
ANNUAL
REPORT
2024
IRHA

Colophon

Publisher
International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA)
International Environment House II
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Bank Details
International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA)
Account No.: 17-198970-3
IBAN: CH15 0900 0000 1719 8970 3 | BIC: POFICHBEXXX

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Graphic Design
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Legal Information
Founded in 2002 | Registered in Geneva, Switzerland
UID: CHE-162.780.092 | Reg. No.: CH-660.2.267.019-0
Non-profit, public-benefit organization | Exempt from Swiss taxes

Date of Publication
May 2025

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Year Rain made a Difference

In a year shaped by escalating climate extremes, geopolitical uncertainties, and widening inequalities, IRHA stood rooted in what nature still offers us freely: **RAIN** — and through it, regeneration.

At IRHA, we believe that rainwater is not an isolated resource. It is the beginning of a living system, the **water-soil-trees** triptych, capable of reviving ecosystems, strengthening food sovereignty, and empowering communities to build resilience and dignity.

Throughout 2024, this vision shaped every drop we harvested, every soil we helped to heal, every aquifer we buffered, every community we supported, and every partnership we forged.

In Nepal and Senegal, decentralized rainwater harvesting systems turned rooftops into reservoirs of hope, reconnecting lives to the rhythm of nature.

As one local Senegalese farmer wisely remarked, reflecting on the shift from water scarcity to rain-based solutions:
"We used to wait for trucks. Now we wait for clouds".

Across our programs – from Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives in schools and health centers, to agroecological transitions in the drylands of the Sahel or the high mountains of the Himalayas, to bio-engineered restoration and watershed management – we applied **nature-based solutions** through **Integrated Water Resource Management** (IWRM), ensuring water nourishes people, ecosystems and entire landscapes.

At every step, **we worked with communities, not for them** – fostering local ownership, building knowledge, and supporting the next generation to steward their environment with pride and leadership.

In Switzerland, IRHA combined creative public engagement with strategic advocacy, promoting rainwater as a vital public good for sustainable development.

Internationally, we amplified this vision at COP16 in Cali, Colombia, through an expert panel showcasing field solutions linking rainwater management to biodiversity, ecosystem restoration, and climate resilience, and extended our reach through global dialogues bridging local innovations to international policies.

But behind every project lies a deeper story:

- a mother growing vegetables where dry soil once cracked,
- a girl attending school, **freed from the burden of fetching water,**
- a village council designing its first rain-fed urban garden, reclaiming self-determination.

These are not isolated actions. They are seeds of **systemic change**.

Because when rain nourishes land, land nourishes life. Rain is not a problem to manage. It is a future to harvest.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT. HARVEST THE CHANGE.

RAIN FOR CHANGE

2. OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

Impact at a Glance

22 175
beneficiaries

59 570
indirect beneficiaries

1 conference

108 hectares of restored land

35 700 meters of edge rows

107 497 planted trees

10 100 meters of gabions

15 946 meters of earth bunds

20 infiltration ponds

15 000 meters of stone bunds

297 half moons

5 springs rehabilitation

3 Blue schools

20 hand washing facilities

48 water tanks

48 toilets for girls and boys

639 000 liters of safe water

36 urinals

36 integrated water resources management trainings

3. LETTER FROM THE MANAGEMENT

A Word of Reflection and Renewal

Dear friends, partners, and members of the IRHA community,

This year once again reminded us of the essential truth we work for every day: water is life, and rain remains one of nature's most powerful gifts.

In a world facing escalating climate extremes, biodiversity loss, and growing social inequalities, IRHA's mission has never been more relevant. Yet what gives us hope is not just the scale of the challenges, but the strength of the solutions growing from the ground up – led by communities, guided by nature, and supported by those who believe change is possible.

Throughout 2024, IRHA stood alongside communities around the world, working hand-in-hand to transform water challenges into new opportunities. We strengthened interaction with Alliance Members, contributed to COP16 on biodiversity, launched new initiatives, and amplified the message that rainwater is not simply a resource to capture, but a catalyst to regenerate ecosystems, restore dignity, and build futures.

None of this would have been possible without you – our partners, donors, team members, and allies. Your trust, commitment, and shared vision made every achievement possible.

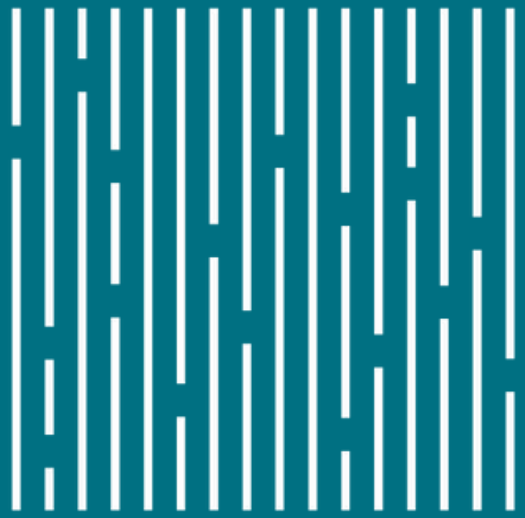
In 2025, our work is more urgent and necessary than ever. With our partners around the world, we will dedicate ourselves to demonstrating the impact of rainwater harvesting and management, and emphasizing that rainwater is a water source we cannot afford to waste. Thus, IRHA will contribute to the UN Water Action Agenda (2023), foster the emergence of new *Rain Communities*, expand *Blue Schools* in development, and continue to support our partners in promoting rainwater harvesting as a climate change adaptation strategy. IRHA remains firmly committed to its core purpose: turning rainwater into local action for livelihoods, safe water, and impact.

