

# Diversifying Income Options for Rural Communities



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Rural communities in India and Vietnam rely on a small number of crops for food security and income generation. The effects of the green revolution in sacrificing species diversity for higher production of the main staple crops (mainly wheat and rice), is felt in both countries. Especially in degraded areas, diversification of farm options is necessary to provide sustainable income. Small farmers have the advantage of crop diversity in their locality, but have limited opportunity to upgrade this produce as a commodity. For successful uptake, efforts to increase or maintain on-farm diversity must be linked to market options and the opportunity for poor rural people to maximize their income from limited resources. However, small farmers are facing a severe challenge in raising and maintaining product quality for more discerning and demanding urban consumers, caused by lack of up-to-date processing, packaging and marketing skills.

## The Coalition to Diversify Income from Underused Crops (CoDI)

CoDI is a group of organisations in India and Vietnam led by the International Centre for Underutilised Crops. Funded by DFID's Research into Use (RIU) Program 2008-2011, the coalition will provide community services for production, post-harvest and marketing, to help disadvantaged people in India and Vietnam have better market access to generate sustainable income, and have more options for better land husbandry.



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## Activities

**Food Processing Parks** are at the core of the initiative, where people will come for training, information and business development services, processing, grading and other post-harvest activities and for wider support on available market opportunities, credit advice and links to other value chain actors at local, national and international levels. The Food Processing Parks will be set up by the project, but ultimately will be run and managed by the communities.

**Regular Village Crop Fairs** will be organised during which local fruits and plants will be evaluated and the best ones selected by the communities. This material will then be sent for further distribution and sale in **Community Germplasm Orchards** (nurseries) which will also serve as training grounds for plant propagation and nursery management skills. The project will thus provide sustainable empowerment, especially of women and tribal communities, and income generation at a significant scale.

**Annual Knowledge Fairs** are a major element of the communication strategy and will be organized in each country, to communicate and discuss the experience with wider stakeholders from the public and private sector. In addition, novel audio-visual information and training materials will be developed.



Photo Credit: BAIF

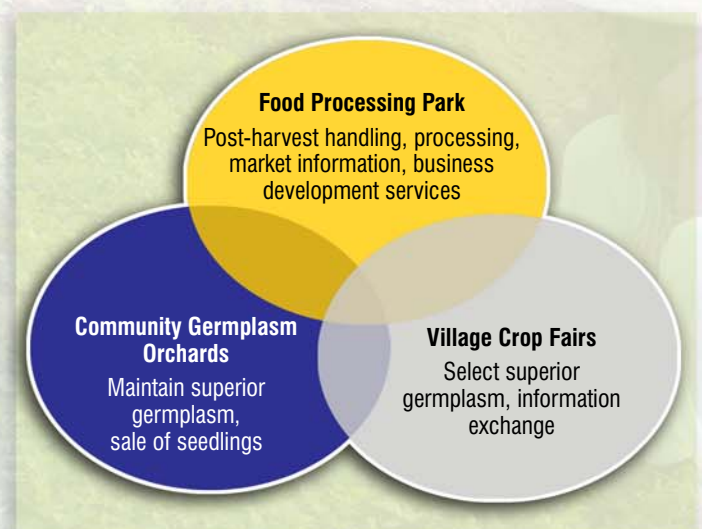




Photo Credit: CASRAD



Photo Credit: ICUC



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The project will build upon in-depth experience of each of the partners; in India on integrated rural development especially for tribal and marginalized farm communities; in Vietnam on making markets work for the poor by facilitating links between rural cooperatives and urban supermarkets, focussing on women farmers who form the majority of vegetable and traditional crops producers, in an increasing urban environment where many men move to the towns for off-farm employment.

The project has a comprehensive **Monitoring, Impact & Learning** system (MIL) to capture impacts on the beneficiaries' household income, skills development and related parameters. The MIL includes a **communication strategy** to facilitate dialogue and **influence policy**. This monitoring and learning component contributes to broader efforts, beyond the immediate countries involved, to develop mechanisms for spotting 'future winners' at an early project development stage.



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## Role of Partners



**BAIF** – Coordination and implementation of India activities; link to other rural development projects



**CASRAD** – Coordination of Vietnam activities and implementation in Hai Duong and Bac Kan Provinces; link to existing market links project (MALICA)



**FAVRI** – Implementation in Ha Noi and Thua Thien Hue Provinces; link to existing training resource centers



**WII** – Monitoring, impact and learning; environmental impact assessment; developing and implementing a communication strategy



**ICUC** – Project coordinator and facilitator; synthesis of information created by the partners on site into globally relevant public goods; overall financial management and reporting

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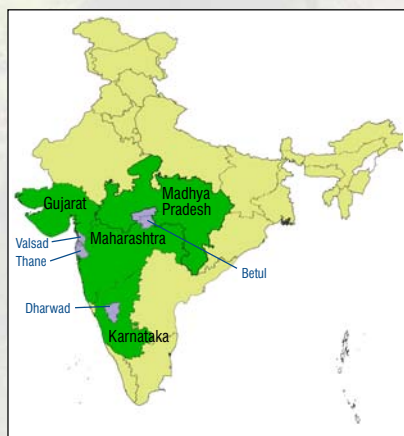
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Designed and Produced by WII/August 2008

## Project Locations

**India:**  
States of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh



**Vietnam:**  
Hai Duong, Ha Noi, Bac Kan and Thua Thien Hue Provinces

