



HIMALAYAN
INSTITUTE®
CAMEROON, AFRICA

Cameroon

2011 Annual Report

Feb 15, 2012



Over the course of the past five years, HI Cameroon has gone from one program to five...

...We have seen a solid trend of positive growth both in impact and towards our sustainability goals. We believe this is partially attributable to the interconnectedness of each program, which we call our community center model. As a program progresses, it begins to amplify the success of the others!

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Total Health Center

Our Total Health Center reached new heights last year and continues to offer preventative and curative holistic health solutions tailored to rural needs.



2011 Recap

- **Consulted with 25,000 people**
 - Our Health center and mobile unit held consultations with 25,000 people seeking holistic treatment for hundreds of illnesses.
- **Yoga for 625 people**
 - Weekly since August of 2011, our health center has been organizing and teaching public, level one yoga classes.
- **Herbal laboratory now producing medicine**
 - By establishing our very own production facility, we have decreased product cost and increased local sustainability.
 - Over 10 products are now being produced in our lab, using the herbs which our Energy Farming program has grown.
- **Wholeselling to Nigeria**
 - Opened up wholesale channels to consultants throughout Cameroon and Nigeria.
 - Products include those which our laboratory produces.
- **Bio-Feedback project piloted with 16 people**
 - Piloted a Bio-Feedback program opened to 16 people.

2012 Outlook

- **Efficiency Plan**
 - **To generate 10% of HIC's Monthly Operating budget**
- **Improve Products**
 - We plan to improve our growing, production and packaging processes.
- **Refine Mobile Unit strategy**
 - Continue to fine tune our mobile unit strategy to be more effective in targeted communities.

Energy Farming

This program is now more focused than ever, teaching land management and organic farming techniques to rural farmers, implementing large scale tree plantings, and medicinal herb cultivation and herbal product production.



2011 Recap

- **Outgrower partnership provided livelihood to 60 local villagers**
 - In 2011 we shifted 75% of our medicinal cultivation to the most ideal climates in Cameroon. We did this by partnering with rural farming communities who now provide us with the crops needed for our Total Health herbal product line.
- **Organic Trainings taught hundreds**
 - At the community center in Tobin and agricultural land in Kishong, seminars and workshops were held to instruct local farmers in composting, micro-rainwater harvesting, crop diversification, organic pesticides, and intercropping.
- **Tractor rental Program increased farmer productivity**
 - Our tractor rental program made modern equipment available to several villages.

2012 Outlook

- **Classes**
 - At our Tobin campus we will continue to hold farming classes and make supportive material available through our Center For Leadership and Vocational Studies.
- **Efficiency measure will save \$7,000**
 - Our activities at Kishong such as herbal cultivation and training seminars will be folded into our Tobin community center. This is an efficiency measure which will save roughly \$7,000 and an estimated 50 man-hours of oversight per year.

School of Carpentry and Construction

Our training and production center offers vocational training and high quality furniture, and in 2011 we met our revenue targets and surpassed our enrollment goals.



2011 Recap

- **Brought training to more than 600 people**
 - The first year with completely local oversight.
 - Offered internships and taught classes in technical schools.
- **Furniture production: 45% growth**
 - Had 45% growth in annual revenue from 2010
 - Created a reputable brand for the CNC furniture line.
 - Offered low cost, entry level products as well as premium products.

2012 Outlook

- **Efficiency Plan**
 - **To generate 30% of HIC's Monthly Operating budget**
 - Plan to increase around staffing, procurement and spending
- **Electrical Training Course**
 - As part of our ongoing educational offerings, the Himalayan Institute's Carpentry and Construction School is proud host an **Electrical Training Course**. The course will focus on both basic and advanced electrical skills and will:
 - Provide local electricians with training needed to acquire higher paying jobs
 - Provide the HIC with its own on staff electrical technicians
 - Teach Electrical Safety
 - Teach Electrical Theory
 - Teach Practical Electrical Wiring: Planning and Layout
 - Teach Proper Battery Maintenance
 - Teach Transformers and Motors
 - Teach Introduction to Solar Power
- **Arc Welder**



- The wear and tear on our carpentry machines has facilitated the need for the construction of a special arc welder to repair blades.

- **Sawdust Burner for the Wood Drying Kiln**

- We will be adding a highly efficient sawdust-burning unit adjacent to the current wood drying kiln. The unit will:
 - Use locally available materials for construction
 - Burn refuse sawdust cleanly and safely
 - Allow the drying of lumber in the rainy season
 - Provide another live example to local technical schools



- **Solar Generator Project**

- Solar panels and special equipment will be installed to the existing diesel generator to keep the onboard batteries properly charged. The installation will be done in a manner that will educate students:
 - On power generation with sunlight
 - On proper regulation of power for charging batteries
 - On automobile battery maintenance
 - On the use of solar panels and inverters to power small consumer devices

- **LED Lighting Project**

- The main building of the Himalayan Institute will have much of its incandescent and fluorescent lighting replaced by super energy efficient LED lighting.
- This will save money and show our commitment to conserving a valuable Cameroon resource, electricity. Our building will be a showcase of this type of lighting which will become more and more common in Cameroon in years to come.

Water Projects

Water is a vital resource for any community. Knowing this, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon will continue to implement water projects in communities that need them most.



2011 Recap

- This year we built a spring fed water system in the village of Takui.
- Takui needed clean water badly and even contributed labor, stones and sand.
- **Completed, this new nearby water source is bringing fresh, clean water while saving the people thousands of hours of hiking for water and also thousands of dollars in medical bills due to diseases caused by contaminated water.**

2012 Outlook

- TBD

Public Library

The largest public library in Northwest Cameroon continued to grow in 2011!



2011 Recap

- **35,000 people**
 - An estimated 35,000 people of all ages came to our Library.
- School teachers and their students also reserved the library for holding classes.
- Teachers are attributing improved grade performance to the library's existence.

