

THE PROJECT STATUS OF THE HIGH ATLAS FOUNDATION IN MOROCCO



ANNUAL REPORT: 2018
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The Project Status of the High Atlas Foundation in Morocco:

An Annual Report of the State of the Organization: 2018



The High Atlas Foundation (HAF) was founded in 2000 by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers so that they can continue to advance sustainable development with the Moroccan people.

[HAF](#) is a United States 501c3 non-profit organization (incorporated in the State of New Mexico), and a Moroccan national civil association that is registered in the provinces Al Haouz, Boujdour, Oujda, and Taroudant.

Using a participatory planning approach, HAF works to establish development projects in Morocco that local communities and their associations, design and manage, and that partner with government, civil society, and business. Since 2011, HAF has Consultative Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

HAF's vision is Morocco's vision for itself. HAF implements projects in agriculture, education, health, multiculturalism, and building capacities of community groups to create development projects that they control. We are actively working with [Partners](#) from all sectors and levels who provide vital contributions to local projects that aim to address communities' prioritized needs.

HAF's vision is that in all Morocco, local communities - villages and neighborhoods - identify, manage, and benefit in a transformative manner from human development. HAF seeks to assist Moroccan programs and policies that bind participatory democracy, sustainable development, and people's empowerment, especially for women, youth, and marginalized rural and urban communities. HAF seeks Morocco to urgently seize its unique opportunity and achieve fulfilling human development for all its people and to be a truly successful example of a sustainability pathway for the region and world.

For HAF, the financial engine to fund participatory development with communities in all the country, is generated from advancing the entire agricultural chain: tree nurseries, carbon credit monitoring and registering, organic certification, irrigation efficiency, cooperative-building, product cultivation and processing, and global sales.

This Annual Report describes HAF's important achievements in these and other central project areas. We hope that you consider our proposals to achieve Moroccan empowerment and growth, and partner with us for full dynamic sustainability.

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Annual Report: 2018

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1 January 2018 - HAF in Morocco is achieving sustainable development:

➤ **GROWING TREES, REGISTERING CARBON CREDITS, AND CERTIFYING ORGANIC:**

- *Through April 2018, HAF and communities are planting in nine regions 225,000 fruit saplings grown from seeds in thirteen HAF nurseries; Then, we are planting in HAF nurseries 1.3 million seeds through April 2019:*

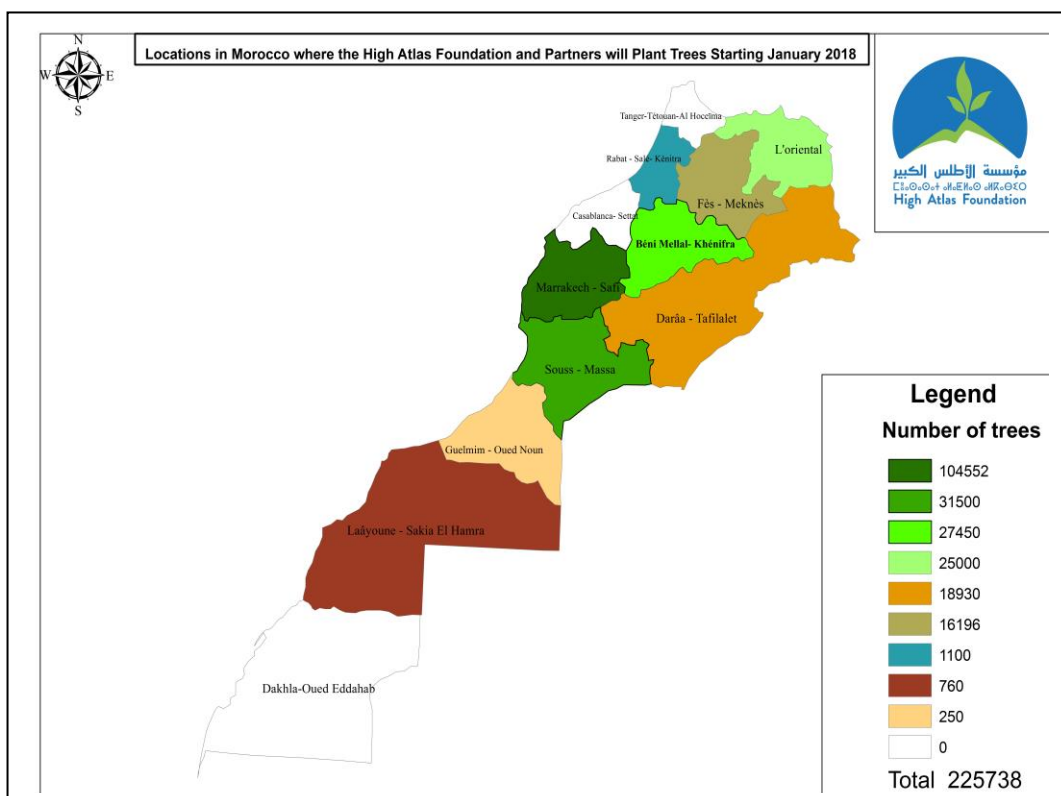
*HAF walnut and almond tree nursery in Tadmamt, Al Haouz; land in-kind from **Regional Department of Waters and Forests**, funded by **UNDP**.*



Now through April 2018, HAF is transplanting 225,000 organic fruit saplings from its thirteen nurseries located in seven provinces: Al Haouz, Azilal, Fes, Ifrane, Moulay Yacoub, Oujda, and Taroudant. Farming families, associations, cooperatives, and schools in nine regions of Morocco (see map below) will receive trees in-kind, and are the entire beneficiaries of the fruit and income.

The fruit trees transplanted from HAF nurseries into farmers' fields and schoolyards are: almond, argan, carob, fig, grape, olive, pomegranate, and walnut. Through April 2019, HAF is planting 1.3 million seeds into these nurseries, benefiting people in 25 provinces.

The nurseries are funded by **Ecosia** (a social business based in Berlin, Germany) and the **United Nations Development Program**, and prior by the **Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Scientific Research** (U.S. government). Since 2003, HAF planted 2.2 million seeds and trees with farming families and schools. Approximately ten thousand household incomes are impacted (60,000 rural people). Partners included: **U.S. Ambassadors Empowerment Fund**, **Earth Day Network**, **Infocore**, **Trees for Life**, **Caterpillar**, **Penney Family Fund**, and **GlobalGiving**.



