

4. Youth & Community Engagement

Engaging youth and the wider community was central to building long-term climate resilience. The project established environmental clubs in 15 government schools, encouraging students to take part in climate action initiatives and awareness activities. Community-wide campaigns were conducted using creative approaches such as street plays, posters, and digital media to promote environmental awareness and highlight the leadership role of women in sustainability efforts.

In addition, multi-stakeholder forums were organized to bring together local Panchayats, government departments, community representatives, and other stakeholders to share knowledge, strengthen collaboration, and promote inclusive climate governance.



IMPACT & RESULTS ACHIEVED

Empowered Communities

The project empowered more than 1000 women with the skills and knowledge required to lead climate-resilient practices, water governance initiatives, and eco-enterprises within their communities. At the same time, 500 youth were equipped with environmental leadership skills and practical knowledge, enabling them to actively contribute to climate action and community development.

Stronger Local Systems

Through the establishment of 30 village-level committees, the project strengthened local governance systems and ensured greater participation of marginalized groups in climate planning. These committees played a key role in facilitating community-led decision-making and sustaining project interventions.



Improved Water Security

Water security improved significantly in at least 20 vulnerable villages through the implementation of rainwater harvesting systems, watershed development initiatives, and community-managed water resources. These measures enhanced access to water and reduced the impact of climate-induced water scarcity.



Restored Ecosystems

The restoration of 50 hectares of degraded coastal and estuarine ecosystems, including the Manakudy Estuary, contributed to improved biodiversity, strengthened coastal protection, and enhanced ecological balance. Community participation in these efforts also fostered a strong sense of ownership and responsibility toward environmental conservation.



Knowledge & Sustainability

The project documented indigenous ecological practices through youth-led research efforts and integrated this knowledge into community-based climate adaptation strategies. This approach preserved cultural heritage and ensured that traditional wisdom contributed to sustainable and context-specific solutions.

Future Leaders

By establishing school-based environmental clubs and supporting youth-led campaigns, the project nurtured a new generation of environmentally conscious leaders committed to sustainable development and climate action.

Policy Influence

The project facilitated dialogue between community groups and government stakeholders, ensuring that local experiences and successful practices informed district-level climate policies. This strengthened collaboration and contributed to more inclusive and effective climate governance.

OUR APPROACH & CALL TO ACTION

Our Approach

The project adopted a community-driven and participatory approach that placed women and youth at the center of climate action. It integrated traditional ecological knowledge with scientific solutions to ensure context-specific and sustainable outcomes. By building strong partnerships with local governance systems and focusing on long-term resilience, the project ensured that its impact extended beyond the implementation period.

Why This Mattered

This initiative went beyond addressing immediate climate challenges by restoring dignity and leadership to marginalized communities. It protected ecosystems that sustained livelihoods while creating a scalable and replicable model for climate resilience in coastal regions. The project demonstrated how local knowledge and collective action drove meaningful and lasting environmental change.

Call to Action

We invite partners and donors to join us in empowering vulnerable coastal communities, strengthening grassroots climate resilience, and promoting sustainable, community-led environmental solutions. Together, we can work towards creating a future where communities are not only protected from climate risks but also become active leaders in shaping resilient and sustainable ecosystems.

Together, We Built Resilient Futures



CFLI/FCIL
Canada Fund for Local Initiatives
Fonds canadien d'initiatives locales

ADVANCING CLIMATE RESILIENCE



HEAL

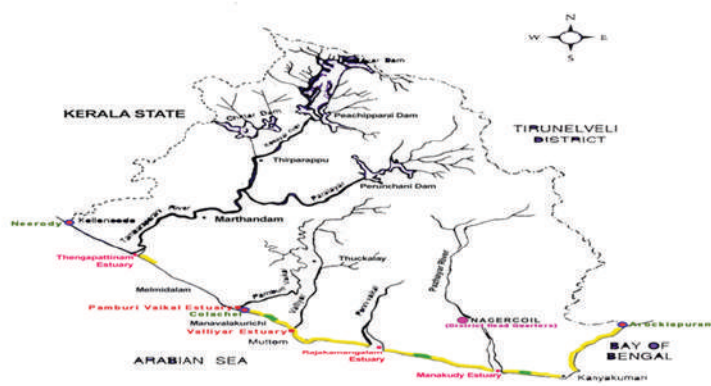
📍 22 C, Scott Nagar, Near Scott Christian College, Nagercoil - 629003, K.K. District, Tamil Nadu

✉ heal_m@hotmail.com
siluvaivasthian@gmail.com

📞 +91 9443449943, 8870898141

Building Climate Resilient Coastal Communities

Empowered Coastal Communities in Kanyakumari District through *“Advancing Climate Resilience by strengthening women, youth, and indigenous leadership in community led-adaptation, water management, and ecosystem restoration”* in 30 Coastal Villages, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu.



