Nairobi, 31 October 2013 - Fully biodegradable plates implanted with organic seeds in Colombia to provide food after use, a social media website to promote car-sharing in Viet Nam, certified cocoa for speciality markets, and affordable biodegradable sanitary pads made from banana waste are just some of the 34 winners of the 2013 SEED Awards, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) announced today.

The awards identify and support innovative social and environmental start-up enterprises, which can tackle key sustainable development challenges at community level, in developing and emerging economies.

Other award winners include Uganda's 'Nuru Energy', which via a micro-franchise scheme sells generators powered by pedals and provides reliable, clean, sustainable power to off-grid households, and 'moWoza' – a mobile phone application providing cross-border traders in Mozambique with fast information on prices, payments, and deliveries and empowering female entrepreneurs.

As in previous years, the 2013 SEED Awards placed a special focus on Africa, with 20 awards being made to enterprises in Ethiopia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. This is part of a larger project entitled 'Stimulating the Green Economy in Africa', which is funded largely by the European Union, and a separate project funded by the Government of Flanders (Flanders International Cooperation Agency) to grant a further two Awards in the South African provinces of Free State, KwaZulu Natal and Limpopo.

Reflecting the growing need to encourage climate-smart enterprises at the grassroots level, a further 10 SEED Low Carbon Awards are being made to social and environmental enterprises that focus on mitigation and adaptation to climate change. These Awards are funded mainly by the

International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

Two SEED Gender Equality Awards complete the line-up. UN Women and UNIDO are funding enterprises that are women-led or -owned and prioritize gender equality or women's empowerment as a core objective. The Gender Equality Winners will also be supported by the SEED Associate Hogan Lovells, the international law firm.

All the 2013 SEED winners were honoured at a high-level International Awards Ceremony at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya on the day of a special SEED Symposium "Green Entrepreneurship: Local Solutions that Make a Difference" taking place in the framework of the Global South-South Development Expo.

At the same event, major Chinese electronics and white goods manufacturer HISENSE was confirmed as a corporate partner for the SEED Initiative for the next three years. The company will also support UNEP's Resource Efficiency sub-programme.

The Award winners will receive from SEED a package of individually tailored support for their businesses, access to other supporting institutions and technical assistance, and a financial contribution of US\$5000.

The 2013 call for proposals saw applications from 85 countries, representing the collaborative efforts of partnerships between enterprises, non-governmental organizations, women and youth groups, labour organizations, public authorities, international agencies and academia.

Most of the applications were in the agricultural and rural development sectors, as well as in energy and climate change, and ecosystem management. Many entries at the same time addressed micro-enterprise development, IT applications, and education and training.

The winners were selected by the independent SEED International Jury of experts (details below).

On the occasion of the announcement the following statements were made:

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary-General, UNEP Executive Director: "These micro-companies are the little acorns from which big and mighty businesses could well grow, but they are more than that. These mini enterprises are achieving profitability, not at the expense of their environment or their communities, but by providing solutions to the social, economic and environmental challenges of our time. If proof is needed that a transition to an inclusive Green Economy is underway, then look no further than these remarkable entrepreneurs".

Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator: "The SEED Winners show us a viable path to a greener economy and highlight the power of creative local business models that can inform the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda."

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General IUCN: "As Chairman of the SEED Board, I greatly welcome this next cohort of SEED Winners - social innovators and entrepreneurs who also place environment centre stage. We will do what we can to help them and others to grow, and call on others to join us."

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director UN Women: “With their innovative entrepreneurial approaches and unfailing attention to women’s empowerment, the SEED Gender Equality Award winners are advancing sustainable development, both locally and at global level. In every region, women are coming forward with new ideas to combat poverty and improve living standards while protecting natural resources. Women’s economic empowerment and full and equal participation in decision-making are essential to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and should be prioritized in the post-2015 development agenda.”

Li Yong, Director General UNIDO: “Promoting women’s economic empowerment is an integral part of UNIDO’s work. As half of the world’s population, women play a crucial role in economic growth, environmental sustainability and poverty reduction. This year’s SEED Gender Equality award winners should be recognized as social innovators who are paving new roads towards not just the empowerment of women, but also towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development. They are pioneers at the local level but make considerable impacts at the global level, shaping new opportunities for themselves, and more importantly, other women.”

