

Annual Report 2021



GLOBAL
DIVERSITY
FOUNDATION



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MESSAGE *FROM THE* GDF CO-DIRECTORS

Dear friends,

The Global Diversity Foundation (GDF) had a truly transformative 2021, and we are delighted to share this year's journey with you.

It began in January, when a growing realisation crystallised for us: GDF - principally representing the work we do in our regional field programmes - and the Global Environments Network (GEN) appear to our supporters and the public as two completely separate entities, when in fact they are entirely intertwined and informed by one another. To remedy this, we sought the support of a consultant who led us through an intensive six-month process to review and refresh our purpose, values and strategy, and to weave the two main strands of our work into a coherent whole. This experience transformed how we communicate GDF's vision and work with the world - now consolidated into a single revised [website](#).



Our team also expanded significantly in 2021. In the Spring, we welcomed [Samirah Siddiqui](#) as our GEN Programme Coordinator and [Eda Elif Tibet](#) as our Visual Anthropology Lead and Media Outreach Coordinator. In the Autumn, [Hannah McGurk](#) joined as our new Finance and Administration Officer and [Simran Rawat](#) as Communications Coordinator. We also welcomed [Tasnim Elboute](#) and [Louisa Aarrass](#) as our Research and Policy Officer and Outreach and Programme Curator respectively. This year we also said goodbye to Marina Aman Sham and Manish Panjabi as core team members. Now operating in a team of 12, we feel privileged to be collaborating with such a diverse, dynamic, and kind group of people.

By the end of the year, inspired by leadership thinkers Brené Brown and Frédéric Laloux, we re-envisioned our leadership structure by inviting Nessie Reid (the erstwhile GEN Director) to join Emily Caruso as GDF Co-Director. Our experience of co-directorship has been so seamless and fruitful that we wonder why it is not more often seen in organisations!

Alongside these significant shifts at the organisational level, 2021 witnessed the deepening and expanding of our network of change-makers. We also launched new initiatives and consolidated our impact. The first [Harvest Festival](#) kicked off in Marrakech in October, our High Atlas programme expanded to a new field site and we formalised our membership with the [Alliance for Mediterranean Nature and Culture](#). We organised a retreat on [Grief, the Body and Transformative Justice](#) - which accompanied the publication of the eponymous [toolkit](#), funded 8 GEN seed projects across Africa, Asia and Latin America, and organised a series of online public discussions and workshops concerning some of the most pressing issues of our time.





The transformations of 2021 set the stage for what has so far been an outstanding 2022 - with two major [GEN events](#) in full swing, a new 5-year programme for the High Atlas inaugurated, and the launch of an Environmental Justice programme.

We are truly humbled by the incredible support we have received from our donors - which goes well beyond the financial - to enable all of this work. Buoyed by our collectively renewed pledge to help communities and environments flourish, propelled by a true 'dream team', and grateful for the continued trust placed in us by our partners and the communities we work with, we find ourselves more than ever able to take on the challenges of these troubled times.

In solidarity and gratitude,

Nessie and Emily

V. Reid *Emily Caruso*





OUR PURPOSE, VALUES AND STRATEGY

PURPOSE

**We work with
changemakers to
help communities
and environments
flourish.**

VALUES

Be Brave

We embrace complexity, difference and possibility.

We combine global and local perspectives, innovations and connections to address complex challenges.

We're creative, daring and welcome uncertainty.

Nurture Yourself

We foster autonomy and leadership.

We practise self-care.

We cultivate kindness and trusting relationships, supporting each other as we grow.

Act Collectively

We are rooted in our interconnection with nature.

We stay culturally grounded, taking the time to reflect, learn and adapt.

We make decisions together.

Commit

We're experts in our field.

We deliver concrete results.

We're in it for the long-term.



STRATEGY

Incubate

Through our field programmes and seed projects we achieve positive, sustainable change at the grassroots and inform our support for similar initiatives elsewhere. The High Atlas Cultural Landscapes Programme is currently our most significant field programme.

Gather

We organise transformative events to enhance the skills, networks and influence of changemakers.

Mentor

Our personalised mentoring programme amplifies the impact and effectiveness of changemakers.

Resource

Peer-reviewed research, practical toolkits and inspiring stories resource changemakers and drive change.

Connect

A community of 600+ individuals & organisations connects and collaborates through the Global Environments Network.





OUR WORK

Moroccan High Atlas

The High Atlas Cultural Landscapes Programme works with communities to revitalise traditional practices, sustain livelihoods and restore nature. The programme is implemented in collaboration with our local partner, Moroccan Biodiversity & Livelihoods Association (MBLA). We ended the year with an expansion of our programming on local product commercialisation that supports community-based cooperatives and sustainable value chains across the larger Atlas Mountain region.



