

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



HIMALAYAN
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HUMANITARIAN

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HI CAMEROON 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Himalayan Institute is a driving force in global humanitarian initiatives, dedicated to providing rural communities with the essential knowledge and skills necessary for sustainable development and enduring social transformation. At the heart of our HI Humanitarian ethos is a grassroots approach founded on collaboration, local partnership, dignity and mutual respect—a model that has organically evolved into a genuinely impactful substrate for our humanitarian efforts.

This model understands and addresses fundamental issues directly at their source, bringing comprehensive and fully integrated, long-term solutions. Our programs encourage participants to not only embrace, but actively pursue healthier, more informed and vibrant lifestyles. In turn, a beautiful independence and confidence is fostered among individuals of all ages in the communities we serve.

Since its inception in 2007, the Cameroon branch of HI Humanitarian has worked to support local community leaders as effective facilitators who provide accessible services in the areas of healthcare, education, women's empowerment, and economic development. The result is a four-part core programs focus that has become the cornerstone of our work in the region:

Community Health

Youth Literacy & Library

Women's and Family Enrichment

Center for Carpentry & Construction

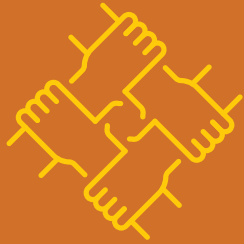


OUR MISSION

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, as well as conducting extensive, all-encompassing outreach initiatives, to give rural populations what they need to address long-standing 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.



Empowerment

Grassroots leadership development is central to our work, so that local community members gain the skills and confidence to become potent change-makers.



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.



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 initiatives that tackle persistent problems.

THANK YOU

In recent years, amidst tumultuous times of prolonged civil unrest and the relentless challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic in Northwest Cameroon, our local Cameroonian-led team has not only persevered but flourished. While other foreign aid agencies were forced to halt operations, our HI Cameroon Team doubled and in some cases even tripled its reach, underscoring the self-sustainability and resilience of our HI Humanitarian model—one that withstands external disruptions and demonstrates the indispensable value of staying power.

None of this would be possible without the continued support of our generous donors and members over the last 17 years. With gratitude and enthusiasm, we are honored to share the remarkable strides made by our HI Cameroon Team in 2023.



COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

HI Cameroon's Community Health Program started as part of our flagship community center, the Total Health Center (THC), in Kumbo, Cameroon. Since then, our initiatives have continued to consistently expand their reach. Most notably, with the implementation of mobile health vehicles, the HIC team is able to serve an ever-growing number of remote villagers who would ordinarily have little-to-no access to healthcare.





OUR COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES INCLUDE:

PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION

Our Public Health Education classes increase health awareness as well as introduce self-care practices, improving the long-term wellness and vitality of our participants. These educational group classes are led by HIC's expert health consultants, and focus on topics such as, basic hygiene and sanitation, high blood pressure, blood sugar levels, bone health, physical fitness, women's health, backaches and joint pain, etc., that are most relevant and useful to the local population.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

With a strong emphasis on the importance of preventative measures such as basic hygiene and sanitation practices, our Public Health Services initiative addresses the root causes of poor health through private consultations and health product manufacturing. At our Total Health Center in Kumbo, and by way of our mobile health vehicles, we have a dedicated team of local health experts who provide free one-on-one health consultations, run health-consultant training programs, and manage a pharmacy as well as herbal medicine production.

OUR COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM IMPACT

Our efforts in providing public health education and services—with a strong focus on teaching preventive methods—have been pivotal in educating communities about vital health practices, while also providing accessible and quality healthcare services. This approach plays an indispensable role in reducing the risks of infection, saving lives, and improving the overall health of the population, while at the same time providing cost-effective solutions. By empowering individuals with a fundamental understanding of health and wellness, and ensuring access to essential medical care, HI Cameroon has made significant strides in fostering a more comprehensive individual as well as community well-being among the populations we support.



2023 COMMUNITY HEALTH ACHIEVEMENTS:



Increasing their reach by over 7,000 this past year, our Community Health initiatives **touched more than 17,000 individuals in 2023**—almost double the amount served in 2022!



We **broadened the scope** of our **health education seminars** to now also include topics such as **gender-based violence, menstrual health, stress management and emotional well-being for young girls and women.**



Our **ongoing focus on preventative health and personal sanitation best practices** was expanded significantly through the addition of **new distribution programs** for **feminine hygiene products, soap, salt and toothbrushes.**



We **enhanced our school visits** to **provide essential education to children regarding common public health issues** such as cholera, diarrhea, and common cold prevention.



