Where Millet Began:

Henggouzi Village's Journey Toward Climate Resilience

Community Overview

Henggouzi Village, Inner Mongolia

The origin of millet

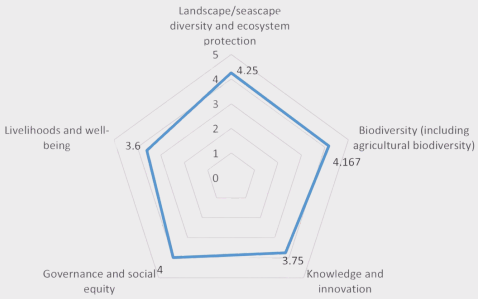
Henggouzi Village, Aohan Banner,
Inner Mongolia, China

- **Global Recognition:** In 2012, Aohan's traditional dryland agriculture system was designated by FAO as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS)
- **Area:** ~3,000 mu (200 hectares)
- **Land Composition**: 50% cultivated land, 50% forest
- **Population:** 44 households, 199 residents
- **Farming Practices:** Traditional dryland farming methods maintained across generations
- **Income:** Annual per-capita income of 10,500 CNY (approx. 1,475 USD)
- **Main Livelihoods:** Agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry
- **Key Crops:** Millet, corn, sorghum, mung beans, foxtail millet, soybeans, buckwheat, and other dryland crops

Community Resilience Assessment

With the development of the social economy, local varieties have rapidly decreased and disappeared in the area. Meanwhile, the impact of climate change has become increasingly evident in recent years, with reduced precipitation and delayed rainy seasons severely affecting local agricultural production. How to utilize and develop the rich biodiversity in the region to cope with climate change and increase farmers' income has become a matter worth exploring.

By the end of 2024, with the support of Oxfam Hong Kong, the Farmers' Seed Network (FSN) conducted a community resilience assessment in Henggouzi Village. They discussed 20 item 5-point Likert scale—yielded the following scores: Landscape Diversity & Ecosystem Protection (4.25), Biodiversity (4.167), Livelihoods & Well-being (3.6), Knowledge & Innovation (3.75), and Governance & Social Equity (4.00). **It can be seen that the scores in knowledge and innovation, livelihood and well-being are the focus of the next step of actions.**



Radar Chart of Socio-Ecological-Production Landscape Resilience Assessment in Henggouzi Village

Comparative experiment of traditional millet landrace varieties

Climate Actions (2024-2025)

1. Knowledge and Innovation

- **Establishing community seed banks:** More than 100 local varieties have been collected and stored. It has also become a public space for the community.

- **Improving soils through composting:** Farmers use forest humus soil combined with farmyard manure for composting, along with microbial agents and enzymes. Through composting, they improve soil health, enhance climate adaptability, and promote ecological planting.

2. Livelihood and well-being

- **Promoting the use and sales of ecological products from local varieties:** The project continues the conservation of local varieties, as well as participatory breeding and evolutionary breeding experiments, producing “colorful millet.”

- **Introducing small-scale agricultural machinery:** The project supports the community in introducing forklifts, manure trucks, and other equipment for composting and sowing, which helps increase farmers’ motivation to compost. It also provides dryers to help farmers dry mushrooms collected from the forest during the rainy season, increasing household income.

Local varieties of millet grown in Henggouzi

Farmers visit rice fields with enzyme compost

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