



TSIRANG ORGANIC SEEDS PROJECT

Bhutan

Join our Support Network
Seeds of Hope and Prosperity

For the local communities in Tsirang, learning to grow seeds and setting up a local and international distribution network will bring prosperity, happiness and re-engagement of young people with farming.

Why we need your support?

Organic seeds are essential for the resilience and sustainability of our food systems. Even in Bhutan with a “100% organic country” policy this proves to be an enormous challenge. Farmers increasingly depend on seeds they buy, mostly from huge companies who promote chemical farming and protect their interest with patents. Seeds alarmingly adapt to chemical production methods based on artificial fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. Farmers who grow ‘the organic way’ face weakened seeds if they rely on conventional seeds available in the market. Only systematic production of high quality organic seeds will save the future of sustainable agriculture, our health and the cultural values implicate in the human mission to care for the Earth.

In order to bring back seed production in their own hands, farmers often have to start at zero. In many countries there is no organic seeds supply system and regulatory frameworks are hostile to small-scale participatory seed production and distribution initiatives. Economic perspectives are slim in a short term perspective.

Meet with Dilip Kumar Subba, Project Manager

Dilip Kumar Subba does not fear these enormous challenges. He is an **experienced seeds grower** in Bhutan.

Dilip Kumar Subba, organic vegetable seeds producer

For over ten years Dilip worked in a well-known small-scale seed production company. He does not reject innovation but resists to follow the trend in commercial seed breeding: compromise with the mainstream and adapt to the industrial farming approach. He decided to relocate his family to Tsirang district in central Bhutan and go back to his remote village-community to start organic seed production for the market. He supports the idea that we should co-create “mindful markets” where long term perspectives, even the interests of future generations, prevail over short term gains.



Feasible venture

Building an organic seeds production base in Dilip’s community and a seeds network in Bhutan will result in a feasible venture.

Organic seed production and experimentation in the field

Initially Dilip will set up a one person venture and register as an organic company. The National Organic Programme (NOP) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests as well as the College of Natural Resources (CNR) of the Royal University of Bhutan recognize the continuous need for high quality organic vegetable seeds among farmers in Bhutan. Vegetable growers in tropical zones in the region, including member organisations of the Towards Organic Asia (TOA) network, face a growing demand for organic non-tropical vegetables like carrots, cabbage, broccoli etc. They can grow the species, but are unable to breed the temperate zone seeds under tropical circumstances. They are eager to import organic seeds from Bhutan.



For the local communities in Tsirang, learning (again) to grow seeds and setting up a local and international distribution network will bring prosperity, happiness and re-engagement of young people with farming.

Ultimately we should understand seeds networks, and indeed our food systems, as “commons”. This vision engages us all in an exciting and joyful collective learning process.

Your support

Dilip's courageous efforts cannot succeed without compassionate support from a broad network of friends and likeminded souls who are mindful of the challenges he faces. A contemporary approach to what in Thai culture is venerated as “dana” (generosity) is now shaped as a heart-to-heart “crowd funding” campaign to guarantee Dilip his material needs in the first three years of the project. Based on experiences during the first harvest in 2017 we commit to convene a workshop in early 2018 to evaluate the process and identify the needs and opportunities of the Tsirang organic seeds venture in the coming decade. Thank you for joining our collective learning process.

Information (For TSIRANG ORGANIC SEEDS PROJECT)

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Gum Sha Aung
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