

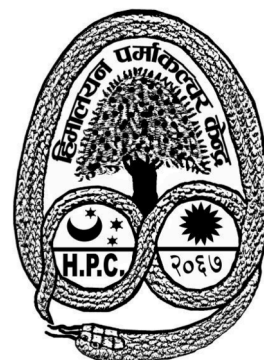
Himalayan Permaculture Centre

www.himalayanpermaculture.com

Building Livelihoods for Household and Community Resilience

6-month Report

Date of this report: May 2020



Introduction and background

The current reporting period has been dominated by the effects of the Covid-19 global pandemic, that has had a significant impact in Nepal. While HPC's working villages are relatively remote – especially in Humla – and no cases have been reported in any of its areas, the lockdown imposed by the government is strict if not generally adhered to by villagers. At the time of writing this report cases are still quite low and only 3 deaths have been reported, but the effects are huge and infections are increasing. Efforts to restrict movement of people in particular those returning from India and overseas are only partially successful and, combined with poor reporting, low capacity to test and even lower capacity to respond to large medical emergencies, it seems only a matter of time before higher infection rates and more deaths are apparent.

In the midst of this, HPCs work has largely been halted since mid-March and most staff temporarily laid off (“furloughed”) since April.

Problems that have restricted the progress of the project

Aside from the pandemic though linked to it, HPC has been unable to bring closure on the loss of its former resource centre in Baragaun. In particular the physical loss of equipment including pipe, sprinklers, solar panels, Farmers' Handbooks, veterinary medicines, bedding, kitchen equipment, etc. has all been registered as “stolen” with the district authorities, and up until March this was in process of legal proceedings. However now due to Covid-19-related lockdown all legal processes are halted, albeit temporarily. Meanwhile, the new RC is under design and implementation.

Working Areas

An updated summary of groups' names, locations and demographics is given below.

		Households	Women	Men	Total
Surkhet	2 municipalities, 14 villages	189	538	608	1146
Humla	2 municipalities, 18 villages	607	1871	1906	3777
Total	4 municipalities, 32 villages	796	2409	2514	4923

These figures represent the demographics of the villages that have been registered with HPC as participating villages. They do not include the new villages that have requested participation, where HPC staff visit for surveying, and barefoot consultants have started to work (usually on training).

ACTIVITIES

1. FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

1.1 Resource Centers

HPC resource Centre in Surkhet is in process of being moved from Baragaun to a new site in Chingar Municipality, Rajena, near Gurung Gaun village. Here a 0.75 acre/0.31Ha plot has been purchased by HPC and construction of farmhouse and training area has begun. Development of the site was further affected when the local municipality decided to construct a new road along one of the boundaries, which as resulted in loss of some of the land. Unfortunately in Nepal there is very little local communities can do about such development work, and no compensation is provided to parties at loss in such cases.

RC production – Surkhet & Humla

The new RC in Surkhet is still going through design phase, and the building to house office, residential and training facilities is under construction. In Humla, documentation of farm/land productivity is now being limited to a smaller area immediately around the new office rather than previously 8 private farms that were within the RC boundary.

1.2 Farmers' demonstrations

HPC supplies various basic tools to farmers' groups enabling them to implement activities in their villages. These include grafting knives, secateurs, spray tanks for liquid manure and bio-fertilizers, irrigation pipe, sprinklers and plastic for hot beds and small poly-tunnels.

Up until April many items had been acquired and distributed while others have been acquired but due to lockdown are still being stored awaiting distribution. Remaining acquisitions of equipment have been halted as the bazaar is closed.

