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High Atlas Foundation
مؤسسة الأطلس الكبير
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GUELMIM . LAAYOUNE . BOUJDOUR . DAKHLA

Building on Local Priorities in Southern Morocco

For more than a decade, the High Atlas Foundation (HAF) has worked with communities, civil society organizations, public institutions, schools, women, youth, and nomadic families across southern Morocco to identify and advance locally determined development priorities.

Since 2012, HAF's work in the region has included clean water and school infrastructure, women's and cooperative empowerment, capacity building, organic fruit tree planting, environmental education, and household support. HAF's approach brings together local communities, government institutions, and national and international partners to move priorities identified through participatory planning toward implementation.

Today, this experience provides a foundation for a portfolio of projects addressing some of the region's continuing priorities: water access, youth opportunity, women's economic participation, education, local governance, and community-led development.

HAF IN THE REGION

Implemented Projects & Results

37

Schools

HAF improved school environments through tree planting, environmental education, and water-system rehabilitation.

300

Women Engaged

Capacity-building initiatives strengthened women's skills, participation, and ability to organize around local development priorities.

Water Access

for Nomadic Communities

Four nomadic communities benefited from clean-water infrastructure, including 4 solar-powered pumping systems, 2 water towers, serving 128,000 goats and sheep and 706 cattle breeders.

30

CSOs Strengthened

HAF supported Boujdour-based organizations with practical training in participatory planning, project management, democratic processes, and partnership development.

Community-Led

Environmental Action

HAF supported waste-management infrastructure and mobilized volunteers to help protect and improve Boujdour's beaches.

Safer, Healthier

Schools in Boujdour

Across 7 schools in Boujdour, HAF supported improvements to sanitation facilities and access to water. The work included the construction and renovation of washrooms, the installation of 24 water taps, repairs to water supply pipes, the provision of water storage tanks, and improvements to wastewater systems. These interventions benefited a total of 4,786 students.

Women's Empowerment

With the support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), HAF engaged 87 women in Boujdour through empowerment workshops addressing mental well-being, relationships, business skills and cooperative development. The workshops aimed to strengthen women's personal and economic empowerment, while encouraging their participation in income-generating activities and cooperative initiatives.

Discover HAF's work and impact

Water Access, Renewable Energy and Environmental Education

Sami's Project | Jrifia, Boujdour Province



HAF implemented Sami's Project, a community development initiative in Jrifia combining improvements to water infrastructure, renewable energy, waste management and environmental education. The initiative supported access to drinking water while engaging schoolchildren in environmental awareness and practical tree-planting activities.

3,760
fruit trees planted

24
environmental workshops

4
solar-powered pumping systems for clean drinking water

500 m
water canals constructed

Learn more about this project

HAF extends its sincere thanks to Siemens Gamesa Renewable Energy for its support in making this project possible.

From Community Priorities to Action

Strengthening local participation, women's leadership and youth engagement in Dakhla-Oued Ed-Dahab



HAF has worked with communities across the region to strengthen civic participation, women's leadership and youth engagement. Through participatory planning, community workshops and capacity-building activities, residents have identified local priorities, developed action plans and strengthened their engagement with local decision-makers.

In 2023, participatory meetings in Bir Gandus, Bir Anzarane and Dakhla resulted in 16 community action plans, shaped through engagement with approximately 1,300 participants.

7 in Bir Gandus . 3 in Bir Anzarane . 6 in Dakhla



172 people

participated in advocacy and participatory governance workshops, with 83% of participants showing greater involvement in civic activity.



134 people

benefitted from the Sanad for Joint Healthcare initiative, which provides medical tests and advocates for the healthcare rights of marginalized groups.



85 youth and women

engaged through the Youth Academy for Citizenship and Participatory Governance with new skills in civic rights and business development.



73 students

engaged, in the Bir Gandus Commune, with civic engagement and children's rights through Citizen Tent workshops. Of these students, over half are girls.



32 families

in Bir Gandus and Bir Anzarane participated in workshops to develop strategies for addressing water scarcity and enhancing climate



The Tidarguit Tasamouh Alliance

established by uniting 5 couscous cooperatives engaging 25 women to directly expand womens'

resilience, which were presented to local decision-makers.

participation in decision-making and leadership inside and outside the community.

HAF gratefully acknowledges the support of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the US Embassy in advancing community participation and local leadership across the region.

Priorities for Partnership and Investment

Building on more than a decade of community engagement, HAF has identified opportunities to expand access to essential services, strengthen local institutions and create economic opportunities across southern Morocco. The following proposals translate community priorities into practical initiatives that are ready for partnership and investment.

Women-Run Native Fruit-Tree Nursery

📍 Guelmim to Dakhla

The project proposes establishing a women-managed nursery to produce 700,000 endemic native fruit-tree saplings over three years, supporting reforestation and strengthening local livelihoods across southern Morocco, from Guelmim to Dakhla. The cooperative will oversee seedling production and sales, with tree sales beginning in the second year. GPS and GIS tools will help monitor planting activities, while net revenue generated through voluntary carbon-offset activities will be reinvested in the nursery and local water systems.

Proposed targets:

- 700,000 endemic seedlings
- 3,500 expected beneficiaries

Young Women and Men Economic Empowerment Labs

📍 Laayoune, Boujdour & Dakhla

The proposal aims to establish three economic empowerment labs in Laayoune, Boujdour and Dakhla, creating practical pathways for young women and men to access employment and develop income-generating activities over a two-year period.

Each lab would offer skills training, support job placement and entrepreneurship, and connect participants with local employers, universities, public authorities and civil society organizations through steering committees. The project also aims to build local ownership by preparing community partners to manage the labs beyond the project period.

Proposed targets:

- 27,500 lab visits
- 2,290 projected job placements
- 454 projected new enterprises

Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

📍 Boujdour Province

The project will strengthen local associations in Boujdour, Jrifia, Elmassid and Galtet Zammour through practical training in participatory planning and community project management.

Participants will learn by taking projects through the full development cycle, from identifying community priorities to implementation. Women will be prioritized, and training will be supported by field practice and Arabic-language manuals.

Proposed targets:

- 40 association members trained
- 40 daylong field-training sessions
- 50 Arabic-language training manuals

DISCUSS A PARTNERSHIP

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