HAF organizes annual tree planting events on the third Monday of January with communities and schools. The events connect people and coincide with Martin Luther King Day of Volunteerism. This year on January 15th, HAF planted 3,000 trees with 57 schools in 10 provinces, and it is ongoing (350 schools since 2013, see **Sami's Project** on page 13).

HAF gratefully received land in-kind from, and *has active nurseries in, 13 locations in Morocco* (combined they produce 1 million trees every 2 years):

Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts-Marrakech (Tadmamt-Asni, Al Haouz)

Adrar Agricultural Cooperative (Ijoukak, Al Haouz)

Aboghlu Cooperative (Tnine-Ourika, Al Haouz)

Moroccan Jewish community of Marrakech-Sofi (Tomsloht, Al Haouz)

Tassa-Ouirgane Village (Ouirgane, Al Haouz)

Education Delegation (Houssein Bin Ali school, Moulay Yacoub)

Education Delegation (Salam school, Ifrane)

University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah (Fes)

Al Akhawayn University (Ifrane)

Children Protection Center (Fes)

Children Protection Center (Oujda)

Imdoukal Znaga Cooperative (Ouaouizerth, Azilal)

Private Individual (Ouanzourt-Toubkal, Taroudant)

HAF has 15 in-kind land agreements for new nurseries (these nurseries will produce 5 million trees / 2 years):

Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts (Ijoukak, Al Haouz)

Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts (Imzourhnane, Azilal)

Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts (Taroudant)

Direction Régionale des Eaux et Forêts (Ouazzane, Tetouane)

Agriculture Extension Center, (Asjen, Tetouane)

Education Delegation (Smimou school, Essaouira)

Education Delegation (Nasr school, Boujdour)

Education Delegation (Allal Lfassi school, Youssoufia)

Education Delegation (Atlas school, Ain Leuh, Ifrane)

Faculty of Law (Mohammedia)

Association Akhyam (Outerbate and N'zala, Errachidia)

Moroccan Jewish Community (Ourzazate, Demnat, Al Haouz)



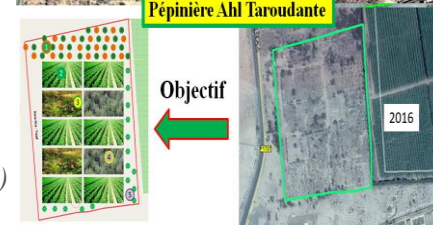
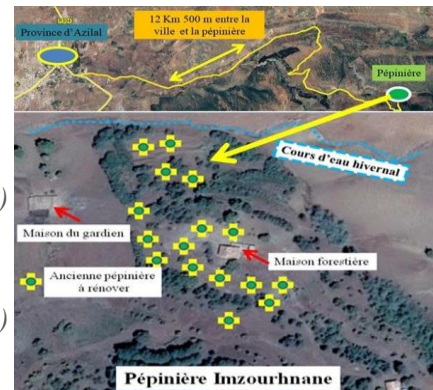
Above: Almond nursery with Imdoukal Znaga in Ouaouizerth, Azilal. Below: Fruit tree nursery at Tomsloht (Al Haouz) on land in-kind from Moroccan Jewish Community of Marrakech-Sofi.



Above: Carob in Al Akhawayn, Ifrane. Below: Almond and Calendula nursery with the Aboghlu Women's Cooperative (Ourika, Al Haouz). Coop dries flowers and sells to Yves Saint Laurent Beauté.



Above: Nursery land in Ijoukak (Al Haouz), in-kind from DREF-Marrakech. Below: Agriculture Extension Center--Asjen, DPA Ouazzane. The 1-hectare nursery will cultivate endemic fig trees and process product. (Photo: Ministry officials and HAF president).



- *Carbon credit monitoring, registering, and certifying:*

HAF built its capacity to register carbon offsets from the trees it planted with Moroccan communities since 2014. These credits can be sold in the global marketplace. **The South Pole Group**, based in Switzerland, is working with HAF toward certifying carbon credits sequestered by trees – on private and public land – whose growth HAF monitors.

HAF works with local and national officials of the Department of Waters and Forests for carbon credit monitoring and certification, sequestered by fruit and forestry trees on private and public lands.



- In 2017, HAF signed a partnership agreement with the **High Commission of Waters and Forests and the Fight against Desertification** that enables HAF to monitor, have certified, and sell the carbon credits sequestered by the nation's forests. Based on the agreement, the revenue generated from the sale of credits are to be used to grow nurseries inside Morocco and in other African countries, to promote South-South collaboration.
 - ❖ In the agreement with the **Regional Department of Waters and Forests-Beni Mellal**, is included a forest (Timzidine, Azilal) to participate in this carbon credit program. HAF registers and monitors trees and creates maps using Geographic Information Systems, to support carbon credit certification.
- Since 2016, HAF partners with **Yves Saint Laurent Beauté** and **Project PUR** to plant and monitor for carbon offsets 48,000 fruit trees in the Ourika Valley of Al Haouz province. In 2017, two **Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteers** (partnership described on page 17) helped assess our carbon initiative.

- *Organic fruit tree agriculture and processing:*

- Since 2015-16, HAF worked with 23 villages covering 300 hectares in the Toubkal municipality of Taroudant province, involving more than 700 farmers, to gain organic certification through **Ecocert** for walnuts and almonds, opening international markets to them. The **Agency for Partnership and Progress (MCC)** supported the training component.
- Partnering with the **Idraren Cooperative** in 2016, HAF processed – with first-time employed 60 women trained in organic handling – 16 tons of walnuts and almonds and 1,000 liters of walnut oil. The product was sold in Morocco and the United States. Contributors to different aspects of this initiative are the **Alliance for Global Good (USA)**, **Lucky's Market**, **National Endowment for Democracy**, and the **Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Scientific Research**.



HAF processes organic certified walnuts and almonds; partner Idraren Cooperative (Al Haouz). Product sold in Morocco and U.S.

HAF's Proposals for Organic Agriculture and Carbon Credits

- *Grow fifteen new organic fruit tree and medical plant nurseries:* This proposed project is in full cooperation with diverse government, civil, and



private partners (listed above) in nine provinces, generating five million plants every two-years. This will impact approximately 200,000 rural people and 1,000 schools, as the trees mature over a six to ten-year period.