As a result of demonstrations at the RCs and in farmers' fields, and various training opportunities at the RCs and in situ in the villages (see below 1.3), groups are involved in implementing various types of practical work in their houses and fields to increase household self-reliance. A summary of all practical work carried out in the groups from December 2019 to May 2020 is as follows:

Farmers making integrated demonstrations

		Dec 2019-May 2020		
	Practical Activities	Surkhet	Humla	Total
	No: households implementing	189	607	796
1	House hygiene	186	599	785
2	Stove	93	598	691
3	Toilet	173	214	641
4	Grinder	187	595	782
5	Water pot	188	598	786
6	Hay box	0	24	24
7	Sweepings	131	348	479
8	Waste water management	121	400	521
9	Plate/pot rack	158	273	431
10	Compost	107	1	108
11	Fodder trough	17	11	28
12	Salt lick	16	26	42
13	Kitchen garden/vegetables	168	424	592
14	Mulching	11	1	12
15	Liquid manure	27	27	54
16	hot bed	4	33	37
17	Leaf pots	29	21	50
18	Home nursery	12	496	508
19	Fruit nursery	49	71	120
20	Air nursery	3	3	6
21	Off season onions	0	2	2
22	Grafting	34	76	110
23	Budding	0	0	0
24	Top grafting	12	18	30
25	Air layering	43	2	45
26	Pot irrigation	4	18	22
27	Orchard	64	94	158
28	Agro-forestry	45	8	53

29	SRI	23	5	28
30	Green manures	2	3	5
31	No till	2	0	2
32	Bamboo cuttings	0	0	0
33	Improved plough	179	51	230
34	Fruit tree Pruning	81	193	146
35	Greenhouse	0	33	33
36	Biomass compost	6	0	6
37	Double digging	4	1	5
38	Urine collection & use	0	13	13
39	Seed production	99	18	117
40	Fruit planting	83	117	200
41	Water Filter	169	208	377
42	Jam/juice making	0	0	0
43	Solar Dryer	8	14	22

Most of these activities are illustrated in the [Farmers' Handbook](#), a key training tool used by HPC.

Fruit and multi-purpose tree production

Winter is a crucial time for cultivating and managing many types of fruit tree: making nurseries and sowing rootstock, grafting previous years' seedlings, planting seedlings and pruning established trees. Farmers in Humla have established **71 new fruit nurseries**, grafted nearly **10,000 new trees** (8 species), planted over **2700 grafted fruit trees** (10 species) and pruned nearly **1100 established trees**. A further **683 cuttings** of mulberry have been established in nurseries, and **141 multi-purpose trees** have been planted, including mulberry (for fodder), pine, *Melia* and willow.

In addition over **2700 grafted fruit trees** have been sold from nurseries, earning farmers a healthy **139,000/-** (nearly £1000). Apple continues to be the favoured species to graft, plant and sell, but others are slowly gaining favour such as walnut, almond and apricot.

In Surkhet meanwhile farmers have established **49 new fruit nurseries**, grafted **435 fruit trees**, planted over **600 fruit trees** and pruned nearly **500 established fruit trees**.

Grafting and top working of fruit trees has been carried out over winter during the dormant period. A summary of varieties grafted is below.

Species	Apple	Pear	Peach	Plum	Apricot	Walnut	Almond	Cherry	Pecan	Persimmon	Total
Humla	7035	307	277	162	70	1000	688	50	0	0	9589
Surkhet	30	47	40	47	19	111	68	25	40	8	435
Total	7065	354	317	209	89	1111	756	75	40	8	10024

Planting

In all working areas there have been nearly **3400 fruit trees** planted over winter:

Species	Surkhet	Humla	Total
Peach	0	191	191
Wild apple	0	18	18
Plum	2	159	161
Pear	12	74	86
Apple	3	1880	1883

Timur	0	12	12
Almond	8	49	57
Apricot	0	10	10
Walnut	371	370	741
Hazelnut	0	11	11
Banana	28	0	28
Junar (citrus)	104	0	104
Cardamom	19	0	19
Other	63	0	63
Total	610	2774	3384

Similarly there have been nearly **900 multi-purpose trees and shrubs** planted in farmers' fields (Surkhet 737, Humla147).

Fruit production

Details of fruit production in Surkhet shows that over the past 6 months a healthy **20,716kg of fruit** has been produced by farmers according to the summary below:

Species	Total kg
Almond	6
Lemon	2810
Banana	5710
Bewara	60
Guava	20
Jewa	165
Junard	6761
Lime	2293
Mausam	50
Orange	2823
Pomegranate	8
Ground Apple	10
Total	20716

Community Funds

HPC facilitates each member village/group to set up a micro-credit fund to raise money and distribute loans. Loans are provided to group members for activities such as purchasing livestock, starting a small business, medical costs, and domestic needs. A small interest rate is charged, usually 1-2%. The fund is increased by monthly deposits of 10-50 rupees as well as interest charged. To date there is a 100% record of loan repayment in all groups.

