High Atlas Foundation
مؤسسة الأطلس الكبير
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Photo by HAF/Field visit

Date of Monitoring and Evaluation Report:
June 30, 2024

Implementing Organization:
High Atlas Foundation

Project Period of Performance:
June 1, 2024 to July 31, 2024

Project Title:
Psychosocial Support and Empowerment Post-Disaster (PSEPD)

Introduction

In the wake of the devastating magnitude 6.8 earthquake that struck approximately 50 miles south of Marrakech, Morocco, on September 8th, 2023, the High Atlas Foundation (HAF) initiated a comprehensive response program to aid affected individuals in rebuilding their lives and achieving a "new normal." This earthquake had a profound impact, disrupting the lives of countless individuals by causing the loss of homes, loved ones, and a sense of normalcy. The program's primary objective is to provide holistic support through psychosocial assistance and empowerment, focusing on those most in need.

The program's core components include the provision of primary health care, mental health services, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services, and protective measures for vulnerable groups such as women, children, older adults, and people with disabilities. By offering psychosocial support, establishing safe identification and referral systems, and delivering targeted support for children and adolescents, the program aims to empower affected communities and facilitate their recovery.

From October 2023 to June 2024, HAF organized a series of workshops across various provinces in Morocco, focusing on community empowerment through training and capacity-building activities. In Al Haouz province, workshops were held in multiple communes, including Ijoukak, Talat N Yaaqoub, Tahnaout, and Setti Fatma, among others. Noteworthy sessions took place in villages such as Ayt Ayoub, Tizagharine, Tinmel, and Azrou, attracting significant participation, especially from women and children.

For instance, the workshops in Ouirgane's Agni village had the highest number of child participants, totaling 78, while the sessions in Ouarzazate, Ighrem N Ougdal's Aguerd Nwadouz village engaged 36 women. Workshops were also extended to other provinces, including Taroudant, Ouarzazate, Al Hoceima, and Marrakesh. Each workshop was meticulously designed to foster community development and sustainability, tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of the local population.

Objectives and Goals

- Overall Objective: To empower the affected population to find their "new normal" through the provision of psychosocial support, including delivery of PSEPD, safe identification & referral, and psychosocial support for children and adolescents.
- Specific Goals:
    1. Provide psychosocial support to 500 women and 500 children in the affected areas.
    2. Conduct 16 hours of training for 15 facilitators to deliver the PSEPD program.
    3. Facilitate 45 training sessions (4 sessions per community) over 4 weeks.

Workshop Summary and Psychological Support

In response to the significant impact of the 2023 earthquake in Morocco, HAF swiftly mobilized a series of workshops from October 2023 to June 2024 across various provinces. These workshops were integral to HAF's broader initiative aimed at providing comprehensive support and psychological assistance to communities affected by the disaster. Focused on empowerment and resilience-building, these sessions were designed to address the immediate needs of vulnerable groups, including women, children, older adults, and people with disabilities. Through tailored interventions such as counseling, community dialogues, and therapeutic activities, HAF aimed to foster healing and facilitate sustainable recovery efforts in the region.

Workshops and Beneficiaries Breakdown by Province

Province	Number of Workshops	Number of Women	Number of Men	Number of Kids
Al Haouz	32	809	72	617
Taroudant	1	27	0	18
Al Hoceima	7	171	0	9
Ouarzazate	6	149	20	100
Chichaoua	2	44	0	42
Marrakesh	3	92	0	32
TOTAL	**51**	**1292**	**92**	**818**

This table accurately reflects the number of workshops and the number of beneficiaries (women, men, and children) by province.