Our **Hatha Yoga and Jin Shin Jyutsu classes** continued to grow in participant numbers, demonstrating **an overall improved understanding and engagement in healthy lifestyle choices.**

YOUTH LITERACY & LIBRARY PROGRAM

Also established as part of our flagship community center in Kumbo, our Youth Literacy & Library Program began with just one large room, one library employee, and 10,000 books we gathered from around the U.S. and Cameroon. Since then, the program has grown into a far-reaching network of public libraries (now with 60,000+ books!) which also offer educational tutoring and mentorship, including literacy and computer skills training as well as summer education programs.

HI Cameroon recognizes youth education and safety as key components for sustaining lasting peace in communities not only in Cameroon but all around the world. When children's senses of curiosity are nurtured and supported through education, they grow up to be more informed citizens and change-makers within their communities. With more than 1.1 million children out of school in Cameroon (Source: Unicef), our Youth Literacy & Library Program provides the necessary tools and avenues for children to more fully thrive through free educational resources, team building activities, and practical development of life skills.



OUR YOUTH LITERACY & LIBRARY INITIATIVES INCLUDE:

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Throughout Africa, there is a consistent lack of access to information. This is most vividly demonstrated by the scarcity of books. In Kumbo, despite a relatively high literacy rate, books are extremely difficult to find. Even when available, a used paperback routinely costs \$15 to \$20 in a country where many earn only \$2 a day. With this in mind, and recognizing the transformative power of education, we've focused on establishing thriving public libraries within numerous rural communities of Northwest Cameroon.

These libraries serve as vibrant hubs of knowledge and social interaction, fostering a love for reading, and providing the eager communities we work with greater opportunities to learn and grow. Expanding significantly since its founding in 2007, our network of libraries has grown to be the largest of its kind in the Northwest Region of Cameroon—with 30,000+ books in Kumbo's main library alone, as well as reading rooms, collaborative work spaces, a children's corner, reference books, and textbooks.

YOUTH LITERACY OUTREACH

HIC's Youth Literacy Outreach initiative is not only combatting, but reversing, the stifling effects of prolonged school closures on youth learning and social development in Northwest Cameroon. While youth literacy has always been a fundamental component of HI Cameroon's vision and mission, the past several years of persistent inaccessibility to consistent education in the region unequivocally impelled us to generate a much more robust and focused remote/mobile outreach.

Answering this imperative call-to-action, we expanded our youth educational offerings to include children's outdoor teamwork activities, and bolstered our computer basics courses along with tutoring and mentoring initiatives. With mobile, independent education materials and consultants, our staff is able to travel all across the region and serve exponentially more children who have been displaced by the youth education crisis in Northwest Cameroon. In fact, our programs are oftentimes the only form of reliable education to which the children of this region have access—giving the youth in the communities we serve a safe and nurturing environment where they can more freely and effectively learn, grow and play.

2023 YOUTH LITERACY & LIBRARY ACHIEVEMENTS:



Primarily benefiting children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 17, our Youth Literacy & Library initiatives reached a total of **27,000+ students** in 2023—**nearly doubling** the 15,000+ students served in 2022 and **far surpassing our initial goal of 25,000!**



We **more than doubled the schools visited last year** (23) by bringing our programs to an incredible **48 various schools**, specifically in Kumbo and Bamenda, in the nursery, primary and secondary levels.



Our program's growing success was evident throughout the four quarters, with **increased attendance rates** ranging from an initial 10% to a **final quarter attendance rate of 50%!**



68% of our students in 2023 were female (up 3% from 2022), with **literacy rates significantly improved for both boys and girls.**

I want to wholeheartedly thank the HI Cameroon Team for having initiated the “Two Days Spelling Drill Seminar” that was organized to boost the Spelling System of our children. I was so surprised that it was free and open to everyone. Seeing an occasion like this, I decided to try by sending my kids. I was so surprised by the quality of teachings and the various drilling assignments that they brought home. As I came home today, I was welcomed joyfully by my kids who presented to me these numerous [school supplies] gifts that will go a long way to help me face the challenges of school reopening with my head up. Thank you to everyone who was part of this project, and thanks to those who donated to provide those gifts which are quite needed.

—A Grateful Parent



WOMEN'S & FAMILY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

The HIC Women's and Family Enrichment Program (WFEP) began with our traditional jewelry-making initiative, the Sacred Link Jewelry (SLJ) project. The initial aim of this project was to teach jewelry-making as a vocational trade to local women, empowering them to generate income independently. This independence not only benefits the women themselves but also allows them to respond promptly to the health needs of their children and support their education, thereby enabling them to take greater control of their families' overall well-being.