This reporting period's audit is summarised below:

	Loans given	Expenses	Cash	Total NRs	No: households taking loan	GB£
Humla	278,000	17,652	73,092	368,744	42	2,543
Surkhet	763,311	15,110	935	779,356	144	5,375
Total	1,041,311	32,762	74,027	1,148,100	186	7,918

Farmers' Training

There are 3 main formats: residential 5-day farmers training held at the Resource Centres (RCs); mobile 3-day trainings held in the villages, and short single-topic trainings of 30 minutes to a few hours, which may be held at the RC or in the villages. Topics are decided depending on season and stakeholder needs. Mobile trainings may be general or for specific topics such as livestock health (see below 1.4) or women's health (see below 2.1).

Different formats of farmers' training have continued during this reporting period but have been cut short due to lockdown. In **Humla** a 5-day residential farmers' training was held for 20 farmers (9 women and 11 men) and 4 mobile trainings in the villages were held: 2 for integrated topics, one for livestock health and 1 for making solar driers (see also below under Livelihoods). A total of **100 village group members** participated (45 men and 55 women). A total of 240 hours (approx. 40 days) of short technical trainings have been provided in 4 fruit-related subjects over winter in Humla: fruit nursery construction and operation, grafting, pruning, and pinching. "Pinching" is the process of nipping off buds formed on the rootstock of grafted fruit trees i.e. below the graft, to prevent them "robbing" the grafted scion of water and nutrients carried in the sap as it travels to the growing shoots.

In Surkhet meanwhile, as well as a **Village Design training** (see below under Capacity Building), 18 short technical trainings in topics including fruit nursery construction, grafting, stove making, pruning, composting, beekeeping and air layering. Mobile trainings have been held in solar drying construction, blacksmithing (follow-up) and bio-fertilizer making and use.

All training has now been halted due to lockdown.

A training summary is below.

Surkhet	No: Trainings	Days	Participants		
			Women	Men	Total
Village Design Training	1	5	2	16	18
Mobile Farmers' Training	3	16	5	17	22
Technical Trainings	18	4	35	53	88
Total	22	25	42	86	128

Humla

Residential Farmers' Training	1	5	9	11	20
Mobile Farmers' Training	4	12	46	40	86
Mobile Livestock training	1	3	9	5	14
Technical Trainings	34	40	115	152	267
Total	40	60	179	208	387
Total All Areas	62	85	221	294	515

Bio-fertilizer training

In a partnership with [Almost Heaven Farms](#) in Eastern Nepal HPC has been developing skills and demonstrations in making and use of bio-fertilizers. Local farmer and BC Thaman Giri of Khaltakura (Jagaran group) was chosen as specialist learner and spent time at Almost Heaven Farm in Ilam where this approach is being pioneered. He was due to travel back to Ilam for follow-up/advanced training but this has been postponed due to lockdown. Meanwhile he has provided training in how to make and apply different bio-fertilizers to 12 farmers so far in Surkhet, including Bokashi, Apache, ash brew, nettle brew, biochar and lactic acid bacteria.

Slide and Film shows

In Humla 5 slide shows were shown before lockdown, to a total of **157 villagers** (80 women and 77 men). Topics included Liquid manure, Effects of Child Marriage, and Agro-forestry.

Livestock stall management

HPC's approach continues to focus on training and demonstration, with support given to improved breed provision and breeding, livestock health and stall management. Most activities have been halted due to lockdown, but before this happened in Humla 1 livestock health training had been provided for 9 women and 5 men in Dapka village, and a total of **161 livestock** (comprising goats, sheep, chickens and a horse) were provided with treatment for worms and external skin parasites (most frequently mange). In Surkhet a total of 98 goats have been castrated by barefoot vets.

Improved breeds of livestock

This activity has been suspended due to lockdown.

Irrigation

HPC is planning surveys and implementation of small-scale irrigation systems in Surkhet but this work has been put on hold due to lockdown.

