



CFI Research Grant Planning Workshop

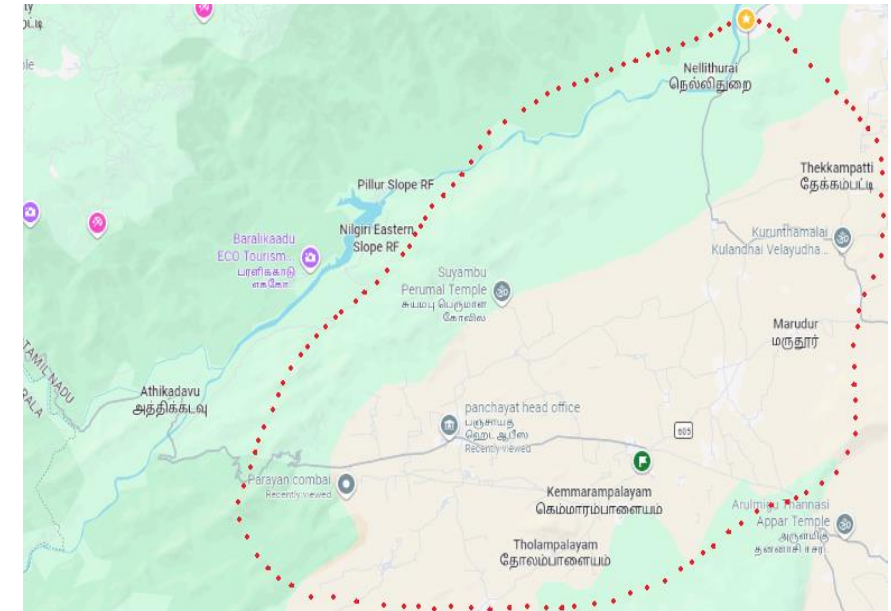
16-18 June 2026
Jain Hills, Jalgaon

Rekha R Warriar
16 June 2026

1. Project Snapshot



- Project title: **Forests of the future: empowering indigenous women through food forests**
- Institution: ICFRE – Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), Coimbatore
- Principal Investigator: **Rekha R Warriar**
- Project duration: **Three Years (May 2026 to May 2029)**
- Budget: **32967 USD**
- Project location(s): **Forest fringe areas of Anaikatti, Tamil Nadu**
Hilly/Foothill region



2. Landscape, problem statement & target communities



Agroecological context

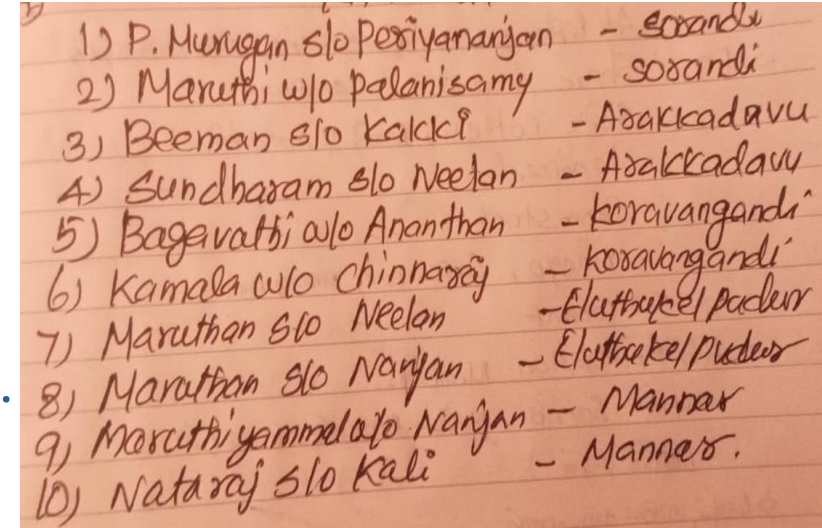
- Forest-fringe villages in Anaikatti, Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), located in the foothills of the Western Ghats. Western Agro-Climatic Zone with annual rainfall of 1,000–1,200 mm.
- Predominantly red loamy soils; agriculture is largely rainfed.
- Small and marginal tribal landholdings (<1 ha) with degraded scrublands and forest-edge ecosystems.
- Suitable for climate-resilient, multi-layer food forest systems.