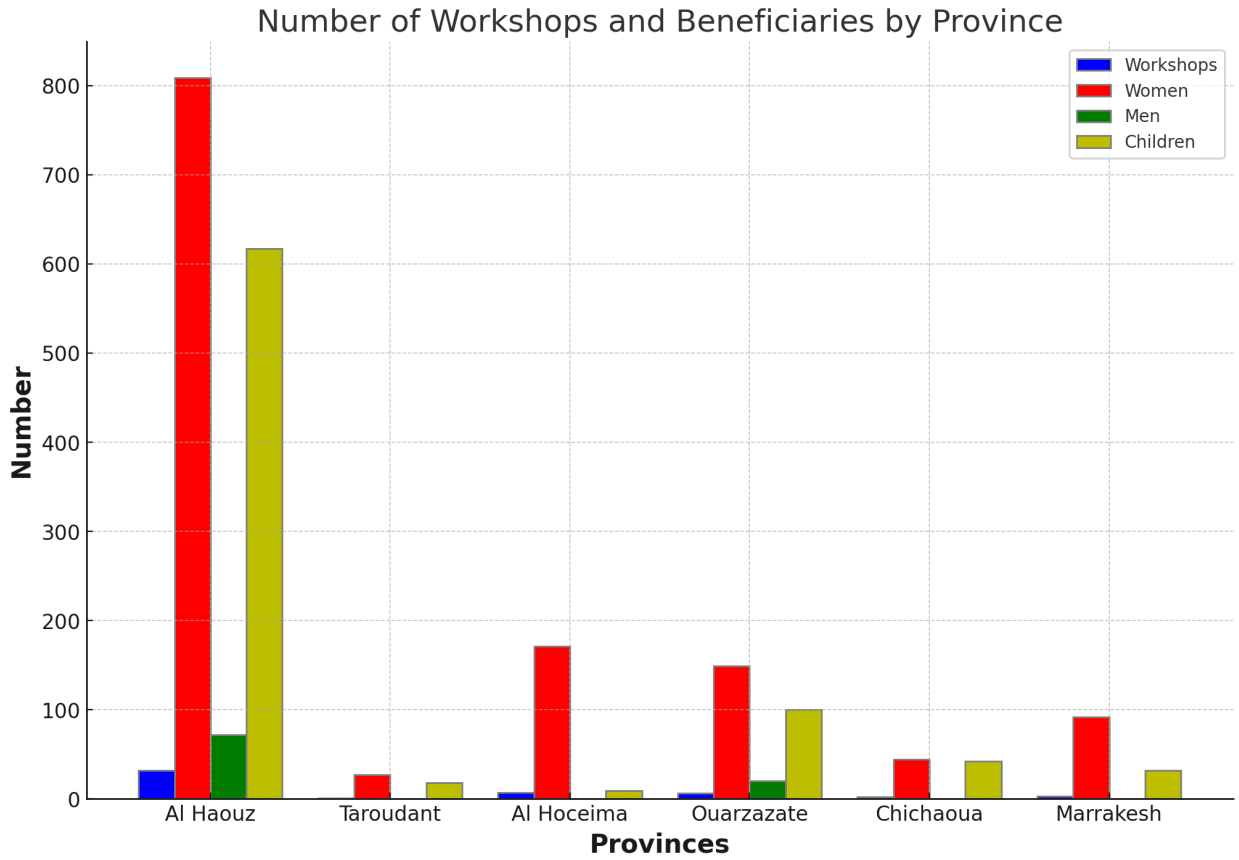


Figure 1: Distribution of Workshops and Participants by Province

This chart illustrates the number of workshops conducted and the demographic breakdown of participants in various provinces from October 2023 to June 2024. Al Haouz province hosted the highest number of workshops (32), engaging a substantial number of women (809) and children (617). Other provinces, including Taroudante, Ouarzazate, Al Hoceima, and Marrakesh, also saw significant participation, with Ouarzazate notably involving 100 children. The chart highlights the focused efforts on women's and children's engagement in community-building activities.