Appropriate Technology

HPC have been researching, testing and distributing various technologies for time and labour-saving activities for farm production and food processing. In this period 10 hand-operated maize hullers and 1 wool-spinning machine have been distributed. Provision of chaff cutters, chiuri oil press, foot-pedalled rice thresher and millet thresher has been postponed due to lockdown.

2. HEALTH PROGRAM

2.1 Women's Health Program (WHP)

HPC's Women's Health Program works around 3 main activities: training, health camps and networking. Women's Health Training (WHT) takes place through residential 5-7 day trainings at the resource centres and mobile 3-day courses run in the villages. Short half to 1 day trainings and workshops are also provided.

HPC gives a priority to women's health, and continues its main strategy of preventing health problems through addressing issues of nutrition and hygiene, while providing skills for self-awareness and understanding of health problems and treatment using locally available resources where possible. This program includes women's health, gender and adolescent training, menstrual pad-making training, women's health camps and women's health network facilitation.

Women's Health Training (WHT)

There is a high incidence of problems caused by unsanitary methods during menstruation in rural areas of Nepal. Women and young adults are culturally stigmatised during menstruation, considered "dirty" and in many areas banished to "menstrual huts" – poorly constructed, cramped and unhygienic structures where they are brought food (also often of poor quality). Stemming of menstrual flow is using old cloth and rags that are poorly washed and dried, adding to risk of infection. HPC provides training in making and using washable and re-usable menstrual pads.

Residential training

In January a residential 5-day general Women's Health training (WHT) was provided to **29 women** at HPC's temporary centre in Gurung Gaun. Women's Health expert Januka Bhattarai from Bardiya co-facilitated the training along with BC Hommaya Gurung. Topics included:

Topic	Issues
Gender	Effects of cultural practice and effects on health e.g.

	education, taboos
Physiology	Differences between external and internal female and male reproductive organs
Adolescence and puberty	Physical and psychological changes in girls, and importance of health issues at this time
Menstrual cycle	Health, hygiene, workloads and cultural issues (taboos, discrimination, etc.)
Common reproductive system-related ailments	Symptoms, importance of health, hygiene, diet as preventative and curative measures; treatment using simple techniques and local herbs
Family planning	Temporary family planning methods used by men and women; effectiveness; side-effects on women; need for gender-participation
Pregnancy and childbirth	Growth stages/process and the importance of health, diet; dangers
Women in the economy	Role of women; access and control of finance; means of production
Herbs for women's health	Reliance on allopathic drugs, their side-effects and correct use; examples of local herbs and their use; empowerment through use of local resources

Menstrual pad-making training

HPC has continued to provide women's and mixed-gender groups in terms of awareness-raising of gender issues such as menstruation. Meanwhile it also provides women in its working areas with training in menstrual pad-making. In this period there have been 5 pad-making trainings in Humla for a total of **112 women**. A program for a further 6 trainings had to be halted due to lockdown measures. In addition a 5-day women's health training was provided to 19 women from 9 groups.

“Golden 1000 Days” training

In March (just before lockdown) HPC, in cooperation with the Municipality Health Post in Humla, co-facilitated a “Golden1000 days” training – provided to 10 women and 13 men of Bahubaikalpic and Mastadev groups (Bhadauda and Sheri villages respectively) at the ward municipality office in Tajakot. WHP BC Hommaya Gurung was the trainer from HPC. The training focuses on the first 3 years (1000 days) of a child's life from conception, and the issues that need to be addressed. Topics included nutrition and feeding (for both baby and mother), hygiene, general health, preventative measures, pregnancy and post-natal risks.

Gender trainings

The gender training due to be held in Humla has been postponed due to lockdown.

Women's Health Camp (WHC)

Due to CV-19 lockdown the health camp due to be held in Surkhet is postponed.

Women's Health Network (WHN)

WHN meetings have been held in Surkhet and Humla for 17 and 14 women members respectively up until March when lockdown ceased all activities. At the meetings the members review and plan activities and listen to stories of both achievements and challenges from the villages.

