



UPDATES

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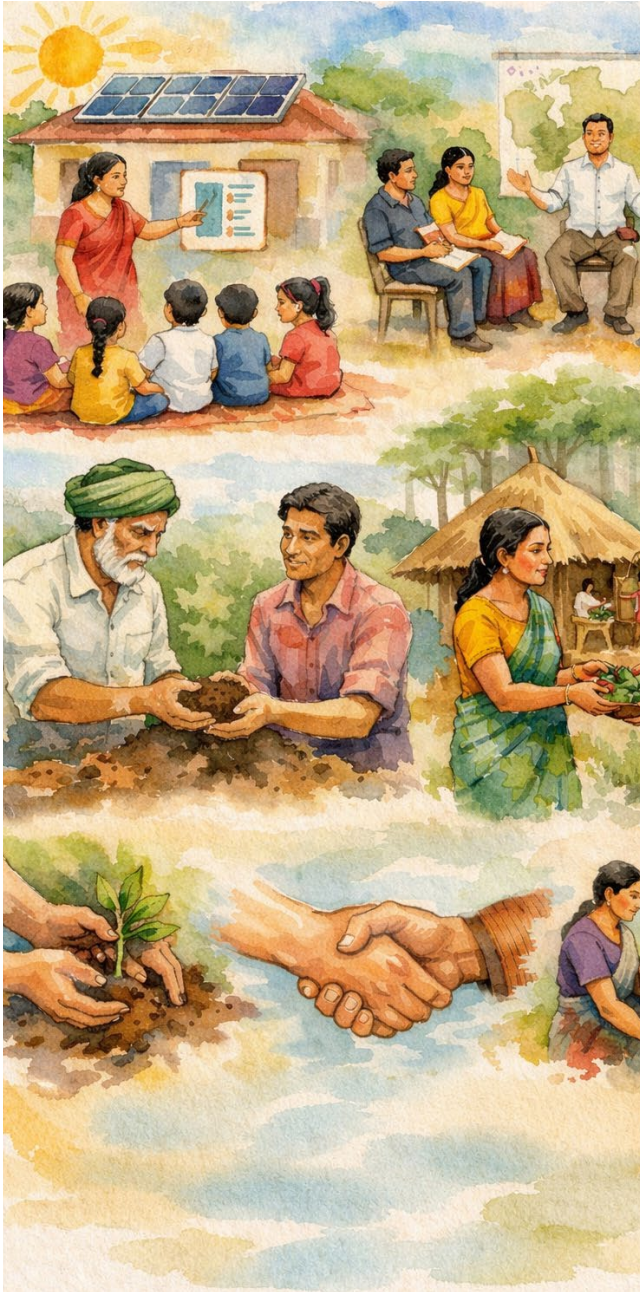
February 2026



INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE
WOMAN FARMER
2026

2026





January unfolded as a month of steady engagement and learning. Across Thanal's work, teams focused on strengthening systems already in place, supporting communities through training, follow-up, and shared problem-solving. From solar awareness at Anganwadis and inter-state learning on carbon-neutral governance to farmer-led soil learning and livelihood support in forest-edge hamlets, the month reflected the value of continuity. These efforts show how climate action and community resilience are built through attention, trust, and everyday practice rather than quick outcomes.

Carbon Neutral Meenangadi

Learning, Systems, and Community Engagement

Building Solar Awareness in Anganwadis

As part of the Angan Jyothi Programme under the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi initiative, solar awareness sessions were held at Thachambath Anganwadi on 8 January and Mundanadapp Anganwadi on 30 January. The sessions brought together parents of Anganwadi children to understand carbon neutrality, renewable energy, and the role of solar power in community institutions.

Participants were introduced to Thanal's work and the objectives of the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi project, followed by an explanation of the 5 kW rooftop solar systems installed at the Anganwadis. The discussions highlighted how solar energy supports clean power generation, reduces electricity costs, and contributes to long-term environmental sustainability. Parents actively engaged with questions on household solar systems, costs, and benefits, reflecting growing interest in renewable energy at the community level.