Incubate: Sowing Regenerative Solutions for Communities, Co-operatives and Conservation

Biocultural Diversity Conservation & Development

Our biodiversity conservation initiatives are based on the results of a 5-year process of documentation of the biocultural diversity of the High Atlas and threats to it. Based on this work, and through participatory decision-making with partner communities, we have established a series of long-term activities that halt the loss of biodiversity. Community plant nurseries produce valuable local plants that are both distributed to community members for cultivation and sale and planted out in the wild as part of ecological restoration activities, while community seed banks safeguard local seed heritage.



Since the start of the HACL programme, **3 community nurseries** have been established, growing **over 300,000 plants of 47 different species** of local importance.

This year, we established a fourth community nursery community nursery in Zaouiat Ahensal. This nursery ushers in our programming in this commune, expanding the reach of our work to conserve endemic, endangered, and economically valuable species.



Our action research focuses on conserving wild and cultivated species—both animals and plants— and maintaining associated cultural practices of conservation in diverse agro-sylvo-pastoral systems.





Agroecology and Agrobiodiversity

Community-based agrobiodiversity management for conservation and food sovereignty is a core component of our programme. This year, we progressed with the documentation and characterisation of local cereal and legume crops, seeds, and traditional seed exchange systems. We carried out extensive fieldwork using the [DATAR](#) system across the regions of Demnate, Azilal, and Al-Haouz through **6 focus groups** and **157 household surveys and interviews** with farmers.

Through a participatory approach, we assess and improve agricultural practices to enhance sustainability, productivity and community wellbeing.

For our agroecological capacity building, we partnered with [DEAFAL](#) to increase the impact of our Farmer Field Schools. The programme delivered two modules on **plant health and nutrition** and [livestock management](#), in the communes of Imegdale and Aït M'hamed.

This year's Farmer Field Schools resulted in management action plans for water, soil, crops, and livestock in both regions, where we also carried out local ecological restoration activities. We planted **5490 keystone tree species** and **3700 aromatic and medicinal plants** to reduce harvesting pressure on existing populations and support degraded ecosystems.





Gather: Engaging Stakeholders for Transformative Action

Local Product Commercialisation

Our local product commercialisation program grew in its support of cooperatives with events such as the [Harvest Festival](#) and [High Atlas Food Markets](#). Alongside MBLA, we organised two High Atlas Food Market events during which we invited High Atlas cooperatives to sell their local products and obtain an experience to engage with (new) urban consumers. We provided **3 training events** alongside each High Atlas Food Market to **over 15 rural cooperatives** to support them in improving their pricing strategies, marketing and social media presence.

In 2021, we offered in-depth capacity-building programs and mentorship opportunities to our cooperative partners. In collaboration with [MOWGLI Mentoring](#) and [IES-Social Business School](#), we organised a rural entrepreneurship boot camp in June 2021 to support the business development of **15 High Atlas cooperatives** (30 participants). The **4 day bootcamp** held in Marrakech brought together rural entrepreneurs with IES professors, business coaches, and mentors and was followed by **9 months of mentorship** for each cooperative.

We promote vibrant economies in the High Atlas by collaborating with local cooperatives to produce, transform and commercialise local products and services sustainably, ethically and equitably.





Harvest Festival: For the Future of Food, Heritage and Health

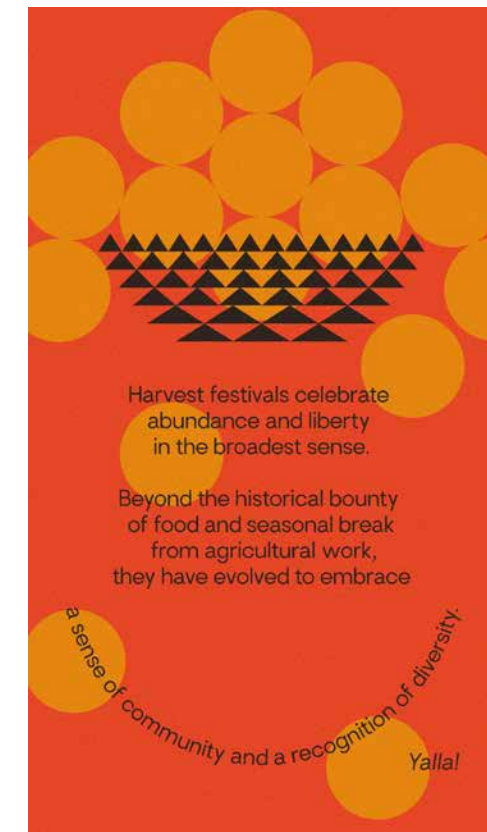
In October 2021, we organised the **first edition** of [Harvest Festival Marrakech](#), a city-wide event that celebrates agroecology, biodiversity, culture and gastronomy performed and produced in the Marrakech-Safi region. This edition included World Food Day and three weekends, each dedicated to a different theme: agroecology and gastronomy, with markets of culinary products including High Atlas cooperative products; cultural diversity, featuring a film festival, crafts market and various art

openings; and a closing celebration on the final weekend.