Women's Health Network Field trip

In February a group of women representing staff and members of the women's health network went on a field trip to visit various development programs in Western and Central Nepal. Over 7 days, 18 women from Humla (4) and Surkhet (14) visited [Kopila Valley school](#) in Surkhet valley where the school has been developing the site using permaculture principles, with rammed-earth buildings, sourcing of organic local produce for school meals, handicrafts project and permaculture design of school grounds. Barefoot consultants from HPC have been involved with training and operation of food production systems at the school, and the school is sourcing some of its food from HPC areas in Eastern Surkhet district. After spending time at Kopila valley the field trip travelled on to Chitwan where they visited Abari bamboo farm and processing centre, Phulbari women's cooperative and the National Park before heading to Kathmandu to visit historic sites as well as development programs at Sunrise Farm and ICIMOD. On their return to Surkhet they finished off with a visit of Shrijanshil Permaculture Farm in Gumi.

Stretcher distribution

To facilitate carrying sick patients to health posts and/or to transport to hospitals, HPC has been providing village groups with a stretcher. In this period 5 have been distributed in Humla and 2 in Surkhet working areas.

2.2 Drinking Water

HPC constructs small-scale drinking water systems for villages using its non-cement technique, tapping small local springs and bringing water to village tap stands. Where possible the policy is 1 house, 1 tap. Households can then use this water for irrigating kitchen gardens and plant nurseries either direct from the tap or using waste (grey) water runoff from the tap stands.

In Humla HPC has started work on 3 drinking water systems benefitting 32 households and a school, total 199 female and 223 male beneficiaries. This has involved surveying a new system for Dalitbada village (Lokes Janajoti Krishi group) and working on maintenance of 2 further systems in Barigaun and Telgaun villages (Krishi and Adanchuli Krishi groups respectively).

Meanwhile in Surkhet 1 system is in process in Mavidada village to benefit 3 households, and a further system for drinking water plus irrigation is being developed for the new resource centre. This work has currently been halted due to lockdown.

3. EDUCATION PROGRAM

3.1 Practical Literacy Classes

This activity involves running practical literacy classes, currently in Humla and not in Surkhet. The PLCs combine Freirian literacy principles with HPC's unique collection of practical activities based on the Farmers' Handbook (FHB), an easy-to-read compendium of over 40 farmer-friendly methods to increase domestic household and farm productivity. PLC participants learn letters and words, and later sentences, that form topics from the FHB such as stove, nursery, toilet, hygiene, diet, fruit tree grafting, etc. At the same time as developing their literacy skills, they also apply the methods in their own houses and fields.

Four PLCs are currently in process, 1 in Surkhet and 3 in Humla with **62 women** and 8 men enrolled in classes since December 2019. Up to April (half-way through the training), 44 of the 56 PLC participants in Humla had been assessed as achieving a basic literacy standard and 29 had implemented practical activities on their own land (fruit nursery, fruit tree planting, pruning, kitchen garden). This activity is currently on hold due to lockdown.

3.2 Schools' Program

Due to lockdown all schools are currently closed. Up until March HPC had supported painting at Shree Nepal Rasitrya Bidhyalaya in Subbatol village (students 40 girls, 30 boys) using locally produced natural paint. This follows successful painting at Gokarna Secondary School in Pakhapani village, as reported earlier.

3.3 Education materials

In this activity a further 100 sets of the Nepali [Farmers' Handbook](#) have been acquired for distribution to farmers' groups in HPC areas.

4. LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM

Beekeeping

Bees keep working during lockdown! With on-going training and technical support in beekeeping and hive making, farmers in Surkhet working areas have documented **385kg** of honey production from 52 improved (Newton) hives and 122 traditional log/wall hives, valued at **NRs 214,000/-** (GB£1480). Materials including veils, gloves, swarm bags and queen gates) have been acquired but distribution postponed due to lockdown.

Vegetable seed production

This program aims to train farmers in various species' seed production, focussing on herbs and vegetables, and facilitate sale and exchange within HPC groups as well as with other villages.

In the current period farmers in Humla have produced **26kg** of vegetable seed including coriander, broadleaf mustard, aubergine, chilli, onion and turnip. In Surkhet over **340kg** of seed has been produced including coriander, broadleaf mustard, beans, fennel and radish.