HAF's team works closely with international partners, experts, volunteers, and visitors who make essential contributions for project implementation and success.

For Ouazzane and its region, there is a major opportunity and need for endemic fig cultivation of 14 threatened varieties. Carob plantations on public land and for community benefit is also vital for sustainable development and income.



- **Expand carbon monitoring and certification:** This proposal is to expand the enormous carbon credit opportunity to 25 provinces (where HAF has existing partnership activities) to generate revenue and reinvest in expanding organic fruit tree growing in Morocco (and Africa, via the Agreement with the **High Commission of Waters and Forests**).
- **Seed Bank:** To return traditional crop varieties to farms, HAF and partners have been enabled with the help of two **Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteers** (funded by **USAID** and administered by **Land O' Lakes**) to assess local agro-biodiversity threats and opportunities, as well as structural design. As a result, we have a proposal (and business plans below enabled by **Farmer-to-Farmer**, **U.S. Embassy Small Grants**, and **SEED**) to create a seed bank in Asni of Al Haouz to preserve local varieties, wild relatives, and wild medicinal plants. The goal is that the seed bank will demonstrate the inherent value of traditional crops and ensure that farmers have access to planting material.
- **Carob and fruit cultivation and processing:** HAF plans to extend its activities to the region of Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima, Province of Ouazzane, through the launch of a project for the production and enhancement of tree and agro-industries and forestry by:
 - Carrying a 605-hectare carob plantation on state-owned land which is not currently being exploited and is within the Rural Commune of Mzefroune, after the agreement with the competent authorities
 - The installation of a crushing unit, production of carob flour and bagging
 - The establishment and management of a nursery of fruit and agro-forestry plants and free distribution of plants to farmers in the region: carob, fig, pomegranate, vine, plum tree, and pear trees

HAF's Agricultural Business Plans

- ***Organic processing and export of walnuts and almonds, raw and oil (Asni, Azilal, Errachidia, Midelt, Taroudant)***
- ***Process and sell apple cider vinegar (Marrakech region)***
- ***Cultivate, certify organic, and export sale of pomegranate and quinoa***

HAF showcases product at the Africa and Fancy Food Shows – 2016-17



- *Lease and cultivate 100 hectares in Oujda region; grow a nursery of endemic trees, and orchard for income; sell fruit and carbon credits, reinvest in community projects*



HAF President and Board Members are planning with provincial leaders of Bouarfa, Oujda Region; 50,000 fruit trees are being planted with communities, 2017-18.

➤ EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SELF-DISCOVERY, AND A RIGHTS-DEVELOPMENT-BASED APPROACH:

HAF has been working in the field of women's empowerment since 2011. Working with the **Middle East Partnership Initiative**, HAF first built capacities in participatory planning with elected women to municipal councils in the Rhamna province. The HAF's women's empowerment workshops (2016-2017), funded by the **National Endowment for Democracy**, have now evolved into a rights-based approach. Using three complimentary activities, HAF aims to create agents of social change with university students and rural women. Our empowerment program reduces barriers to manifest women's place as pillars of society. The three activities and their objectives are:



- "Imagine'" is a self-discovery workshop developed at the **Empowerment Institute** in the United States. Throughout the personal growth process, we assist women in finding their voices and achieving their goals.
- Integrated with "Imagine" is 'Moudawana' (2004), based on a rights-based approach, bringing together women to learn about legal protections and determine ways to further social justice.
- Cooperative-building grows from empowerment gained during the "Imagine-Moudawana" experience and supports women's cooperatives and their development to create greater financial independence, expand networks, and promote change in women's roles in their communities. Using the rights-based approach, HAF strengthens women as rights holders by providing tools to advocate and act on their needs and goals.



- ❖ Three-hundred women benefited from a series of Imagine empowerment workshops, from the Provinces of Al Haouz, Boujdour, and Marrakech.
- ❖ From them, ten female university students received training for trainers to become facilitators of empowerment programs. Results were demonstrated when beneficiaries undertook to create cooperatives and self-employment initiatives.
- ❖ A group of thirty-five women addressed illiteracy by hiring a female university student and starting a literacy program in their village. Participants who attended the training are supporting their children's education. Sixty-five joined parent associations and are actively involved in efforts to improve local schools.





- ❖ This program has now evolved into HAF fostering a network of empowered agents of change, who support women in achieving their rights.



- Over ninety-four percent of the women who participated in HAF's 2017 assessment, had before never heard about Moudawana. Most communities indicated that they felt left behind; that national processes and changes hardly reached remote areas, and that even if they were aware of their rights, they felt they could not secure them. Conducting this assessment research, HAF tried to understand the specific reasons. Al Haouz Province was chosen as the pilot area, due to access and previous development relationships between HAF and the communities, providing trust between the two sides.



- Using the focus group method, sixteen participatory assessment workshops were conducted from August-December 2017 (four months). One additional workshop took place in Marrakech, which was set as a control group. Ninety-three women from Al Haouz took part in the assessment. Targeting women corresponds with the global understanding of women's important role in creating sustainable development and promoting community growth. Full study available.

- Testimonials from these workshops are profound, including:



- ❖ *"I've never had such an opportunity as this. We need such exercises to listen to our inner voice and beliefs."*
- ❖ *"I promise myself to look for a dormitory school to complete my studies."*
- ❖ *"As a widow woman of two kids I didn't have the courage to ask anyone for work."*



- ❖ *"As a mother of three I have been busy working at home for many years. Now I am able to participate in empowerment training that helps me to discover that I have great capacities and skills that I truly would like to use outside of the house."*
- ❖ *"I am earning money to live a better life."*

HAF's Project Proposals for Women's Empowerment

- *Rights-based approach and Participatory Empowerment with Moroccan Women: Supporting Moroccan Women in stepping into the forefront of leading decentralization and social change (seven regions in Morocco)*

- *Building on its Education Community partnerships since 2008, HAF seeks to create seven hubs of rights-based-participatory empowerment in Morocco: in Beni*





Mellal, Fez, Ifrane, Marrakech, Mohammedia, Oujda, and Rabat. Youth will participate to build behavioral change via civic engagement, the application of human rights, and employability. The goal is to provide students and rural women with tools to take an active role as facilitators of Imagine, Moudawana, and Cooperative-building.

