

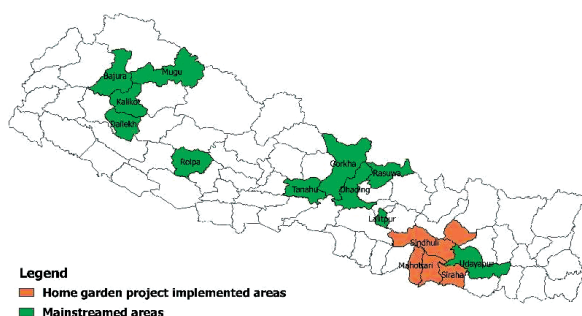


# Home Garden: An approach for improving family nutrition and building resilience



## Context

Group of Helping Hands (SAHAS) Nepal has been implementing Home garden approach since 2000 with the partnership from SDC. The programme was implemented in the districts of Okhaldhunga, Sindhuli, Mahottari, Siraha and Dhanusha from the eastern part of Nepal across different phases of the project. LIBIRD provided technical support for the project while the project was implemented by CDAFN in Mahottari and Dhanusha districts.



## Description

Home garden refers to the traditional land use system around a homestead where several species of plants and animals are grown and maintained by the household members and their diverse products are primarily intended for family consumption (Shrestha et al, 2002).

Diet diversification through food is arguably is most sustainable and affordable strategy to improve nutrition of majority of population, particularly poor people in the context of Nepal where the percentage of stunting, wasting and underweight are 36, 15 and 27 respectively. Home garden is an approach for dietary diversification which is also main contributor in obtaining food security and reducing hidden hunger. Many uncultivated, as well as neglected and underutilized species, can contribute in dietary diversity of local communities. There could be reduction in expenditure for purchasing vegetables as well as can receive cash income from home gardens. This also indicates that home garden is not only the source of diverse food and nutrition and biological conservation sites, but is can be also means for income generation. Involving women





and marginalized groups of the society in home gardening will empower them by making financially secure. Home gardening activities are centred on women and it is also women friendly in the context of increasing out-migration of males from the rural areas.

In the context of changing climate, home garden can be seen as a viable option for adaptation process. Low cost technologies and practices adopted in home gardens can help in optimum utilization of soil moisture and nutrition, and diversification of crops and varieties ensures stable yield and income, thus increasing the resilience capacity of resource poor farmers against climate change.

Home garden can play an important role in empowering women and disadvantaged groups as well as to ensure continuous supply of nutritious food throughout the year. In our situation where food security is becoming growing problem and depletion of genetic resources is alarmingly increasing, home garden not only ensures achieving food security but also helps in crop diversification, genetic resource conservation and adaptation against climate change.

## Benefits of Home garden

- Improve family nutrition by diversifying diets and contribute to food security
- Sale of surplus small livestock, vegetables



and fruits including mushroom contribute to family income and help poor and vulnerable families

- Use of low input agriculture techniques such as local seeds, soil-water management practices and integrated farming.
- Less labor intensive and women friendly
- Preserve local and neglected crop varieties
- Increase resilience of small farmers against climate related risks

## Components of Home garden

Vegetables, Fruits, Small animals, Poultry, Honey bees, Fish, Mushroom, Fodder & forage, Ornamental plants and Spices

## Low cost Home garden management

Home garden is a low input farming which seeks to optimize the use of internal production inputs like on-farm resources while reduce the use of external production inputs like chemical fertilizers, pesticides, etc. to lower production cost, reduce pesticide residues in food, to reduce a farmer's overall risk, and to increase both short- and long-term farm profitability. Space, soil, water and pest are optimally managed using low cost management practices such as wastewater collection, urine use, biopesticides, vermicompost, nursery bed, etc. to promote agro-biodiversity and ecological farming. Low cost technologies ensure profitability for women and disadvantaged farmers as these do not need huge investment and are not labor intensive benefitting most farmers.

Contact and further resources:

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