Central to the goals of the Harvest Festival is bridging urban and rural spaces, celebrating the regional identity of Marrakech and its hinterlands.

The festival is an extension of our High Atlas commercialisation project, supporting rural cooperatives by highlighting their role in maintaining cultural practices and High Atlas

biodiversity. These cultural practices sustain local livelihoods and landscapes, and are expressed as local cosmetic, craft and culinary products that we promote, along with the farmers and artisans that create them. The Festival was highly publicised, generating national and international press, and was successful in forming an online community through social media platforms, investing in the future success of subsequent editions.





Governance and Policy

We continued our policy workshop series in July 2021 with a workshop on the International Plant Treaty (ITPGRFA) and Morocco's national agricultural policy (Green Morocco Plan 2008-20 and Green Generation Strategy 2020-30). High Atlas cooperatives and agricultural associations sent **24 community members** to the event. Through this workshop, participants better understood conservation measures and agricultural policy at the international and national levels, as well as their influence on life in the High Atlas region.

We continued our support of the Consortium APAC Maroc (the national consortium for Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas- ICCAs) to further strengthen and improve governance systems for participatory cultural landscapes' management. MBLA organised the first edition of the *Carrefour des APAC* in Spring 2021, **gathering 80 participants** including regional partners and (inter)national experts on ICCAs to explore and exchange about the protection of these areas in Morocco and globally.

We also produced a series of policy-related resources which are [available for download here](#).

Our programme encourages dialogue, collaboration and participation for successful governance and policy of local biocultural systems with local, regional, national and international partners.





Biocultural Education, Innovation & Transfer

Our environmental education program for the young women of [Dar Taliba](#) continues to offer training and agroecological learning opportunities. This year, we also offered new workshops on traditional foods and the commercialisation of medicinal and aromatic plants in the High Atlas. Highlights from our program in 2021 include the visit of the Australian Ambassador to Morocco in September and the publication and dissemination of an educational manual, "Biodiversity: in the Moroccan High Atlas and the World."

The manual is targeted at school-aged children and aims to raise awareness on topics such as biodiversity hotspots, climate change, biodiversity loss, plastic pollution and the Sustainable Development Goals. We printed **500 copies** for use by current and future students at Dar Taliba and other local high schools.

By supporting community-based learning, we help build individual and collective skills and capacities.





Connect: Building Bridges for Lasting Change

Networking and Scaling Up

This year, we officially launched our HACL programme in the commune of Zaouiat Ahansal. Two new local community researchers were recruited and are carrying out baseline research. Based on requests from local community members, we built our fourth community plant nursery and seed bank to serve this region.

Our Harvest Festival in Marrakech also brought together and expanded our network, with over **25 national partners** participating through workshops, roundtables, film screenings, food tastings and other events.

And finally, our commitment to expand our work on sustainable value chains and supporting community-based cooperatives across the larger Atlas region relies on the networks built over the course of the HACL programme.