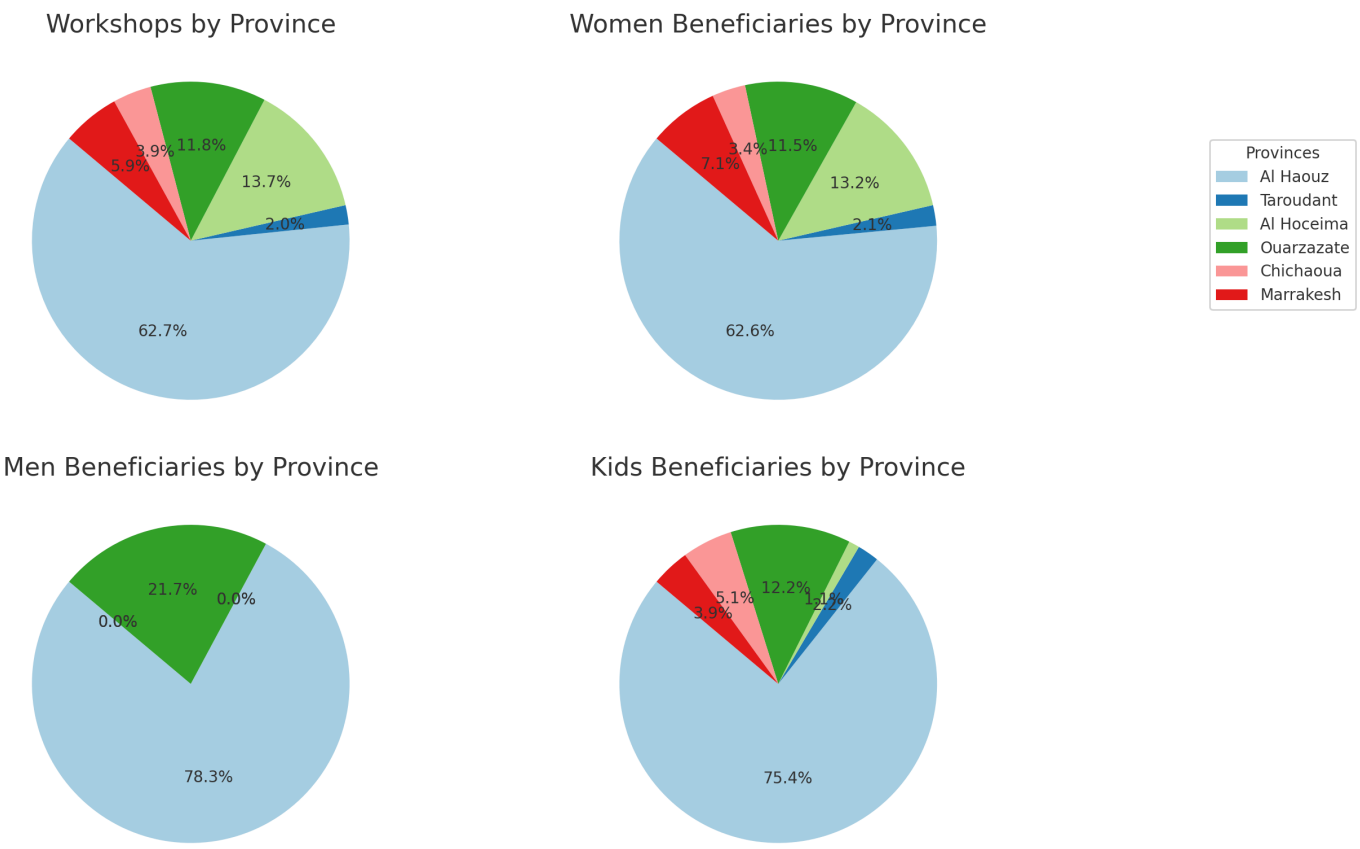


Figure 2: Workshops and Beneficiaries Breakdown by Province

This pie chart illustrates the distribution of total participants in the workshops, broken down by women, children, and men. Women make up the majority of the participants, representing 58% of the total (1,292 participants). Children account for 37% (818 participants), while men represent a smaller portion at 4% (92 participants). The chart visually demonstrates the focus on empowering women and engaging children in the capacity-building activities conducted from October 2023 to June 2024.