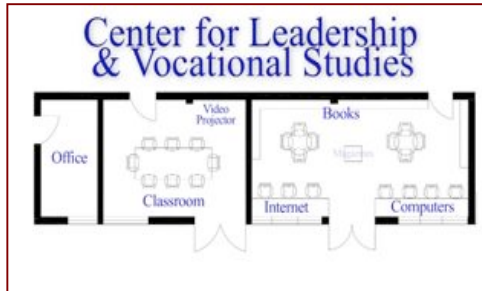
2012 Outlook

- **The Public Library is Getting Even Better:** The Kumbo Public Library is so popular that we'll be implementing improvements that will make it even more effective:
 - New Windows will be installed to protect books from weather damage and provide a dust free environment.
 - Electric fans will be installed for comfort and to protect books from moisture. *The fan installation is part of the upcoming Electrical Training Course.*

- More career-focused and general education textbooks will be available to students.

Center for Leadership & Vocational Studies

The Himalayan Institute in the summer of 2012 will build the region's first Center for Leadership and Vocational Studies.



This project:

- Will allow students to have an occupation-focused school with the resources, teachers and classes needed to jump-start a career.
- Will employ several librarians.
- Will house a 5,000-volume library comprised of vocational topics such as management, law, accounting, marketing, farming, woodworking, electrical, plumbing, automotive skills, and more.
- Will make subscriptions available to relevant magazines for the latest news and developments in these fields.
- Will feature modern technologies such as computers, Internet access and a projector.
- Will house a conference room that can double as a community meeting space.
- Every month we will host free classes and workshops on business skills, leadership skills, and specific vocational trades, calling up local experts to help staff the classes.
- This will also relieve pressure from our general library, giving it the opportunity to make a greater impact, too.

Sacred Link Jewelry

Empowering women by providing technical training, business skills and market linkage.



2011 Recap

- Last year we continued to train and graduate local women from our Sacred Link Jewelry training course. Our center now employs 3 part time technician/instructors who train and produce sacred Link Jewelry for local and foreign markets.

2012 Outlook

- **Efficiency Plan**
 - **To generate 30% of HIC's Monthly Operating budget**
- Tools
 - We'll be resupplying this program with basic hand tools needed to continue its training.
 - Special components will also be provided to the program which will allow the students and staff to continue producing for the local markets.

Appendices

Program Stories From Our Blog

Water Report

Special Health Center Report: Social Healing

Stories From Our Blog (2011) Valentine's Day

February 8, 2011 by [JohnD](#) | [Edit](#)

Put some Heart into Valentine's Day

This year give a gift that makes a difference.

By creating small businesses for women in rural Africa, [Sacred Link Jewelry](#) helps to create income opportunities which can eradicate poverty and heal economic isolation.



It not too late to order a piece of Sacred Link Jewelry for your special somebody! All proceeds support the Himalayan Institute's humanitarian projects around the world.

Watch this video to learn more:

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Eco-Service Excursion to Cameroon

February 7, 2011 by [JohnD](#) | [Edit](#)

In November 2010, Pandit Rajmani Tigunait led a group of 25 participants on a journey through Cameroon, West Africa to the Himalayan Institute's community center in Kumbo. From the moment participants hit the road in a bus to travel from Douala to Kumbo, they were immersed in a truly authentic Cameroonian experience: Like so many African countries, Cameroon suffers from poor infrastructure which makes travel, as one participant put it, "a test of will and endurance." Heavy rains had carved out huge pot holes in the dirt roads and cars frequently got stuck in the slippery clay soil. As participants experienced these challenges firsthand, they began to get a sense for why the Institute's work is so important in this region.



The group enjoys a hike to a nearby waterfall.

Upon arriving in Kumbo, guests were warmly greeted with singing, dancing and traditional music from HI Cameroon staff and community members. Guests stayed at the Pastoral Center, which has a beautiful view overlooking the town. Throughout the trip, Panditji spoke regularly with the group about Spirituality in Action—the importance of service for both personal and global transformation. Putting these discussions into practice, the group took part in the community center’s various programs. With the [Sacred Link Jewelry](#) program, participants worked with local staff to create handmade jewelry; with the [School of Carpentry & Construction](#), the group helped to build furniture and made use of the new [wood drying kiln](#); at the [Total Health Center](#), participants harvested, crushed, and encapsulated herbs grown locally for use in our dispensaries; they planted trees with the [School of Energy Farming](#); and at the [Kumbo Public Library](#), participants read with local children and played educational games in the Children’s Corner.



Through this hands-on work, the group got to experience the impact that the Himalayan Institute is having in Cameroon. One participant said, "I had previously gone to Africa to provide humanitarian service and I could not imagine how any program could be sustainable there." After attending, she writes, "I was impressed with the willingness to teach and share knowledge and resources with the people of Cameroon, allowing them to empower themselves.... HI is working with the existing culture to empower people."

It is one thing to understand what a project is doing, but it is even more meaningful to actually meet the people whose lives are touched by this work. This aspect of the trip had a profound effect on participants who left feeling inspired and energized to continue their service to humanity.

If you are interested in participating in an excursion with the Himalayan Institute, please join us this summer as Pandit Rajmani

Tigunait leads a group of 21 people through Mexico.[Click here to learn more about the upcoming excursion to](#)

Water Wells for Health and Irrigation

March 15, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

With generous support from the [Buffalo Arts Studio](#) the Himalayan Institute Cameroon was able to complete its first community water project: the installation of two public wells in the villages of Kishong and Jakiri. Using completely local talent and resources, from rural engineer to construction workers, these two wells were completed in 2010 and are fully operational at this time. These wells are making a huge impact in the quality of life and health for the residents of Northwest Cameroon, who suffer through a serious dry season each year from November to April.



Filling water containers at a municipal tap during the dry season.

The first well was installed in Kishong Village, on the HI Cameroon Energy Farming demonstration land.

A diesel-powered pump carries water from the well at the base of the land to an elevated storage tank.



The water storage tank at the top of the land is elevated on a tower to increase water pressure for the roadside and irrigation taps.

From there, the water flows to a roadside tap for free, public use and through an irrigation system to water 6 acres of Energy Farming crops, including medicinal herbs, food crops, trees and biofuel crops.



Energy Farming crop plots irrigated by the well, which is visible on the left side of the photo.



All together, the construction of the wells employed 12 people for roughly 2 months.



Sign welcoming visitors to the Energy Farming land at Kishong, where educational seminars and demonstrations are held.



Providing clean water at the HI Cameroon land also serves as a springboard for Total Health Center outreach projects that aim to educate the public about disease control, hygiene and preventative healthcare.

