



### SEPALI – Community-based Silk Producers Association : Madagascar

Fighting poverty and environmental degradation by producing and marketing high-quality textiles

#### Project description

SEPALI is a local spin-off of an international non-governmental organisation that provides technical and financial assistance to farmers and community-based enterprise groups in Madagascar. By promoting the production and processing of wild silk from moths raised on indigenous trees, SEPALI conserves local biodiversity and secures farmers' livelihoods.



#### Business model

SEPALI teaches farmers how to intercrop the host plant for wild silk moths on their farms, trains them how to rear the larvae and teaches the community how to process the silk and produce unique, non-spun textiles. SEPALI then sells these textiles in the EU and US to generate foreign exchange. This creates jobs along the value chain and at the same time rehabilitates damaged areas in the border forests of the Makira Protected Area through the planting of host plants for the silk moths.

#### Scaling up activities in 2012

- Expand the number of farmer-led breeding cooperative networks from 8 to 10
- Initiate and establish larval rearing with 50 new farmers
- Increase the number of silk producers to 200
- Training of textile workers in villages
- Continue textile production at the demonstration site

#### Immediate needs

- Comprehensive training in management, business and marketing skills
- Help with establishing partnerships with national and international designers and buyers
- Financial support to employ more staff
- Assistance with additional job training





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## Partnership

- **SEPALI** initiates and facilitates the set-up of community enterprise groups, nursery development and management, training in silk moth rearing and silk processing
- **Conservation through Poverty Alleviation International (CPALI)** serves as project advisor and provides funding, marketing and technical support
- **Material ConneXion** assists in the marketing process
- **Source4style** introduces SEPALI's non-spun textiles to designers
- **Ghent University** develops new applications for SEPALI's silk



## Social, environmental and economic impacts

**Social impact:** The initiative helps women access affordable loans and financial advice. This enables women who do not own farms to set up businesses and create group savings funds.

**Environmental impact:** As a result of the initiative, farmers use the Makira Protected Area less for growing crops. This reduces land degradation and protects local biodiversity. The planting of newly intercropped food plants and native trees also helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**Economic impact:** By planting trees, harvesting silk and producing textiles, farmers can increase their income by between 30 % and 200 %. Disadvantaged groups such as landless women earn money by producing larval rearing nets and spinning baskets.

## Contact

**Mr. Mamy Ratsimbazafy**

Email: [mamycpali@gmail.com](mailto:mamycpali@gmail.com), <http://sepalim.org/>

## SEED Partners

SEED's founding partners are the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and SEED is hosted by UNEP-WCMC. Other current 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; and SEED's corporate partner, Hisense.

## 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

[info@seedinit.org](mailto:info@seedinit.org)

