



Community Seed Banks in Nepal: Promoting Conservation and Use of Local Crop Diversity

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- Nepalese context
- Functions and activities
- Case example - Shivagunj CSB, Jhapa
- Sustainability measures
- Role of CSB Association
- Some lessons





Context: rich diversity of PGRFA is declining!

Scenario 1: Agriculture is in transition - moving towards commercialization

Scenario 2: Increasing youth migration - labor scarcity, fallow land

Scenario 3: Land fragmentation, use of farm land in other purposes

Scenario 4: Agriculture extension service is inclined towards use of high yielding varieties and input intensive farming

Scenario 5: Generation gap – Poor documentation and dissemination of TK associated with PGRFA

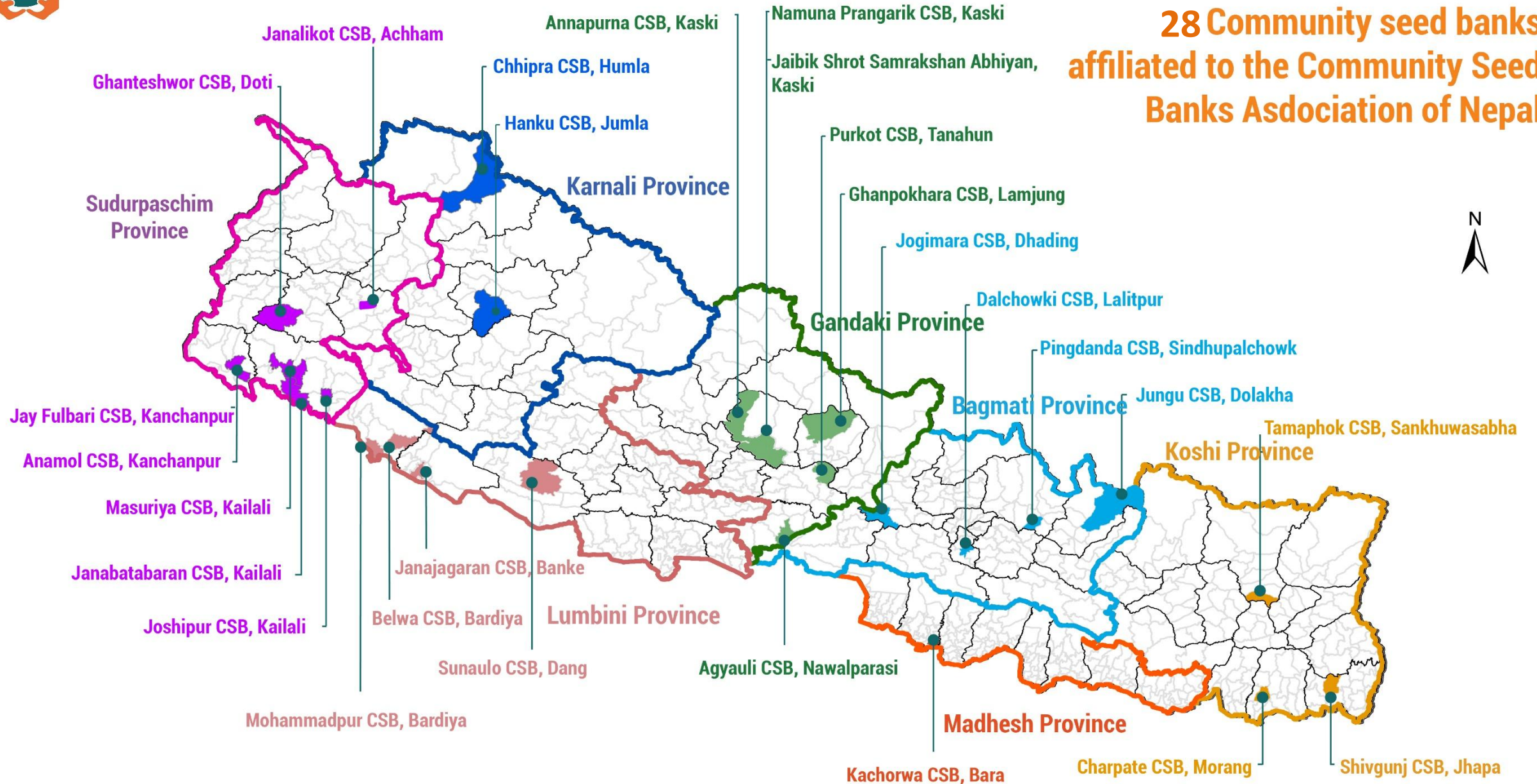
Scenario 6: Access to quality seed is still a huge issue among the smallholder farmers (SRR is less than 20%)