Since its inception, our WFEP has evolved into a multi-faceted program that now includes workshops and seminars on small business start-up and finance, marketing strategy, family finance and budgeting, women's and family-focused health services, and conflict management. After 17 years of growth and development, we have established a strong foundation to not only serve, but markedly empower the women in the communities we serve. We provide the women's and family-focused skills, financial training, and health and wellness services needed to become confident, self-reliant, head-of-household entrepreneurs—significantly better equipped to support themselves and their families.



OUR WOMEN'S & FAMILY ENRICHMENT 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 17 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 expansion of the program allows women to add the additional vital skills to their repertoire that ultimately results in even greater success as entrepreneurs.

WOMEN'S AND FAMILY-FOCUSED HEALTH

To further uplift the women of the Kumbo community, and in addition to our regularly offered Public Health Services initiative, we established a more customized 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. We've also begun to extend the program to young girls, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to overcome societal challenges that put them at risk of unwanted pregnancies and transmissible infections. This complementary format to our regularly offered public health services has created an invaluable support network and safe space for women to talk with other women about health struggles, as well as receive more specialized healthcare 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. Since its establishment, this program has proven to be highly invaluable, with women confidently and courageously taking on more leadership roles within their communities and families.

2023 WOMEN'S & FAMILY ENRICHMENT ACHIEVEMENTS:



Our **seminar and workshop attendance is growing exponentially!** We held numerous seminars and workshops in Kumbo and Bamenda for both women and youth, presenting on critical topics such as **financial management, household budgeting, income generation, and strengthening resilience during times of conflict.**



Through our Financial Management and Income Generation seminars **we brought much needed practical business knowledge and skills to 200+ women** in one of our largest seminars to date!



Our **Sacred Link Jewelry** initiative continues to grow its reach and impact, providing **high-quality jewelry design training for nearly 200 women** in March of 2023.



In addition to **small business and marketing training**, we **distributed soap and salt to 19 women's groups** throughout 2023, **supporting women-owned startup businesses** and noting a **remarkable 165 individual recipients** at our most successful distribution turnout of the year!



Our **Conflict Management and Stress Management seminars** have quickly become **one of our most attended offerings**, revealing the extraordinary resolve of the women in the communities we serve as they **fortify their resilience** and transform **themselves into powerful agents of peace.**

CENTER FOR CARPENTRY & CONSTRUCTION (CC&C)

Kumbo, Cameroon, suffers from an overwhelming deficiency of carpentry and construction tools. Furthermore, workers lack the practical knowledge and skills needed to integrate the various trades required to effectively build or renovate a building. The result is that construction projects are frequently plagued with inefficiency, inconsistent quality, high cost, and numerous safety concerns. These facts—combined with the recognition of the invaluable role practical skills and vocational training play in societal upliftment and transformation—are what inspired us to establish the HIC Center for Carpentry and Construction.

The Center for Carpentry & Construction (CC&C) is a vocational training and service center that features a large range of modern tools, equipment, and techniques—all designed to improve the efficiency, safety, and quality of construction projects in Cameroon. By integrating several vocational trades, including carpentry, masonry, and plumbing, the Center for Carpentry & Construction is training a new generation of general contractors who will be equipped to more effectively address the challenges of construction.

With a well-established reputation for providing furniture and carpentry services of exceptional quality to the residents of major cities such as Bamenda, Douala, Buea, and Yaounde, the HIC Center for Carpentry & Construction has become a leading role model in Northwest Cameroon. Its consistent, exemplary craftsmanship is contributing significantly to the development and advancement of carpentry skills in the region, ensuring that both aspiring as well as experienced carpenters receive much needed, valuable knowledge and hands-on experience.



OUR CENTER FOR CARPENTRY & CONSTRUCTION INITIATIVES INCLUDE:

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The Center for Carpentry & Construction offers vocational training courses on advanced woodworking techniques and furniture making. Our student internship program is the core of our activities at the center. Over the years, we have trained hundreds of students in this program to be highly competent carpenters. With a strong emphasis on hands-on experience, the courses include training in structural design, furniture design and upholstery, detail-carpentry work, wood preserving and finishing techniques, project estimating, and shop management. Graduates can use their certificates of completion to help them get better jobs throughout Cameroon, and select, outstanding graduates have the opportunity to join our Furniture Production Center and Specialty Wood Services program.