“Strengthened resilience where land met sea – through people, knowledge, and sustainable action.”

THE NEED & OUR VISION

The Need

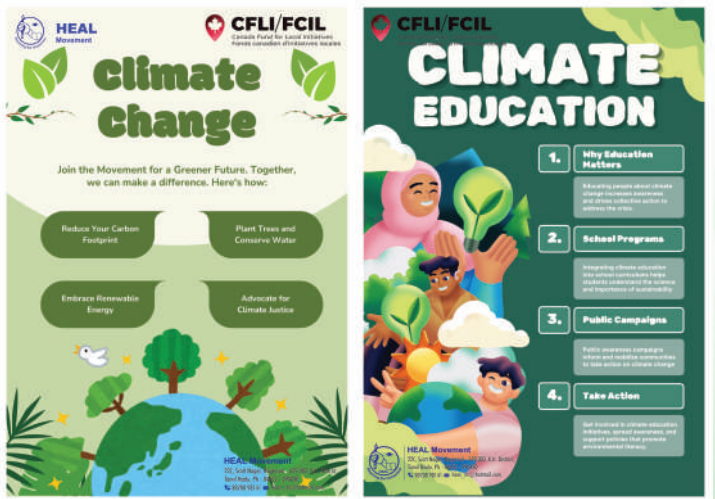
Coastal communities in Kanyakumari District were on the frontline of climate change. Women, youth, and indigenous fisherfolk increasingly faced declining water security due to saltwater intrusion, along with severe coastal erosion and biodiversity loss. These environmental changes disrupted traditional livelihoods and weakened the economic stability of families. At the same time, these communities had limited participation in local governance and decision-making processes, which restricted their ability to influence climate adaptation strategies. Despite their deep connection with natural resources, indigenous ecological knowledge remained underutilized and insufficiently integrated into formal climate responses.

Our Vision

The project envisioned building climate-resilient coastal communities by empowering women, youth, and indigenous fisherfolk to become leaders in climate adaptation, sustainable water management, and biodiversity conservation. It ensured that these groups were not just beneficiaries but active drivers of change within their communities.

Project Goal

The goal of this project was to create inclusive, community-driven platforms that enabled women, youth, and indigenous fisherfolk to actively engage in environmental decision-making. By integrating scientific approaches with traditional ecological knowledge, the project promoted sustainable, locally owned solutions that strengthened resilience to climate change.



WHAT WE DID? (KEY INTERVENTIONS)

1.Capacity Building & Community Empowerment

The project focused on strengthening the knowledge and leadership capacity of both youth and women in coastal communities. A total of 500 youth were trained in climate change awareness, biodiversity conservation, leadership skills, and environmental advocacy through structured training programs. At the same time, 1000 women received capacity-building support in areas such as water conservation, climate-resilient agriculture, and eco-friendly entrepreneurship, enabling them to lead sustainable initiatives within their communities.

In addition, participatory community consultations were conducted across 30 coastal villages to assess climate risks, identify vulnerabilities, and document traditional adaptation practices, ensuring that local voices shaped the project's interventions.



A Community-Led Initiative for Climate Adaptation, Water Security & Biodiversity Conservation

2. Strengthening Local Governance

To enhance community participation in climate decision-making, the project facilitated the formation of 30 village-level Climate Adaptation Committees. These committees were inclusive in nature, ensuring at least 50 percent representation of women and 30 percent participation of youth. Through orientation and continuous support, these committees were equipped to lead local climate planning, manage resources effectively, and coordinate adaptation actions at the village level.



3. Ecosystem Restoration & Water Security

The project undertook ecosystem restoration activities to strengthen natural defenses against climate impacts. This included the restoration of 50 hectares of degraded coastal ecosystems through community-led efforts, with a particular focus on mangrove regeneration in the Manakudy Estuary. Alongside ecological restoration, the project addressed water scarcity by installing rainwater harvesting systems and developing watershed management structures in vulnerable villages. These interventions enhanced water availability and improved long-term water security for coastal communities.



In Schools In Community