HI Cameroon installed the second well in the heart of [Jakiri](#), a town located approximately 20 kilometers from Kumbo. Operated by a simple hand pump and without pipelines, this well now serves as a permanent,

free water source that exists without encroaching on the present government water system. Because it is installed on the property controlled by the local ruler, it will be protected from vandalism and government intervention, and will be maintained and kept available to the public.



A rural engineer and Jakiri residents examine the freshly dug (by hand!) hole for the well.



A view of the completed well, taken from the patio of the Fon's palace. The metal structure protects the hand pump.

Like the public roadside tap in Kishong Village, this well in Jakiri will empower the local people with free water available in their own community. We believe that clean, safe drinking water is a fundamental necessity to which every person should have reliable access. Now firmly into the dry season, these two wells are already making a significant impact in the lives of community members.



Neighborhood children enjoying a cool drink of water at the public tap supplied by the new well in Kishong.



Interested in supporting a village water project? Join the Himalayan Institute's clean water commitment and help make a long-term impact in rural communities. On average, a well costs \$5,000. If you're interested, we can guide you on ways that you, your classmates, coworkers and friends can fundraise to support a water project of your own. Contact our Humanitarian Projects team at 570-647-1527 or email us at info@himalayaninstitute.org to learn more.
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Turning Inspiration Into Action

March 7, 2011 by [JohnD](#) | [Edit](#)

After visiting the Kumbo Public Library in Cameroon last November with her family during the 2010 [Eco-Service Excursion](#), 14-year old Claudia Bacon returned home inspired to also make a difference.



Reflecting on her experiences in Cameroon, she wrote, “I was first inspired by the library because it was one of the only public libraries in Cameroon and the kids were so thrilled to have books to read, games to play, and textbooks to use since they could not afford them. This inspired me to do as much as I can to help these people. Africa was a life changing experience that I learned so much from in two weeks... Africa will remain in my heart forever and I can’t wait to go back.”



Turning inspiration into action, on Martin Luther King Day Claudia gave a speech to approximately 1,000 of her schoolmates about the harsh realities facing rural communities and the need for quality educational materials. After hearing this, the students and their families at McCall Middle School in Winchester, MA were ready to help change the lives of students over 5,500 miles away. Together, the community gathered 2,430 books!





Claudia and some friends sorted and boxed the books, and then Claudia and her mom Nicole rented a cargo van and delivered them to Honesdale, PA.

A special thanks to the Bacons, the Gukenbergers, and all of the students and faculty at Winchester Middle School!



Interested in organizing a book drive or fundraiser in your community? Be a part of the Himalayan Institute's 'One Book One Dollar' campaign! For every book that we collect to send to Cameroon, we need \$1 to cover shipping charges. Contact our Humanitarian Projects team at 570-647-1527 or email us at info@himalayaninstitute.org to learn more about how you can support students in underprivileged areas gain access to quality educational resources.

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The Sweetness of Honey

March 2, 2011 by [JohnD](#) | [Edit](#)

The Himalayan Institute Cameroon's School of Energy Farming promotes sustainable agriculture methods that support farmers in becoming self-reliant and more productive. Beekeeping is an agricultural technique with numerous benefits: the bees pollinate the crops which improves the harvest and the honey they produce is valuable both as food and as medicine.



The School of Energy Farming maintains two Kenyan Top-Bar hives on its demonstration farm.



A honeycomb from the hive



Staff members clean and separate the honey.



After being processed, the honey is bottled and sold in Kumbo and throughout Cameroon.

In addition to being a healthy sweetener, honey is used traditionally in Ayurvedic medicine as an excellent transport for herbs. The Total Health Center in Cameroon uses the honey as a base for several of its herbal remedies for improved digestion, treating sore throats, and overall health.

Energy Farming methods, like beekeeping, help farmers to get the most out of their land and their labor — that's the sweetness of honey.

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[Libraries Serving Libraries](#)

February 28, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

When the Wayne County Public Library in Honesdale, PA needed to clear out some extra books from its shelves, the librarians immediately thought of the Himalayan Institute's humanitarian projects. A team of

participants in the [Self Transformation Program](#) volunteered their time to box up the collection of books and transport them to HI headquarters.







Thanks to the generosity of the library and the strong muscles of the packing team, 1,100 new hardbound books will arrive at the Kumbo Public Library when the next container is shipped over!

Meanwhile in Cameroon, the Kumbo Public Library, housed in the HI community center, has made a donation of its own: 1,000 top quality books were selected from the library and donated to the Kumbo Council's new public library, which is being established by the municipal government in another part of town.



HI Cameroon staff members pass off the books to the 2nd Deputy Mayor of Kumbo, pictured in center.

The books range in topic from religion to mathematics to children's books. Since its grand opening, the Kumbo Public Library has had a constant stream of students and visitors, eager to use the library's many resources. Another public library will help bring literacy, education, and access to high quality books to even more community members.

The donated books from the Wayne County Public Library will serve to refresh HI's Kumbo Public Library and may even lead to another sharing of books with the new Council library.

Because of the goodwill of people all over the world, the Kumbo Public Library has become an amazing community hub and has inspired the people of Kumbo to establish more places of learning like it. Many thanks to the Wayne County Public Library and everyone who has contributed books, time, and funding to make it happen!



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World Health Day

April 7, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

Creating Access to Health

Celebrate World Health Day by helping HI Cameroon bring affordable healthcare to even more people.

The [Total Health Center](#) at HI Cameroon provides access to affordable, holistic healthcare through public hygiene seminars, training in stress

reduction, yoga, homeopathy and herbal medicines. The community is served by a clinic in our community center and a mobile health clinic that brings health consultants to remote villages. By focusing on prevention and empowerment, the Total Health Center works to place good health back into the hands of the people.



Click on the image to view more photos of the Total Health Center
Make a difference today by supporting the Total Health Center and other empowerment programs!

DONATE NOW

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Raising Awareness in Buffalo

April 4, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

Last month, members of the HI Humanitarian team were honored to be invited to attend two major community events in Buffalo, NY to raise awareness about our rural development projects around the world.



The Himalayan Institute was represented at a booth at the 3rd annual Women's Conference hosted by [Buffalo For Africa](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about human rights and poverty concerns in Africa. Keynote speaker Mariatu Kamara, a survivor of the war in Sierra Leone, shared her story and break-out sessions focused on women's empowerment practices. HI was on hand to tell people about the work we do in Cameroon, particularly the [Sacred Link Jewelry](#) program which empowers women through micro-enterprise.

