

**Winner
Non-Technical Solutions**

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Women as seed conservation and agro-ecology experts helping their communities resist climate change

Description of the project: The project “Seeds for Hope” improves the climate resilience, food sovereignty and economic autonomy of farming communities (20,000 people) in the valley of Derhadun, in Northern India, relying on women’s knowledge and action. They are trained to reproduce and conserve local seeds, learn agro-ecological techniques and food transformation, which reinforces their power to make decisions. The project is led in partnership with the association Navdanya, created by Vandana Shiva. Direct beneficiaries: 745 farmers and their families in 31 villages.

Climate impact: The project addresses both mitigation and adaptation: agro-ecology reinforces soil fertility and moisture (organic matter contents increased by 25% between 2011 and 2015), seeds conservation and reproduction ensure biodiversity rehabilitation and food sovereignty: yields have improved by 20%, dependence on the purchase of seeds lowered by 50% and the quality and quantity of food supply are progressing. The Uttarakhand intends to become a 100% organic State.

Gender impact: The project promotes the key role that women play in subsistence farming and family nutrition in rural India. As owners of knowledge, conservation actors and distributors of seeds, as well as trainers in agro-ecology and micro-savings, women have gained a local political role, their living conditions and financial autonomy are improved. The project ensures their increased involvement in the good management of natural resources at all levels.

Scalability / replicability: The project’s durability is ensured by a 10-year partnership between SOL and Navdanya. Its model builds on the communities’ autonomy, from seeds reproduction to short circuit sale, and is easily replicable: it was extended to 16 new villages and 250 vegetable gardens managed by women will soon be set up. The project touches on other cross-cutting themes: sustainable water management, sanitary food, solidarity through support groups, multiplying indirect beneficiaries.



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