SPECIALTY WOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Our center 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 Specialty Wood Service program makes these modern power tools available to the Kumbo public. Staffed by select graduates from the center's 10-week training program, the center provides on-demand custom cuts and joinery for established carpenters. Many of the orders completed in minutes with stationary power tools at the center 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

Our carpentry & construction interns are also trained in modern furniture design and building techniques. This enables the Center for Carpentry & Construction to fulfill challenging orders from the local community for furniture that could not be completed through traditional methods. By doing this, the center raises awareness of the potential for local materials and creates future demand for locally produced, high-quality furniture.



2023 CENTER FOR CARPENTRY & CONSTRUCTION ACHIEVEMENTS:



Following five years of forced closure due to socio-political unrest, **the reopening of the doors to our Center for Carpentry & Construction in 2022 continues to gain momentum!**



In 2023, the HIC CC&C conducted **free monthly workshops** specifically tailored for existing carpenters who aspire to hone and improve their current skills. Workshop trainings included:

- Benefits and techniques of effective lumber seasoning
- Advanced techniques for woodworking and finishing applications
- Essential workshop best practices for safety and regulation guidelines
- Workshop management
- Project estimate building



2023 also brought an inspiring **10 new carpentry and construction interns** to us!

OUR IMPACT & FUTURE 2024

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

From Bamenda to Kumbo, the impact of our programs resonates throughout hundreds of communities. For over seventeen years, thanks to your generosity, HI Cameroon has truly thrived—going from hundreds to thousands to now tens of thousands of people experiencing the positive impact our programs bring to their lives every single month. Our model of forging authentic, long-standing, collaborative community partnerships with local churches, schools and community groups is a testament to the power of genuine reciprocity—where people are joining hands, hearts and resources to accomplish a shared higher purpose.

HI Cameroon's focus on health, education, women's and family enrichment, and carpentry and construction, addresses the critical needs of the communities we serve. The overwhelming number of requests to be part of our highly esteemed programs is evidence of their tremendous value and the transformative change they are bringing to thousands of people's lives. We continue to receive a multitude of heartfelt letters of appreciation from individuals and organizations who have witnessed the immediate as well as long-lasting benefits of our programs.

UPDATE: OUR 2023 CLEAN WATER AND PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

In 2023, we implemented a Clean Water and Public Health Initiative to directly address the issue of waterborne diseases such as cholera, diarrhea, and dysentery that are widespread among the vulnerable populations we serve. With a goal of providing clean drinking water as well as vital hygiene and sanitation education to the village residents of Central Kumbo, Mbonso, and Mbiame, we are pleased to report that more than 15,000 individuals in these communities are now able to access and enjoy safe drinking water!

THE FUTURE: 2024

As we enter a new year with heightened enthusiasm and an even deeper commitment to supporting the communities where we work, our annual special project focus is turning towards the growing food security crisis currently unfolding throughout Africa due to intense global conflict and severe climate change. Our 2024 Food Security and Nutritional Wellness Initiative was officially launched in the last quarter of 2023 with a fundraiser that raised over \$90,000—kicking off our efforts to provide immediate as well as long-term relief and support to thousands in Northwest Cameroon through strategic farming partnerships, an ambitious “Meals at School” program, and essential nutritional wellness education for families.

2024 FOOD SECURITY & NUTRITIONAL WELLNESS INITIATIVE

Escalation in global conflict is bringing unprecedented supply chain disruptions. Drastic climate change is causing poor crop yields. As a direct result, food security for millions across Africa has been severely impacted. With humanitarian projects serving rural communities in Cameroon for over 17 years, we are effectively positioned to provide relief and support now.

Our vision for the 2024 Food Security and Nutritional Wellness Initiative is based on three clear and crucial goals. Through farming partnerships focused on direct sourcing, we'll assist with the growth of 23,000 lbs of food locally by teaming up with well-vetted, Cameroonian farmers to enhance crop quality and productivity. Simultaneously, we'll be providing 10,000 locally-grown meals to schoolchildren—nourishing their minds, bodies and spirits for an entire school year. But we won't stop there. Through the third component of our three-part objective, we'll help further build and invest in the future by mentoring 5,000 families in personal wellness, educating them about the vital importance of diet, nutrition and preventive health best practices.

Thanks to your invaluable donations and support, we'll serve thousands of children and families in Northwest Cameroon, Africa, in 2024.