Key challenges being addressed

- Land degradation, soil erosion, and declining soil fertility.
- Low agricultural productivity and increasing climate variability.
- High dependence on seasonal wage labour and forest resources.
- Poor dietary diversity and low fruit consumption.
- Micronutrient deficiencies and seasonal food insecurity.
- Limited access to quality planting materials and stable income sources.

Target beneficiaries

- Focus on women-led households, nutritionally vulnerable families, and small/marginal farmers.**



Project landscape



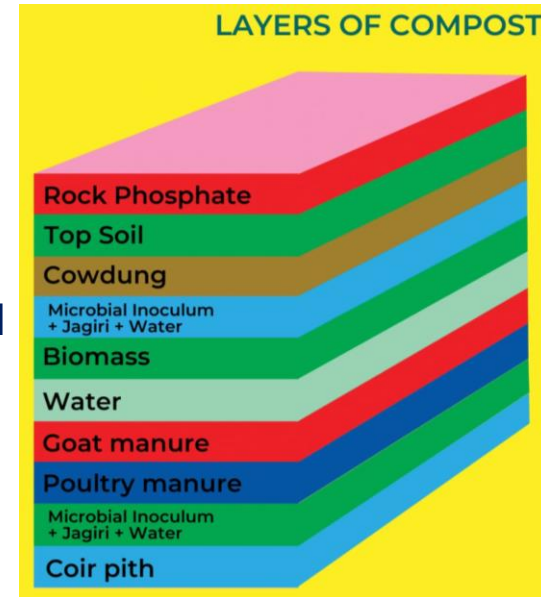
Sites Finalisation



3. Year-1 Implementation plan *Summarize key activities planned*

during Year 1, which will Include:

- Site establishment
 - **Identification of Sites (Completed)**
 - **Layout of plots**
 - **Protection of plots - Fencing**
 - **Arrangements for Irrigation wherever required**
- Nursery development activities
 - **Preparation of Compost (50 days)**
 - **Arrangements for planting material**
 - **Planting during the NE Monsoon**
- Demonstrations sites
 - **All the sites would serve as demo sites**
- Capacity building programme planned
 - **One programme on maintenance of the sites**
- Target community engagement
 - **Partnership with the ADI Federation**
 - **Participatory planning workshops for species selection**
 - **Community-led monitoring and peer learning**



4. Fruit Species and production models

Key fruit species promoted

Vitamin C-rich: Amla, guava, lemon

Vitamin A & antioxidants: Mango, papaya

Iron absorption enhancers: Citrus and amla

Dietary fibre & energy: Banana, jackfruit, sapota

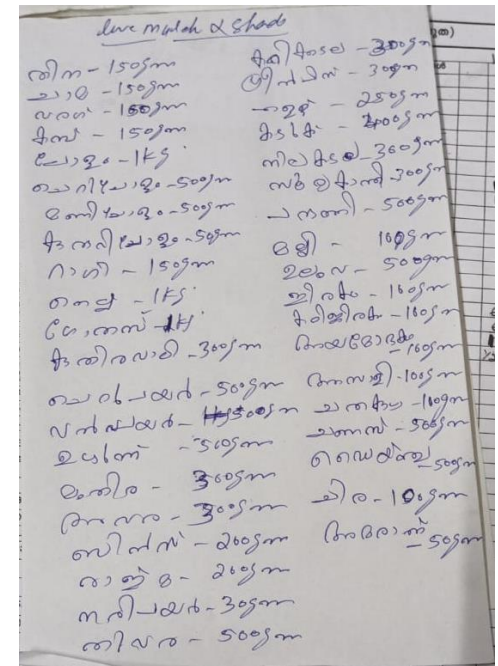
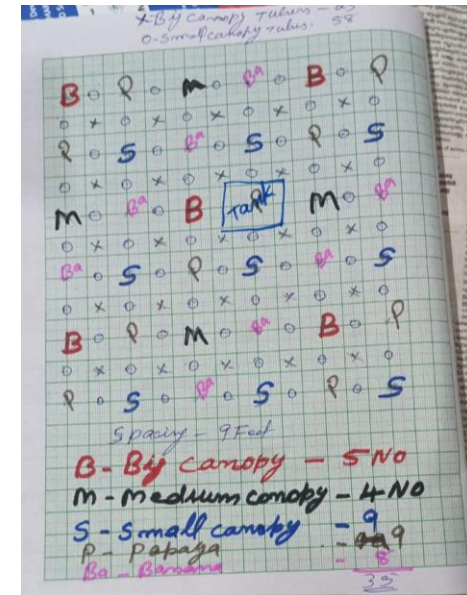
Micronutrient-dense traditional foods: Drumstick and minor forest fruits

These species directly address identified fruit consumption gaps and micronutrient deficiencies.