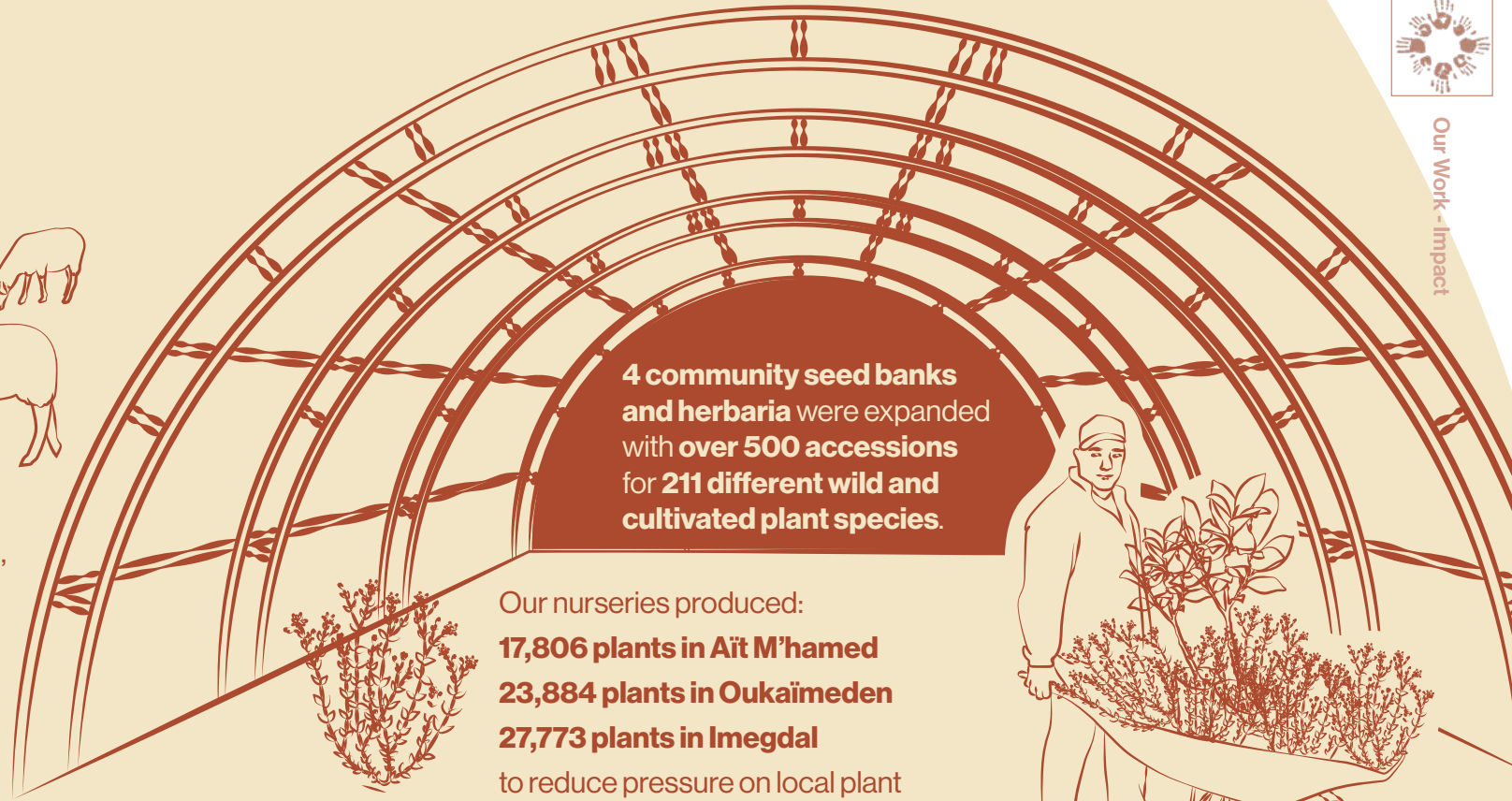




In 2021



4 Farmer Field Schools were held in 2021 covering plant and soil health, livestock, and water management among other agroecological topics.



4 community seed banks and herbaria were expanded with **over 500 accessions** for **211 different wild and cultivated plant species**.

Our nurseries produced:

17,806 plants in Aït M'hamed

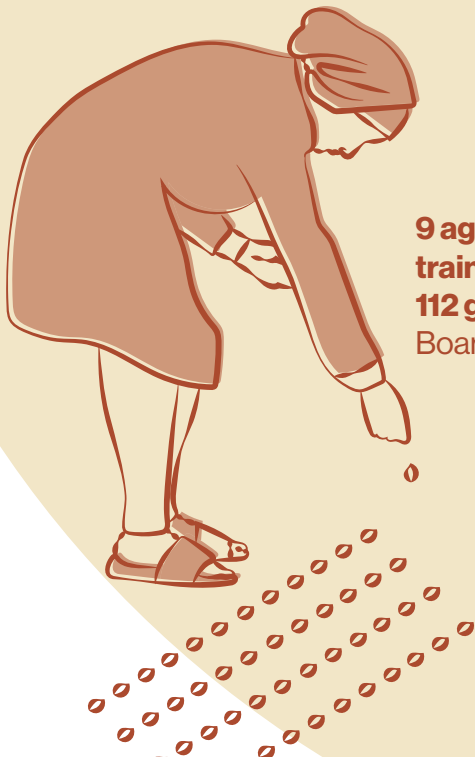
23,884 plants in Oukaïmeden

27,773 plants in Imegdal

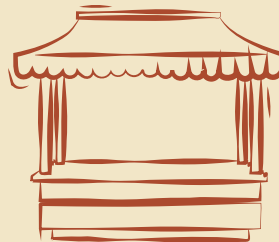
to reduce pressure on local plant populations.



We organised local plant distributions and **distributed 19,565 plants** in total, benefiting **498 households across 48 villages (douars)**.



9 agroecology trainings were held for **112 girls** at Dar Taliba Boarding School.



26 High Atlas cooperatives were supported, producing **over 40 different local products**, and generating income for **750 households**.



Partnerships with:

over 30 local associations, cooperatives and rural communes

35 regional and national partners

33 partners across 12 countries.



Partnering to Raise Awareness and Knowledge of Cultural Landscapes in the Mediterranean

In 2021, we joined the [Alliance for Mediterranean Nature and Culture \(AMNC\)](#), a partnership of 13 organisations that have come together to support cultural landscapes, biodiversity and local livelihoods. Supported by the MAVA Foundation, the AMNC roots its work in pilot sites located in 8 countries across the Mediterranean.