Cotton Growing & Processing

The final training in this activity provided by UK organic cotton-growing expert since 2016 was held in December in Gumi, Surkhet. In total **10 women and 9 men** attended the 3-day training, which gave follow-up on previous trainings and answered questions on cotton-growing experiences over the past 3 years as well as providing new information.

Mills

The activity to construct hydro-powered mills for processing farm produce in HPC working areas is currently on hold due to lockdown.

Oil Processing

The activity to provide oil-pressing facilities in HPC working areas is currently on hold due to lockdown.

Herbs development stage 2

Planting of medicinal herbs has continued in both districts over winter, with **152 plants** established in 11 villages in Humla and **446 planted** in 10 villages of Surkhet working areas. Species include Vicks mint (*Plectranthus tomentosa*), mint, comfrey, lemon grass, aloe vera, sweet flag (bojho, *Acorus calamus*), blackhorm (Bhuichampa, *Kaempferia rotunda*) and pennywort (Patharkat, *Umbilicus pedulinis*).

Weaving & Fibre Processing

This activity aims to support processing of cotton and nettle into thread for weaving and cloth manufacture. In this period 1 nettle-spinning machine in Surkhet and 1 wool-spinning machine in Humla have been acquired and provided.

Cold Store

The activity to construct demonstration cold stores in HPC working areas is currently on hold due to lockdown.

Solar drier

In Surkhet a training was held in Salgadhi village and HPC Chairperson Purnaman Pulami, who is also a skilled carpenter, facilitated 9 days of training for 5 carpenters in solar drier manufacture when 6 solar driers were made and distributed in villages. Meanwhile in Humla a 5-day training for 9 carpenters produced 8 new solar driers that have been distributed and being co-operatively used by **21 households**. These are in

addition to 4 in Humla and 6 in Surkhet last period, so there are now **24 solar driers** in all working areas.

Biogas

The activity to construct biogas plants in HPC working areas is currently on hold due to lockdown.

Solar electric

This activity has been providing solar light and mobile re-charging sets to households in Surkhet and Humla. In this period 4 sets have been provided to households in Humla before lockdown halted the activity. There are now just a few solar sets remaining to be distributed.

Sugarcane Processing Machine

A new sugar cane machine has been acquired and shipped to Humla where it will be tested on domestic crops grown in Humla. HPC has introduced sugar cane for growing as part of diversified home gardens, and now many houses have a few plants growing around their houses and kitchen gardens, and in diversified orchards.

Cloth recycling machine/training

A machine for recycling cloth into useable thread has been acquired and shipped to its site near Gurung Gaun village. A site has been chosen and construction of the plant using hydro-power from the local river is intended. Construction is currently halted due to lockdown.

Community agro-vet centre operation

This program aims to set up a village-based centre for livestock treatment, providing tools and equipment locally and run by local co-operatives. Farmers will buy their services and materials to enable re-stocking and sustainable operation of the centre. Following acquisition of materials and medicines, distribution has begun in both Humla and Surkhet. To date **27 farmers in Humla** have used the facility and purchased veterinary medicine, creating a revolving fund that will be used to purchase further materials.

Farm produce and distribution centre

This training is on hold due to lockdown.

Farm tools community sales centre

This project has started distribution in Humla during the current reporting period, and continued in Surkhet after starting in the previous period. Various farm tools and items including hammer, shovel, watering cans, pipe, sprinklers, secateurs, chicken wire etc. have been purchased wholesale and shipped to the working areas where they are sold on to create a community revolving fund that allows for future purchase and re-investment. To date in **Surkhet 69 farmers, and in Humla 89 farmers** have used the facility and purchased tools and materials, creating a revolving fund that will be used to purchase further materials.

Vegetable production partnership

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Local chicken rearing partnership

This activity aims to support low-income households involving rearing of local varieties of chicken with 12 households from particularly disadvantaged/poor farmers. The program is currently in the planning and design stage with village groups, in Humla 1 pair of laying hens have been provided to a farmer in Satti village (Pragatishil Krishi

Group) along with materials to build a coop. Support to more farmers has been suspended due to lockdown.

Radio permaculture program: preparation & studio fees

This activity is on hold due to lockdown.

