



Project Proposal: Water Infrastructure Rehabilitation in [Aroumd](#) Village

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1. Introduction: Water scarcity remains a pressing concern of rural farming communities impacted by the September 8, 2023 earthquake. The collapse of drinking water channels and irrigation systems has resulted in a shortage of water resources and the deterioration of water quality. Intensive field visits aimed at humanitarian aid distribution revealed significant water-related challenges affecting the well-being and stability of rural communities. Water infrastructure is inherently multidimensional and impacts health, hygiene, agriculture, livestock, and livelihood in a variety of ways. According to a 2022 report by the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene, only 62% of rural households in Morocco have access to safely managed drinking water; 46% have access to safely managed sanitation; and 65% have access to materials for basic hygiene. Water borne illnesses are the leading cause of disease, and water infrastructure decreases infant and child mortality rates, general illness, infection rates, and other critical metrics for public health.

2. Current Situation in [Aroumd](#) Village: *Prior to the earthquake, HAF had been in consultation with these municipalities and villages working towards developing water project scopes aimed at irrigation systems in support of future tree planting activities.* Aroumd Village, home to 285 households including 3,100 individuals, anticipates a decrease in water accessibility per person. Long periods of drought, low rainfall, and the aftermath of the earthquake have heightened risks and uncertainties. This situation has adverse effects on potable water and irrigation, affecting the local population's daily lives. The extent of the damage varies by location, but the need is clear: water towers, piping, irrigation canals, and filtration systems are in urgent need of repair and reconstruction.

3. Importance of Traditional “Sequia” Irrigation System: The traditional irrigation system, a longstanding practice in rural communities, serves as a vital daily tool for agricultural fields. Rooted in oral knowledge, this system fosters community cohesion, encouraging collective management of water resources for the greater good. Analogous to a communal gathering space, an irrigation system brings people together to organize and manage its exploitation. Beyond its practical utility, the irrigation system represents an ancient cultural heritage and contributes to the social and solidarity economy.

4. Project Development: The High Atlas Foundation, through extensive meetings with locals, identified the fundamental role of the traditional irrigation system in sustainable development. The proposed project involves constructing a water reservoir and rebuilding the irrigation system, benefiting over 25,000 fruit trees. This initiative not only creates job opportunities for villagers but also supports local associations and cooperatives in tree planting projects. Furthermore, it serves as a cornerstone for broader development programs, empowering rural women to lead youth-focused initiatives. Local civil associations and cooperatives implement the project, with HAF providing oversight. The National Agency of Water and Forest is an essential partners and they provide the necessary authorizations and technical reviews.

