



2020 Annual Report

Looking Back

INTRODUCTION

The Himalayan Institute's global humanitarian initiatives empower rural communities with the knowledge and tools needed for lasting social transformation. We train local leaders to be resourceful and efficient in their economic, health, and education initiatives, which give people of all ages the tools to be healthier, more knowledgeable, and more proactive in all areas of life.

In 2007, we began partnering with rural communities in Northwest Cameroon to meet a broad spectrum of community needs. Our programs address root problems with integrated, sustainable solutions. Thanks to your generosity and support, over the last 13 years, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon team has spearheaded and expanded four key initiatives:

Public Health Education and Public Health Services

Public Library Program

Women's and Family Empowerment Program

Center for Carpentry and Construction



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to partner with rural communities to eradicate poverty, disease, and illiteracy through education, health services, and job creation. We're building libraries, health centers, and vocational training schools to give rural

populations what they need to tackle chronic problems and become effective agents of change. Without our community-led humanitarian work, the villages we serve would lack the resources to live vibrant, healthy lives and fulfill their potential.



OUR VALUES:



RESPECTFUL PARTNERSHIP

Every community has unique priorities, challenges, assets, and opportunities. Guided by the experience and wisdom of grassroots leaders, our humanitarian model is rooted in participatory and collaborative development.



ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Our projects strive to create livelihoods that offer stability and dignity to people and their families. Genuine empowerment drives sustainable change and generational impact in the communities where we work.



EMPOWERMENT

Grassroots leadership development is central to our work, so that local community members gain the skills and confidence to become effective agents of change.



LASTING TRANSFORMATION

Our global humanitarian projects transform rural communities through strong local partnerships. In each community, we employ local talent and leadership to design, implement, and evaluate innovative projects that tackle chronic problems.



2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

Thanks to your support, we created a concrete positive impact during a time of uncertainty in Cameroon and the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Here is what you helped to accomplish.

“Health is the key, and our uniqueness as an organization in identifying and reaching out to people in areas that affect their lives the most makes this work so inspiring.”

—Pascaline Berri, Programs Manager at
Himalayan Institute Cameroon





TOTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Our Community Health Initiatives started as part of our flagship community center in Kumbo, Cameroon. Since then, our Total Health Program has expanded its reach to serve remote villagers who have little-to-no access to healthcare. Our initiatives are encompassed within two broad categories:

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

Our educational group classes **increase health awareness in the general public and improve long-term health outcomes** in the region. Public health education classes are led by our expert health consultants and focus on the topics that are most relevant and useful to the local population.

ONE-ON-ONE HEALTH SERVICES

We address the causes of poor health through **private consultations and health product manufacturing**. At our Total Health Center in Kumbo, and through our mobile health vehicles that travel to rural villages across the region, we have a dedicated team of local health

experts who provide free individual health consultations, run health-consultant training programs, and manage a pharmacy and herbal medicine production.

TOTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

The prevention of COVID-19 was our priority in 2020. In March, we closed our campus in Kumbo as local authorities issued a stay-at-home order to prevent the spread of the virus. Following the safety protocols outlined by the local government and the World Health Organization as they unfolded throughout the year, we began offering small group workshops in July of 2020 in Kumbo and Bamenda, and we introduced remote access to our **essential public health services**. In response to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon team provided educational materials and communicated best practices on COVID-19 prevention and symptom identification to groups, institutions, and influential leaders throughout the region.

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION AND ONE-ON-ONE HEALTH SERVICES



Distributed face masks, soap, and hand sanitizer, and communicated best preventive practices that helped

**prevent
the spread
of COVID-19**



**Health classes
focused on
stress management**

gave people the tools to cope with the challenges of civil unrest and the global pandemic



We delivered health talks focused on
**bone health, diet
and digestion, and
personal hygiene**
—some of the most prevalent health concerns in the region



We reached
63 children
in a single Health and Hygiene class



Our Total Health Program
**fortified
partnerships**
with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit organizations, and orphanages



3,309
people reached
through our Public Health Education and One-on-One Health Services in 2020

2020

Achievements





Public Library Program

Our System of Public Libraries also started with our flagship community center in Kumbo. We began with one large room, one library employee, and 10,000 books we gathered from around the U.S. and Cameroon. That center has grown to include **educational tutoring and mentorship**, including literacy and computer skills training and summer education programs. With more than 1.1 million children out of school in Cameroon (Source: Unicef), the communities we serve have expressed a continuous demand for our programs. Our Public Library Program provides the **necessary tools for children to thrive** through free educational resources, team building activities, and practical development of life skills.