The 2013 SEED Gender Equality Award winners (by country) are:

Colombia:

- “*PROVOKAME*” produces innovative 100 per cent biodegradable plates, made from natural fibres and recycled paper, which are also implanted with seeds. The enterprise trains and employs local women living in rural areas in the plate production process. The plates are distributed through supermarket chains and organic products shops. The entire process contributes not only to the reduction of pollution and sustainable waste management, but also creates job and income for women, while additionally increasing environmental awareness among the community.

Peru:

- “*Life Out Of Plastic - L.O.O.P.*” is a 100 per cent women-owned organization that designs and sells green products such as reusable bags and fleece made from rPET fibre - a textile derived from bottle recycling. L.O.O.P.’s mission is to raise awareness among coastal communities about plastic pollution using market tools such as social media to fund education campaigns, art exhibitions, guided tours for school-groups, and beach clean-up activities, all teaching the value of marine ecosystems to communities.

The 2013 SEED Low Carbon Award winners (by country) are:

Colombia:

- “*Un litro de luz Colombia*” promotes an alternative lighting system based on recycled plastic bottles that are filled with pure water and bleach and then fitted on roofs. This brings lighting to rural and peri-urban poor areas that are not connected to a conventional electricity distribution grid. The enterprise employs women to identify the homes in which the lighting is to be installed, targeting deprived families; women and men are employed equally for the installation.

India:

- “*Pollinate Energy*” Establishing a micro-distribution network for appropriate and affordable green household products, this enterprise targets urban poor migrant communities in India that rely on kerosene for their daily lighting requirements. Their mission is to create job opportunities for local “Pollinators” to start their own businesses as micro-distributors that bring clean energy technology, in the form of small-scale solar lights, directly to the most needy communities.

- “*Sustaintech India Pvt. Ltd*” markets and distributes a line of environmentally friendly fuel-efficient commercial cook stoves designs for cooking, food processing and post-harvest processing. They are extending sustainable energy technologies to lower income communities, creating positive financial, environmental and healthy impacts, and promoting climate change adaptation.
- “*Tambul Leaf Plates*” promotes production of arecanut leaf plates as a livelihood option amongst rural communities in Northeast India, providing training, technical, financial and marketing assistance to the rural producers to enable them to establish their arecanut leaf plate making enterprises. Tambul Leaf Plates provides 100 per cent buy back guarantee to the rural producers and purchases the plates at a fair price.

Uganda:

- “*Awamu Biomass Energy*” embraces the innovative design, manufacture and distribution of micro-gasifier stoves with a flat-pack design making them accessible to the last mile, using renewable energy from dry organic biomass, and increasing agricultural profitability and sustainability through environmentally responsible production of fuels.
- “*Nuru Energy*” Working with local organizations to recruit and train micro-franchise entrepreneurs, this enterprise markets an innovative and simple-to-use off-grid recharging platform that uses kinetic energy. Their pedal generator provides reliable, clean, sustainable power anytime to recharge portable LED lights as well as other low-power devices, such as radios and mobile phones.
- “*Trees for Global Benefit*” is a cooperative carbon offsetting scheme linking small scale landholder farmers in Uganda to the voluntary carbon market, combining carbon sequestration with rural livelihood improvements through small-scale, farmer-led, agro-/forestry projects while reducing pressure on natural resources in national parks and forest reserves.

Vietnam:

- “*Dichung.vn*” An innovative start-up that has set out to create an online platform that helps reduce traffic jams and environmental pollution in urban areas of Vietnam. Their easy-to-use online network platform creates favourable conditions for car sharing and allows its users to collaborate in favour of reduced carbon emissions and mitigation of climate change.
- “*Solar Serve*” designs, manufactures, trades and installs equipment using renewable energy, such as solar devices, clean cookers and fuels. Solar Serve specifically targets poor communities and people in areas of serious deforestation, helping them to change their habits of cutting down trees for traditional firewood, so reducing air pollution and bringing practical economic benefits and healthy improvement to the population.
- “*Southeast Asia Renewable and Adaptive Energy (SEA-RAE)*” is a consortium of academic and business partners with the common goal of providing sustainable energy services to rural areas, particularly through photovoltaic arrays and hydroenergy harvesters. They source labour locally and educate community members about operations and maintenance, thus creating resilient technical installations.

