



# SEED Awards 2010

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## The Rural Enterprise Network : Sri Lanka

Linking Small-Scale Farmers to Input-Output Markets through the Rural Enterprise Network

### Project description

The Rural Enterprise Network (REN) is a social marketing organisation established by rural farmers in the south of Sri Lanka. REN provides marketing-related services to increase market access for poor small-scale producers.



### Business model

The REN business model has been developed based on collectivism and common branding, which help to create better market positioning for small-scale producers.

This model has adapted existing mechanisms and systems and developed the "community-based business development services hub", which links rural producers and markets.

### Scaling up activities in 2011

- Develop partnerships with the ongoing livelihood development programs and funding organisations to find resources for the expansion process.
- Improve entrepreneurship and technical skills of 400 producers.
- Identify new markets for the products of small-scale producers.
- Develop staff capacities to provide a better service for the REN members.

### Immediate needs

- To organise scattered producers in the north and to promote collectivism as an approach to enter new markets.
- To improve entrepreneurship skills and processing technologies of the small-scale producers.
- To acquire organic certification for selected products.
- To develop, test, and promote environmentally-friendly processing technologies.





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### Partnership

- ❶ **Rural Enterprise Network (REN)** implements the project, including capacity building, product marketing and project administration.
- ❷ **Practical Action** mainly provides required guidance and technical inputs for REN to expand its network.
- ❸ **The Farmer Federation for the Conservation of Traditional Seeds and Agri-Resources** provides its expertise on chemical-free farming practices to the REN members.



### Social, environmental and economic impacts

**Social impact:** Increase income and living conditions of rural farming families through capacity building for small-scale agro-processing enterprises. This will create new employment opportunities and contribute to poverty reduction.

**Environmental impact:** Protect the local biodiversity by promoting environmentally-friendly farming and processing practices and technologies, and renewable energy sources.

**Economic impact:** Sustainability and profitability of small agro- and processing enterprises is assured through improved product quality, entrepreneurship skills and market links.

### Contact

#### Rural Enterprise Network

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### SEED Partners

SEED is hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Other current partners are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (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.



### About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs that while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion.

SEED provides these social entrepreneurs with know how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making.

More information: [www.seedinit.org](http://www.seedinit.org)

### SEED Secretariat

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