

**Progress Report**  
**Bountiful Heritage: Protecting**  
**Pakistan's Peacocks**



Network for Human and Social Development GlobalGiving ID 82396

Dated 14<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Since September 2023, the Network for Human and Social Development has been active in the region. The sanctuary was initiated as a project aimed at offering the Indian peafowl population a secure, enclosed environment to protect them from poachers and other native wildlife in Mithro Charan and Mithrio Suttar, Chachro, Tharparkar. Additionally, it offers a chance to raise awareness about the cultural and social challenges faced by the Hindu population, for whom the peacock holds significant importance. In Hindu belief, Lakshmi, the goddess of fertility and wealth, manifested in the mortal realm as an Indian peafowl. However, the peacock population in the region has drastically diminished due to reduced veterinary medical coverage, significant weather changes from climate change (notably the devastating 2023 floods in Sindh, Balochistan, and particularly Tharparkar), and widespread, crippling poverty. Among the few peacocks that have survived against all odds are Shannan and Amert.

NHSD was initially introduced to Shannan and Amert through the community of Mithrio Charan and Mithrio Suttar in Tharparkar, as part of our project to rebuild 27 houses and construct a vocational training center, dispensary, and school in Mithrio Charan, Chachro, Tharparkar. This initiative expanded and culminated in a successful grant from Global Giving, which enabled the installation of solar panels to provide electricity to these newly constructed buildings. Throughout this period, Shannan and Amert were initially fearful. The floods had destroyed their habitat, leaving them without stable perches to escape predators. They saw their peers caught in the floods, succumb to the worsening Newcastle disease virus, and their population nearly wiped out. Peacocks lay their eggs in bushes, far from predators, in remote and isolated spots, but the floods rendered these fragile eggs unsustainable.

However, Shannan and Amert found hope in these projects. The newly built structures, constructed from locally sourced concrete and sustainable materials, were designed to endure the pressures of floods—an assertion proven by their resilience during the devastating monsoon rains in Sindh in October 2023. With roofs made of bamboo, thatch, and bark, the buildings were well-suited to the needs of the Indian peafowl. Shannan and Amert, along with their surviving peers, found safety and a measure of stability restored.

As their populations began to slowly increase due to successful hatchlings, NHSD committed to providing safe and secure habitats for them, protecting them from poachers and native predators. This is particularly crucial in Chachro, Tharparkar, where the greatest threat to the Indian peafowl comes from an increasingly violent non-Hindu population focused on encroachment and illegal poaching. These poached peacocks are often sold to affluent elites in Islamabad and Lahore.

The location now features tree saplings that were donated, which is particularly advantageous for Shannan and Amert, as they can raise their brood safely within the

sanctuary. The sanctuary is protected by a fence. The walls will be converted from mud to locally sourced concrete. Continuous Work is being done for further improvements. The local community has greatly appreciated these efforts and has shown strong support for them.

NHSD is deeply thankful for the ongoing endorsement, patronage, and support of our donors and Global Giving. Without their contributions, this effort would have been in vain and Shannan and Amert, like grains of sand in the Thar deserts, might have faded into obscurity.

Photos of the local sanctuary, the saplings planted in the region, and photos of Shannan, Amert and their ostentations (a group of peacocks) are attached below.



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