After packing up the booth at Buffalo For Africa, the team headed to a second event, [Trimania](#), a multi-floor celebration of art, music and culture held every 3 years. 3,500 people were expected to attend this year. Joanna Angie, executive director of the Buffalo Arts Studio and

cofounder of Trimania, invited HI to be present at the event in order to spread the word about our work in Cameroon, India and Mexico, which the Buffalo Arts Studio helps to sponsor.



Videos introducing viewers to HI's rural empowerment programs played throughout the night.



Help Africa Move Forward merchandise and artisan crafts from Cameroon were popular with the art lovers attending Trimania. All sales return directly to the projects in Cameroon.



Two women admire the handiwork of Sacred Link Jewelry technicians.

In addition to merchandise sales and donations collected at the HI booth, proceeds from bottled water sales during the evening will come to the Himalayan Institute to support construction of more wells and to plant trees! Support generated at Trimania 2008 enabled HI Cameroon to install two wells in the community which are now active and making an impact in rural Cameroon!



It was a long day, but well worth it to have formed meaningful connections, raised funds which will go directly to plant trees in the Tibetan settlements and to build more wells in Cameroon and Mexico, and to have met new friends that are also dedicated to improving the lives of people all over the world!



Humanitarian projects team members striking a pose before Trimania begins: Chelsea Abella, Jeff Abella, John Daskovsky, and Amanda Masters.

Special thanks to the [Buffalo Arts Studio](#) for their continued support of the Himalayan Institute's humanitarian projects and for their dedication to the arts and education in their own local community!



“Think globally, act locally.” We would love to assist you in fundraising or awareness events that you would like to host for these projects. From tea parties to book clubs to performances, the possibilities are endless. The [Trees For Tibet](#) campaign, in particular, is completely driven by on-the-ground efforts like these. Be a part of the solution! Contact our humanitarian projects team at 570-647-1527 or email us at info@himalayaninstitute.org.

[Agriculture seminar in Kishong](#)

May 2, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

On April 26 Lilian Gupie, Energy Farming Program Leader, taught a free 3-hour long seminar at the Energy Farming campus in Kishong village. 39 people attended, including students and local farmers.



The Kishong campus is a perfect setting for agriculture seminars, as all of the concepts are modeled throughout the land.

The seminar, titled “An Introduction to Organic Agriculture,” sought to raise awareness about the fundamental concepts in organic agriculture and to demonstrate its relevance and advantage to farmers in the region, who primarily grow corn, potatoes and coffee.

After reviewing the history and challenges of modern agriculture, Lilian described how sustainable, organic agriculture answers these problems. The class concluded with a hands-on practicum building a compost heap, which is an easy first step for farmers wishing to increase the sustainability of their own operations.





Eucharia Kuoh, head consulstant for the Total Health Center, also presented briefly about the Total Health program, highlighting the connection between agriculture and health.



This is the first class in a new seminar series, which will continue to delve deeper into key sustainable methods, such as advanced composting, integrated pest management, and crop diversification.



Clean Water for Takui, Cameroon

June 6, 2011 by [JohnD](#) | [Edit](#)

As part of its ongoing work to support the health of the region, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon in partnership with the Honesdale Rotary has started construction on a water catchment system in the village of Takui in Northwest Cameroon. The installation will harvest water that flows from a local spring and channel it into an easily accessible and clean well.



The old Takui water tap (above) was dirty and poorly managed. Without a catchment container, the water flowed constantly during the rainy season and was often dry during the dry season.

The project is being carried out in collaboration with the traditional village council and the majority of the labor has been done by local residents. "It was important for us to get the full support of the local community," said HIC staff member Ntani Divine. *"You can dig a well with only a few people, but it takes the whole community to keep a well clean and functional."*



Community members help carry small stones...



..and big stones, too!

On the first day of construction there was a huge outpouring of community support. "Even the village elders were carrying stones and concrete. Today we really saw true community spirit! The people are happy for what HI is doing to provide water for them as they have been suffering from water problems for a very long time," said Ntani. "For those who couldn't work, like elderly women, you will see them

watching babies and babysitting the children of those people who could work. Even elderly men who could not work came out in great numbers to give courage and support to all of the workers.”



Here is a sketch of what the water catchment system will look like when it is complete.

One of the grandmothers of the village named Beri Vi Mbang, speaking in the local dialect, said, “I did not think that I would drink such beautiful, clean water in my lifetime.”

Living in the United States it is difficult to wrap our minds around her sentiment, to fully appreciate the value of clean water which is so often taken for granted in our part of the world. Next time you go to turn on your faucet, do a mental experiment: imagine what it would be like to have to walk over a mile every time you wanted to fill up your glass. For the people of Takui, clean water is now a little bit closer to home, and that will make a world of difference.

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Measuring the Impact of a Library

May 16, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

The full impact of the [Kumbo Public Library](#) is hard to convey. The fact that approximately 100 people, and oftentimes more, visit *each day* may serve to paint a small picture of how well loved and used this community resource is. That teachers from area schools and vocational training centers bring classes to the library after school hours and on weekends may also illustrate the degree to which the library is bolstering local education.

The following photos show how crowded—yet hushed and serious—the library became during the week leading up to the examination for the General Certificate of Education. Final year students filled the library studying for their big exam, which is necessary to graduate from high school.



A line begins to form as students wait for the library to open.





Extra tables were set up to accommodate all of the students.



The library contains copies of all required reading and textbooks for government-run schools. Making these books available for students to share is a small move toward relieving the chronic burden of book shortages and underfunding in schools.



Public relations manager Ntani Divine writes, "I want the world to see the impact of the Kumbo Public Library in the community of Kumbo. I want those who donated money and books for the library to see how it is serving the community with knowledge."



In Memoriam: Roland Mbenkum, Dear Friend of HI Cameroon

August 22, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

It was mid-July 2007 and a small team of Himalayan Institute staff members had been sent to execute a new humanitarian project in the mountainous Northwest region of Cameroon. The first few months were challenging, yet very focused on gaining a foothold in this extraordinary new environment—Kumbo.