Number of Workshops	Province	Commune	Village	Dates of the workshop	Number of Women	Number of Men	Number of Kids
1	Al Haouz	Ijoukak	Ayt Ayoub	Oct 9, 2023 Oct 16, 2023	27	0	0
2	Al Haouz	Talat N Yaaqoub	Tizagharine	Oct 10, 2023 Oct 17, 2023 Oct 25, 2023 Oct 31, 2023	29	0	9

3	Al Haouz	Talat N Yaaqoub	Tinmel	Oct 10, 2023 Oct 17, 2023 Oct 25, 2023 Oct 31, 2023	30	0	25
4	Al Haouz			Oct 18, 2023 Oct 24, 2023 Nov 01, 2023	28	0	46
5	Al Haouz	Tahnaout	Azrou	Oct 18, 2023 Oct 24,2023 Nov 01,2023	21	0	
6	Al Haouz	Ijoukak	Tagherghiste	Oct 12, 2023 Oct 19, 2023 Oct 26, 2023 Nov 02, 2023	28	0	27
7	Al Haouz	Imgdal	Tinkest	Oct 9, 2023 Oct 16, 2023 Nov 1, 2023	31	0	28
8	Al Haouz	Setti Fatma	Asni	Oct 14, 2023 Oct 19, 2023 Oct 28, 2023 Nov 04, 2023	22	0	15
9	Taroudante	Adar	Tiferki	Oct 24 to Oct 27	27	0	18
10	Al Haouz	Tameslouht	Akrich	Oct 9, 2023 Oct 12, 2023 Oct 19, 2023 Oct 26, 2023	27	0	33
11	Al Hoceima	Ajdir	Ajdir	Nove 16,17,20,24	20	0	3
12	Ouarzazate	Ighrem N Ougdal	Aguerd Nwadouz	Dec 4th to Dec 7th 2023	36	0	26
13	Ouarzazate	Telouet	Taboughamte	Dec 4th to Dec 7th 2023	30	0	29
14	Al Hoceima	Sidi Boutmim	Touzalt	Dec 4th to Dec 7th 2023	30	0	2
15	Al Haouz	Talat N Yaaqoub	Amegdoul	11 to 14 December 2023	22	0	13

16	AL HAOUZ	Amezmiz	Zaouit	11 to 14 December 2023	23	0	24
17	Chichaoua	Imintanoute	Imintanoute	16 to 19 January 2024	22	0	7
18	AL HAOUZ	Amezmiz	Tigdelt	16 to 19 January 2024	28	0	15
19	AL HAOUZ		Asguen	22 to 25 January 2024	27	0	24
20	Chichaoua	Assif El Mal	Anebdour	22 to 25 January 2024	22	0	35
21	Al Hoceima	Ajdir	Sfiha	22 to 25 January 2024	22	0	0
22	AL HAOUZ	Setti Fatma	Sidi Ali Oufars	29 Jan to 1 Feb 2024	17	0	35
23	AL HAOUZ		Sidi Ali Oufars	29 Jan to 1 Feb 2024	17	0	
24	Al Haouz	Anougal	Imi N Tala	5 to 8 February 2024	28	0	12
25	Al Haouz		Ineghede	5 to 8 February 2024	29	0	24
26	Al Hoceima	Beni Boufrah	Torres	5 to 8 February 2024	25	0	1
27	Al Hoceima	Snada	Beni Yetef	9,13 to 15 February 2024	25	0	3
28	Al Haouz	Amghras	Tagadirt Bouimzgane	19 to 22 February 2024	17	0	14
29	Al Haouz		Tagadirte Ait Ben Saïd	19 to 22 February 2024	21	0	25
30	Ouarzazate	Telouet	Anmiter	26 to 29 February 2024	29	0	33
31	Ouarzazate			26 to 29 February 2024	27	0	
32	Al Haouz	Ouirgane	Ait Harb	04 to 07 March 2024	23	0	51
33	Al Haouz			04 to 07 March 2024	29	0	
34	Al Hoceima	Ait Youssef Ouali	Sidi Bouafif	19 to 22 March 2024	22	0	0
35	Marrakesh	-	-	23-29-30 March and 03 May 2024	33	0	0
36	Al Hoceima	Ait Youssef Ouali	Azghar	26 to 29 March 2024	27	0	0
37	Al Haouz	Aghbar	Ouidrarane	15 to 18 April 2024	24	0	25