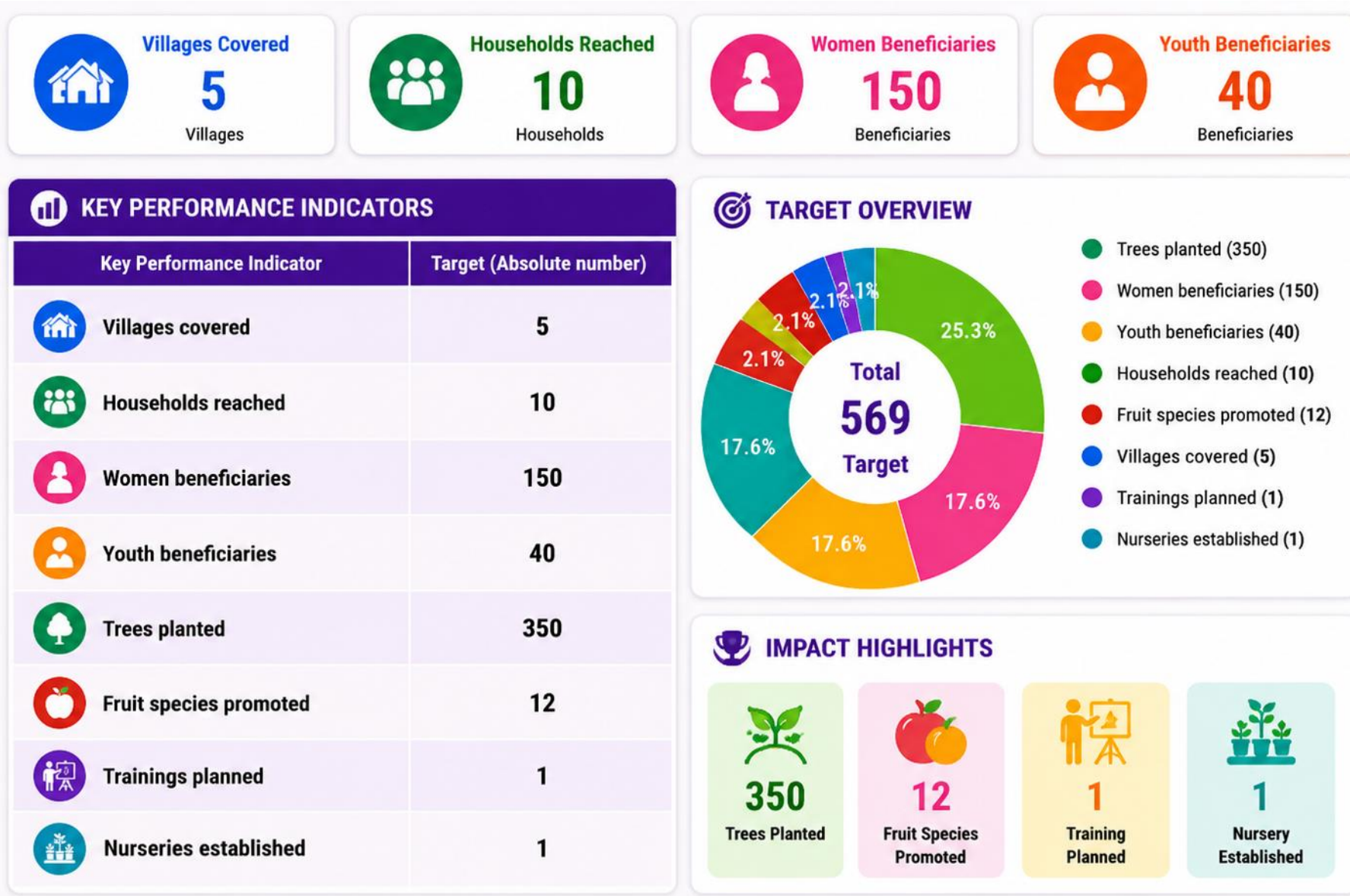
The species have been selected in consultation with the ADI federation. Low-cost drip irrigation, mulching, and organic inputs (Jeevamrutham, FYM) will be used.