Alliance for Mediterranean Nature & Culture

Since the AMNC's inception, GDF has led the Alliance's efforts to build its visibility as a key actor in the Mediterranean and to amplify the Cultural Landscapes approach. We are promoting this through 'Our Common(s) Story', a transmedia storytelling campaign which involves a video documentary series, podcasts, animated videos, a comic book and social media posts.







OUR WORK

Global Environments Network

Supporting a network of people dedicated to social and ecological justice, healing and planetary wellbeing

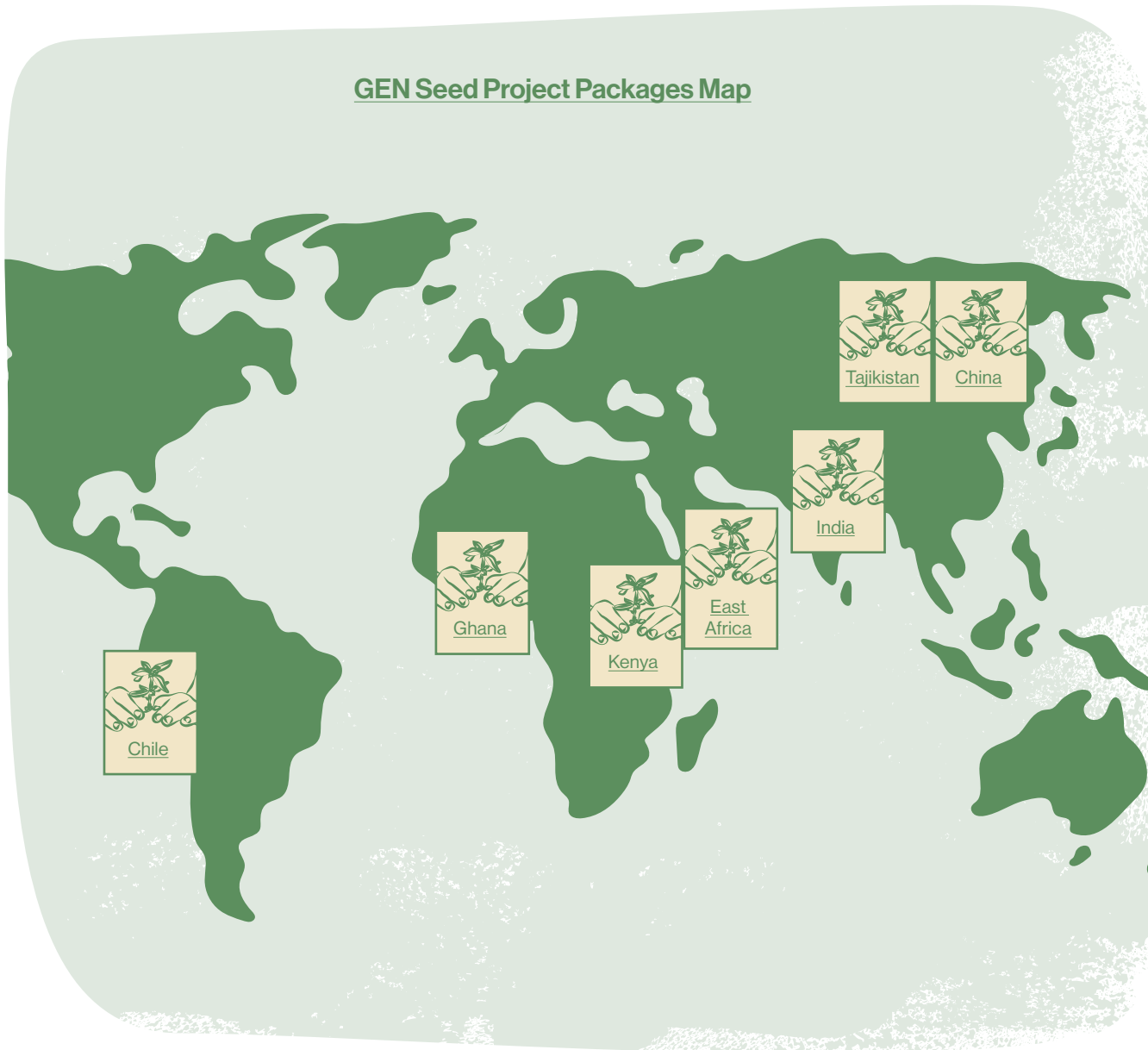
Over 2021, the Global Environments Network team scaled up efforts to support our network of 600+ innovators and leaders. This past year, we saw a return to in person events with our Grief Retreat. We also continued to offer online events, including three In-Conversation events, and the new GEN Grove online space. Additionally, we maintained our engagement with members through mentoring, seed funding and the regular publishing of GEN stories, op-eds and newsletters.