38	Al Haouz				24	0	
39	Al Haouz				0	36	
40	Al Haouz				0	36	
41	Al Haouz	Talat N'Yacoub	Anbdour	23 to 26 April 2024	21	0	20
42	Al Haouz	Ijoukak	Outakharri		25	0	11
43	Al Haouz	Ouirgane	Agni	29 April to 02 May 2024	28	0	78
44	Al Haouz			29 April to 02 May 2024	32	0	
45	Ouarzazate	Telouet	Tighza	14th to 17th May 2024	27	0	12
46	Ouarzazate		Tabougamt	15th to 17th May 2024	0	20	0
47	Al Haouz	Ourika	Talat-n-Mimoun	14th to 17th May 2024	33	0	20
48	Marrakesh	El Bahia	Mellah	20th to 23th May 2024	29	0	3
49	Marrakesh	Ait Imour	Ait Othman ou Hsain	21st to 24th May 2024	30	0	29
50	Al Haouz	Ouirgane	Ouaougmout	4th to 6th June 2024	17	0	30
51	Al Haouz			4th to 6th June 2024	22	0	
52	Al Haouz	Ourika	-	10th to 13rd June 2024	28	0	13
53	Al Haouz		-	10th to 13rd June 2024	31	0	

This table presents a comprehensive overview of workshops conducted by the High Atlas Foundation (HAF) from October 2023 to June 2024 across various provinces in Morocco. These workshops were pivotal in providing holistic support to communities affected by the earthquake, including targeted psychological assistance through counseling, community dialogues, and therapeutic activities aimed at fostering resilience and aiding in emotional recovery. The participation numbers categorized by women, men, and children reflect HAF's commitment to addressing the psychosocial needs of vulnerable groups and empowering communities towards sustainable recovery.

Field Evaluation of Earthquake Recovery Efforts in Morocco:

Assessing Progress and Community Impact

From June 24-26, 2024, a comprehensive evaluation of earthquake recovery efforts in Morocco was undertaken through field visits to key locations. The visits were motivated by the need to assess the progress and impact of recovery initiatives following the devastating earthquake. On June 24th, assessments were conducted in Talat-n-Mimoun, Ourika, Anbdour, Ouidraren, Imi N

Tala and Sidi Ali Oufaress. The following day, June 25th, visits included Outaghari, Ait Harb, Ouaougmout, Ineghede, Tagadirt Bouimezgane, Tagadirt Ait Ben Said, Tigdelt, Asguen and Agni. On June 26th, evaluations continued in Tabougmete, Tighza, Imintanoute, Anbdour, Ait Othman Ouhsain and Anmiter. These visits aimed to provide firsthand observations of the recovery process, gather community feedback, and evaluate the effectiveness of support programs implemented by stakeholders like the High Atlas Foundation.

Data Collection Methods

- **Method 1: Attendance Records**
    - **Tools:** Sign-in sheets
    - **Frequency:** Weekly, Monthly
- **Method 2: Pre- and Post-Assessment Surveys**
    - **Tools:** Standardized mental health and resilience questionnaires
    - **Frequency:** At the start and end of the 4-day training period
- **Method 3: Facilitator Reports**
    - **Tools:** Session logs, feedback forms
    - **Frequency:** quarterly

Data Analysis Plan

- **Analysis Techniques:** Descriptive statistics, comparison of pre- and post-assessment scores
- **Software/Tools Used:** Excel, Forms, Questionnaires (qualitative and quantitative data)

Mid-term Evaluation

- **Objective:** Evaluate the impact of earthquake recovery efforts in the visited communities and assess the effectiveness of implemented programs.
- **Methodology:** Conducted face-to-face interviews with community members and stakeholders in Talat-n-Mimoun, Ourika, Sidi Ali Oufaress, Anbodour, Outaghari, Ait Harb, Ouaougmout, Agni, Tabougmete, Tighza, Anmiter, Ouidraren, Imi N Tala, Ineghede, Tagadirt Bouimezgane, Tagadirt Ait Ben Said, Tigdelt, Asguen, Imintanoute and Ait Othman Ouhsain. Reviewed community feedback and observed participation levels in recovery workshops.
- **Responsible Persons:** M&E Coordinator, Project Manager
- **Timeline:** Conducted during the field visits on June 24-26, 2024.