We thank you for walking this journey with us.

With warm regards and renewed determination,

Han Heijnen, President
Marc Sylvestre, Director

4. WHO WE ARE



International
Rainwater
Harvesting
Alliance

IRHA

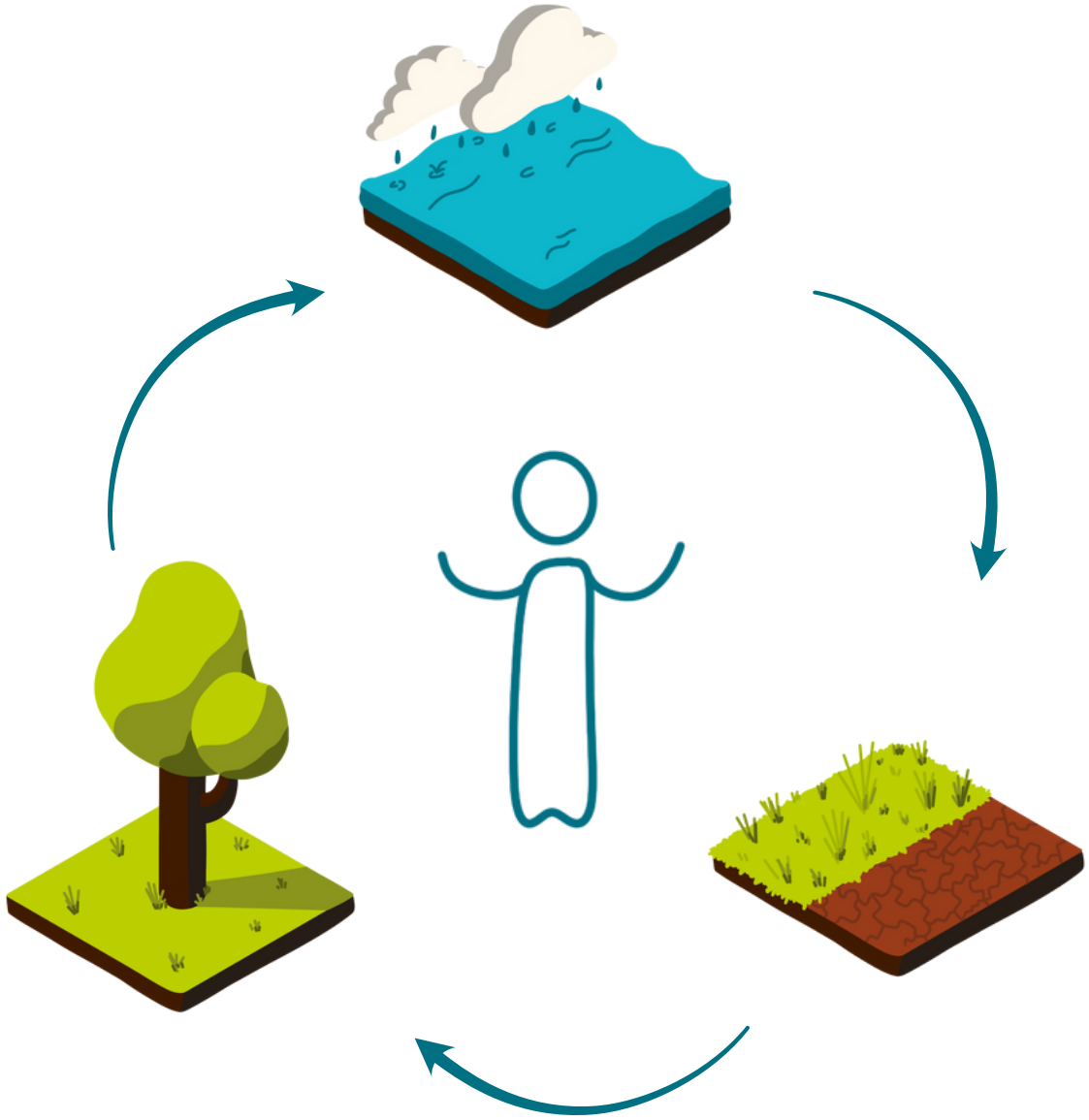
IRHA committed to Development

The International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) is a Geneva-based non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to promoting **Integrated Water Resource Management** (IWRM)**, ecosystem restoration, and climate resilience** through nature-based solutions.

IRHA works primarily with **vulnerable communities facing water stress and climate extremes**, ensuring access to water, soil conservation, and environmental regeneration through community-driven approaches.

Through its programs, IRHA:

- Implements rainwater harvesting solutions that enhance public health, food sovereignty, and biodiversity.
- Restores degraded landscapes by reconnecting **water, soil, and trees.**
- Advocates for rainwater management within public policies and water governance frameworks.



Our Mission

IRHA transforms water challenges into regenerative opportunities by promoting **rainwater harvesting, watershed management, and soil and water conservation** — enabling communities to achieve **water security, food sovereignty, and climate resilience**.

