



WINNER TRANSFORMATIONAL SOLUTIONS

Women Barefoot Ecologists bridge ancestral knowledge with modern science to protect their ecosystems

Description of the project:

Women Barefoot Ecologists are 20 indigenous women from Tamil Nādu and Kerala who have strengthened their capacities to link Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with modern scientific methods to observe and monitor climate impacts on their forests, rivers, and farms. Practical observation with village elders as well as data collection and analysis – using digital modelling – enable local women groups to lead appropriate and adapted climate and conservation actions in their communities. Supported by Keystone Foundation, they have launched forest nurseries, community kitchen gardens, water source protection initiatives, and soon to come: a seed keeping social enterprise.



TRANSFORMATIVE OUTCOMES

Climate impact	
	Unique combination of ancestral and modern science to document climate impacts identifying and monitoring specific ecological indicators.
	Innovative climate solutions – analog forestry with model plots, seed banks – are created and utilised.
	Promotion of autonomous ecosystem restoration and food sovereignty.
Gender impact	
	Indigenous women are recognized as knowledge bearers and climate action leaders.
	Trainings on Women Environmental Human Right Defenders.
	Gender integration in the governance and management of protected areas.
Scalability / replicability	
	Partnered with the International Analog Forestry Network (IAFN) to promote local engagement and showcase climate resilient farming methods.
	Creation of a locally owned enterprise for seed keeping.
	Capacity building model for indigenous and local communities: forest nurseries, nature education, community kitchen gardens, water conservation activities.



CONTACT



www.keystone-foundation.org

Country: India
Organisation: Keystone Foundation
Representative: Bhavya George
Email: bhavya@keystone-foundation.org

Address: Keystone Centre PB 35, Groves Hill Road Kotagiri 643 217 Nilgiris District, Tamil Nadu
Financially supported by: IAFN- International Analog Forestry Network, Rohini Nilekani Philanthropy, GAGGA