Structured Evaluation Form: Assessing Community Impact

In assessing the earthquake recovery efforts in Morocco, a structured evaluation form was utilized to gather comprehensive insights from community members directly impacted by the disaster. This form includes detailed questions covering demographic information, such as age, gender, occupation, educational background, and current living situation. It also delves into the provision and satisfaction levels of received psychosocial support services, participants' engagement in community rebuilding activities, their understanding and application of stress management techniques learned during training sessions, and the perceived effectiveness of these interventions. Additionally, the form seeks feedback on the relevance of training topics, improvements in mental and emotional well-being post-training, utilization of support resources, and recommendations for enhancing future psychosocial support services. Through this structured approach, the evaluation aims to comprehensively assess the impact of programs, tailor interventions to community needs, and contribute to long-term resilience building efforts.

Result of M&E Evaluation



Photo by HAF/Field visit

During the three-day M&E evaluation conducted in the regions of Talat-n-Mimoun, Ourika, Sidi Ali Oufaress, Anbodour, Outaghari, Ait Harb, Ouaougmout, Agni, Tabougmete, Tighza, Anmiter, Ouidraren, Imi N Tala, Ineghede, Tagadirt Bouimezgane, Tagadirt Ait Ben Said, Tigdelt, Asguen, Imintanoute and Ait Othman Ouhsain face-to-face discussions were held with a sample of 65 women (aged between 20 and 75), 20 children (aged between 8 and 12), and 10 men (aged between 35 and 50). Participants were notably welcoming, displaying a sense of relaxation, confidence, and openness throughout the discussions. They freely shared insights regarding their physical and mental health concerns when queried about the psychosocial support and empowerment post-disaster (PSEPD) workshops conducted over the four days.

Key Findings

85% of participants reported significant improvements in their stress levels since receiving psychosocial support.
90% indicated that the topics and exercises covered in the training were very helpful in addressing their specific needs and concerns, such as enhancing self-confidence and addressing limiting beliefs.
75% stated that they have been able to apply the stress management techniques and coping strategies learned during the training to their daily lives since the earthquake. Examples of techniques applied include breathing exercises, positive thinking exercises, and using stress balls.
95% of the women participants rated their understanding of stress management, emotional awareness, and coping strategies presented in the training sessions between 4 and 5 on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating a high level of comprehension. This understanding included recognizing stages of anger and emotional breakdown, demonstrating effective assimilation of the concepts taught.
Among the participants, only **3 women** are still living in tents, while the rest are sheltered in houses either with their families or independently.
5 out of 65 women studied until primary school, while **60 out of 65** were illiterate and used to help in household activities. Despite this, their high comprehension ratings indicate effective communication and learning methodologies during the workshops.
100% of participants recommended extending the duration of the workshops, suggesting longer sessions exceeding four days for women and more than three days for men. They expressed the need for additional tools to cope financially with trauma, build new careers and futures for their families, acquire skills, access information on creating cooperatives, increase community engagement, and achieve sustainable outcomes. Participants emphasized the importance of mental health support focusing on future-oriented thinking and planning.

