

# Seeds of Development Program

Advancing Africa's Green Revolution  
Through Private Seed Companies



# About SODP

The Seeds of Development Program (SODP) was initiated in June 2003 with a goal to alleviate rural poverty through improved access to appropriate seed varieties. This goal is accomplished through a Business Development Services program for small to medium-sized seed companies complimented by market analysis of domestic seed industries. Currently, SODP works with 25 companies located in seven East and Southern African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique). Plans are underway to deepen the program by recruiting additional companies in East and Southern Africa and broaden coverage by expanding into West Africa.

The specific objectives of the SODP are:

1. To build management capacity of small to medium-sized local seed companies in order to improve their market delivery systems for poor farmers;
2. To create platforms for networking among African seed companies, research institutions and other seed industry stakeholders to improve their effectiveness in meeting the needs of smallholder farmers;
3. To conduct research on the seed industry that will guide strategies of the local small and medium-sized companies serving resource-poor farmers and inform public policy.

The Seeds of Development program is a project of Market Matters Inc., with offices in the U.S. and South Africa, and works in collaboration with the Emerging Markets Program at Cornell University, and other seed industry stakeholders.

# SODP Activities

Small and medium-sized seed companies that serve smallholder farmers in Africa are carefully selected to become members of a Fellows Program. SODP objectives are accomplished through six major capacity building, networking and research activities: Workshop Training, Distance Learning, Field Visits, Seed Trading Forum, Student Attachments and Research.

## Workshop Training

Each year, selected managers from the participating seed companies attend an executive agribusiness management training workshop – the Making Markets Matter workshop in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Starting in 2006, an additional workshop, exclusive to seed companies has been added to address technical aspects of seed production and distribution.

## Distance Learning

Management modules suitable for the seed industry are provided to Fellows based on identified needs. Fellows are kept up-to-date with new developments in the global, regional and domestic seed industry through an email listserv.

## Field Visits

Fellows visit successful seed companies in a country with a more advanced seed sector to learn about relevant aspects of seed production and marketing and to explore business opportunities.

## Seed Trading Forum

Every year between harvest and the next planting season, SODP brings together managers from participating companies to network and explore opportunities for seed trading and other collaborative initiatives.

## Student Attachments

As part of its capacity building effort, SODP facilitates attachments for university students to address specific management and marketing challenges facing Fellow companies.

## Research

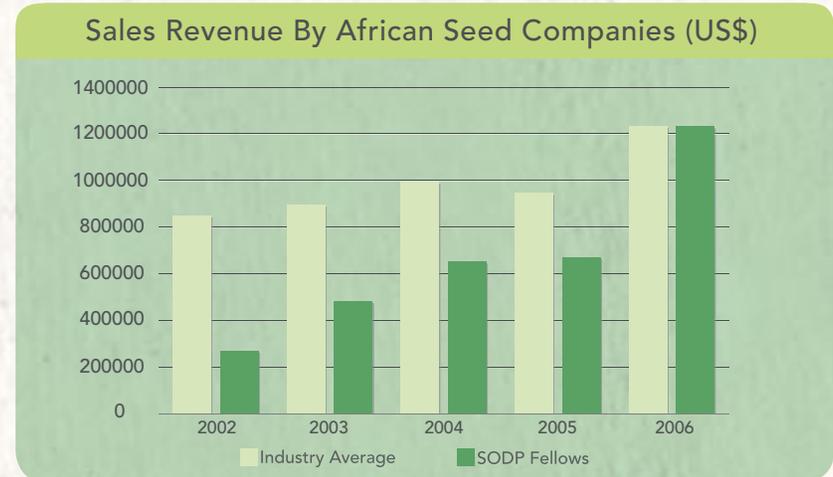
Through the Emerging Markets Program at Cornell University, SODP conducts research on seed systems in Africa. Research findings are used to guide strategies by private companies and to inform seed industry policies and regulations by governments.



# SODP Outcomes and Impacts

The outcomes and successes of the Seeds of Development Program are most visible in the program's direct impact on participating companies. A recent monitoring and evaluation report indicates that SODP Fellows have experienced statistically significant gains in the following areas: sales revenue, maize seed production, other seed production, number of varieties offered and total volume of seed sales. The program has been highly successful and was recently awarded the L.A. Potts award for an innovative program showing significant impacts on economically disadvantaged communities.

Variable	2003	2006	Increase
Annual sales revenue	US \$450,370	US \$1,438,120	319%
Area under maize seed production	147,000 (ha)	448,000 (ha)	304%
Area under other seed production	96,000 (ha)	312,000 (ha)	325%
Number of maize seed varieties offered	4.2	7	166%
Volume of total seeds sold	229 (M tons)	682 (M tons)	299%



A key element of the companies' success lies in the capacity building and networking provided by SOPD. Fellows consistently report that they value and make use of opportunities to exchange information and experiences with other seed companies from the continent. Further, SODP Fellows have created numerous successful business deals. These collaborations include not only seed sales but other products, such as chemicals/fertilizers, equipment, and germ-plasm processes that are essential to increased productivity by rural farmers. In short, the SODP network allows Fellows to expand their contacts, participate in business deals they would not otherwise have access to, and gain experience in providing seed products/services in domestic and/or regional markets.

Through its successful work with African seed companies, SODP's broader impact in smallholder farming communities has become visible. First, Fellow companies create additional employment, as virtually all companies have experienced growth and the concurrent need for additional labor, whose earnings support immediate and extended families. Company sales data also show that the bulk of sales (more than 80%) go to smallholder farmers. By offering a wider variety of seeds, including higher-yielding, disease- and drought-resistant varieties, and other inputs such as fertilizers, SODP companies help smallholder farmers increase food security for their families and communities. Building on its success so far, SODP's goal is to continue to grow its network of African seed companies that will lay the foundation for a well-functioning, locally-owned, and continent-wide seed marketing system.



# SODP Fellows

**FICA Seeds**, Kampala, Uganda

**Victoria Seeds**, Kampala, Uganda

**Harvest Farm Seeds**, Kampala, Uganda

**NASECO, Ltd.**, Hoima, Uganda

**Freshco Seeds Ltd.**, Nairobi, Kenya

**Western Seeds**, Kitale, Kenya

**Lagrotech Seed Company**, Kisumu, Kenya

**Faida Seeds**, Nakuru, Kenya

**Zanobia Seeds**, Arusha, Tanzania

**Tanseed International**, Njombe, Tanzania

**Suba Agro Trading**, Arusha, Tanzania

**Highland Seed Growers**, Mbeya, Tanzania

**ZUM Seeds**, Lilongwe, Malawi

**Seed-Tech**, Blantyre, Malawi

**Funwe Farm Ltd.**, Blantyre, Malawi

**Pristine Seeds**, Harare, Zimbabwe

**National Tested Seeds**, Harare, Zimbabwe

**Agri Seeds & Services**, Harare, Zimbabwe

**Tropical Seeds**, Ruwa, Zimbabwe

**Hygrotech**, Lusaka, Zambia

**MRI Seeds**, Lusaka, Zambia

**Kamano Seeds**, Lusaka, Zambia

**Progene Seeds**, Zambia & Zimbabwe

**Qualitá**, Chimoio, Mozambique

**Semente Perfeita**, Chimoio, Mozambique

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For more information, please visit:

[www.sodp.marketmattersinc.org](http://www.sodp.marketmattersinc.org)

SODP activities are supported in part by Market Matters Inc. (USA and RSA), The Rockefeller Foundation, USAID, DFID, and participating companies.