This mission is delivered through holistic landscape management and field-proven techniques — from rainwater harvesting infrastructure to soil and water bio-engineering — used to stabilize slopes, control erosion, restore degraded land, and manage water flow sustainably.

Our Vision

IRHA envisions a world where **rainwater is recognized as a vital and strategic resource** – essential to both planetary health and human development.

Its vision is rooted in ecological balance and social equity, where rainwater harvesting and nature-based solutions help restore ecosystems, support communities, and reduce systemic inequalities.

IRHA works toward a future in which the most climate-affected populations have fair access to safe water, strengthened food systems, and the means to lead sustainable, dignified lives.

Our Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

IRHA aligns its work with the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It contributes directly to several key objectives related to water, climate resilience, biodiversity, and social justice.

By integrating the SDGs into its action framework, IRHA ensures that rainwater management and ecosystem restoration become strategic tools for achieving global sustainability.

Rainwater remains an underused resource which, when managed properly, can significantly reduce poverty, enhance climate resilience, and improve both food and water security.

SDG 1 – No poverty

- construction of sustainable water infrastructures to reduce the economic vulnerability of rural communities and strengthen their resilience
- creation of local jobs in the construction, management, and maintenance of rainwater harvesting systems

SDG 2 – Zero hunger and food security

- promotion of agroecology and agroforestry to improve agricultural resilience and local food production
- ensuring access to water for irrigation, reducing food insecurity and dependence on unpredictable rainfall

SDG 4 – Quality education

- training and educational activities focused on sustainable water and watershed management
- awareness-raising for schoolchildren and young professionals on rainwater-based and climate-resilient solutions

SDG 5 – Gender equality & social inclusion

- reduction of the water collection burden, often assigned to women and girls, allowing better access to education and employment
- empowerment programs for women in the management and governance of water resources

SDG 6 – Clean water and sanitation

- implementation of rainwater collection and storage systems to ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water
- promotion of WASH solutions that are resilient and ecosystem-integrated

SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities

- integration of rainwater management solutions in urban environments to improve climate resilience
- advocacy for rainwater use in urban planning and development strategies

SDG 13 – Climate action

- adoption of nature-based solutions such as watershed restoration and tree planting for CO_2 sequestration
- mitigation of drought and flood impacts through water retention and infiltration systems

SDG 15 – Life on land

- protection and restoration of degraded ecosystems through watershed management and agroecological practices
- improvement of local biodiversity through integrated natural resource management

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the goals

- collaboration with NGOs and international institutions through our Alliance
- sharing of best practices and strengthening of synergies to maximize sustainable development impact

Our Values

Excellence & Innovation
IRHA combines scientific rigor with practical creativity to develop climate-smart, locally adapted solutions. Its commitment to continuous learning ensures that every project – from cistern to watershed – meets the highest standards of impact, efficiency, and care.

Innovation is not a luxury. It is dignity delivered with quality.

Integrity & Transparency
From village meetings to global forums, IRHA acts with honesty and accountability. Trust is earned through clarity, respect, and consistency – and maintained through long-term engagement.

Credibility is built drop by drop – in actions, not words.

Empathy & Empowerment
IRHA listens deeply and acts locally. By valuing traditional knowledge and co-creating solutions, it fosters true cooperation and empowerment — far from top-down models and any form of dependency.

Resilience is not delivered. It is cultivated – and it starts by listening.

Collaboration & Partnership
As an alliance not just in name but in spirit – with people and nature – IRHA bridges local and global actors – NGOs, municipalities, researchers, youth, and donors – to build solutions that outlast single projects and transcend silos.

No one harvests alone. Change is a collective act.

Sustainability & Responsibility
IRHA embeds environmental, social, and economic sustainability into every layer of its work. Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, each project is designed to restore ecosystems, reduce inequalities, and regenerate futures.

We do not just aim for impact. We aim for balance.


CYCLE NATUREL DE L'EAU
FONDATION
AUDEMARS PIGUET
IRHA

Our Expertise

IRHA is a recognized leader in rainwater harvesting, watershed management, and ecosystem restoration.

With over 20 years of field experience, IRHA delivers context-specific, nature-based solutions that generate measurable, long-lasting impact across diverse geographies and sectors.

What sets IRHA apart :

Proven, locally adapted expertise

Deep experience in rainwater harvesting, Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), soil and water conservation, and landscape restoration — including in post-crisis and climate-sensitive contexts.

End-to-end project management

From feasibility assessments to implementation, monitoring, and sustainability planning, IRHA ensures technical excellence and long-term capacity transfer to local actors.

A global Alliance of trusted partners

Operates through the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance — a dynamic network of NGOs, municipalities, researchers, and institutions working across regions and disciplines.

A committed player in water governance

Supports policymakers and international organizations in integrating rainwater harvesting into national adaptation strategies and water security frameworks.