"The diversity I've seen here, I really haven't seen before. I had been in workshops like this, that were very diverse but much more 'first world' than 'third world'. That itself was absolutely fantastic. I just think that there is such richness in the space and the conversations I've had with people."

-Claudia Leal, GEN resource person



GEN Seed Project Packages Map



Incubate: Seeding Systemic Change

Our seed project packages support our members by nurturing their ideas from the ground up through a holistic approach: we provide funding, mentoring, feedback, communications support, and access to partners and individuals who can support them. This year, we funded 8 projects in 3 continents.





Askarsho Zevarshoev launched the project [community seed banks in the Pamir Mountains, Tajikistan](#) to preserve local seeds for future generations: an approach which also serves as a coping strategy for natural disasters and climate change adaptation.



Paula Fuentealba Urzúa supports seed guardians to develop [community seed banks contributing to small-scale food production, agrobiodiversity and local seed exchange networks in Chile](#).

Feature: Meet Angela, one of the seed guardians on [Youtube](#).



Ana Elia Ramon Hidalgo's project [replanting ancient trees in the Savannah region for resilience](#), established and expanded a tree nursery on [Cultural, Environmental, Human, Development Association \(CEHDA\)](#) land to nurse endangered local tree species.

"With this project, we are revitalising ancient socio-ecological wisdom through the experience of rural communities who still remember and care about the multiple and intricate values of local trees and plants." - Ana Elia Ramon Hidalgo





[Meredith Root-Bernstein](#) is engaging with [local communities for a rewilding project](#) in central Chile with the goal to develop a model of rewilding in central Chile that focuses on restoring lost functionality within socio-ecological systems.



[People, parks, and prosperity: a story map project](#) in China's new National Park is a collaboration between [Wenjing Xu](#) and [Inanc Tekguc](#) to help explore the "park vs. people" dilemma through the lens of China's first and largest national park - the Sanjiangyuan National Park.



[The Rejea Retreat 'Radical Reskilling for Regeneration' in East Afrika](#) is an online event led by [Wangui wa Kamonji](#) to introduce regeneration as a guiding principle and a lived practice for a broad audience in East Afrika.



[Revitalizing Sengwer people-land relationships through indigenous knowledge in Kenya](#) is supporting the Sengwer indigenous peoples environmental struggle for land justice, led by [Milka Chepkorir Kuto](#).



[The Coffee Miners Project](#) by [Piyush Dhawan](#) is a one of its kind online immersive platform to gain a deeper understanding of social, economic and environmental sustainability in the Coffee Value Chain.





Incubate

Hawapo: Mitigating Malaria and Promoting Community Health Among Three Indigenous Ethnic Groups of the Venezuelan Amazon

The Hawapo project began in 2018, in the wake of a terrible malaria epidemic in Venezuela. Indigenous peoples, especially those remote from urban areas and without access to modern medical care, suffered the highest levels of morbidity and mortality. At the urgent request of leaders of the Joti, Eñepa and Piaroa, GEN members partnered with the communities and project leaders to create a crowdfunding initiative on the Global Giving platform, “[No One Should](#)

[Die of Malaria Today](#)”. Since its inception, we have been providing support in the form of nets, diagnostic tests, antimalarial treatment, training and more.

In 2021, despite restricted mobility due to Covid-19, efforts continued to provide medicines and financial support for cases of dire medical emergencies. Community members embraced the resources and training, and managed them highly effectively: the communities **registered no deaths due to malaria in the last two-and-a-half years**. In 2022, we’re headed back with fresh nets, medications and a groundbreaking trial of a community-led malaria eradication strategy.





Gather: Uniting Changemakers to Tackle Challenges



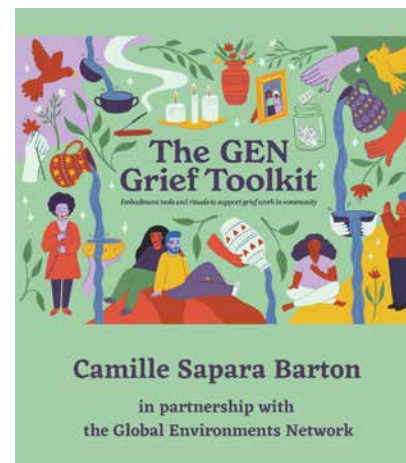
The GEN Grief Retreat and Grief Toolkit

In collaboration with [Camille Barton \(The Collective Liberation Project\)](#) and Farzana Khan ([Healing Justice London](#)), we hosted a [6-day residential retreat](#), exploring how embodied grief practices can support environmental advocacy and transformative justice in the UK context. The retreat prioritised people with recent ancestral histories of migration or colonisation.

