

Community Seed Banks: A step towards seed sovereignty



Seed Sovereignty

- Seed is about culture, tradition, spirituality, cooperation & diversity, off-course survival
- Farmers are the first breeders and have evolved rich biodiversity
- Seed is the basis of food sovereignty and foundation for freedom and sovereignty of the country
- We have responsibility to conserve our seed heritage



Importance of Local Seed Systems

- Adapted to local growing conditions, tastes and culture
- Farmers can plant and replant
- Reduces external dependency
- Increases resilience of farmers and overall productivity
- Farmer's have knowledge and control



Community Seed Banks

- A part of the local seed system
- A local institutional means to revive and preserve indigenous seeds
- Farmer managed systems for preserving, multiplying and distributing traditional seeds
- Ensures seed sovereignty, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience



Community Seed Banks: Living Farms achievement

- Living Farms have facilitated to establish 93 seed banks of millet, rice and vegetables seeds
- Preserved & Revived Indigenous Seed Varieties – Traditional seeds of millets, rice, pulses, and vegetables safeguarded
- Enhanced Farmer's Seed Sovereignty
- Increased Crop Diversity- more resilient and nutritious food systems
- Strengthened Community Participation – Women and smallholder farmers leading seed conservation
- Climate Adaptation – Seeds adapted to local agro-climatic conditions, promoting resilience



Experience & Learnings

- Community ownership is key
- Dialogue around seed politics strengthens community participation
- Traditional knowledge is vital
- Exchange among elders and youngsters
- Networking and exchange strengthens CSB
- Institutional support enhances sustainability
- Final destination is seed conservation by farmers and continuing exchange



Challenges

- Limited awareness and acceptance- Some big commercial farmers prefer hybrid seeds
- Storage and maintenance issues at village level
- Dependency on external/NGO support
- Some Government policy/ schemes discourages local seed
- Market pressure
- Legal and regulatory barriers
- Delegitimising of traditional knowledge



Conclusion & Way forward

- Community Seed Banks are essential for preserving biodiversity, enhancing food security, and building climate resilience
- Strengthening CSBs requires continuous community engagement, infrastructure support and policy advocacy
- Youth Engagement – Younger generations need to be encouraged
- Living Farms remains committed to expanding and strengthening seed sovereignty initiatives





Thank You...