The ADI Federation will lead implementation, strengthening women-centred governance and post-harvest value addition.

Production systems to be demonstrated – Food Forest - Closest to a Homestead orchards and a Nutrition garden



5. Year-1 Targets and deliverables :



6. Collaboration Opportunities (Offer and Ask)



What we can offer	Support we need
Technical expertise on food forest design, agroforestry systems, species selection, and plantation management	Subsidized supply of quality fruit tree saplings and planting material for PVTG communities
Training and capacity building for PVTG women and youth on nursery raising, planting, maintenance, value addition, and entrepreneurship	Subsidies for Drip irrigation systems, water storage tanks, and micro-irrigation support for PVTG communities
Establishment of demonstration food forest plots showcasing climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive agroforestry models	Protective fencing, solar fencing, live fencing, or other wildlife deterrent measures to prevent crop damage
Scientific monitoring of plant growth, survival, soil health, biodiversity, and ecological impacts	Support from Forest Department and Tribal Welfare Department for crop protection in forest-fringe areas
Supply of technical know-how, planting protocols, and extension support	Market linkages, aggregation, and value-addition support for fruits and non-timber forest products

7. Baseline, MEL and Next Steps :



Timeline	Milestone	Key Activities	Expected Outputs
Months 1-2	Baseline Assessment and Planning	- Mapping and geo-referencing of 10 pilot food forest plots in forest-fringe areas. - Documentation of soil characteristics, water resources, and traditional cultivation practices through household baseline surveys. - Participatory consultations and workshops with ADI Federation leaders, women beneficiaries, and stakeholders. - Finalising agreements with partners and beneficiaries. - Approvals from line departments (Forest, tribal welfare, revenue) - Finalisation of species mix and food forest layout.	- Baseline database established. 10 pilot plots identified and mapped. - Food forest designs prepared. - Beneficiary households selected and oriented.
Months 4-9	Establishment of Food Forests	- Site preparation, pit digging, and soil improvement measures. - Protection measures against wildlife - Installation of irrigation systems and water conservation structures. - Planting of selected fruit, support, medicinal, and multipurpose species following the 7-layer food forest model. - Application of mulching, composting, and organic soil amendments using locally available biomass. - Capacity building and hands-on training for women and youth beneficiaries.	- Food forests established in selected sites. - Fruit and support species planted. - Irrigation systems operational. - Beneficiaries trained in food forest management.

7. Baseline, MEL and Next Steps :



Timeline	Milestone	Key Activities	Expected Outputs
Months 10-24	Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptive Management	• Periodic monitoring of plant survival, growth rate, canopy development, and overall health. • Documentation of yields from annual and short-duration crops across seasons. • Assessment of resilience indicators such as soil organic matter and pest incidence. • Collection of beneficiary feedback on ease of management, nutrition benefits, livelihood opportunities, and challenges. • Mid-term evaluation and adaptive management interventions as required.	• Survival and growth performance records. • Seasonal production data. • Soil and resilience monitoring reports. • Community feedback and lessons learned documented. • Improved management practices adopted.

8.Budget summary, risk & mitigation strategy:

Personnel	Supplies & Services, including Planting material and field trials	Travel	Monitoring, documentation and publication	Training & Workshops	Equipment, including irrigation structures	Field days	Overhead/ Administration charges (10%)	Total
9500	10800	1500	1950	2970	2150	1100	2997	32967

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Poor plant survival/growth	Medium	High	Use native species, improve soil with compost, conduct baseline assessments
Water scarcity	High	High	Install gravity-fed drip systems, harvest rainwater, choose drought-tolerant varieties
Pest and disease outbreaks	Medium	Medium	Promote biodiversity, use natural repellents, monitor regularly
Community disengagement	Medium	High	Involve ADI leaders, host field days, highlight nutritional and income benefits
Knowledge gaps	High	Medium	Provide vernacular manuals, hands-on training, peer learning
Climate variability	Medium	High	Diversify species, build soil organic matter, create microclimates with agroforestry



Thanks