On this particular day in July the house was dark due to a power outage and the unforgiving deluge of the rainy season streamed down the windows. There was an unexpected knock on the door, then Roland Mbenkum and his wife Stella walked in. Roland's smile and enthusiastic presence immediately lit up the dark surroundings and Stella embraced us as our new mother away from home. From that moment, Roland was a friend to the Institute and continuously inspired

those around him with his eternal positivity. Roland was a hopeful man, thinking about the light at the end of the tunnel before even approaching the tunnel. He never merely clung onto hope but in fact worked tirelessly to birth such hope.



Roland shakes hands with HI Cameroon staff member Jeff Abella.

Although new faces to us at the time, these two beloved people were already familiar to thousands of people in Kumbo and the surrounding areas, and respected spokespeople for those living in Cameroon. One of Roland's biggest impacts was the founding of a local NGO, the [MilanoKumbo Sports Academy](#), whose mission is "Helping young people to realize that sports can give them a future by helping to build self-esteem and community." HI Cameroon has had many occasions to partner with MilanoKumbo to support the youth of Kumbo, including annual [sponsorship of the Summer Vacation Sports](#) program and hosting athletes from MilanoKumbo in the US who ran in the [Boston Marathon](#) as the first ever Cameroonians to participate in the race. The sports academy is not only an amazing resource for local youth, but a point of pride and unity for all citizens of the area.



Coach Roland gives a pep talk to some young athletes. He was inspired to start the sports academy to provide youth with a healthy alternative to the drugs and petty crime he witnessed while working as a judge in the municipal high court.



Proudly standing with the Boston Marathon athletes.

HI Cameroon joins thousands of people in remembering this inspirational community leader, who passed away last week. On behalf of all HI members who knew this singular man and how he served his people through many self-driven initiatives, we will miss you. Speaking on behalf of the HI Cameroon staff who have served alongside Roland in striving for youth empowerment, your efforts will live on and you will forever be remembered as an initiator of great change.



The close relationship between the MilanoKumbo Sports Academy and HI Cameroon will persist as one of Roland's legacies.

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Inauguration of Takui Water Catchment

August 3, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

The Takui spring water catchment system, a project that was only started a couple months ago, is now open and bringing fresh, clean water to the people of the village!



A large group turned out for the opening of the new catchment system.

This project is very exciting, not only for the difference that it will make in the quality of life for local residents, but because of the great amount of local collaboration that helped bring the project to fruition. Nearly all labor was carried out by local volunteers, who were overseen by a rural water engineer.







The hard work pays off! Women wait in line to fill their containers from the new taps.

Takui village consists of approximately 2,500 people, 750 of whom live in the central town, and all of whom will now have easy access to this water. The high number of people concentrated around the water source has caused sanitation problems in the past.



The new catchment system replaces a single pipe flowing into open air. With no method in place for storing water during the high flowing wet season, the spring dried up during the six-month dry season.

The new water catchment system consists of two storage tanks and buried pipelines. Two water spigots allow villagers to shut off the water flow when not in use.





The water catchment system cannot come at a better time. Cholera has been spreading at an alarming rate throughout Cameroon, particularly in the northern parts of the country. Cholera has claimed the lives of hundreds of Cameroonians this year and thousands more suffer from infection, yet this disease is easily preventable and treatable with good hygiene and sanitation practices and access to abundant clean water. Water catchments such as the one in Takui are an important way that villagers can protect their water sources from contamination and ensure adequate drinking water year round. Accompanying public education about public and personal hygiene is being offered by the HI Total Health Center.



Rural water engineer Visi Edwin tests the water quality before opening the taps up for public use.





Takai Community Water Project

The Himalayan Institute Cameroon is proud to have partnered with the Honesdale Rotary, the Buffalo Arts Studio and the Takai community to provide clean water for the people of Takai.

REMEMBER: Water is precious to our earth, please do not waste!

- To avoid contamination always carry your water away from this area before using
- Use for drinking
- Use for washing—away from this area
- Do not damage the water system
- Avoid carrying water at night
- In case of any difficulty contact the official attendant

Please help protect this water project by respecting the guidelines above. Always report any vandalism to the official attendant or directly to the Himalayan Institute Cameroon in Takai: 3348-3446.

You are invited to the Himalayan Institute Cameroon in Takai for free health consultations, use of our free public library, our women's empower program, carpentry center and more!

A sign posted by the well invites villagers to enjoy the water and includes important guidelines for keeping the catchment from becoming contaminated.



A community leader makes a speech in praise of the catchment and the villagers' hard work in completing it. He says, "not only have we been given water, but we have also been given life and we are not going to die from cholera. My children will drink the water and my children's children will do the same."

A few days after the new catchment was opened, an official inauguration ceremony was held. A huge crowd came to the inauguration, including the Village Head. The inauguration was a celebration of great joy and pride in Takui!



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Posted in [Cameroon](#), [Event](#), [Total Health Center](#) | [Leave a Comment »](#)

A simple, direct way to help the Kumbo Public Library!

July 27, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

Almost half of the population in Cameroon is under 25 years old. To both support and utilize the youth, Cameroon needs schools, vocational training facilities and libraries to encourage literacy and continue creating opportunity. This is why our Kumbo Public Library sees over 30,000 visitors per year and why we need your help to keep up with this positive trend.

We are looking for people to sponsor several periodicals for the library's Business and Vocational Training sections.



Please email us at info@himalayaninstitute.org to help!

Outgrowing Arrangement Helps HI Cameroon Expand

October 4, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

A major part of increasing organizational sustainability at HI Cameroon is developing the means to completely produce the Total Health

product line in-house, from growing the herbs, to processing them into medicine, to distributing them to customers through the Total Health Center and Mobile Clinic. Local production is significant because it means that the center will no longer need to import the medicines, thereby greatly reducing cost to customers, while increasing opportunities for employment.

Because of the popularity of the line, Energy Farming program leader Lilian Gupie, who is in charge of cultivating the necessary herbs, reached out to other farmers in the area to help with growing them. Currently, two farmers in two different locations are contracted to grow the herbs—including ashwagandha, brahmi, turmeric, rosemary, and others—and a total of 6 people are employed on their farms to help with the cultivation.



Both farms are located along roads used by many farmers, and the contracted farmers report that many people stop to ask about the herbs being grown and their uses.