THREE GOALS WE NEED TO ACHIEVE



GROW 23,000 LBS OF FOOD LOCALLY

Partnering with Cameroon farmers to bolster crop quality and productivity



PROVIDE 10,000 MEALS TO CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

Nourishing the minds, bodies and spirits of Cameroon children with an entire school year of daily meals



MENTOR 5,000 FAMILIES IN PERSONAL WELLNESS

Educating families about the importance of nutrition and preventative health

OUR MULTIDIMENSIONAL, GRASSROOTS APPROACH

FARMING PARTNERSHIPS

Africa's population is exploding, climate change is making food production increasingly erratic, and geo-political disruptions are making global food supply chains increasingly unreliable. Despite being blessed with fertile soil, abundant water and remarkable farming talent which collectively have the potential to feed not only the entire continent, but the world, Africa remains highly reliant on importing food from abroad. Intensifying global conflict has devastated much of its grain supply and the only truly sustainable solution is to grow food locally. Through direct sourcing partnerships, our initiative supports steady, reliable growth and expansion for well-vetted, local farmers who grow staple foods such as rice, corn, beans, potatoes, and vegetables in the communities we serve.

MEALS AT SCHOOL

During food shortages, families are often forced to resort to cutting back on meals, resulting in children going to school on an empty stomach. A multitude of studies report that hunger and poor nutrition dramatically harm children's ability to learn and grow. Helping schools feed students is an effective way to not only improve children's education, but also their long-term health and well-being. This initiative engages partner schools that HI Cameroon has worked with for over a decade on a wide range of educational and health initiatives, providing children with school-time meals or take-home food packets over a consistent, substantial amount of time, bringing a much longer-lasting, comprehensive impact.

FAMILY HEALTH & WELLNESS MENTORSHIP

Knowledge is power. Nutritional wellness and preventive health literacy is a key tool in improving the overall health of families. This initiative focuses on educating parents regarding key principles and guidelines in diet, nutrition, public health and preventive wellness so that their children and families get the most out of what they eat and stay healthy longer. A favorite phrase of the HI Cameroon public health team is "Your health is your wealth!" which beautifully captures the spirit of this initiative. Support the HI Cameroon team's efforts in bringing this indispensable practical knowledge to thousands by offering a series of public family nutrition and wellness workshops through our HIC Community Center as well as in partnership with dozens of community groups, churches, schools, social clubs, and traditional (tribal) groups.

A LEGACY OF RESOLVE & RESILIENCE

Over the years, our education, healthcare, and community-centered initiatives in Northwest Cameroon have not only significantly improved the lives of thousands but also revealed the incredible resolve and resilience of the individuals with whom we work. As we face the complexity of this newest challenge arising from the intersection of conflict, climate change, and food insecurity, we're confident our HI Cameroon Team and the communities with which they collaborate are aptly prepared and motivated to leverage this legacy, as they not only address the immediate needs of these times but also continue to establish more sustainable, long-term solutions. Uplifted by your generous and invaluable contribution, we're confident we'll not simply achieve our objectives for 2024, but far surpass them. Together, we can more swiftly and impactfully feed the future.





Feed the Future

HI INDIA 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

LEGACY OF OUR HUMANITARIAN IMPACT IN INDIA

For over 50 years, HI India has been at the forefront of numerous humanitarian initiatives aimed at fostering positive change in the lives of the people of India. With a strong focus on healthcare, education, livelihood creation, and environmental regeneration, HI India's efforts have left—and continue to build upon—a lasting legacy of compassion and empowerment. The organization's campuses in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad) and Khajuraho not only anchor the Institute's educational programs and publications in India, but also host extraordinary, life-affirming spiritual retreats, and are home to a vibrant community which sustainably supports the local villages in their vicinity.



2023 CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE

Suffering from chronic drought, the region surrounding the HI campus in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh, is known as a rain-shadow district. Climate change, land degradation, and deforestation have all exacerbated this phenomenon. The scorching heat of Indian summers has further intensified the already dire conditions, resulting in critical shortages of clean drinking water in the villages surrounding the HI Khajuraho campus. For the past few years, HI India has undertaken the Clean Water Initiative to alleviate this pressing issue.

As part of the initiative, during these crucial summer months, HI India uses water tankers to distribute approximately 10,000 liters of clean drinking water daily to the nearby village of Kaunda. In 2023, we expanded these efforts to the neighboring village of Lakheri. The water is sourced from a traditional brick-lined well built on the HI Khajuraho Community Center campus, providing a lifeline to thousands of individuals in need.