- *Sowing Seeds to Harvest Trees of Influence: Empowering Rural Moroccan Women*



- *This project builds a stronger and more prosperous economy with women's active participation in the processing of raw materials, promoting an educated workforce, and redressing women's socio-economic disadvantages; and empowers women by strengthening their agency through self and communal legitimization and leadership.*

➤ **BUILDING UPON SEVEN UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS WITH STUDENTS:**

- *This initiative implements capacity-building in development planning and management* with university students. In 2008, HAF created

– in partnership with **Hassan II University's Faculty of Law, Economics, and Social Sciences in Mohammedia** – the **Center for Community Consensus-Building and Sustainable Development**. The Center's mission is to advance local participation in the planning and implementation of socio-economic projects – by way of experientially training students, faculty, members of civil society, elected officials, government technicians, community leaders, and citizens.



- This has achieved effective skills-building with four hundred and thirty students and two hundred members of civil organizations in the areas of needs assessment for community action planning, organizational development, project management, and advocacy (funded by the **Middle East Partnership Initiative, Embassy of the Netherlands in Rabat, and National Endowment for Democracy (NED)**).



- Student and civil society activists designed and implemented 16 school and youth projects and assisted the formation of three municipal federations of civil society organizations in the Mohammedia Province. Civil society committees have contributed to the evaluation of four municipal development plans.

- *In 2016-2017, HAF implemented a Legal Aid Program to advance civil society's and communities' capacity to advocate* for policy reforms in the Mohammedia and Boujdour Provinces. During the duration of this **NED-funded** project, HAF staff organized and facilitated a total of thirty capacity-building workshops; sixteen round table discussions; and twenty-seven meetings, where five priority topics were analyzed and strategies to address them were developed. These efforts involved a total of thirty-nine university





students (eighteen women and twenty-one men) and one-hundred-five civil society activists and community leaders (forty-five women and fifty-six men), representing eighty-four civil society organizations in Mohammedia and Boujdour. Examples of tangible outcomes of the program included:



- In Mohammedia and Boujdour, ninety percent of newly elected communal representatives were among the civil society activists.
- In Mohammedia's commune of Ain Harrouda, ninety-five percent of the newly-elected communal representatives participated in legal aid workshops and activities.
- Newly-elected councils in Mohammedia and Boujdour created communal development plans with active involvement of civil society.
- The Legal Aid Program benefitted civil society activists with disabilities and civil society organizations that provide them services. Two projects were created to directly benefit this vulnerable group.



- ❖ The first was an advocacy strategy to ensure equal access for people with disabilities to government buildings in Mohammedia. Civil society activists were able to meet with the Governor and representatives of elected councils to activate and enforce all existing regulations and policies regarding disability and accessibility. The infrastructure necessary to ensure equal access was installed in six government premises in the province.



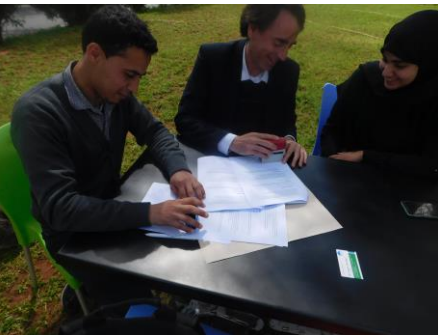
- ❖ The aim of the second project was to create a vocational training structure for teenagers with Down Syndrome. The HAF team helped secure funding for a year-long training for six teenagers currently preparing for their diploma to become chefs.



- In the long term, the most lasting impact of the Legal Aid Program is the fact that the law clinic is still, to this date, operating and providing legal aid services to university students, civil organizations, elected officials, and individuals from the Province of Mohammedia. Based on statistics provided by officials of the **Faculty of Law in Mohammedia**, master degree law students have provided twenty-eight-hundred hours of legal service to two-hundred-thirty individuals, among them one-hundred-seventy-five women, thirty-eight of whom represent local associations.

- *HAF aims to build networks of empowered, skilled individuals by the following partnerships with Moroccan universities:* These partnerships have launched **Centers for Sustainable Development**, or hubs for participatory democratic citizenry, which are tailored to the specificities of each local context. The proposed program consolidates the empowerment efforts into one cohesive, holistic, approach that produces measured change and thereby permits sound replication.





- ***Al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUI)*** – This university partnership supports student-community engagement by applying participatory approaches and growing an AUI-Community almond and carob tree nursery (*shown in photo*). The end-purpose of these priorities is to alleviate poverty among disadvantaged local communities and groups; with community members and students, these efforts reach the Ifrane- Azrou region.
- ***École de Hautes Études Économiques et Commerciales (HEEC) in Marrakech*** – This partnership builds collaboration and synergies between HAF and HEEC in engineering techniques of development projects. With HAF, students are afforded real-world learning experiences through volunteering and community service. The perspectives in areas of sustainable development further reinforces student’s workforce readiness.
- ***Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II (IAV HII) and the Jeunes Leaders Marocains (JLM) in Rabat*** – The JLM team comprises the IAV HII program which promotes Moroccan youth activism in sustainable, socio-economic development and a Club to implement projects. The partnership supports “AgriEscort” where JLM members build capacities of the associations and cooperatives with whom HAF works in organic agriculture. Training includes: nursery management, product processing, organic certification and farming, and promoting participatory practices.
- ***University Hassan II, Faculty of Law, Economics, and Social Sciences in Mohammedia*** – HAF’s initial university partnership to address the significant need in Morocco to train facilitators of participatory community planning and project management. Beyond the participatory training, HAF built an innovative Legal Aid Program where students provide legal services for CSOs and marginalized persons, focusing on political, economic, and social areas of law (rights) that impact abilities to engage in efficient advocacy efforts for reform.
- ***University Mohamed I, Center for Human and Social Studies and Research in Oujda*** – In Oujda, HAF is now partnering with the **Middle East Partnership Initiative** to build the capacity of 162 youth and women from regional cooperatives. The training-action covers: Project set-up; Business planning; Monitoring of projects; Social and associative skills; Participatory planning; Technical and scientific skills; Professional organization; Management and accounting; Territorial marketing; Communication; Legislation; Moudawana and youth development. The project will also create a network around development projects of common interest.
- ***University Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah and the Association des Experts Bénévoles pour le Développement in Fes*** – The three-party agreement promotes networks between researchers and actors of



HAF President with USMBA President Omar Essobhei, and Mostafa Mouslih, President of Volunteer Experts for Development, signing our Partnership Agreement (2015). Observing are U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, Dwight Bush, Sr. (right), and André Azoulay, Advisor to the King of Morocco (left).



sustainable development, promoting dialogue, reflection, and action. The Center promotes innovation between students and teachers, and stimulates scientific and pedagogical synergies.