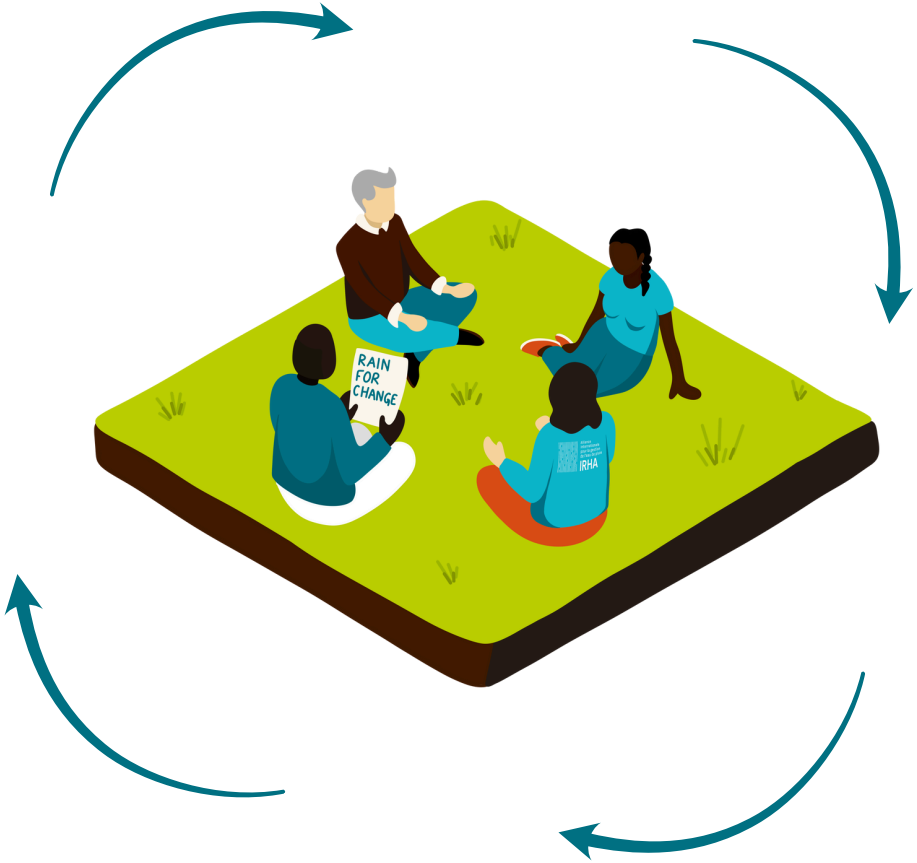
5. OUR ALLIANCE AND PARTNERS

Building Systems of Change Together

The International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance is more than an organization – it is a global network. Since its creation, IRHA has united a growing Alliance of NGOs and expert partners across continents who share a common vision: **rainwater is not a constraint – it is a catalyst**. A natural, abundant, and often undervalued resource that can address some of today's most urgent challenges.

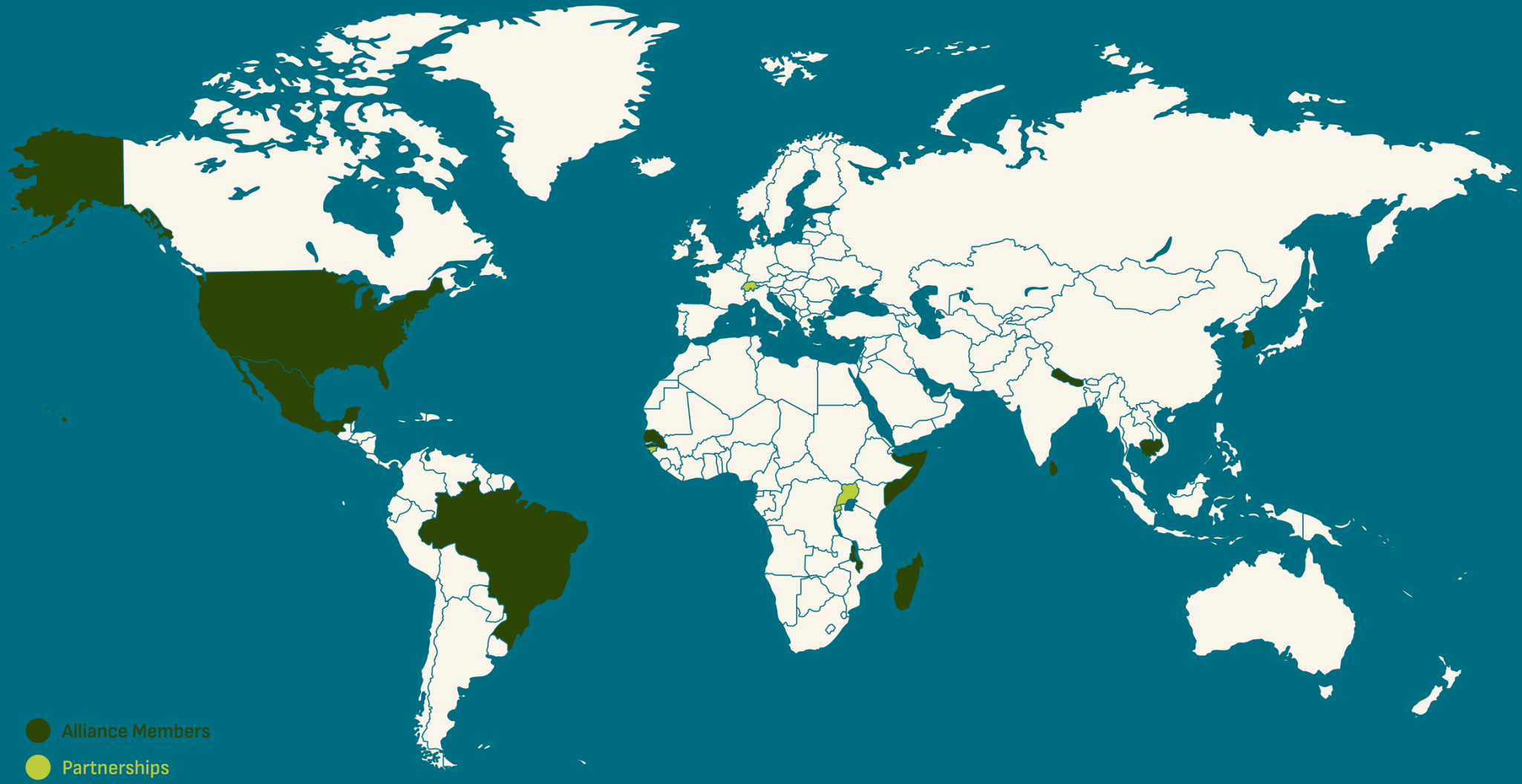
This decentralized, field-driven network brings together NGOs, researchers, technical actors, and civil society organizations, working collectively to turn rain into a driver of resilience and equity. It is a living system of trust and collaboration, built on the belief that **harvesting rain is a shared act of transformation.**