RAIN WATER HARVESTING TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE WATER SOURCES

The key to sustainably providing clean drinking water in the HI Khajuraho region lies in rainwater harvesting. Due to its hilly terrain and rocky soil type, this region is known for its unpredictable and fragile water table. All of the drinking water our initiative distributes is drawn from traditional wells, making it vital that we find ways to recharge this water source during the brief, seasonal rainy period.

Rainwater harvesting is a method that involves channeling the natural flow of rainfall through land contouring, guiding runoff into designated structures like ponds or water tanks. This allows precious rainwater to be reabsorbed back into the water table, so it can sustainably be drawn out later as needed.

In Spring 2023, a new pond was dug just 200 yards away from our new HI Community Center well. Measuring 75 feet by 95 feet, with an initial depth of five feet, it boasts an impressive storage capacity of approximately 400,000 gallons!

We're excited to report: while the pond rarely appears full, this is actually a good sign, as much of the water is being absorbed into the ground and thus recharging the water table. After only the first rainy season, we're already seeing great signs of groundwater recharge, with the nearby well maintaining an average water level about 10' higher than the previous year!

Before



After





Clean water sustains life.



THE FUTURE: 2024-25 SUSTAINABILITY, STEWARDSHIP, & INNOVATION

SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

Looking ahead to 2024-25, HI India recognizes the ongoing challenges posed by climate change and land degradation which continue to put pressure on groundwater resources. To address these root causes, we'll continue our efforts in sustainable water management, particularly by focusing on rainwater harvesting and tree plantation.

The new pond dug in 2023 will be deepened before the 2024 rainy season to increase its storage and recharge capacity. Additionally, HI India aims to enhance tree plantation efforts in the areas surrounding the ponds to minimize surface runoff and evaporation. By implementing various rainwater harvesting techniques, including the enhancement of natural water channels, the organization strives to amplify the ponds' capacity in order to raise groundwater levels. These initiatives will ensure a sustainable supply of clean drinking water for the community, guaranteeing its availability for decades to come.

DATE PALM REGENERATIVE FARMING PILOT PROJECT

Innovative agriculture and land utilization is a key aspect of sustainable water management. In much of the region surrounding HI Khajuraho, crops that are highly water inefficient, such as wheat, are still being cultivated on a large scale. Outmoded agricultural practices of this kind lead to detrimental depletion not only of the water table but also the soil.

To address these concerns, a regenerative farming pilot project, focused on cultivation of date palms and dragon fruit using highly water-efficient drip irrigation technology, is envisioned for 2024. Despite the soil and climate of this region being well suited for these crops, they have yet to be cultivated in a systematic way in the region, which is ironic since the name Khajuraho means "land of dates"! Hence, the goal of this pilot project is to experiment and validate that these crops can grow well—and better yet, thrive—amidst today's harsh climate conditions. Initially serving as a demonstration project and sustainable income source, we'll ultimately be able to showcase the project's success as an outreach and educational effort to local farmers.

HI KHAJURAHO GOES NET-ZERO ENERGY USE

In line with a growing and ever-evolving commitment to environmental stewardship, HI India's tree plantation initiative doubles as an integral part of the Institute's mission to incorporate regeneration practices for reducing its carbon footprint. But we aren't stopping there. In Summer 2023, as part of our broader focus and pledge to environmental responsibility, a large-scale, 18kW solar photovoltaic (PV) system was installed on the roof of the main building at our HI Khajuraho campus. With significant initial solar power production results, we're enthusiastic and confident that this project's aim of bringing the HI Khajuraho campus into net-zero energy usage, making it fully carbon-neutral by 2024, will be achieved.



LOOKING AHEAD

In the upcoming years, the Institute's humanitarian efforts in India will continue to serve its local communities through clean water distribution and environmental regeneration efforts, with a focus on rainwater harvesting, tree plantation, and agricultural innovation. These projects address the region's most crucial and immediate needs at present. We believe that these initiatives will play a vital role in establishing a strong foundation for sustainable, long-term community transformation. As we look to the future, these efforts are an expression of our desire to cultivate positive change—leaving a lasting legacy of upliftment and empowerment in the community we serve in India.



Thank you for joining us on this journey of compassion, resilience, and progress.

As we look back on the accomplishments and impact of each initiative thus far, we are reminded of the immeasurable value your support brings to these underserved communities. Together, we have witnessed lives transformed, barriers overcome, and hope restored.

Your commitment to our shared vision of advancing rural empowerment through education, health services, livelihood betterment, and environmental stewardship, is truly making a difference.



HIMALAYAN
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