- ❖ For the signing of the HAF-USMBA partnership, we set aside a moment during [a reception](#) held at the residence of the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, Dwight Bush Sr., in the presence of Mr. André Azoulay, advisor to the King of Morocco. The event itself celebrated [House of Life](#) - an interfaith tree nursery and integrated agricultural project of HAF (as well as [a commitment-to-action](#) of the **Clinton Global Initiative**).

- **SUPMTI - Ecole Supérieure de Management d'Informatique, et de Telecommunication in Ben- Mellal:** The partnership's mission is to: i) promote community participation in planning and implementing socio-economic projects, ii) build knowledge of sustainable development policies through applied activities, iii) create vital opportunities for youth to build their professional skills and be community members who are catalysts, and iv) facilitate sustainable human development.

HAF's Project Proposals for University Student Programs



- *Law Clinic and Legal Aid Programs at University Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah, Fes: Supporting civil society through capacity-building and legal aid to advocate for inclusion of vulnerable migrant and refugee groups*
 - Expanding to USMBA HAF's successful program, we'll introduce students to the law's application with migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees.



- *Rights-based approach and participatory empowerment with Moroccan Women: Supporting women students from seven Moroccan universities and rural women in their surrounding regions in leading social change*



- ***Oummat Salaam:** HAF aims to counter divisive conceptual frameworks that violent extremists propound. The initiative integrates educated youth and at-risk community members through volunteerism and service-learning; creating job readiness, and motivate increased social connectivity to build resilient communities.*
- *Participatory Development Planning Center in partnership with Regions of Oujda and Taroudant: Centers are where members of communities, government, civil society, and business, collaboratively design local projects.*

➤ SAMI'S PROJECT: BUILDING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES



Morocco's schools, especially in rural places, have serious needs to enable students to thrive in a healthy environment. HAF is dedicated to building school infrastructure, such as water delivery systems, classrooms, bathrooms, dormitories, and gardens. We support curriculum development, environmental education, and applied learning activities.

Sami's Project is a great initiative created for schoolchildren and their communities, and is transforming education in rural areas. Fruit trees uplift the school landscape, providing green spaces and shade while creating educational activities, nutritious food, and sustainable income. Sami's Project spreads the culture of planting among students so that they may discover and practice innovative agricultural techniques. Sami's Project raises consciousness of core values, such as mutual respect and trust.

HAF's goal for 2018 is to plant 8,000 trees with 150 schools – engaging 18,000 students – in 16 provinces. Since 2013 to date, HAF planted approximately 25,000 trees with nearly 350 schools in 22 provinces (**PaperSeed Foundation**, **International Foundation**, **Rotary Clubs**, **Embassy of Switzerland in Rabat**, and **G4S North and West Africa**). HAF built water systems and bathrooms for 12 schools (seven in Boujdour with **Kosmos Energy**; in Al Haouz with **Kahina Giving Beauty**; and Rhamna with the **American School in Marrakech**). HAF constructed three classrooms and a house for teachers (Rhamna with **Foundation OCP**).

HAF Project Proposals to Enhance School Communities



- *Planting Future Stems: Innovative and high-demand employability skills for Moroccan youth (Transforming 90 schools in Fes, Marrakech, Oujda and Tetouan regions)*
- *Build drinking water systems at 30 schools that will also serve their entire villages in Rhamna and Youssoufia*
 - HAF built drinking water systems with 26 villages (9,000 people) and 12 schools (1,200 students) (in Al Haouz, Beni Mella (**Organization of the Moroccan Community in the U.S.**), Boujdour, Rhamna (**FOCP**), and Taroudant (**Mosaic Foundation**), reducing infant mortality and illness, and increasing school retention for girls.



➤ IMPLEMENTING CLEAN DRINKING WATER INITIATIVES AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE IN THE MOROCCAN (WESTERN) SAHARA

HAF's community approach in the Sahara increases participation in development, decision-making, and governance by creating workshops of local collaborative planning. In 2012 in

Boujdour, a one-year project priority assessment in rural and urban areas was conducted, involving approximately 5,000 people. In 2013, HAF registered as a provincial association in Boujdour. Working with local cooperatives and with support from the **National Endowment for Democracy**, HAF conducts participatory planning with local communities in the region, where people's voices and their ideas drive initiatives, partnership-building, and advocacy. Currently, in the Jrifia Commune of Boujdour province, HAF is partnering with **Siemens Wind Solar** to dig six wells to benefit the nomadic communities.

■ *Key achievements:*

- HAF successfully implemented a school infrastructure project (funded by **Kosmos Energy**): clean, gender-segregated bathroom facilities and drinking water supplies for students at seven public schools in Boujdour. This project targets 17 schools total in Boujdour (HAF's seeks partners to complete the remaining ten schools). This project aims to improve infrastructure, access to water, sanitation, and develop local capacity in health and hygiene. The program improves the health of students as well as the education and training of children to meet their future challenges.
- HAF's project managers conducted participatory meetings in Boujdour with the goal to encourage communities to become principal actors in sustainable development. Fifty-five people, mostly women, were trained, highlighting their priorities, which is the basis for project proposals and the municipal development plan. They developed and submitted project proposals to the **National Initiative for Human Development** for support.
- Community creation of project action plans in each municipality
- Formal partnerships have been created with HAF and public agencies, including the **Education Delegation, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Health, Regional Department of Waters and Forests, and Provincial Direction of Agriculture**.
- The development of detailed socio-economic and environmental reports based on community-generated data
- The formation of the regional HAF association in Boujdour



HAF's Project Proposals for the Moroccan Sahara

- *Institutionalizing Participatory Governance in the Boujdour, Dakhla, and Laayoune Regions*
- *Building Capacities for Participatory Democratic Planning and Project Management with Members of Civil Society Organizations*





- *Sami's Projects: Improving School Environments with Water, Gardens, Classrooms, and Bathrooms*
- *Preserving Cultural Heritage and Generating Income through Tent Production with Women*

➤ HAF'S INTEGRATES MULTICULTURALISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

An embodiment of Morocco's integrated development approach is its way to preserve its diverse cultures. Morocco's vision is that cultural activities should be advanced in integration with people's development. King Mohammed VI described in 2008: "That vision consists in making sure culture serves as a driving force for development as well as a bridge for dialogue." HAF's cultural projects critically move forward human development, in education, livelihoods, the environment, and with people in remote places.