The Alliance remains open to all who share this commitment – from grassroots groups and public institutions to private sector partners and engaged individuals.



IRHA NETWORK

Harvesting Rain, a collective Act of Transformation



Partnerships

Project : PartageÖ

Since 2023, PartageÖ has engaged member organizations of the Fédération genevoise de coopération (FGC) to integrate rainwater harvesting into their development projects.

The initiative fosters mutual learning between IRHA partners from the Global South – experts in rainwater management – and technical staff from FGC member organizations, strengthening both conceptual understanding and practical implementation.

Keys Achievements

- 4 capacity-building webinars
- 11 technical fact sheets in 3 languages
- 1 in-person knowledge-sharing workshop
- 2 technical exchange sessions

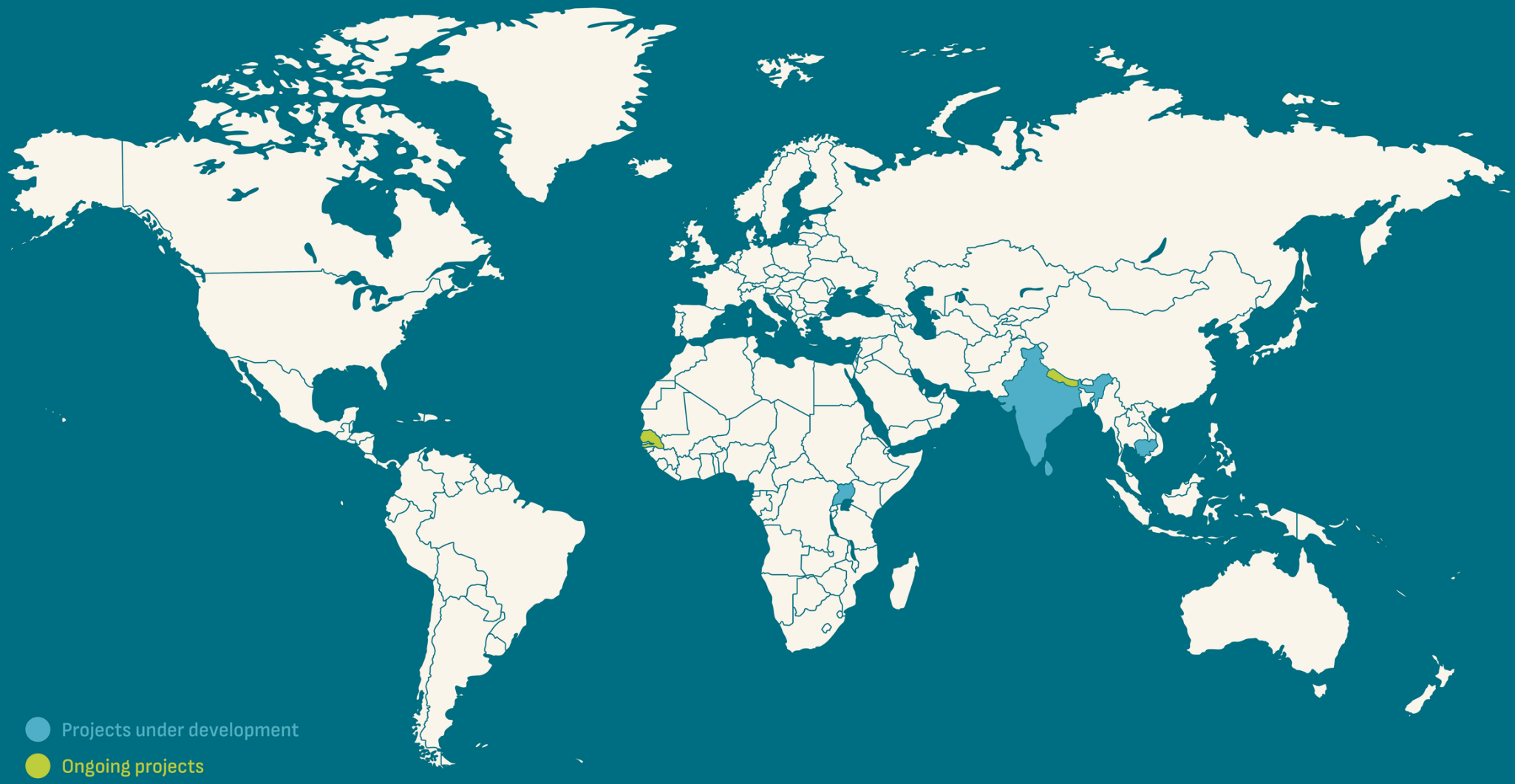
Our Alliance Members

- **American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association** (ARCSA International), The United States of America
- **Associação Brasileira de Captação e Manejo de Água de Chuva** (ABCMAC), Brazil
- **Asociación Mexicana de Sistemas de Captación de Agua de Lluvia** (AMSCALL), Mexico
- **Association sénégalaise pour la gestion de pluie** (ASGEP), Senegal
- **Lanka Rain Water Harvesting Forum** (LRWHF), Sri Lanka
- **Madagascar Rainwater Harvesting Association** (MRHA), Madagascar
- **Nepal Rainwater Harvesting Alliance** (NRHA), Nepal
- **Rain for All**, Republic of Korea
- **Rainwater Association of Somalia** (RAAS), Somalia
- **Rainwater Harvesting Association of Malawi** (RHAM), Malawi
- **Rainwater Cambodia** (RWC), Cambodia

6. OUR PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

COUNTRIES OF OPERATIONS

Mapping collective Impact through Rainwater



RAINWATER FOR WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Where dignity begins with a drop

This program strengthens access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in underserved communities – particularly schools, health centers, and remote areas where centralized systems are absent or unreliable.

By transforming rooftops into reliable sources of water through decentralized rainwater harvesting, IRHA supports healthier living environments, restores dignity, and reduces the daily burden on women and girls who must walk long distances to fetch water.

Solutions are designed with respect to ecological balances combining infrastructure with awareness-raising among local actors to ensure better management of rainwater and promote safe practices such as Household Water Treatment (HWT) where needed.

