

ANKURA MAHILA BEEJA BANK

Karnataka, Bangalore Rural District



*Collection of seeds at the CSB
Photo: Sahaja Samrudha*

The Self-Help Group (SHG) Ankura Mahila Swasahaya Sangha established the Community Seed Bank in 2013 with the support of Sahaja Samrudha. This seed bank is located in the village of Mayasandra in Bangalore Rural District in Karnataka, India.

The CSB is managed by the SHG and serves 80 members and 60 non-members from approximately 13 villages.

The CSB was established in response to the scarcity of local varieties in the area. Women from the SHG have joined to work on reviving these traditional crop varieties as they are an integral part of farmers' kitchens and culinary traditions.

The seed bank is well-known in Karnataka, as it exclusively focuses on the conservation of traditional varieties of vegetables, currently safeguarding around 70 varieties.

Saraswathamma, the President of the CSB, has been honored with the title of Beeja Matha, or 'Seed Mother.

The CSB participates actively in seed fairs organized by Sahaja Samrudha. In 2017, CSB members participated in the Kisan Sammelan, Organic World Congress, Krishi Mela organised by the State University of Agriculture Sciences, Bangalore.

The CSB is supported by Sahaja Samrudha. Support includes training and facilitating the commercialization of organic vegetables as well as local varieties of vegetables. The commercialization is done through the Farmers Producer Organization (FPO) established by Sahaja. Although the income is low, it helps the CSB to sustain part of its operations.

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