Youth cleaning the Christian cemetery (Essaouira).



- In Essaouira in 2013, HAF held a conference to present the results of its one-year preservation and education program for the cemeteries of the three religions in the presence of **U.S. Consul-General, Mr. Brian Shukan** and representatives of local authorities, civil society, and project partners. Mr. Shukan (*bottom left photo greeting children*) welcomed the achievements of the project, which trained caretakers in good practices, overseen cleaning and planting activities with local community members, organized awareness-raising events with local people, integrated over 400 individual students and schoolchildren into educational and practical activities around cultural knowledge preserved by the cemeteries, and worked with over 120 members of local civil society. He said: "By making the cemeteries most welcoming, encouraging more visitors to discover these cemeteries for the first time and helping the current generation to remember its rich roots of their peaceful coexistence, this project will help preserve the illustrious past of Essaouira for future generations." The project was initiated by HAF and its partners and funded by the **Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation and Essaouira Mogador**.



- **HOUSE OF LIFE** is an innovative agricultural initiative whose implications are broad and set in the specific context of Moroccan human development needs and cultural history. The model thus created could be replicated throughout North Africa, the Middle East, and beyond. The term HOUSE OF LIFE denotes a traditional name for a Jewish cemetery. It was therefore particularly appropriate for the **former Governor of the Al Haouz Province, Younès Al Bathaoui**, to employ the phrase in respect of the project, led by HAF in Morocco and endorsed by the **Clinton Global Initiative**. The uniqueness of the scheme lies in its intercultural aspect. HOUSE OF LIFE facilitates the free loan of land adjoining Jewish burial sites, in order to establish organic tree and medicinal nurseries for the benefit of farming communities.



Akrich: 1) Muslim-Jewish gathering (2016) when the trees were distributed.
2) Ambassador Bush and Governor El Bathaoui planting a fig tree.



- In 2014, the HAF pilot nursery on Jewish communal land was established at Akrich, located on the northern side of the High Atlas in Al Haouz province, around 25 kilometers south of Marrakech, at the site of the 700-year-old tomb of the healer Rabbi Raphael Hachohen. Since that time, we planted 120,000 almond, fig, pomegranate, and lemon seeds which have reached maturity and now are maintained by about 1,000 farmers and 130 schools. The project was funded by **Wahiba Estergard and Mike Gilliland**, and the **Lodestar Foundation**.
- In 2016, the first trees from the pilot were handed to local children and farmers by the Governor joined by the **United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, Dwight Bush, Sr.** Earlier, Ambassador Bush hosted a reception for House of Life at his residence in Rabat, at which **Advisor to the King, André Azoulay, and former Peace Corps Director in Morocco, Ellen Paquette**, addressed the audience.

- Having started during the holy month of Ramadan 2017, HAF is hosting a series of community meetings in the Mellah neighborhood of Marrakech to prioritize local needs and establish a path for a sustainable future. In coordination with the **Association Mimouna, Jewish Community of Marrakech, Region of Marrakech-Safi** and the **Marrakech Beladiya**, HAF hosted a series of traditional Moroccan breaks of fast with the local community in order to foster participatory development action. Immediately following these interfaith meals at the Slat Lazama synagogue, local residents and organization leaders developed plans to achieve new projects - in clean drinking water, education, and building revitalization.

HAF's Project Proposals for Multiculturalism and Development



The Franciscan Church in Essaouira, Morocco was once a lively center of faith and community. Today, it is crumbling and not accessible to the public.

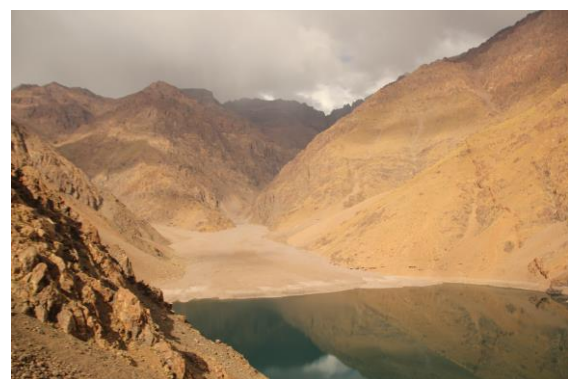
- **Inter-faith Understanding and Empowerment in Essaouira, Morocco: Preservation of the Franciscan Church:** *HAF seeks to restore the Franciscan Church in Essaouira. The city government will transfer the church to local civil society to serve as a location for public workshops, family education, and a meeting point for interfaith relations and development stakeholders. Restoring the church will preserve the Moroccan cultural past, and reflects the Moroccan model of social integration.*
 - **Inter-community and inter-faith understanding, collaboration, and cultural preservation in the Kingdom of Morocco:** *HAF seeks to initiate a knowledge preservation and awareness program for the buildings of the Essaouira medina which pertain to the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish faiths (i.e., mosques, zawiyas, churches, synagogues, and religious schools) and develop the historical narrative of these communities. This built heritage – which has variously disappeared and fallen into disuse – stands as a reminder of the rich multicultural past of this port city, where Arab and Amazigh Muslims, Jews and Christians shared a town, a life, work, a culture, and a language.*

Inside the wall is 1.5 hectares that the Moroccan Jewish Community lent to HAF for a tree nursery; in the middle of the white structures is the burial of Rabbi David Ou Moshe. **The Province of Ourzazate** partners with this initiative.



- **Pluralistic Moroccan Human and Agricultural Development:** The goal of the project is to plant the two million seeds on land lent by the Moroccan Jewish Community and implement the agricultural value-chain, including the export of organic certified product to the United States and European Union. HAF proposes to grow two million seeds in four nurseries in three provinces, transplant them to orchards and schools in the twelve regions of Morocco, certify organic in three municipalities, monitor carbon offsets, and provide training with community and cooperative members.