Core methods include:

- Roof catchment systems
- First-flush filters and basic treatment units
- Ferrocement cisterns and storage tanks
- Community-based WASH training and promotion
- Household Water Treatment (HWT) for safe domestic use

Project : Blue school Janajyoti

In Nepal, nearly 20% of public schools lack improved water and sanitation. Even where infrastructure exists, it often fails to meet needs – especially for girls – fueling absenteeism, health risks, and school dropout.

Yet with over 2500 mm of annual rainfall, rainwater is an untapped solution. The IRHA **Blue School** model strengthens access to water, sanitation, hygiene, and environmental education through rainwater harvesting, school gardens, and reforestation – turning schools into resilience hubs for their communities.

Key Achievements

- 450+ students and staff to benefit from improved water, sanitation, and hygiene
- 2 rainwater harvesting systems installed (28m³ total storage)
- 7 sanitation units built, including toilets, urinals, and handwashing stations
- 1 school garden established
- 1 community-led campaign launched
- 9 WASH training sessions delivered
- 3D participatory mapping (3DPM) conducted with students and families
- Local management committee trained for long-term infrastructure maintenance

Partner : Kanchan Nepal
Donors: SITSE, Hirzel Foundation
Location: Kaski District, Nepal


WATER
DRINK

RAIN-FED AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Where water meets soil, harvests return.

This program supports the transition to sustainable, rain-fed agriculture in regions facing soil degradation, erratic rainfall, and food insecurity.

IRHA strengthens the resilience of farming communities by improving natural resource management capacities and promoting knowledge sharing among local actors — enabling them to nurture their soils, adapt to climate change, and reclaim food sovereignty.

Interventions are guided by agroecological principles and landscape-level planning, combining practical infrastructure with traditional practices and field training — ensuring that rain becomes a driver of fertility, nutrition, and locally rooted solutions.

Core methods include:

- Rain-fed garden systems (e.g. half-moons or deep-bed designs)
- Terracing and bund construction for water retention
- Soil regeneration through mulching and composting
- Farmer training in agroecology, water-smart farming, and local seed systems