Scenario 6: Impact of climate change in agriculture is huge

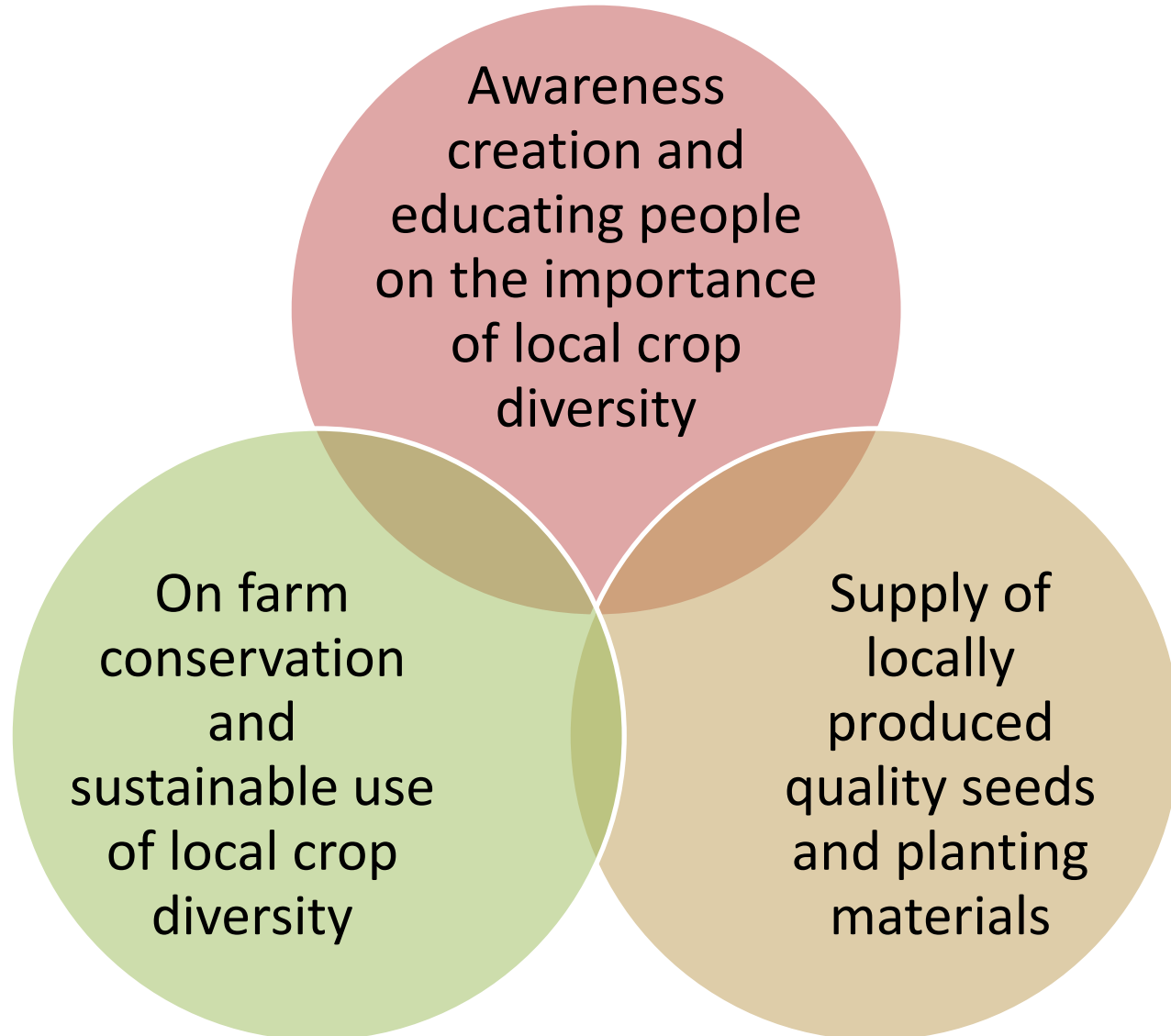
- Continuous loss of local varieties and traditional knowledge
- Increasing dependency on external input (seeds, tools, fertilizers, technology)
- Poor crop production and food insecurity