Inter-State Learning Through Exposure Visits



During January, Meenangadi hosted three exposure visits from officials of the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, Government of Karnataka, with participation ranging from 34 to 37 members across the visits. The visits were designed to facilitate practical learning and exchange around carbon-neutral local governance.

Field visits covered key CNM locations including the Material Collection Facility, Green Facilitation Centre, Anganwadis, schools, health centres, temples, and household organic farming sites. Officials were introduced to initiatives such as decentralised waste management, composting models, institutional and household-level solar installations, climate literacy campaigns, Tree Banking schemes, Oxygen Park development, and special Grama Sabhas focused on climate action.

Interactive sessions with the Panchayat

President, Vice President, ward members, and administrative staff provided insight into governance structures, planning processes, departmental coordination, and monitoring mechanisms. Thanal presented the CNM methodology in detail, explaining how community participation, data-driven planning, and sustained follow-up shape Meenangadi's carbon-neutral journey. The Karnataka teams expressed strong interest in adapting similar approaches and formally invited Thanal for further institutional engagements in Mysore and Coorg.

Mannorukkam Deepening Soil Learning and Farmer Support



Mannorukkam continued to strengthen its soil health work during January through a mix of field engagement, learning support, and awareness activities. The focus remained on helping farmers and students understand soil as a living system that needs care, observation, and informed action.

To support farmers facing crop-level challenges, an online expert interaction was

organised with Anoop Sir for Mannorukkam master farmers. The session addressed questions that emerged from field observations during the season.

Discussions focused on nutrient-related issues, early identification of pests and diseases, and preventive agroecological practices suited to organic systems. Emphasis was placed on soil health management, crop diversity, and timely use of on-farm bioinputs.

The interaction helped farmers translate field conditions into informed decisions, reinforcing confidence and collective learning within the Mannorukkam network.

Across January, Mannorukkam work continued through regular follow-ups, farmer interactions, and knowledge reinforcement. Rather than introducing new activities, the month focused on strengthening understanding, refining practices, and supporting farmers as they applied learnings in their fields.

This steady approach reflects the project's intent to build long-term soil resilience through patience, observation, and shared learning, rather than quick fixes.

ITDP Kulathupuzha

Livelihoods, Safety, and Visibility

Addressing Man–Animal Conflict at Peruvazhikala

At Peruvazhikala Hamlet, a CSR-supported intervention is underway to address long-standing man–animal conflict affecting agriculture and livelihoods. Surrounded by forest, the hamlet has faced repeated crop losses due to elephants, deer, bears, and monkeys. Earlier measures such as trenching offered limited protection.

The current initiative combines natural and technological solutions, including live fencing with lemon saplings, bee fencing using honey bee boxes, camera traps, monkey repellents, and motion sensors. This blended approach is designed to reduce animal entry while remaining ecologically sensitive. Implementation is progressing steadily and is expected to be completed soon, strengthening livelihood security for the community.

Livelihood Trainings Continue Across Hamlets

Skill-based training continued across Kulathupuzha during January, supporting diversified livelihood pathways. These included apiculture training focused on safe hive handling and disease prevention, goat rearing sessions on scientific animal management and health care, tailoring classes that enabled women to stitch garments and blouses, and hands-on agricultural machinery training conducted with technical support from RTTC Vellayani.

Together, these ongoing training aim to reduce risk, improve self-reliance, and strengthen income options across hamlets, with strong participation from women and small farmers.

ITDP Kulathupuzha Featured in NABARD Documentary

In January, NABARD, in collaboration with the Media4Agri team, conducted a two-day documentary shoot to capture the impact of the Integrated Tribal Development Programme in Kulathupuzha. The filming highlighted six individual beneficiaries and three self-help groups, documenting changes in livelihoods, skills, and community confidence.