➤ **CONSERVING THE BIODIVERSITY OF LAKE IFNI AND ITS ECOSYSTEM, PROTECTING IT AGAINST POLLUTION, AND ENSURING SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM**



This new project is in partnership with the **United Nations Development Program, Toubkal National Park management of DREF-Marrakech, and Association Toubkal**. A primary objective is to protect the biological and landscape biodiversity of Ifni Lake, located in the Toubkal National Park. The banks and slopes around the lake will be stabilized and the lake's water retention will be protected.

If one compares the map of Toubkal published in 1968 and the current state, the lake's decline is clear, especially on its west side where there is a catastrophic level of erosion. The

activities to be carried out aim at mechanical and biological measures to stop the masses of sand and pebbles on the slopes from filling the lake. A waste collection infrastructure will also be set up and a management and cleaning system will be created.

A second objective is to develop sustainable ecotourism around Lake Ifni, important for the promotion biodiversity and the sustainable development of the local people. The people have inherited the pastoral activities of their ancestors and having not gained other income-generating activities, some families continue this degrading activity. The intention is to develop ecotourism and to reach the maximum number of people.

➤ **HAF'S MULTI-FACETED VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Volunteers are integral to most all aspects of HAF's operations. They assist in partnership-building, communications, project analysis, design, evaluation, and planning. The following three volunteer programs have made essential contributions to HAF's development work and in meeting the needs of marginalized communities:

- **Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteers**, in partnership with the U.S. cooperative - **Land O 'Lakes** - and funded by **USAID**: From 2017 to 2018, HAF in Morocco is visited by 30 volunteer-experts from the United States in areas related to agricultural value-chains. Focuses include nursery production, irrigation design, hydrology, carbon credit monitoring, product commercialization, and developing business plans for organic agriculture. Volunteers visited all HAF nurseries, as well as the proposed new





nurseries referred to in this report. Results include a seasonal management plan, a funded erosion/planting project, and business plans for carbon credits, trees, nuts, fig, pomegranate, and apple vinegar.

- Interns from different universities around the world visit for a period of three-to-six months: associated with an internship is the development of thesis research, and support of HAF operations. Interns have helped make important advances for HAF in regards to women's empowerment, multicultural activities, and housing and development.
- Volunteers coming through partnerships with organizations (OCP Group, youth agencies) and on their own: we are flexible as to their duration and time of year – as the need for productive volunteers is constant. We build volunteers' assignments around their skill-sets and professional goals, and that further HAF's organizational needs and programs.

➤ HAF EVENTS IN MOROCCO AND THE UNITED STATES

HAF has held annual events from 2006-2012 in Washington, DC, hosted by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United States, Aziz Mekouar, at his residence. HAF has also held annual events in New York City (2005-2012), including a Moroccan Film Festival held at Tribeca Film Center (2011-2012, sponsored by **Vogue**, **Western Union**, and the **Moroccan National Tourist Office**). In 2009 and 2016, the United States Ambassadors to the Kingdom of Morocco (Thomas Riley and Dwight Bush, Sr.), hosted events at their residence in Rabat. We are grateful to the approximately 3,000 people who have come to these events to support Moroccan human development. Honored guests have included Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Meryem, His Excellency André Azoulay, the late Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, former Peace Corps Director Carol Bellamy, and musician Jimmy Buffett. We remembered together the late Kate Jeans-Gail (former Peace Corps Volunteer) and her mother Victoria, and built HAF's first nursery in their loving memory.

Proposed HAF's Events in Morocco and the United States



- **HAF event at the United Nations in New York:** *HAF's Consultative Status at the U.N. enables us to host events on U.N. premises. We propose a gathering of people who connect with global development and African and Middle Eastern societies, and people interested in Morocco and building its civil, business, government, cultural, and academic relationships around the world. The theme of the event is that Morocco's vision for development, and that of HAF, are rooted in participation, and like-minded organizations can thrive, and help Morocco show a way to prosperity for the region and world.*



HAF President Ben-Meir speaking at HAF event (2012) at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

- **HAF will host events in New York and Morocco in support of its sale of carbon credit offsets to organizations and individuals.**

➤ **ADVOCATING PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT AT ALL LEVELS OF SOCIETY**

HAF and its partners advocate for projects and policies that enable community-driven development. Our advocacy takes the form of sharing information with all concerned public, civil, and private agencies. In addition, the staff of HAF research, write, and publish articles about development opportunities and challenges in Morocco and its region (in English, Arabic, and French), that are of interest to a global audience.

Articles by HAF staff and by independent journalists about HAF and the many aspects of sustainable development in Morocco and elsewhere, are the following (2015-2017):

2017

HAF Volunteers



Ben-Meir discussing at Slat Lazama Synagogue in Marrakech revitalization of the mellah.

- [Accelerating Sustainable Development Toward 2030](#), 16th Session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, HAF Statement, 2017.
- [Volunteers Create Worlds](#), Center for Research on Globalization, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2017
- [Participatory Planning of Housing and Community Development](#), Journal of Business and Economics, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2017
- [Alternative Politics of Renewal](#), Center for Research on Globalization, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2017.
- [Moroccan Jewish Community Promotes Interfaith Harmony via Development Projects](#), San Diego Jewish World, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2017
- [Morocco: Addressing Shantytowns in an Emerging Democracy](#), Eurasia Review, by Wajiha Inbrahim (HAF Intern), 2017

2016

Planting carob seeds with youth at the Children Protection Center in Fes.



- [Supporting the Kingdom of Morocco](#), Eurasia Review, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2016
- [Countering Extremism through Human Development](#), University World News, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), Mouhssine Tadlaoui-Cherki (HAF Program Manager), and Kati Roumani (HAF Volunteer), 2016

Women's planning meeting for projects in Tassa Ouirgane (Al Haouz)



Meeting with youth at the Center for the Protection of Children (Oujda, Oriental).



Farmers who received walnut trees provided by Tadmamt (Al Haouz) for the first time.



HAF and USMBA presidents.