The 2013 SEED Africa Award winners (by country) are:

Ethiopia:

- “*Gogle Energy Saving Stoves*” is a renewable energy enterprise that produces improved cook stoves and briquettes for various end users all over Ethiopia, working in partnership with different international agencies and state institutions. This helps to reduce deforestation and contributes to the shift towards clean energy, while also providing income for local

communities.

Morocco:

- “*Au Grain de Sésame*” is an arts and crafts workshop which trains disadvantaged women to design and create organic products based on an innovative technique of recycling paper. Preserving and promoting the local art and cultural heritage, Au Grain de Sésame contributes to raising awareness of environmental conservation, while encouraging the choice of eco-friendly purchasing.
- “*High Atlas Agriculture*” This enterprise aims to export organic farming products to generate a revenue stream that assists rural communities throughout the entire agricultural development cycle (tree nurseries, irrigation, training, organic certification, and marketing) and thus increases household incomes for rural families while preserving natural resources.

Mozambique:

- “*moWoza*” is a mobile phone marketplace platform that allows informal cross-border traders to access price-related information and an order and pre-pay inventory, and to receive delivery status notifications and access credit on their mobile phones. By empowering especially female traders to trade efficiently and transparently, *moWoza* improves the livelihoods of women and fosters their business activities in the communities.

Namibia:

- “*The Dried Fish/Food Company*” Working in partnership with a community organization that empowers women entrepreneurs, this enterprise manages a value-added fish and food processing facility that focuses on solar dried products. They provide day-to-day food for rural and urban communities, proactively managing food security. As women are the primary distributors of the dried fish the enterprise is also working towards reducing the economic gender gap.

South Africa:

- “*5 Star Stoves*” creates a local bio-energy value chain out of waste biomass, producing biomass pellets which are used in a updraft gasification stove to cook and heat. The stoves are assembled in the community and distributed locally via a franchising model. The enterprise thus generates income for the local community, encourages more efficient use of natural resources and also improves energy security by using local bio assets.
- “*Farmer Eco Enterprise Development - FEED Africa*” develops conservation low-carbon agriculture for emerging organic farmers, helping to empower them as entrepreneurs. They bring support in management, training, mentorship and marketing skills, and connect the farmers to markets, enabling them to join the mainstream agricultural economy and to adapt to climate change.
- “*Muthi Futhi*” is a community business which cultivates and processes indigenous medicinal plants for sale both as primary raw materials in bulk, and in the form of finished herbal products. Many of the plants cultivated are endangered in the wild due to over-harvesting, and this pioneering business is designed both to protect the biodiversity of KwaZulu-Natal and to create sustainable jobs for rural women.
- “*Khulumani Gogos Going Green*” is a small enterprise initiated by elderly women living in rural areas who form savings clubs to enable them to gain access to solar lighting and electricity. It thus supports successful small enterprise development and management in the solar energy sector, while reducing women's vulnerability to sexual assault and facilitating access to communication technology for rural communities.
- “*MRDP Sunwater*” aims to supply solar water heating through black PVC pipe systems

allowing communities and especially women and children to save time, money and trees. This heating system is well accepted in the community and easy to maintain. By reducing the need to gather firewood to heat water, MRDP Sunwater helps the community to manage their natural resources sustainably.

- “*NABIDI Power*” aims to develop and distribute lamps, radios and chargers designed to operate for days at a time without recharging. Being the first products with casings manufactured from a new bio-plastic made from sugar cane waste, their energy products help mitigate climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- “*The Duncan Village Secondary Recycling Cooperative*” collects and recycles organic waste, processing it into valuable nutrients i.e. compost, vermi-compost, organic food, and biogas, enabling communities to capture the full value of their organic waste resources. By using best practices in food composting and urban food production, the enterprise contributes to improve community waste management.