NEW: UPDATES - PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAM

In the last year, our Public Library Program partnered with a variety of local youth camps to counsel children on the culture and importance of reading. In our **children's literacy classes**, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon team taught reading and writing skills and counseled children on the culture and importance of reading. These workshops also included song and dance, group reading and question and answer sessions, as well as regular movement breaks to reset and refresh the mind and body.



Our Public Library Program focused on helping children to be productive and active during the many challenges presented in 2020.

Our program reached more than 700 children in a single month.



Our Children's Fun Hour Program brought outdoor learning activities to **145 children at nine locations across the Northwest Region.**



2,775 people reached through our Public Library Program in 2020



In June, the Himalayan Institute Cameroon team partnered with UNICEF to

celebrate the International Day of the African Child.

This annual observance day raises awareness of the challenges facing African children, and the theme for 2020 honed in on cultivating a children-centered justice system in Africa. We celebrated with children ages 8 through 12 through storytelling, arts and crafts, presentations, and dance. Masks were distributed to the children and a talk on COVID-19 precautions was held. Children reported feelings of hopefulness following the workshop.





Center for Carpentry and Construction

The Center for Carpentry and Construction began as a vocational training center for woodworking and electrical trade skills. Over the last 13 years, it The Center for Carpentry and Construction began as a vocational training center for woodworking and electrical trade skills. Over the last 13 years, it has expanded to include an apprenticeship program and direct school-to-job placement for program graduates. Through time and dedication, the center became a hub for excellent craftsmanship and instruction in Cameroon. Our training center is equipped with modern woodworking equipment and accomplished teachers who provide instruction and training for students, community members, and carpenters of all skill levels. Our services have improved the overall quality of construction in the region and widened the skill set of carpenters. We have also achieved a 90% employment success rate for the graduates of our program.

Center for carpentry and construction initiatives include:

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The Center of Carpentry & Construction offers vocational training courses on advanced woodworking techniques and furniture making. The course includes training in structural design, furniture design and upholstery, detailed carpentry work, wood preserving and finishing techniques, project estimating, and shop management. With a strong emphasis on hands-on experience, the program provides ample opportunity for student projects

and internships. Graduates can use their certificates of completion to help them get better jobs throughout Cameroon, and select students have the opportunity to join the Furniture Production Center and Specialty Wood Service Program.

SPECIALTY WOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The School of Carpentry & Construction is equipped with a modern set of woodworking machines: table saw, mortising machine, drill press, lathe, plunge routers, handheld belt sanders, and random-orbit hand sanders. Many of these machines are the first of their kind in the area, helping to make the local carpentry industry more efficient, productive, and safe. The Service Program makes these modern power tools available to the Kumbo professional carpenters. Staffed by select graduates from the center's 10-week training program, the center provides on-demand custom cuts and joinery for established carpenters. The staff completes many of the orders in minutes with stationary power tools, which would otherwise take days of manual labor. The Service Program ensures high-quality products for consumers and broadens the product base for the 250+ carpenters in the region!

FURNITURE PRODUCTION CENTER

The Center of Carpentry & Construction fills challenging orders from the local community for furniture that otherwise could not be completed through traditional methods. By doing this, the center raises awareness of the potential of local materials, while creating demand for locally produced, high-quality furniture.



In the last year, the Center for Carpentry and Construction received and fulfilled many requests for finishing carpentry, with an emphasis on

window installations, joinery, and crown moulding.



The team collaborated with local carpenters to produce

custom furniture for the community, including functional window shutters, doors, wardrobes, bookshelves, beds, tables, chairs, TV stands, kitchen cabinets, and school lockers.



97 people reached through our Center for Carpentry and Construction





Women and Family Enrichment Program (WFEP)

Our Women's and Family Enrichment Program began with our traditional jewelry-making program. This program taught jewelry-making as a vocational trade to local women. Since its inception, our WFEP has evolved into a multi-faceted program that includes **small business finance, marketing strategy, family finance and budgeting strategy, and family-focused health services**. After 13 years of growth and development, we have created a strong foundation to serve women and provide the skills, financial training, and health services they need to become self-reliant entrepreneurs and support themselves and their families.

