

TEERTHA COMMUNITY SEED BANK

Karnataka, Dharwad District



*CSB members raising awareness about traditional varieties at a seed festival
Photo: Sahaja Samrudha*

Teertha Community Seed Bank is a seed initiative started by Bibi Fatima SHG. The seed bank is located in Teertha, a village in the Dharwad district of Karnataka, India. Bibi Fatima SHG, with the help of Sahaja Samurdhha, an NGO, initiated a Self-Help Group (SHG) in 2018 to empower women. In 2020, the SHG established the seed bank to improve farmers' yields and provide them with access to local varieties.

The SHG manages the operation of the CSB. Each year around 200 farmers from around 22 villages benefit from the CSB.

Currently, the CSB conserves approximately 300 varieties of different crops, including 75 varieties of Finger Millet (Ragi), 25 varieties of Little Millet (Saave), 25 varieties of Brown Top Millet (Korale), 10 varieties of Foxtail Millet (Navane), and two varieties of Proso Millet (Baragu). Additionally, the CSB also maintains a wide range of local varieties of vegetables and pulses.

The founder of the seed bank has won various awards, including the Herald Change Maker Award, Bodhivardhan Award, and Vaicharika Award in 2023 by the Keshav Murthy Foundation.

In 2021, with the help of Sahaja Samurdhha, nine millet processing machines were established in the village where the seed bank is located, with financial support from ICAR-IIMR, Hyderabad. This is being operated under the leadership of Bibijan. With the unit, various products are produced, including 6 types of millet, and rice, as well as value-added products like ragi dosa mix, ragi multigrain atta, and ragi special malt.

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