Uganda:

- “*Agroforestry for sustainable land use and economic empowerment*” is a land use change initiative which targets smallholder farmers through community groups, allowing them to plant mostly native trees and various commercial viable crops such as nuts, beans, maize and rice that are subsequently sold through local grocery markets. While facilitating access to markets for its members, the enterprise also contributes to forest protection and conservation.
- “*BanaPads Social Enterprise*” produces comfortable sanitary pads from natural agricultural waste materials. They are low-cost, fully biodegradable, safe and hygienic, and made locally, following international standards. The objective of this enterprise is to reduce absenteeism of schoolgirls in rural and poor communities while creating a women’s entrepreneur network through which the pads are distributed and sustainable independent micro-businesses are established.
- “*Blessed Bee for Life*” This apiculture enterprise makes hive tools and equipment available to farmers while also teaching them beekeeping and assisting with gaining market access for their honey. Women are fully integrated into the honey value chain, reducing not only extreme poverty among the rural communities but also environmental degradation.
- “*Busia Waste to Energy-Eco-briquette Production Enterprise*” seeks to provide alternatives to charcoal and firewood by collecting waste for the production of eco-briquettes. The enterprise, run by women, also trains local communities in technical aspects of solid waste management and sensitizes them to the importance of forest protection.
- “*Green Organic Watch Cocoa Project*” promotes certified organic cocoa production and strengthens the capacity of farmers to carry out effective sustainable farming practices in order to tap into speciality export markets. While continuously improving the farms in terms of production, productivity and quality, the enterprise contributes to sustainable agricultural and green business development.
- “*Growing a Sustainable Future: Sustain for Life Hospital Gardens*” In partnership with an international and a Ugandan NGO, two hospitals created this enterprise to harvest organic farming products that deliver nutritious food for hospital patients and staff members while training vulnerable and marginalised community members in organic farming.
- “*GRS Commodities Ltd.*”. The enterprise has developed a biogas plant which utilises agricultural waste such as manure collected from local farmers, and other biowaste such as water hyacinth, to produce renewable energy for rural communities and off grid applications. Also in development is a rice husk gasification plant.
- “*Pumpkin Value Addition Enterprise*” By using a climate-resistant crop, this enterprise proposes an alternative to traditional food plants and gives women an opportunity to start

small-scale businesses that generate healthy value-added food products. They offer women technical skills training in pumpkin value addition and also link these women entrepreneurs to the market and to financial institutions.

Tanzania:

- “*KARIBU Solar Power*” A modular solar lamp that is sold via a franchising network is the value proposition of this enterprise. By paying in small increments, which replicate the required cash flow for kerosene, KARIBU is making high quality solar lighting and mobile phone charging affordable, allowing also poorer communities to enjoy the benefits of solar lighting and energy.
- “*Tia Nuru*” This enterprise enables and empowers individuals through consultation, educational events and training in how to build sustainable living systems. This comprises cob building, compost toilets, grey-water re-use systems, and sustainable farming. In this way the enterprise reduces the environmental footprint of their customers while promoting new services to the local community and preserving local resources.

Further details about all SEED Winners can be found on the SEED website at www.seedinit.org

Notes to Editors

2013 SEED International Jury

The 2013 SEED Award winners were selected by the independent International Jury which dedicated considerable time to choosing the most promising of the applications. The members of the jury are:

- Helmy Abouleish: Managing Director, SEKEM Holding, Egypt.
- Rachid Amrani: National Programme Manager, Business Advisory Services, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Morocco.
- Seema Arora: Executive Director, CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development, India.
- Lucy Aviles: Independent Senior Advisor on Rural Development, Gender Mainstreaming and Social Impact Assessment, Bolivia / Germany
- Srey Bairiganjan: Head of Research and Enterprise Engagement, New Ventures India
- Phillip Bohwasi: Executive Director, Zimbabwe Opportunities Industrialization Center, Zimbabwe.
- François Bonnici: Director, Bertha Centre for Social Innovation & Entrepreneurship, University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business, South Africa.
- Nancy Chege: National Coordinator, UNDP Global Environment Facility’s Small Grants Programme, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Julie Clarke: Programme Manager, Development Bank of Southern Africa, South Africa
- Thais Corral: SEED Winner 2008; Director, Adapta Sertao, Brazil.
- Saliem Fakir: Head of the Living Planet Unit, WWF, South Africa.
- Jeff Felten: Managing Director, Camco Clean Energy, Tanzania.
- Andrew Gamble: Partner, Hogan Lovells, UK.
- Leticia Greyling: Senior Lecturer, Rhodes Business School, South Africa.
- Douglas Kativu: Head of Global Reporting Initiative Focal Point South Africa.
- Nguy Thi Khan: Executive Director, Green Innovation and Development Centre, Viet Nam.
- Jane Kisakye: Independent Senior Advisor on Environment Conservation and Community Development, Uganda.