Art therapy interventions were woven into the retreat experience, allowing participants to creatively unearth how grief work can be explored in individual and collective contexts. Participants were taught embodied self-regulation practices throughout the retreat, based on a variety of somatic practices. Dance therapy, free writing and journaling, drawing, painting and peer counselling practices were used in order to integrate people's experiences. The event took place



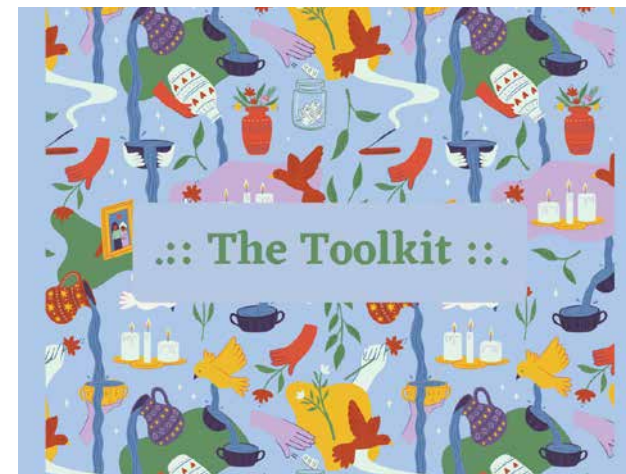
at the Quadrangle, a retreat centre in Kent, United Kingdom.



The retreat was also an opportunity to put into practice the [Weaving Grief, the Body and Transformative Justice Toolkit](#) research. By the end of 2021, we finalised this open-source toolkit with simple rituals designed to allow people to connect to grief while staying resourced and aware of their embodied experience, in order to prevent overwhelm.



"In my wild visions for this toolkit, and how it may ripple into the world in years to come, I imagine regular grief rituals being incorporated into movements for social change, as well as other networks as a practice of care and interdependence. These grief spaces will enable us to make generative connections between our own lives, our ancestors and the stories of the lands we inhabit or are ancestrally connected to. We will all have space in the community to be with our sorrow and be embraced with tenderness. As a first step towards this vision, I hope that activists, change makers, parents, care givers, healers and artists will be brave enough to give grief work a chance." - Camille Barton



The GEN Grove

In 2021, we introduced the GEN Grove, a facilitated interactive online space for our members and our wider community to meet and share meditation, poetry, read articles, project ideas and more. Building upon the Grief Retreat and Grief Toolkit, we organised this space around ecological grief, recognising and honouring the need to gather as a global community and process our collective distress over ecological devastation around the world.





GEN In Conversation: Forums for Discussion, Debate and Collective Learning

Colonial Conservation and Uneven Development

Kendi Borona, Milka Chepkorir, Ashish Kothari and Suzanne Dhaliwal shared their first-hand experiences of the ways indigenous knowledge and community-led education can revitalise our human connection to land and build resilient, thriving societies. We collectively ruminated on antidotes to neocolonial conservation, extractivist models and so-called nature-based solutions.



Creative Strategies for Change

In this interactive workshop with Suzanne Dhaliwal, we explored power, privilege mapping, art and activism to develop creative campaign strategies to sustain our earth and support resilient communities. We also delved into practices and rituals which could help revitalise our connection to nature, spirit and community.

Rites of Passage in the 21st Century

This roundtable moderated by Rachael Knight, featured Daktari Karambu Ringera, Naomi Mwangi, Sutej Hugu and Max Girardeau. They discussed how we might co-design and incubate new rites of passage that maintain the powerful content our ancestors perfected, but in new forms that encompass various identities and their fluidities.





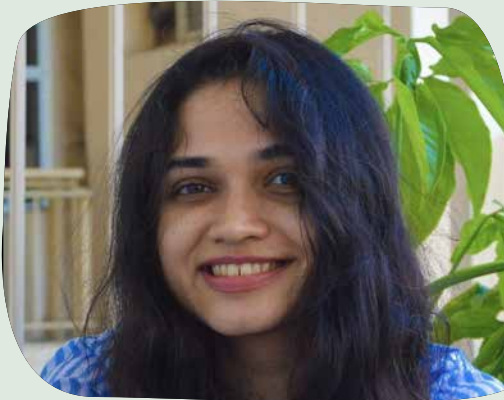
Our People

GDF programmes are implemented by our diverse, multidisciplinary and mobile team, under the governance of the UK Board of Trustees and US Board of Directors.

Our High Atlas Cultural Landscapes team in Morocco comprises team members whose expertise ranges across local product commercialisation, ethnobotany, agroecology, community governance, biodiversity conservation and more. To ensure that our approach is community centric, we work with community researchers, whose inputs are invaluable to our projects, research and field data collection.

The Global Environments Network team works remotely from all corners of the world on various aspects such as fundraising, administration, events, coordination, program design, mentoring and building networks. Currently, GEN team members can be found changing the world from their homes in the UK, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Cyprus and the US.





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Team Member Feature

Hafida grew up immersed in Amazigh culture and practices, including culinary practices, which instilled in her a love of local products and food.

