Community Biodiversity Management (CBM) is a community-driven participatory approach to empowering local farmer groups to organize themselves and develop strategies that support the on-farm management of agricultural biodiversity.

Research Question: Will the CBM process help the community realize the importance of conservation and the sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity?

General Framework and Desired Outputs

Activity 1: Develop strong local institutions  
Output 1: Empowered communities  

Activity 2: Implement good practices  
Output 2: Enhanced livelihoods  

Activity 3: Enhance agricultural knowledge  
Output 3: Improved use of agricultural biodiversity  

Note: These three activities should be mutually supported to promote long-term sustainability of the CBM.

Essential Tools and Their Uses

1. **Four Cell Analysis**: measure the abundance and distribution of crop varieties within a farming community.  
2. **Custodian Farmers**: consolidate the roles and rights of farmers and create connections with local community members and organizations.  
3. **Community Seed Catalogues**: document and disseminate local crop knowledge.  
4. **Diversity & Food Fairs**: display local diversity and sensitize the community to the importance of agricultural biodiversity.  

Note: While multiple tools are used in the CBM process, the above four are central to its values and proper implementation.

Steps in the CBM Implementation

**Step 1: Selecting the site and community**

- Select the site for CBM from centres of diversity in the region.
- Important characteristics to consider: ecosystem diversity, intraspecific diversity of target crops, history of crop cultivation or gathering, level of genetic erosion, presence of specific crop adaptations, community interest.

**Step 2: Understanding the local context**

- Schedule and host multiple, staggered activities designed to create an understanding of the specific needs of any future local interventions.
- Activities to include: participatory rural appraisal, diversity assessment, baseline survey, documentation of traditional knowledge.
- Tools to use alongside the above activities: four cell analyses, Venn diagrams, timelines, focus group discussions, questionnaires.

Bioversity International is a research-for-development organization that provides scientific evidence of the role that on-farm and wild agricultural and forest biodiversity can play in a more nutritious, resilient, productive and adaptable food and agricultural system. [www.bioversityinternational.org](http://www.bioversityinternational.org)
### Step 3: Formalizing working modality
- Create collaborative partnerships with members of the community by building upon existing local organizations.
- Develop strong leadership structures within these organizations that will provide guidance to farmers and enforce cooperation from the community.

### Step 4: Building community awareness
- Use diversity and food fairs to sensitize the community to the importance and value of agricultural biodiversity.
- Engage youth, women and policymakers at different levels in the process.

### Step 5: Capacity building
- Identify and work with local leaders to increase community confidence, efficiency, and social mobilization capacity.
- Hold training events with multiple community groups to teach good farming practices, decision making, structural organization and other related topics. Make sure to fit the training to the specific needs of the community based organization, especially when discussing farming practices.

### Step 6: Consolidating the community role
- Encourage the use of a bottom-up decision making process to enable local groups to operate separately from the implementing organization.
- Promote the simultaneous planning of conservation and development.
- For conservation, suggest practical actions, like: diversity blocks, nurseries and seed banks.
- Facilitate interventions that help understand and support the communities specific need for development and conservation advancements.

### Step 7: Establishing a CBM fund
- Set up a fund for community empowerment. Allow the community to make financial decisions independently with the money in this fund.
- Help create a local framework for the use of funds, especially in reference to providing individual loans and reproducing seed.
- Suggest the following reasons to mobilize funds: assisting resource poor farmers, sustaining local institutions, paying for conservation practices, benefit sharing of genetic resources.

### Step 8: Reviewing the community action plans
- Support local leaders in a review of the progress made throughout the CBM process and current community action plans.
- Create a platform for social learning, and adjust plans if necessary.

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