- Paul Laird: Corporate Partnerships Manager, Earthwatch, Oxford, United Kingdom.
- Tanya Lobel: Director, Actis , United Kingdom.
- Edward Mungai: CEO, Climate Innovation Center, Kenya.
- Bert van Nieuwenhuizen: Senior Advisor Renewable Energy East and Southern Africa, SNV Netherlands Development Organisation, Kigali, Rwanda.
- Shrashtant Patara: Senior Vice President, Development Alternatives, India.
- Tamzin Ractliffe: Chief Executive Officer, Nexii, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Patricio Sande: President, Scientific Research Association of Mozambique.
- Sarah Timpson: Senior Adviser on Community-based Initiatives, UNDP, New York City, United States.
- Diana de la Vega: Communications Specialist, Clean Energy Programme, Colombia
- Gisele Yitamben: President, Association for the Support of Women Entrepreneurs, Cameroon.

The SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative was founded in 2002 by UNEP, UNDP and IUCN to contribute towards the Millennium Development Goals and the commitments made at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development.

SEED identifies, profiles and supports innovative, locally-driven start-up enterprises that integrate social, environmental and economic benefits into their business models at the outset. Based in developing countries, these enterprises work in partnership with stakeholders to improve livelihoods, tackle poverty and marginalization, and manage natural resources sustainably.

SEED also develops learning resources for the broad community of social and environmental entrepreneurs, informs policy- and decision-makers and aims to inspire innovative, entrepreneurial approaches to sustainable development.

Partners of the SEED Initiative in addition to the Founding Partners are the governments of Germany, India, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America; the European Union; Conservation International; SEED's corporate partner, Hisense; and UN Women.

SEED is hosted by Adelphi Research, based in Germany.

The 2013 SEED Awards in Ethiopia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda are supported by:



the European Union, which is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

The 2013 SEED Low Carbon Awards are supported by:



the International Climate Initiative (ICI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) which since 2008 has been financing climate and biodiversity projects in

developing and newly industrialising countries, as well as in countries in transition. The ICI receives funding from the BMU budget as well as through the auctioning of emission allowances and thus represents an innovative mechanism to support partner countries in the area of climate and biodiversity protection, and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

The 2013 SEED Awards in 2 South African provinces are supported by:

With the support of
the Flemish authorities



The Government of Flanders through Flanders International Cooperation Agency (FICA), which is active in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa. FICA works not only with the local authorities, but also with indirect actors such as NGOs, research institutes and international organizations. In South Africa, the focus is on job creation through Small Enterprise Development, and improving food security through smallholder farming.

The 2013 SEED Gender Equality Awards are supported by:



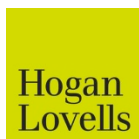
UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Established in July 2010 by the United Nations General Assembly to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide, the creation of UN Women came about as part of the UN reform agenda. It brings together resources, mandates and important work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system for greater impact, and to become a global champion for women

and



Established in November 1966 by the United Nations General Assembly, UNIDO is the specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability.

The Winners will be offered legal and other support from:



Hogan Lovells, one of the largest international business legal practices, with over three thousand people operating from over 40 offices worldwide. The firm advises many of the world's largest corporations, financial institutions and government organizations, acting regularly on complex, multi-jurisdictional transactions and commercial disputes.

For more information, please visit www.seedinit.org or contact:

Amélie Heuer, Programme Manager, amelie.heuer@seedinit.org

UNEP News Desk, unepnewsdesk@unep.org, +254 725 939 620