



# Seeds of Change

## Women Farmers' Community-Led Seed Banks

A grassroots initiative by  
WGWLO empowering women  
farmers to preserve indigenous  
seeds and protect biodiversity.

# Who We Are: WGWLO

Working Group for Women and Land Ownership (WGWLO) now Society for Women's Access to Land (SWAL) is a formal network of 40+ members including CBO, NGO and Individuals



## Our Organization

- 40+ member network including CBOs, NGOs and Individuals
- Initiated in 2002
- Working in 17 districts in Gujarat



## Our Mission

- Women's ownership of agriculture land and access to productive resources
- Function as a multi-level platform for sustained action
- Policy advocacy on women's land rights in patriarchal societies



## Our Focus Areas

- Women's Land Ownership: Advocating for women's legal rights
- Sustainable Agriculture: Promoting sustainable farming practices
- Forest Rights: Ensuring women's access to forest resources





# Why We Started Seed Banks



## Food Security

Given the state's policy that focuses on cash crops we thought it was imperative to look at food security



## Economic Sustainability

Reduces input costs and supports smallholder farmers' financial resilience.



## Women's Empowerment

Fosters self-reliant, community-led farming systems led by women.



## Biodiversity Preservation

Safeguards indigenous varieties and traditional farming knowledge.

# Our Community Seed Bank Model



## Community-Led

Local women's collectives manage and make all decisions.



## Decentralized

Located at the village level for easy community access.



## Knowledge Hub

Traditional farming practices are preserved alongside seed varieties.





# Our Current Reach



## Started in 2018-19

Initiated across 12 districts at the village level.



## Currently Active in 3 Districts

Sustained through women-led management and local ownership.



## Crops Conserved

Indigenous rice, wheat, millets, pulses, oilseeds and vegetables.



## Decentralized Access

One seed bank serves 5-10 villages.



## Our Achievements in Seed Sovereignty

**500+**

### Women Farmers

Actively accessing and cultivating indigenous seed varieties.

**20+**

### Indigenous Varieties

Rare and climate-resilient seeds safeguarded in community banks.

**100%**

### Women's Leadership

All seed banks managed by women as biodiversity custodians.

### Traditional Practices

Traditional seed-saving and farming traditions documented and revived.

### Food Diversity

Increase in household and community diet diversity and resilience through indigenous crops.





# Challenges We Face



## Technical Gaps

Women farmers need training in seed production ecosystem



## Climate Variability

Unpredictable weather leads to crop failures and disrupts seed returns.



## Storage Infrastructure

Inadequate facilities lead to seed spoilage and pest attacks.



## Documentation Gaps

Inconsistent record-keeping makes tracking and planning difficult.

# Opportunities for Growth

## Regional Seed Networks

Strengthen resilience & foster inter-village exchange

## Women-led Seed Enterprises

Empower rural women with livelihoods rooted in tradition

## Community Seed Curriculum

Pass knowledge to youth; preserve traditional wisdom

## Participatory Seed Certification

Ensure quality & build credibility for indigenous seeds

## Annual Seed Festivals

Celebrate biodiversity, create community pride & exchange

## Policy Advocacy

Gain long-term recognition & state-level support

## Digital Seed Mapping

Document varieties, stories & ensure intergenerational access

## Link to Local Food Economies

Close the loop: From seed to nutrition, kitchen & market





# Enabling Ecosystems of Change



### Financial Resources

Support for infrastructure and training empowers local seed banks.



### Policy Support

Protecting indigenous seeds inspires wider farmer participation.



### Research Partnerships

Agricultural universities can enhance seed quality and climate resilience.



### Scaling Up

Institutional support helps replicate successful models across Gujarat.



**"Seeds in women's hands are seeds of change."**

When women control seeds, they secure their families' future, preserve biodiversity, and transform communities.