Blacksmith training

A 5-day blacksmith's follow-up/refresher training was held in Surkhet for 5 blacksmiths. Various tools were made including *asi*, *kodalo* and *sanasi*. A more extensive training for new blacksmiths has been postponed due to lockdown.

Leatherworking training

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Furniture making training

This activity aims to train up local carpenters enabling them to support a livelihood based on processing of local timber and bio-resources. Local training has been delayed but before lockdown HPC took the opportunity to send 2 group representatives on a [bamboo processing training](#) in Eastern Nepal. The 5-day training was facilitated by HPC partner [Almost Heaven Farms](#) with [trainers](#) from [Petrichor](#) in West Bengal, India. Topics included bamboo harvesting, curing, treating, bending, splitting, bunching, making ply, joinery, foundations, making models and sustainable business.

5. CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

Permaculture Design Course (PDC)

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

PDC Follow-up

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Village Design Course (VDC)

This is a basic, locally modified 5-day version of the PDC. It is designed to give background of the problems facing rural communities and show them how to assess their needs, resources and constraints. It also introduces how permaculture can help make changes and improvements as well as contribute to and strengthen traditional practices.

In this period, 1 VDC was provided by staff and BCs in Surkhet to 2 women and 16 men. For some of them it is a qualification to become a BC, while for others is for their own use in their community.

Trainers' Training

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Organisational development Training

These trainings are postponed due to lockdown.

Business and Marketing Training

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

5.3.2 Organic Certification

HPC is researching into methods of product certification with an aim of supporting farmers' groups to gain and improve market access for their products grown and produced within its permaculture programs. To this end, in March a workshop was held in the **Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)** of certification for 4 women and 22 men representing HPC staff and groups' representatives. PGSs are quality assurance initiatives that are locally relevant, emphasize the participation of stakeholders, including producers and consumers and operate outside the frame of third party certification, [developed by IFOAM](#). "Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are locally

focused quality assurance systems. They certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange." (IFOAM 2008). The workshop was led by Mr Tulasi Giri, a PGS educator from Pokhara.

The PGS workshop was used to introduce the concept and understand the aims and why it is used, then looking at the steps and activities required for farmers/groups to go through the process. Once lockdown is over this workshop will be followed-up by further training to assist farmers to go through these steps with the aim of accrediting their products.

Farmers Field trips

In March, just before lockdown, 5 women and 7 men representing HPC groups in Humla (plus 2 staff) travelled from Humla to visit HPC project sites in Surkhet. Over 5 days they visited 10 of the 13 villages in Surkhet and viewed various activities including nettle processing, bio-fertilizer production, kitchen gardening, livestock stall management, cardamom cultivation, vegetable seed production and beekeeping. Their trip also coincided with HPC's Farmers' Festival which they attended.

Farmer-Farmer extension

This activity facilitates experience-sharing meetings between farmers in Surkhet and Humla. Seven workshops and meetings had been possible up until late March involving **135 farmers group representatives, BCs and staff**, then ward municipalities closed activities due to lockdown.

Barefoot Consultants' Workshop

This training is postponed due to lockdown. Up until April barefoot consultants continued to train in all villages of the project area and in addition 2 villages outside that had requested training. Trainings have included technical subjects such as fruit nursery construction an operation, grafting, bio-fertilizers, and BCs have also co-facilitated mobile (3-day) trainings and women's health trainings.

Rice Breeding training

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Festival

In March HPC held its annual Farmers' festival at its temporary HQ in Gurung Gaun. There were over 300 participants HPC's villages in Surkhet who participated in the fair. There was exhibition of different hand made goods, farm products and traditional art and cultures, and different games and sports activities. Visitors also came from program areas in Humla.

PRA Training

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Leadership Training

This training is postponed due to lockdown.

Community contributions

Community contributions to activities in Surkhet and Humla up until lockdown show a total contribution of **473 person days** with a monetary value of **NRs 183,100/- (GB£1,263)**. Activities include maintaining community infrastructure (paths, bridges, water courses, mills, schools and community learning centres), and direct contributions to HPC programs such as portorage of equipment.

HPC Website

HPC's website, www.himalayanpermaculture.com was created February 2009. Up to the time of this report (May 2020), **254,995** hits have been recorded.