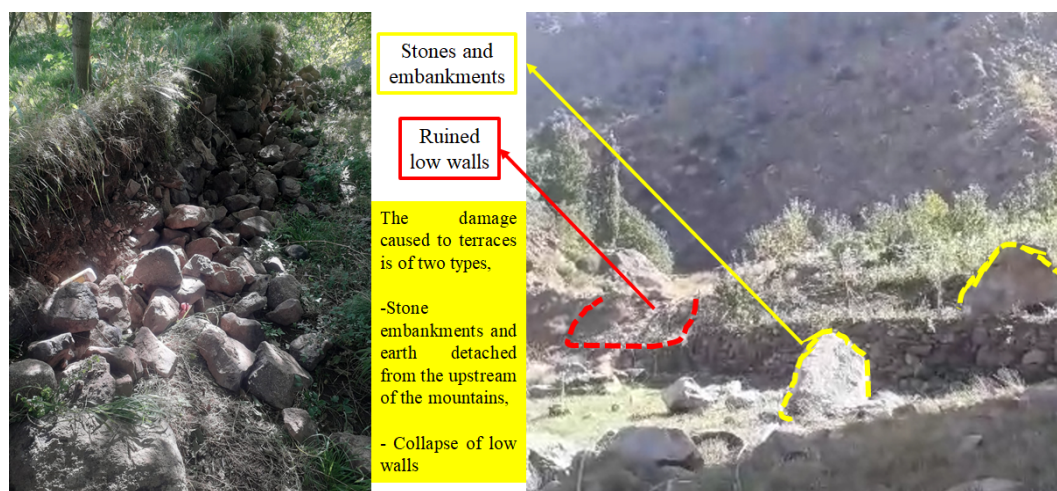


Earthquake Recovery in Morocco: Rehabilitating agricultural infrastructure in the medium and high valleys north of Toubkal National Park

By Karma Salloum

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On September 8, 2023, Morocco suffered a catastrophic earthquake stronger than any faced by the region in the last 100 years. The 6.8 magnitude earthquake resulted in the devastating loss of thousands of lives, leveled or damaged over 50,000 homes, and compromised water and agricultural infrastructure in hundreds of villages.



While HAF has been quick to deploy immediate disaster response in these communities, our long-term strategy for reconstruction is essential. We are well positioned to partner with communities to rebuild key irrigation and agricultural infrastructure for sustainability and resilience. Our decades-long partnership in these affected regions has allowed us to directly receive reports from villages, identify damages, and confirm priority needs.

We found severe damages to two important structures for mountain agriculture: (1) terraces, low walls built 0.5-2mm off the ground to facilitate cultivation and irrigation in hilly areas, and (2) seguias, open-air irrigation canals. Without these, agriculture will not resume and residents of the affected villages in the High Atlas Mountains may be forced to leave their homes, exacerbating the trend of urban migration.



The damage to the irrigation network is great; breaks, embankments etc. The majority of seguias damaged and require maintenance or total reconstruction to make them operational



The High Atlas Foundation will work with local community members to rehabilitate agricultural infrastructure and construct solar-powered water pumps to allow agricultural activity to resume and to ensure sustainable, resilient food and water access and income for families. We have developed a proposal to repair and reconstruct damaged terraces and seguias in a number of villages in the Aghoitim, Asni, Oukaimden, Ouirgane Azzaden, Setti Fadma, and Ijoukak municipalities. We are seeking funding to carry out this project and continue to support affected communities.