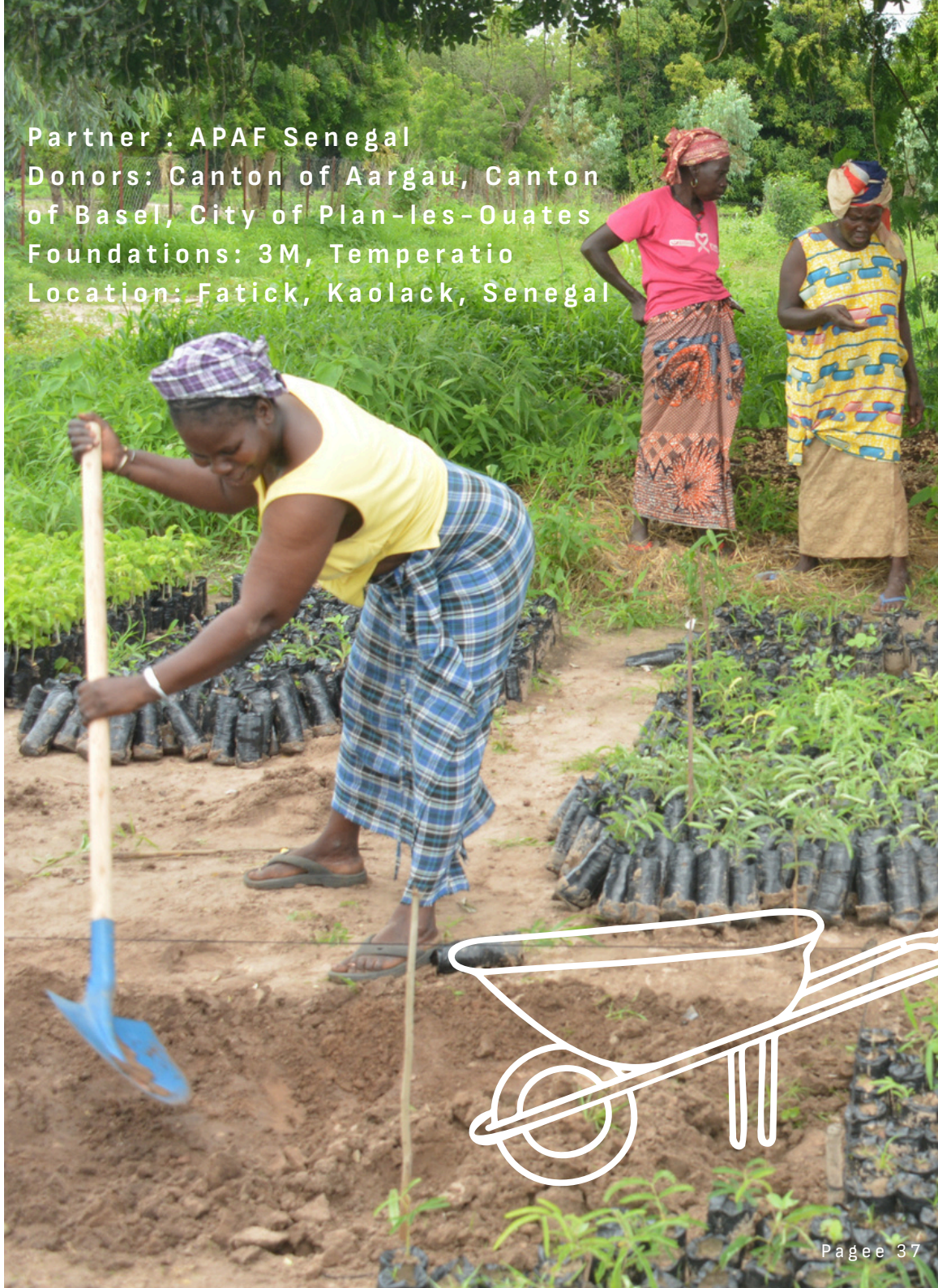
Project : Femmes de Terre | Women of the Land

Like in many Sub-Saharan countries, rural women in Senegal are central to food production, processing, and distribution — contributing up to 80% of household food supply. Yet this contribution could be even greater if women had the same access to land, finance, and essential production inputs as men.

In a context where 76% of Senegal's poorest populations live in rural areas, expanding women's access to resources is a powerful lever for achieving national food sovereignty. The right to food, land, and gender equity are deeply interconnected — which is why IRHA developed **Femmes de Terre** to address the root causes of rural women's vulnerability.

Achievements

- 275 people reached through awareness activities
- 8 women's groups formed
- 8 rainwater harvesting systems installed (10m3)
- 6.83 hectares of land restored and 900 meters of anti-erosion barriers built
- On-going support for women's transition to agroecology, responsible production and water resource management



DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Reinforcing land. Restoring balance.

This program addresses land degradation, erosion, and climate-induced risks such as flooding, landslides, and water scarcity. It focuses on restoring the ecological functions of landscapes while protecting communities from environmental hazards and strengthening their resilience to climate change.

By stabilizing slopes, restoring vegetation, and improving water retention, IRHA helps reduce disaster vulnerability while reviving soils and local biodiversity. Projects are designed with local participation and adapted to specific topographies – using principles of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM).

Core methods include:

- Soil and water bio-engineering techniques (e.g. vegetative bunds, gabions, terracing)
- Reforestation and slope stabilization with native species
- Rainwater retention ponds and infiltration systems
- Participatory planning for risk mapping and landscape design

Partners : OCEANIUM Dakar
Donor: AP Foundation
Location: Djilasse, Fatick, Senegal

Project : La Forêt de la Mer | The forest of the Sea

In the Sine Saloum region, the advance of saline land is a major factor in vegetation loss, land degradation, and salinization of groundwater tables

These disruptions – exacerbated by the severe droughts of the 1970s-80s and increasing human pressure – have been accelerating significantly since 2015.

Mangroves are vital to both environmental and socio-economic balance. Their degradation directly threatens the resilience of the estuarine ecosystem and the livelihoods that depend on it.