The farmers who were approached about growing for the Institute had previously participated in a training with HI Cameroon about using power tillers. Because of the prior connection, Lilian felt confident about hiring the farmers and they in turn knew that HI Cameroon would make a fair arrangement.



In the past, the farmers have cultivated maize, beans, peanuts and some minor crops like coco yam on these properties. Now they have been able to cultivate a greater variety and number of crops, while continuing to grow food for their families.

Planting started in May and the number of healthy, vibrant plants have already met and exceeded the Total Health Center's needs! Some crops will be harvested soon, then dried and ground for use in medicinal formulas, while a few others will remain in the fields for a couple months longer. The next step for the farmers, who have been in charge of all aspects of cultivation, will be to fence in the remaining herbs to protect them from cattle, which graze on the lands during the dry season!



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Drumming for Cameroon

September 26, 2011 by [lindsayhulterstrum](#) | [Edit](#)

Sustainable Earth Solutions (SES) is a small entrepreneurial sustainability organization in Buffalo, NY whose president, Dave Bauer, attended the African Humanitarian Conference at the Himalayan Institute in Honesdale two years ago. Since then, he has been dreaming of a month-long Youth Environmental Leadership Program in Cameroon and watching as the dream slowly unfolds.



Dave welcomes guests to a fundraising event at his home and introduces the "Youth Environmental Leadership Program" in Africa.

On Sunday, September 11, the SES team members hosted "An Afternoon in Africa" to network and build relationships of support for the project, and to raise funds needed for the month-long trip to Cameroon. Local community members gathered at Dave's home for an

African drum circle and samples of dishes from native Cameroon recipes.



Local community members playing together in the drum circle.



HI Cameroon's Sacred Link Jewelry was sold to help raise funds for the project.

The road to funding this novel project has been long and challenging. Dave recalls the Zimbabwean proverb "Be patient with your drum, the night is long." The expertise and will of the SES and HI teams have begun the road-building process.



It was a fun afternoon for everyone who participated!



Create an Event of Your Own!

The HI humanitarian team encourages other inspired individuals, groups, or organizations like SES who want to contribute. If you have

an idea for a program that would support any of the projects, please share them by commenting on this post.

Kumbo Arts Exhibition

October 13, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

Kumbo, the home of the HI Cameroon community center, recently hosted a regional arts fair featuring the work of many artists intimately connected with the Himalayan Institute's humanitarian projects. The event was a perfect opportunity for craftspeople working with HI Cameroon's School of Carpentry and Construction and students of our Sacred Link Jewelry program to display the beautiful fruits of their labor.



The show piece in the HI Cameroon booth was a desk, whose style and high quality are unique for the area, made in the School of Carpentry and Construction.



A woman admires the selection of Sacred Link Jewelry.

The excellent handiwork of artists in Cameroon is gaining a wider appreciation in the African region and throughout the world. The Himalayan Institute's Humanitarian TrAid initiative helps artists like those at Kumbo's art show earn a fair wage for their work in the global marketplace.



Intricate wood carving is one of Kumbo's trademark art forms.



A man displays local crafts, including instruments and traditional dress wear.

Inquire at any of HI's branch centers worldwide to learn how you can purchase art from Cameroon, India and Mexico to support our humanitarian initiatives.

HI Cameroon Attracts Visitors from Afar

November 21, 2011 by [ajmasters](#) | [Edit](#)

HI Cameroon continues to be an education hub for the whole region with its many offerings, including the renowned [School of Carpentry &](#)

Construction and the largest library in the region. As it grows, information about these successful programs has been spreading throughout the country.

Two students from the Government Training Center of Buea, a large coastal town approximately 250 miles away (over a 10 hour drive), recently travelled to the center in Kumbo to see for themselves the facilities they have been hearing about. They were impressed.



Visiting students Nji David Emaka and Alima Espa Nsom.

The visitors were invited to experience each of the community center's core programs, including the School of Energy Farming, Total Health Center, Kumbo Public Library, and School of Carpentry & Construction.



Examining medicinal herbs being cultivated in the Energy Farming demonstration plot behind the community center.



Head consultant of the Total Health program demonstrates the encapsulator which turns Energy Farming-grown herbs into effective and inexpensive medicine.

"I could not believe my eyes it when I saw these capsules made in the blink of an eye," exclaimed David at our herbal laboratory.



"The Kumbo Public Library, what a blessing to your community," commented Alima while touring our large public library.



In the Carpentry and Construction facility, the visitors observed fine furniture being made with equipment they had learned of in school.



They were especially inspired by the solar wood drying kiln.

David and Alima were impressed by the innovation and creativity at HI Cameroon. They left saying, "This center should be affiliated with a technical university in Cameroon." Certainly, the more people that HI Cameroon can reach, the better!

TAKE ACTION today and help us change lives for tomorrow and beyond. NEW Cameroon Campaign Launch!

December 19, 2011 by [Himalayan Institute Humanitarian Team](#) | [Edit](#)

At the Himalayan Institute (HI), we unroll several fundraisers each year allowing you to be a part of the great success we're experiencing with our humanitarian projects around the world.

Today we have something very specific and extremely important to ask you. But it's not just important to us here at HI, but rather to the 100,000 people who will receive this gift....

Watch our trailer below and check out our [campaign page](#) to learn more about the CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP AND VOCATIONAL STUDIES and to make a contribution.

did you know?...

50,000 people die each day due to poverty related conditions. Over half of these people are children who never had the chance of developing themselves to ultimately improve their lives and their surroundings.

Here at HI we use education and long term mentoring to build capacity, create opportunity, and give people the means to direct their own lives.

This is why we need your help to support this NEW campaign and build a [Center for Leadership and Vocational Studies](#) at our community center in Kumbo, Cameroon.

The action you take today will make a real change, for tomorrow and beyond.

Sincerely,

The HI Humanitarian Team

Give the Gift of Education

December 23, 2011 by [Himalayan Institute Humanitarian Team](#) | [Edit](#)



Some gifts look great with a bow. Some gifts are harder to wrap like the gift of education to budding professionals in the developing world, or the gift of state of the art tools and equipment to an entire community of entrepreneurs, all striving to build a better life for their families! In 2012, with your help, we'll provide this gift to thousands in Cameroon by creating a [Center for Leadership and Vocational Studies](#). The Himalayan Institute's humanitarian projects are funded by the contributions of its members. This holiday season, please give \$25, \$50, \$100 or whatever you can to continue making these gifts a reality.

