

Title: Making themselves Visible: Women, Market and Ecofeminism in Rural Assam

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Representational only picture (PC: Anindita Sharma)

Overview of the project:

The study aims to broadly understand the relation between women and environment and the way it was conceptualized in the West vis-a-vis in the Third World countries more specially in India. Through two case studies from Assam, the study intends to address few questions following a broader framework of ecofeminism and see the interplay of nature, women and market. Positioned somewhere in between the debates around gender (in)equality and environmental sustainability, the debate around ecofeminism needs to be rekindled given how these relations are impacted upon by forces of market in a globalized world. Within the existing realm of patriarchal power structures, the study, would further explore how women negotiate their practical and strategic needs. While governments around the world are geared towards achieving the SDGs in reducing poverty, addressing gender equality and climate change apart from a range of other objectives, it is also important to see these initiatives in the light of political economy of development and how market plays its role. This study would like to explore the nuances of class, caste, region (Northeast India in particular), and how women and women-led initiatives figure in these debates.

Research Methodology:

To understand the interplay of gender, environment and market, the study would entail focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interviews with women and other stakeholders associated in various stages of the production process and marketing of the initiatives considered under the study. The key focus of these discussion would revolve primarily around how women negotiate a concern for climate change, which visibly impacts society and daily lives of people in its own ways. Through a qualitative approach, the study will explore how women address their material needs negotiating with challenges at different levels- individual, societal and market.

Deliverables:

- A policy brief addressing SDG goals of gender equality and climate action.
- A quality research paper to be communicated to any reputed peer reviewed journal.