- [Women and Trees – Empowerment and Planting](#), **The Hans of India**, by Mark Apel (HAF-Farmer-to-Farmer Volunteer), 2016
- [Moroccan Decentralization – Challenges to Genuine Implementation](#), **Indigenous Policy Journal**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2016
- [Decentralization in Morocco: An Innovative Solution to Promote Human Development](#), **Global Innovation Exchange**, HAF staff, 2016
- [Global Bottom-Up by 2030?](#), **Media for Freedom**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2016
- [A Legacy of Peace Corps Service](#), **Friends of Morocco**, by Lillian Thompson (HAF-Peace Corps Response Volunteer), 2016
- [Between Despondency and Hope in Morocco's Oriental Region](#), **The Perspective**, by Elle Houby (HAF writer), 2016
- [A Message to a World Rife with Terrorism](#), **The algemeiner**, by Emma Tobin (HAF Intern), 2016
- [What is the Value of a Woman?](#), **ZNET**, by Emma Tobin (HAF Intern), 2016
- [Growing Trees to Mend Old Wounds](#), **Modern Ghana**, by Emma Tobin (HAF Intern), 2016
- [High Atlas Foundation Partners with Clinton Global Initiative in Tree Planting Project near Marrakesh](#), **Morocco World News**, by Colette Apelian (Independent Journalist), 2016
- [On the Cusp of Change - Walnut Distribution in Tadmamt, Al Haouz](#), **World News**, by Elle Houby (HAF writer), 2016
- [Paradigm Project for the Future: Location: Morocco](#), **Indigenous Policy Journal**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2016
- [How a Jewish Cemetery is Bringing a Moroccan Village to Life](#), **Middle East Eye**, by Mathew Green (Independent Journalist), 2016
- [New Vistas for Students: Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fez, Morocco](#), **Modern Ghana**, by Yossef Ben-Meir, 2016

2015



- [How to Plant Morocco's Billion Trees](#), **Scoop News**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015
- [Implementing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals](#), **Transconflict**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015



Aziza dates from Figuig. HAF seeks to build a lab in order to grow Aziza date seeds into trees (they are fragile and require a controlled environment).



Ben-Meir in Yaoundé facilitating a water management workshop.

Participants in HAF's empowerment workshop (Ourika, Al Haouz).



- [Meet 2015er: Yossef Ben-Meir](#), **U.N. Dispatch**, Mythili Sampathkumar (staff writer), 2015
- [Figs May Provide Security for Rural Moroccans](#), **World Policy Blog**, by Ida Sophie Winter (HAF writer), 2015
- [Figuig: A Troubles Home for Morocco's Rarest Date](#), **Middle East Eye**, by Ida Sophie Winter (HAF writer), 2015
- [Yaoundé: Government, Civil Sector Officials Discuss How Climate Change Threatens Water and Development](#), **Worldstage**, by Ida Sophie Winter (HAF writer), 2015
- [Northern Cameroon's Water Shortage](#), **World Policy Institute**, by Ida Sophie Winter (HAF writer), 2015
- [Meet the High Atlas Botanical Superhero](#), **Green Prophet**, by Ida Sophie Winter (HAF writer), 2015
- [Lending Land to Enhance Life](#), **Scoop News**, by Kati Roumani (HAF Moroccan Decentralization: Step by Step, Jerusalem Post, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015
- [Austerity or Stimulus? Participatory Development Offers a Third Way](#), **Belfast Telegraph**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015
- [Morocco and South-South Unity](#), **Libération**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015
- [A Fresh Template for a Changing Reality](#), **World Policy Institute**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015
- [Happy Tears: Human Connection Leading to Human Development](#), **Morocco World News**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015
- [Human Development in the Arab Spring: The Implications of Decentralization for Societies in the Context of Human Development](#), **Foreign Policy Journal**, by Yossef Ben-Meir (HAF President), 2015

HAF's Finances and management: HAF properly manages contributions provided by government, corporations, civil society, and thousands of individuals - international and Moroccan. Since its founding, HAF has raised \$3,566,770 in support of human development projects and capacity-building in Morocco. HAF upholds the highest standards of grant management, reporting, financial monitoring, and auditing. It maintains financial records relating to all expenditures and field logs of all project activities. HAF uses the QuickBooks accounting system to track all grant and activity expenses.

HAF is audited annually by an external U.S. accounting firm, and files tax forms with the United States Internal Revenue Service. HAF disseminates all information regarding its project activities, fundraising, and its financial allocations to projects with the Office of the Secretary General of the Government of Morocco, and the governors in Morocco in whose jurisdictions HAF's projects are located. HAF also posts for the public its project

and financial activities on Guidestar, where it has a gold seal of transparency, and on GlobalGiving, where HAF has a Superstar level.

HAF currently has 22 paid staff members, and may have five volunteers at any one time. Its main office is in Marrakech. The organization is led on matters of strategic development by its founder and president, Yossef Ben-Meir, Ph.D. HAF's Director in Morocco, who manages its daily operations, is Larbi Didougen. Fatima Zahra Laaribi is HAF's office manager and is a women's empowerment trainer. Core project managers are Amina El Hajjami, Naima Benazzi, Rachid Montassir, Hana Ezaoui, and Abdelghani Lamnaouar. HAF's financial management is conducted by Mouhssine Tadlaoui-Cherki. HAF's Board of Directors in the United States is led by Bruno Mejean and Ellen Paquette. In Morocco, its Board of Directors is led by Haj Ahmed Amazzal.

Concluding thoughts: There is systemic poverty that afflicts the majority of people in Morocco. However, there are established national structures and initiatives to advance sustainable human development. Their intention - and HAF's - is to catalyze people's development that meets communities' self-described priority needs.

The nation has exemplary models for sustainable and shared growth, driven by the participatory method. It remains a serious challenge, however, to achieve the inclusive and widespread implementation of these development goals because the skills to organize and facilitate local collaborative planning are not well-dispersed.

The High Atlas Foundation recommends engaged capacity-building workshops with members of society who interface with communities, such as from civil associations, government, teachers, youth, retirees, and residents. Training in facilitating participatory methods for planning development projects is most effective when it is learning-by-doing, with applied experiences.

The High Atlas Foundation seeks to multiply the amount of the revenue generated from the organic agricultural and carbon credit value-chain – working from growing nurseries to global sales – and to utilize the new income to finance participatory community planning and implementing the sustainable projects that are identified by the people. We hope you



work with us to achieve the projects of the Moroccan people outlined in this Annual Report.

Morocco's challenge is similarly faced by nations that are guided by practical and universal ideals: to conscientiously embody act-by-act the progressive values that are intended to build national development now and in the future. Morocco's success is of vital importance for itself, and for the dispersion of participatory principles of social organization in its region.



مؤسسة الأطلس الكبير
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