The shoot also showcased practical economic activities such as Nendhran banana harvesting, chapathi production, and flour mill operations, presenting a holistic picture of value addition

and local enterprise. The documentary is expected to support wider learning, stakeholder engagement, and replication of ITDP approaches in other regions.

SUCCESS STORY



The Pamba Tribal Hub | A Community Enterprise Through the Pilgrimage Season

During the Sabarimala season, the Pamba Tribal Society demonstrated how community-owned enterprises can thrive with careful planning and collective effort. The Pamba Tribal Hub, a food outlet set up at Thulappally near Narayananthodu, operated through the pilgrimage months to serve Ayyappa devotees while creating income for tribal families.

The hub was opened on 20 November 2025 and run for over two months by members of two women's self-help groups, Pulari and Shreya, from Kurubanmoozhy. The team prepared and served fresh meals throughout the day and also sold locally made snacks and

products such as banana chips, pickles, and coffee powder under their own tribal label.

Daily operations were managed with strong attention to hygiene, transparency, and record keeping. The society maintained clear accounts and ensured timely wages for workers involved in the hub. Over the season, the initiative provided steady employment for community members and built confidence in managing a collective enterprise during a high-demand period.

Though the formal TDF project has concluded, Thanal continues to support the Pamba Tribal Society through guidance and handholding. The success of the Pamba Tribal Hub reflects how livelihoods can sustain beyond projects when communities lead, systems are trusted, and local effort is valued.

Keystone Foundation Team Visits Meenangadi



On 6 January 2026, the Keystone Foundation team visited Manikavu School and Manikavu Temple with 34 participants as part of a field interaction in Meenangadi.

The team was introduced to the Manikavu School Biodiversity Park, with a focus on bamboo species and school-led conservation practices. Thanal and the Panchayat jointly presented the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi initiatives, including waste management, solar installations, biodiversity monitoring, climate literacy, sacred grove conservation, and Smrithivanam.

At Manikavu Temple, the Punyavanam project was explained, highlighting its ecological and cultural significance. The visit strengthened institutional learning and collaboration on biodiversity and climate action.

Online Knowledge-Sharing Session on Carbon Neutrality

An online programme on Carbon Neutrality was organised by ANSSIRDP & PR, Karnataka, with live streaming that enabled participation from officials and practitioners across regions.

During the session, Thanal Executive Director C. Jayakumar presented the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi project, explaining its methodology, planning framework, and community-led implementation.

The programme supported inter-regional knowledge exchange and reinforced the relevance of local governance models in advancing climate-resilient development.

Plastic Free Coastline | School Outreach and Pre-Survey

As part of the Plastic Free Coastline project, the Thanal team conducted awareness sessions and pre-surveys in selected schools across Thiruvananthapuram during January. The programme aimed to understand existing student awareness on plastic pollution while encouraging responsible consumption practices.

Sessions were conducted at Thycaud Model Boys Higher Secondary School, Holy Angels School at GH Junction, Shishu Vihar School in Vazhuthacaud, St. Mary's Higher Secondary School, Vizhinjam, and VHSS Vizhinjam. Plastic Scouts Units were formed in schools, and Plastic Task Force Units were initiated in selected colleges.



World Soil Day Observed in Meenangadi



Through interactive discussions and baseline surveys, students learned about the environmental impacts of plastic waste and the importance of reducing single-use plastics. Practical alternatives to SUPs were introduced in accessible ways.

By engaging children early, the initiative supports long-term behaviour change and strengthens efforts toward a plastic-free coastline through informed and conscious action.

World Soil Day was observed on 16 January 2026 at the Community Hall, Meenangadi, through a programme organised by the Soil Conservation Department in collaboration with the Panchayat and Agriculture Department.

Sessions highlighted soil health, conservation challenges, and the importance of soil testing and nutrient management. Interactive activities encouraged participation from farmers and youth.

The programme strengthened public awareness and reinforced the need for collective action to protect soil resources and support sustainable agriculture.



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