28 Community seed banks affiliated to the Community Seed Banks Association of Nepal



Major components of community seed banks



Multiple functions and services of community seed bank

1. On-farm conservation of local crop diversity (1,716 varieties of 75 crop species)

2. Seed production and marketing of local and improved varieties (500 mt/year)

3. PPB, grassroots breeding (23 varieties of 8 species registered)

4. Empowerment of smallholder farmers special women and build their agency

5. Responding to climate crises and disasters (Earthquake, Covid 19)

6. Income and local employment

7. Farmers' rights and seed/food sovereignty



Outcome

Contribute to improving food security, livelihoods and build resilience

Case example: Shivagunj CSB, Jhapa

Bulk seed storage



Kalonuniya rice seed production plot



Storage of small quantity seed



Rice diversity block maintained by Shivagunj CSB

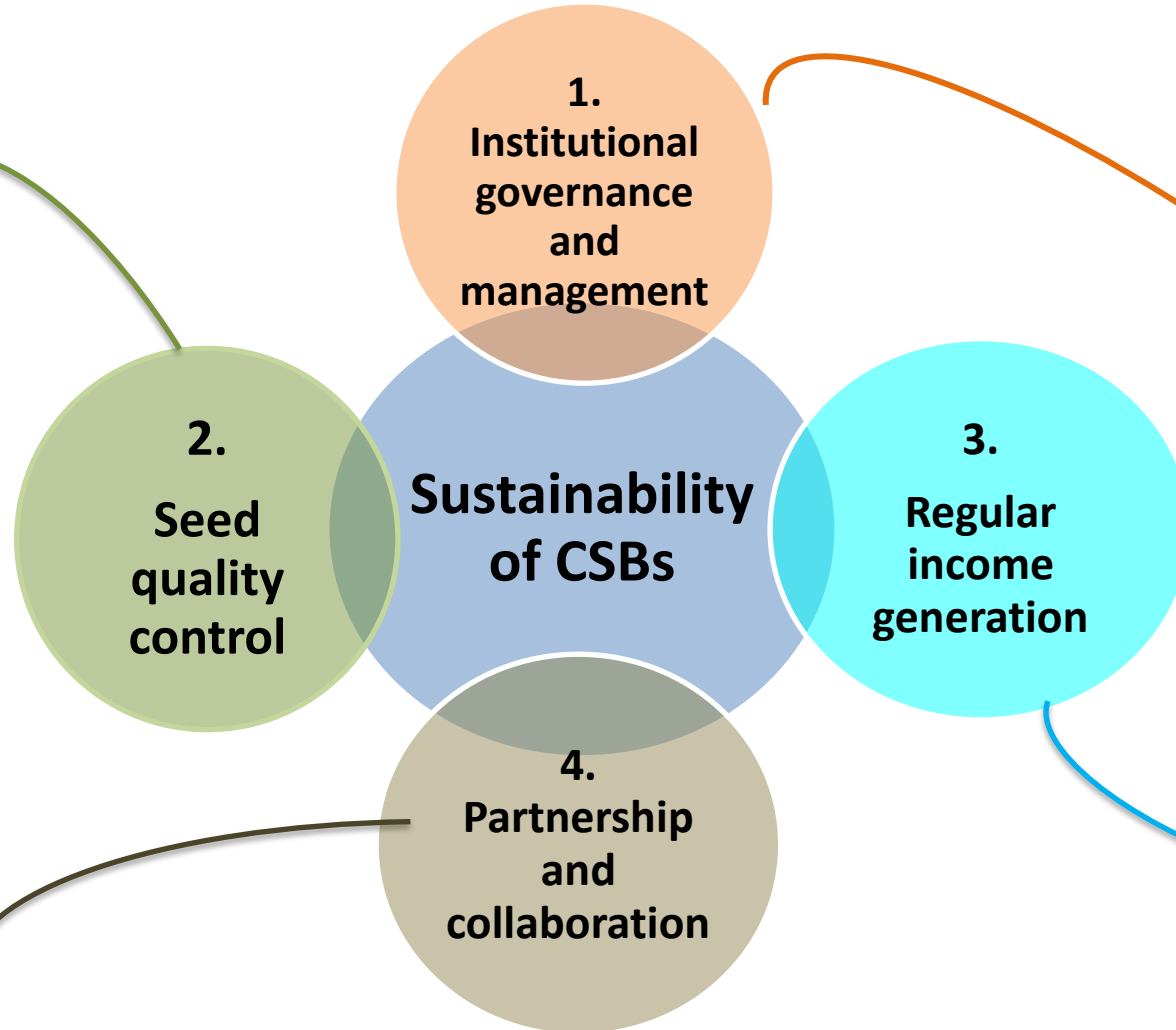


- Established in 2010, has 1070 members with 65% women,
- **Conservation:** Conserved 144 varieties of 20 crop species
- **PPB:** With technical support of LI-BIRD, registered *Kalonuniya* rice landrace, produces about 10 mt. seed every year. A rare variety has become common, municipality is also promoting this variety.
- **Local seed system:** Produces and markets about 50 mt. seeds of improved varieties, also a good source of income,
- **Income, local employment, sustainability:** Has a Community biodiversity management fund of USD 18,000 and seed fund of USD 20,000 (as of end of 2024)
- **Collaboration:** Established good collaboration with municipal government, district extension agency.
- **Empowerment:** Ex-leader of the CSB was elected as vice chairperson of the municipal government.



Sustainability measures

- Preparation of annual seed production plan and its execution
- Seed quality control - purity, moisture and safe storage
 - Mandatory germination testing and labeling before distribution.



- Trained human resource
- Development and execution of institutional policies
- Regular meeting and transparent decision-making process
- Financial auditing, general assembly and renewal
- Effective record keeping system and safe storage
- Assets management
- Involvement of youth and women in management, leadership