TAKE ACTION NOW by clicking here and make a contribution which will help build this new center.

Happy Holidays!

Chai for Charity: A Great Start to the New Year!

January 14, 2012 by [Himalayan Institute Humanitarian Team](#) | [Edit](#)

The [Himalayan Institute](#)'s New Years weekend packed a full house of friends and guests for an unforgettable seminar with [Pandit Rajmani Tigunait](#). Throughout the weekend guests gathered at HI's [campus cafe](#) and drank [chai](#), shared New Years goals, and enjoyed each others company—all while raising money for our latest campaign! To date, we've raised \$4,310! This means we are only \$690 shy of our goal. With this \$5,000 (which will be instantly matched), [thousands will benefit](#) from HI Cameroon's educational center.

We need your help! Every dollar counts! Please take a moment to [donate](#). We won't reach this goal without you....

The Year in Review: 2011 accomplishments

January 20, 2012 by [Himalayan Institute Humanitarian Team](#) | [Edit](#)



In 2011, Dallas high schoolers rocked out to support Trees for Tibet, [HI members](#) forged a new community partnership with a [service excursion to Mexico](#), environmentalists in Buffalo drummed to support [youth leadership in Cameroon](#), and people from all over the world donated books to the [Kumbo Public Library](#). Thanks to your support, the [Himalayan Institute's humanitarian initiatives](#) have expanded across the board. Here are a few 2011 highlights:

Water

This year our water initiatives team dug two wells and also pioneered a spring-fed water catchment system. Now, thousands more people in rural communities have access to clean, safe drinking water.

Education

Across three continents, wherever Himalayan Institute centers opened

their doors, they provided scholarships for underprivileged people of all ages. It's a simple way of showing our commitment to long term poverty alleviation through education. Support education today by joining our latest campaign, the [Center For Leadership](#) in Africa.

Cultural Exchange

Our eco-service excursion to Mexico proved that zero footprint tourism can be win-win. Between exploring centuries old cathedrals and stunning landscapes in central Mexico, participants contributed to communal projects and were invited into the homes of local residents.

Ground Breaking:

In Khajuraho, India we began construction on a new Himalayan Institute campus, nestled between the Vindhya Mountains and a national forest.

Holistic solutions

In 2011, more medicines than ever before were grown and processed on site by the very communities they will heal. The union of agriculture, medicine, and employment opportunities forms the backbone of sustainable humanitarian projects.

Humanitarian Staff

Last year we said goodbye to humanitarian couple John Daskovsky and Amanda Masters who served our projects in the USA, Mexico and Cameroon. They have taken on new territory in Buffalo NY and now work at and run the [Himalayan Institute Buffalo](#) center. Congratulation to them both as they await arrival of their first born expected in April! Also last year we said hello to new humanitarian dept technician, Steve Odnaha and welcomed him and his big bag of techy tricks.

Vocational Training and Job Creation

In Cameroon, we expanded our jewelry-making course to reach more rural women, while our School of Carpentry and Construction has been declared one of the leading vocational centers in the country. In 2012, support these entrepreneurs by purchasing clothing, handcrafted jewelry and quality artwork from our [Humanitarian trAID store](#).

Environmentalism

In Mexico our community center continues to grow its sustainable agriculture programs as it teaches earth friendly and money saving farming practices.

Thanks again to HI members, donors and our humanitarian fans who's extraordinary support made 2011 a year to remember!



HIMALAYAN
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Impact Report for Africa Water Project Northwest Province, Cameroon

Himalayan Institute | January 2011

The Problem

November to April is the dry season in northern Cameroon – 6 months with hardly any rainfall. During this time, rivers dry up, municipal water sources are rationed, and village people are forced to travel further and further each day in order to get a bucket of water. Often, water sources during this time become dirty and disease-ridden due to overuse and increased traffic. Wells provide year-round water that is clean and more readily accessible.

The Solution

With the support of generous donors such as the **Buffalo Arts Studio** the Himalayan Institute Cameroon was able to complete its first community water project: the installation of two public wells in two towns in the Northwest Province of Cameroon. The villages of *Kishong* and *Jakiri* were the beneficiaries of these wells. Using completely local talent and resources, from rural engineers to construction workers, these two wells were completed in 2010 and are fully operational at this time.



Village Overviews

Kishong Village

Most of the roughly 35,000 residents of the Kishong municipality have access to municipal water in their homes or from a small number of public taps. However, during the dry season these taps are frequently turned off to ration dwindling water supplies. Because of its rural status, Kishong Village suffers from the most severe rationing and villagers are forced to haul water from nearby streams. The incidence of diseases related to poor hygiene, water-borne microbes, dehydration and malnutrition greatly increases during the months that villagers must harvest unclean water for themselves.



The same view comparing land in Kishong during the dry season (at left) and the wet season. During the dry season, the air is saturated with dust blown down from the Sahara Desert and suspended dirt from the unpaved roads.

Jakiri Village

Jakiri is a town located 20 kilometers from the HI Cameroon main campus in Kumbo. Home to roughly 100,000 people in its municipality, Jakiri is a connecting point linking townspeople with their farms in the country. Despite its important location and the large population it contains, Jakiri suffers from a dire water situation. During the dry season, it is common for the residents of Jakiri to pass two or three months at a time without municipal water. They must travel to streams in the surrounding area to fill their jugs with unclean water. The municipal water system in place is controlled by the regional government, which not only neglects the residents of Jakiri, but has prohibited citizen groups from seeking alternative water systems. Groups of farmers and residents have attempted to install private water pipelines from other catchments, but have been prevented from doing so.



Filling up water containers at a dried up municipal tap during the dry season.

Supported by the Buffalo Arts Studio, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon has installed a well in the heart of Jakiri. Operated by a simple hand pump and without pipelines, this well now serves as a permanent, free water source that exists without encroaching on the present government water system. Because it is installed on the

property controlled by the local ruler, it will be protected from vandalism and government intervention, and will be maintained and kept available to the public.

Like the public roadside tap in Kishong Village, this well in Jakiri will empower the local people with clean, free water available in their own community.

Construction

It took approximately one month to complete the Kishong well and accompanying pipelines, and one month to complete the Jakiri well. As with almost all construction projects in the region, both wells were dug by hand.



