

# world challenge 2006

In association with



## THE WORLD CHALLENGE FINALISTS

>> Twelve finalists, based on nominations from readers and viewers, have been selected. Each week, two of these inspiring stories will be featured in this spread. The stories of all twelve finalists can be found at [www.theworldchallenge.co.uk](http://www.theworldchallenge.co.uk). We are asking you, our readers and viewers, to decide who wins the World Challenge. Visit [www.theworldchallenge.co.uk](http://www.theworldchallenge.co.uk) for full details. You may cast your vote at this website from Oct. 6-Nov. 19.

### BLOOMING BUSINESS:

#### Flora Marketing Co. – Mauritius/Madagascar

*Seeds of hope for poor communities*

Most conservation organizations have come round to the view that there is no future for tropical forests outside heavily protected areas, unless local people get a direct benefit from their utilization. Flora Marketing Co. was set up to ensure they get that benefit. The company encourages poor communities in the tropics to set up seed banks for traditional plant varieties. Some of these sustainably harvested seeds are sent to Flora Marketing's Mauritius headquarters for export to buyers in some 30 countries. The rest are used to reforest degraded land, helping to ensure a future income. The company's founder, Vinah Ganoo, was first inspired to help conserve the rainforest while on a visit with her father to Madagascar, where she discovered "a goldmine of palms, forest species, succulents and aquatic

Flora Marketing has partnerships with communities throughout Africa



plants" – a goldmine that was fast being depleted. The company has since formed partnerships with communities in other African and South American countries. The income from seed sales now benefits some 2,500 employees around the world, many of them women with no alternative livelihood. Flora Marketing's policy is that for every dozen seeds harvested, at least four are replanted in the natural habitat. It claims by this means to have planted ten million seeds since 1994.

World Challenge vignettes can be seen on BBC World  
[www.theworldchallenge.co.uk](http://www.theworldchallenge.co.uk)

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