- Extension agency
 - Municipality
- National Genebank
- Community Seed Banks Association
 - NGOs/INGOs

- Community biodiversity management fund
- Seed fund
- Seed production and marketing
- Production and marketing of local variety-based food items
- Fruit, vegetable and fodder nursery



Community Seed Banks Association of Nepal: strategies to scaling up and mainstreaming CSBs

- Filling the gaps!



Support, Engage and Strengthen Member Community Seed Banks

- Keeping CSBs active,
- Revival of inactive CSBs
- Upgrading, governance, capacity building



Promote Community Seed Banks and Farmers' Rights

- Sharing Nepal's experiences
- Member of AHTEG/ITPGRFA



Provide Training and Technical Support Services

- Expanding CSBs in Nepal through training to community, government and NGOs staff



Advocacy for Wider Scaling up of Community Seed Bank Approach

- Federal MoALD, CCDABC
- Provincial Agriculture Development Directorates
- Local Governments



Community Seed Banks Association of Nepal: strategies to upgrading CSBs in Nepal

- Adding new elements on community seed banks or upgrading CSBs



Information corner, about the community seed bank



Small quantity seed storage corner



Bulk seed storage and record keeping corner



Consumers' corner (seed and food)



Some lessons from Nepal

- The sustainability of community seed banks is a global concern. In the case of Nepal, four factors are decisive: i) institutional governance, ii) seed quality control mechanisms, iii) regular income generation, and iv) collaboration with the formal/public sector.
- To scale up good models, a multipronged strategy could be followed: i) conduct policy dialogues with ministries and departments to integrate the community seed bank approach in policies, plans and programs, ii) influence/convince elected bodies at the local level and guide them to develop policies and plans and, iii) capacity building of civil servants, NGOs and communities through training/workshops.
- A network or association of community seed banks is vital to keep CSBs active and alive, provide technical support, keep connecting people and community seed banks, and scale up good models.



Thank you!



Further information: www.csbnepal.org, info@csbnepal.org