The Kishong well measures 9 meters deep, with standing water at a minimum of 3 meters, even at the height of the dry season. Most importantly, because of its depth, the water is very clean.

Once the well was dug, the entire length was lined with concrete rings to strengthen the well and prevent soil from entering the water.



Removing the concrete rings from the molds.

A diesel generator powers the pump that sends water from the well to an elevated 1,000 L storage tank at the top of the land. The pump is kept locked up in the guard shed and brought down to the well when needed to refill the tank.



The water storage tank at the top of the land is elevated on a tower to increase water pressure for the roadside and irrigation taps.

Accompanying the well itself, a team of 4 workers hand-dug over 1000 meters of trench and laid PVC piping to carry water from the well to the storage tank at the top of the land; from the tank to the roadside tap; and from the tank downhill to six taps that supply irrigation water to 6 acres of crops.



Digging the trenches took about five days' labor.



All together, the construction of the wells employed 12 people for roughly 2 months!



Energy Farming crop plots irrigated by the well, which is visible on the left side of the photo.

The well at Jakiri was installed at a crossroads of two major footpaths so that it will be readily accessible to many people. It was constructed in the same manner as the Kishong well and is 28 meters deep, with standing water at a minimum of 18 meters in the dry season.



Rural water engineer Visi Edwin was responsible for siting, designing and overseeing construction of both wells. Here, he explains to HI Cameroon staff members how the well will be installed.



Jakiri residents examining the freshly dug hole for the well.

Unlike the well at Kishong, this pump is hand-operated, so is far less expensive to maintain and thus more suitable for a public access pump.



*A view of the completed well, taken from the patio of the Fon's palace.
The metal structure protects the hand pump.*

The Impact

Clean, safe drinking water is a fundamental necessity to which every person should have reliable access. Now firmly into the dry season, these two wells are already making a significant difference in the lives of community members.

The water storage tank at Kishong is connected to a pipeline that carries water to a water tap installed at the edge of HI Cameroon property along the main road through the village. This public tap now provides the villagers with a reliable and clean water source, all year round. With this water, the people of Kishong regain time and energy previously spent traveling to fetch river water, and regain the health and quality of life that suffers so during the dry season.



*The tap is kept locked when not in use to prevent vandalism.
It is opened up for public use on a regular schedule during the dry season
and is monitored by a local HI Cameroon employee.*



*Sign welcoming visitors to the Energy Farming land at Kishong,
where educational seminars and demonstrations are held.*



Providing clean water at the HI Cameroon land also serves as a springboard for Total Health Center outreach projects that aim to educate the public about disease control, hygiene and preventative health care.

In addition to supplying the public tap, the water is used to irrigate 6 acres of Energy Farming crops growing on the land, by means of gravity-fed flood irrigation.

These crops are primarily medicinal herbs, including brahmi, ashwagandha, turmeric and echinacea. Beginning in 2011, the Energy Farming program is responsible for growing and processing approximately 80% of the herbs used in the formulas of the Total Health Centers. By removing the need to import herbal medicines and completing the loop between growing, processing, and offering medicines all locally, HI Cameroon is greatly reinforcing its own financial sustainability. This will also allow the Total Health Centers to continue offering organically grown, natural, inexpensive medicines to even the poorest of people, while at the same time modeling concepts of self-sufficiency and sustainability within the farming community.



Energy Farming Program Leader Lilian Gupie harvesting calendula blossoms grown on the irrigated crops. Calendula is used in the Total Health Centers to make medicinal salves and oils to alleviate skin conditions including burns, abrasions, bites and rashes.

Planted among the herb crops are plots devoted to the two crops with which every farmer in Cameroon is intimately familiar: corn and beans. Such is the prevailing mindset that many farmers refuse to even attempt organic farming, believing that it is impossible to grow these food staples without expensive chemical fertilizers.

Demonstration plots like these are the kind of concrete proof needed to break generations-old habits and encourage a new paradigm of commercially viable, wholly sustainable agriculture.



Employees harvest njama-njama, a local green vegetable, in front of a corn and beans plot.

The Energy Farming program also focuses its work on the cultivation of oil crops as sustainable fuel sources, so such plants as castor, sunflower and pongamia are grown, in addition to native trees and melliferous plants for honey production in the on-site apiary. For all of this, the well is invaluable; without a water extraction and storage system, the land is virtually uncultivable during half of the year.



The Jakiri well provided an opportunity not only to gift a valuable asset to the community, but also to reinforce the important friendship between HI Cameroon and local ruler Fon Sehm Mbinglo I, whose support helped HI Cameroon acquire the Energy Farming land at Kishong and gain social acceptance within the entire Kumbo region. To ensure that the well would be protected, maintained, and perpetually available to the public, the well was constructed on the grounds of the Fon's palace in Jakiri. This site is centrally located and accessible to all.

Jakiri has two other wells that foreign aid groups installed and then left to the community. Since then, the wells have been damaged and no longer work. Part of the success of our Jakiri well, will depend on adequate and regular maintenance. To ensure the success of the Himalayan Institute-built well and to avoid the problems the HI has partnered with local community leaders to create a **clean water committee**. This committee has one purpose: to efficiently and strategically implement water projects

and maintain them long term by training and educating other community members on the importance of water management.

The Future

The Himalayan Institute would like to double its clean water impact by constructing 2 additional wells in Cameroon in the near term. With the increasing cholera outbreak in northern Cameroon, clean water supplies and sanitation training are crucial. We believe that this is achievable because of support from our members and supporters.

In just a few months of operations, these projects are already fulfilling their intended purpose:

- By providing a *local* source of water, villagers regain time, energy and money previously spent traveling to fetch river water.
- By providing a *reliable* source of water, the quality of villagers' lives, particularly in the dry season, increases because gardens may be watered, homes cleaned and drinking water will be readily available.
- By providing a *clean* source of water, the health of villagers dramatically improves through better hygiene, waste sanitation and a reduction in water-borne illnesses.
- By facilitating Energy Farming crop cultivation, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon can continue to offer inexpensive, locally produced, natural health options, model sustainable agriculture with core crops in the local economy, and develop its biofuels research.



Neighborhood children enjoying a cool drink of water at the public tap supplied by the new well in Kishong.

We thank the Buffalo Arts Studio for their support in making this possible and look forward to future collaboration.