WFEP initiatives include:

SACRED LINK JEWELRY AND SMALL BUSINESS FINANCE AND MARKETING TRAINING

Sacred Link Jewelry incorporates designs and materials from all around the world and brings the beauty of the village market to the global market. For 13 years we've worked with schools, women's empowerment groups, government ministries, local nonprofits, and other development clubs throughout Cameroon to teach **jewelry-making as a vocational trade**. For the women in these communities, having a skill that enables them

to earn an income is a matter of great pride as it allows them to be self-reliant. Most recently, we have added small business finance and marketing skills training to our already robust jewelry making program. This addition to the program allows women to add additional skills to their repertoire and become successful entrepreneurs.

WOMEN'S AND FAMILY-FOCUSED HEALTH

To uplift the women of the Kumbo community, we started offering a women's and family-focused health services program. The program utilizes the infrastructure and resources of our existing health centers but focuses specifically on women's health issues—**prenatal and postnatal care, family planning, and reproductive health, as well as children's health**. This new format has created a safe space for women to talk with other women about health struggles and get care for themselves and their children.

HOME FAMILY FINANCE MANAGEMENT

In Cameroon, women are still the primary managers of the household, and this includes family finances. We started an in-depth course covering the basics of family finance management so that women can take charge of their financial future. Throughout the course, women learn the basics of **budgeting, saving, and income management**. Over the last two years, this program has proven successful, with women taking on more leadership roles within their communities and families.



In February 2020, we reached 115 people in a single women's health talk. Every WFEP orientation introduces more women to the resources available to them in the program.

192 new women oriented to the program in 2020.



Responding to the most pressing needs in 2020, our team held workshops focused on

COVID-19 sensitization as well as raising awareness of and reducing gender-based violence.

The Himalayan Institute Cameroon team partnered with the Justice and Peace Commission in Kumbo to host a workshop titled "Women as Key Actors in Justice, Peace and Reconciliation." 56 women from all denominations were in attendance.



1,083 people reached through our Women's and Family Enrichment Program in 2020.





Village Health Relief Fund

2021 Donor Appeal



Thanks to your outpouring of support and generosity, we **achieved our \$100,000 fundraising** goal for our public health initiatives. We are so grateful to each one of you for stepping up and supporting our work in Cameroon—particularly during the challenging year that all of us globally have faced. Your generosity will support an extraordinary team and will have a positive impact on thousands of lives in Cameroon.

Over the nine weeks of our campaign, we received donations from individual donors, grantmakers, and

family foundations across four continents, 14 countries, and 29 states. We are so inspired by the generosity and support that we received from across the globe. Thanks to you, we will be **able to reach 3,200 people** through our public health education program, **give 1,000 individual health consultations**, and **serve over 400 villages in the Northwest Region**. Our public health initiatives will be able to continue to thrive and provide critical support to Cameroonians during a time of turmoil.



Future 2021 Program Development

As we move into 2021, our 14th year of service in Cameroon, we will continue to advance our mission to fight poverty, illiteracy, and inequality through education, health care, and job creation.

In the next year, we will continue to focus on preventing the spread of disease, including COVID-19, through our public health education outreach and one-on-one health services. Our Public Library program will serve more children who have been unable to attend school as a result of ongoing civil unrest. By teaching useful skills

like carpentry, jewelry making, and family finance, our Center for Carpentry and Construction and Women's and Family Enrichment Program will create job opportunities and new possibilities for communities to thrive.

Knowing that creating change is a long-term investment, we are committed to the **ongoing support of peace and progress through all of our programs**. As we continue to work together to achieve lasting change, the programs we have been nurturing over the past fourteen years can have a further reach as we deepen our attention toward expansion.

Staff Spotlight: Yao and Quiniva's weddings



We are delighted to announce the weddings of Quiniva, who keeps our financial books in order for our operations in Cameroon, and Yao, the leader of our Public Library Program. We wish them much joy and happiness in these new chapters of their lives. Congratulations to the newly married!

Meet Quiniva

Joining our team in 2018, Quiniva works to keep our financial books in order for our operations in Cameroon. As we expand our core initiatives in 2019, Quiniva brings her local knowledge, business skills, and young entrepreneurial spirit to the team. Quiniva is one of 7, born in Bafut Village of NW Cameroon and grew up loving singing, gymnastics, and the idea of pursuing accounting and financial management. We're thankful to welcome all of these skills and passions to the HIC family.

Meet Yao

Since 2016, Yao has been the leader for our Library Program in Kumbo, Cameroon. He leads after-school programs, children's literacy courses, computer training programs, spelling bees, and summer education programs. After secondary school, Yao went on to earn an Advanced Level Certificate and is also a certified librarian and construction technician. His enthusiasm for education has truly transformed the Kumbo Public Library into a space for learning and empowerment for all.