Hafida explains that it is an honour to be a part of our ongoing commercialisation and entrepreneurship efforts, which invest in cultural and biodiversity conservation and sustain natural resource management, ultimately improving the livelihoods of High Atlas communities.

“I believe it is possible to achieve food security by valorising local plants and products, and this belief is reinforced by my close work and interaction with rural producers in the High Atlas who work tirelessly in innovating, strategising, and commercialising their products and businesses.”



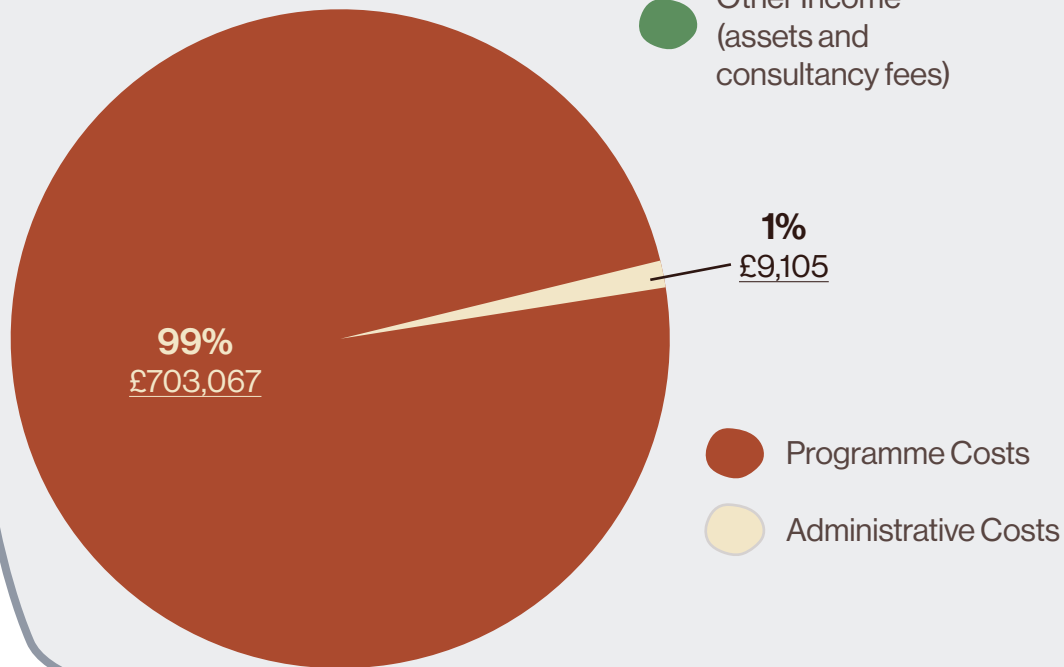


FINANCIALS

Global Diversity Foundation UK

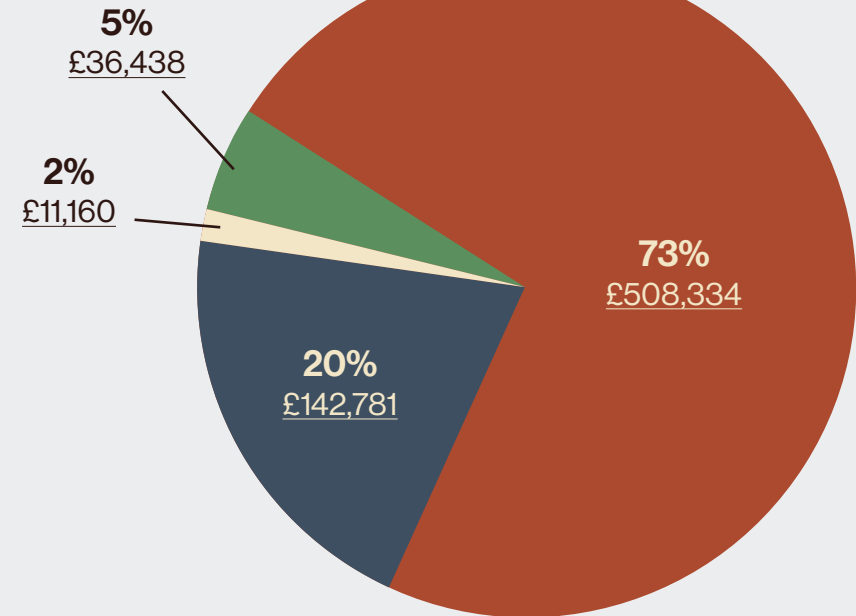
October 2020 - September 2021

EXPENDITURE



- Foundation Grants
- Government Grants
- Programme Income and Donations
- Other Income (assets and consultancy fees)

INCOME



We thank MAVA Foundation, Darwin Initiative, Salvia Fondation, Open Society Foundations, as well as a generous anonymous donor and many individual donors for their ongoing support.



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