



SEED Initiative

promoting entrepreneurship for sustainable development

Founding Partners



GENDER EQUALITY WINNER 2014

Vulnerable women living at Precious Life Foundation's farm centre are taught bio-intensive agricultural techniques like sack potato production in order to become self-sufficient. The women then provide training, support, and resources to their community to increase yields and thereby food security.



Precious Life Foundation's Outgrower Project, Zimbabwe

BUSINESS MODEL

Bio-intensive, organic agricultural techniques are taught to women, who pass on their knowledge to the community. Local smallholder farmers are provided inputs and encouraged to adopt the techniques, and contribute financially to the project by providing labour, contributing to running costs, or by returning some of their produce to Precious Life.

The enterprise acts as an intermediary between local farmers and the national market, selling on produce as well as secondary products like heirloom seeds. All profits are reinvested into the project.

ENTERPRISE FAST FACTS

Location	Matabeleland South Region
Year founded	2007
Sector	Agriculture (incl. aquaculture)
Product/Service	Agricultural training for communities

Social impacts:

- Providing training opportunities and skills for vulnerable women, thus empowering them to create a self-sufficient food supply and reducing unemployment levels.
- Creating a culture of resilience for the local community who are encouraged to work together to achieve food security.

Environmental impacts:

- Addressing desertification of the Siphezini area through teaching locally adapted agricultural techniques.
- Encouraging locals to adapt sustainable farming methods suited for the region like bio-intensive potato sack production.

Economic impacts:

- Working towards a target of self-sufficiency within the community, thus making the region less economically vulnerable in regards to food supply.
- Promoting a closed-circle economy whereby profits are reinvested back into the Outgrower Project to increase its presence in the community.

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” What truly makes this initiative special is it utilises and expands on the community’s existing farming livelihood, while placing a stronger emphasis both on environmental conservation and better management of scarce resources.

Scaling up activities:

- Increase the number of agricultural training classes held over the coming year.
- Hire more agricultural specialists and additional teachers for the training centre, in order to increase teaching and outreach capacity.
- Continue to develop a partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture to construct a biogas digester.
- Continue to search for funding grants, while reinvesting existing profits back into growing the project.



” Our heirloom seeds reduce costs because we can reuse them every planting season instead of always buying seedlings.



Partnership

● **Precious Life Foundation** is a non-profit organisation in the Siphezini region of Matabeleland South running a women’s shelter that includes several training courses and an agricultural centre. The Foundation runs and facilitates the Outgrower Project.

● **The Rotary Club of Bulawayo** has provided a matching grant that has enabled Precious Life to purchase a pickup truck, build a reservoir, a shelter, two classrooms and a lodge on their premises.

● **The Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development** has provided expertise in sack potato production. Continued expertise has been promised.

● **Mind the Gap** is a non-profit organisation that helps Precious Life with marketing and sales for its agricultural products.



The 2014 SEED Gender Equality Awards are supported by UN Women, the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; and UNIDO, which promotes and accelerates inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Additional support is from the international law firm, Hogan Lovells.

About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs who while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion. SEED provides these entrepreneurs with know-how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making. For more information please write to info@seedinit.org or visit:

www.seedinit.org

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