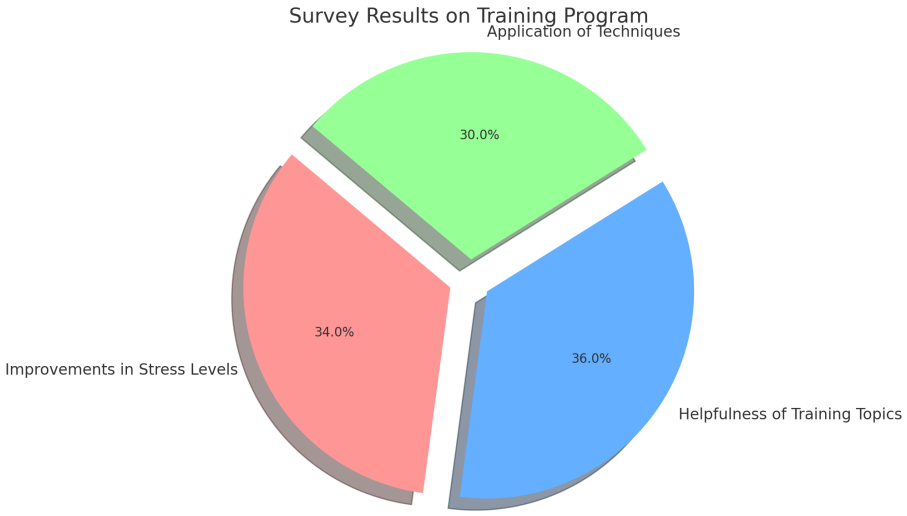


Figure 3: Survey Results on Training Program Effectiveness

Improvements in Stress Levels: 85%
Helpfulness of Training Topics: 90%
Application of Techniques: 75%

These findings highlight the positive impact of the PSEPD workshops in enhancing participants' mental and emotional well-being, underscoring the effectiveness of the support programs implemented in these earthquake-affected communities. Upon reviewing the feedback from the 20 children surveyed, overall, **100%** of children reported enjoying the games and exercises provided, with a majority expressing particular fondness for storytelling and role-playing activities. **95%** of children felt that the games helped them understand how to manage their feelings after the earthquake, emphasizing improved emotional awareness and expression. Additionally, **85%** mentioned applying techniques learned from the workshops in their daily lives, such as using deep breathing exercises to manage stress. Effectiveness was consistently high, with **100%** of children finding the activities helpful in feeling better emotionally, and **90%** noticing improvements in stress management. Engagement and relevance were rated positively by **95%** of participants, highlighting the games' ability to meet their emotional needs.

The workshops positively impacted well-being for all children, with **100%** reporting feeling better mentally and emotionally. Regarding hygiene instructions, **100%** understood the explanations and found the hygiene kit useful, with many using items like soap and toothbrushes regularly. Suggestions for improvement focused on adding more interactive and outdoor activities, with **75%** recommending follow-up sessions to reinforce learning. These insights underscore the successful implementation of targeted support initiatives aimed at addressing children's needs post-disaster, contributing positively to their mental and emotional well-being.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the recent field evaluation, it is strongly recommended that the workshops continue and be extended to better meet the needs of the affected communities. To ensure sustainability and broader reach, a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach should be adopted, empowering community members to train their peers and provide ongoing support as they navigate their new realities. Additionally, it is crucial to engage participants with local initiatives and funding programs, equipping them with the necessary tools and knowledge to develop income-generating projects. The training should be adapted to include a dedicated section focusing on work and project ideas, such as brainstorming sessions tailored to local contexts. This approach will foster community resilience, encourage economic self-sufficiency, and contribute to the overall well-being of the earthquake-affected populations.

While HAF has already conducted training on psychological aspects, continued engagement through local initiatives and practical skills development is essential. These efforts will not only provide economic benefits but also aid in the healing process, fostering a sense of hope and empowerment in the community. Meeting with these individuals again and providing additional types of psychosocial support, such as One-on-One Talking Sessions, Community Gatherings, Storytelling Sessions, and Group Chats, is also necessary to ensure comprehensive support.

Furthermore, the workshops should place a strong emphasis on coping with the trauma of the earthquake and moving forward. Providing ongoing psychological support and teaching effective coping strategies will help individuals manage their emotional and mental health, allowing them to rebuild their lives with confidence and resilience. Engaging in local initiatives and gaining practical skills will not only provide economic benefits but also aid in the healing process, fostering a sense of hope and empowerment in the community.

Conclusion

The evaluation of earthquake recovery efforts in Morocco revealed significant improvements in mental health and well-being among the affected communities. Participants reported a substantial reduction in stress levels, high relevance of training topics, and successful application of stress management techniques in daily life. Despite educational limitations, women demonstrated a strong understanding of key concepts. Recommendations include extending workshop durations, adopting a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach, and incorporating local initiatives and funding programs to support income-generating projects. Emphasizing psychological support, coping strategies, and practical skills development will foster resilience and economic self-sufficiency.

Continued engagement and comprehensive support are essential for helping these communities rebuild their lives with confidence and resilience. These findings will guide future efforts to ensure sustainable and empowering recovery processes.