Beneficiaries

30 nurserymen, 30 women from EAFs (family farms), 30 CVA members, 15 members of the Djilasse community, 15 Water & Forestry agents, 20 Local Development Support Centres (CADL) in Fimela

Achievements

- 66.3 hectares of mangroves restored
- 28 Family Farm Managers (FFMs) supported
- 2 Agroforestry Technical Advisers trained
- 2,000 to 3,000 people participated in community awareness sessions
- 2,500 schoolchildren sensitized to the water cycle and mangrove preservation
- 2 Mangrove Village Committee (CVM) trained
- 44 heads of family farms supported in creating vegetated cordons

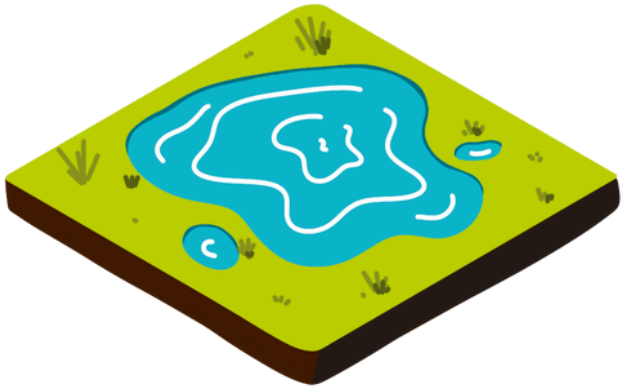
Project : Transition to agro-ecological Ecosystems

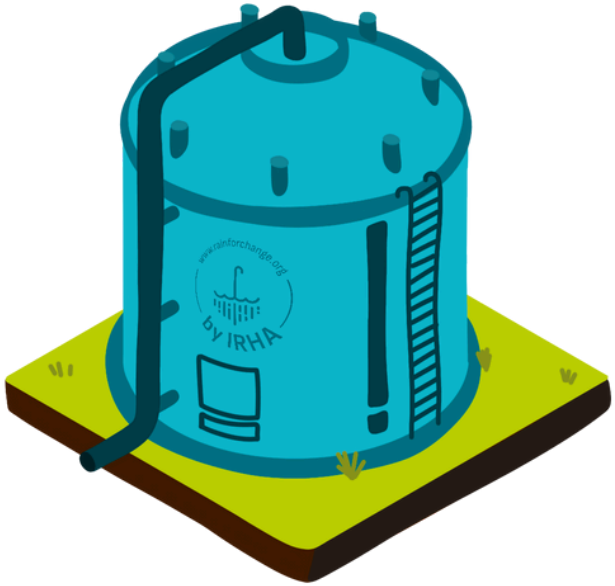
The Kaolack region, largely agricultural and economically vulnerable, is facing a fundamental shift in its production systems. This vulnerability – compounded by food insecurity and the intensifying effects of climate change – is driving the degradation of biodiversity, soils, and ecosystems. The project aims to support a transition from traditional rain-fed agriculture to resilient, sustainable farming practices that reinforce food sovereignty while protecting natural ecosystems. Key levers include soil restoration, water cycle management, and improved access to land.

Expected results

- 4 areas supported in market gardening, rice cultivation, tree planting, and beekeeping
- 50% of erosion-prone sites have been treated with anti-erosion systems
- 3 out of 6 rainwater retention areas rehabilitated to restore ecosystem functions
- Reforestation of a full School of Ecosystems as a living laboratory
- Completion of technical studies to strengthen infrastructure management, agroecological training and marketing
- Ongoing awareness campaigns promoting agroecological transition
- Implementation of environmental education initiatives benefiting students and community members

Partners : Caritas Kaolack
Donors: Fédération genevoise de Coopération (FGC)
Location: Kaolack, Senegal





Beneficiaries

- 320 producers
- 1,500 households
- 6,280 community members
- 3,100 pupils and students
- 48 university students and teachers
- 255 municipal and technical staff,
- 48 support staff

Project : Rain Communities

The **Rain Communities** project aims to enhance the resilience of Nepalese populations to the impacts of climate change by restoring ecosystem functionality, improving water availability, strengthening agricultural practices, and promoting the collective and sustainable management of natural resources at the catchment basin level by local stakeholders in the target region.

Beneficiaries

- 2,000 households across 10 rain-fed communities
- 75 households equipped with rainwater harvesting tanks
- 35 households equipped with greenhouses for market gardening
- 300 households benefiting from spring rehabilitation
- 4,500 households benefiting from the rehabilitation of retention ponds
- 7,500 households engaged in a reforestation campaign
- **100 local authorities members trained**

Partners : Kanchan Nepal, Li-Bird, SVSI, FECOFUN, Pokhara Metropolitan, DWSS
Donors: Fédération Genevoise de Coopération (FGC), Services Industriels de Genève (SIG), L'Effet Papillon, Swisslos Aargau
Location: Tobang, Pokhara, Nepal


0 cm 1 2 3 4
BEFORE


AFTER
0 см
1
2
3
4

RAIN IN THE CITY

Transparent cities, thriving ecosystems.

Rainstorms, urban flooding, and the growing need for climate adaptation have made urban rainwater management a key challenge – and opportunity – for sustainable cities. Integrating rainwater into urban planning offers a nature-based solution (NbS) that supports biodiversity, reduces heat islands, and strengthens climate resilience.

Objective

Making the city 'transparent for water' – ensuring that urban environments are designed to allow water to infiltrate, circulate, and support life, rather than being treated as waste.

Core Principles

- Infiltrate rainwater by preserving or restoring the soil's natural infiltration capacity in and around urbanized areas
- Preserve vegetation cover by maintaining or enhancing green spaces and ensuring access to sufficient water for vegetation
- Combat runoff by allowing rainwater to infiltrate where it falls
- Disconnect rainwater from sewage systems and promote reuse where possible. Underground pipes should no longer be the default approach to rainwater management.

Project : PluiË | Rain

Promouvoir la pluie de façon ludique et innovante | Promoting rain in a playful and innovative way

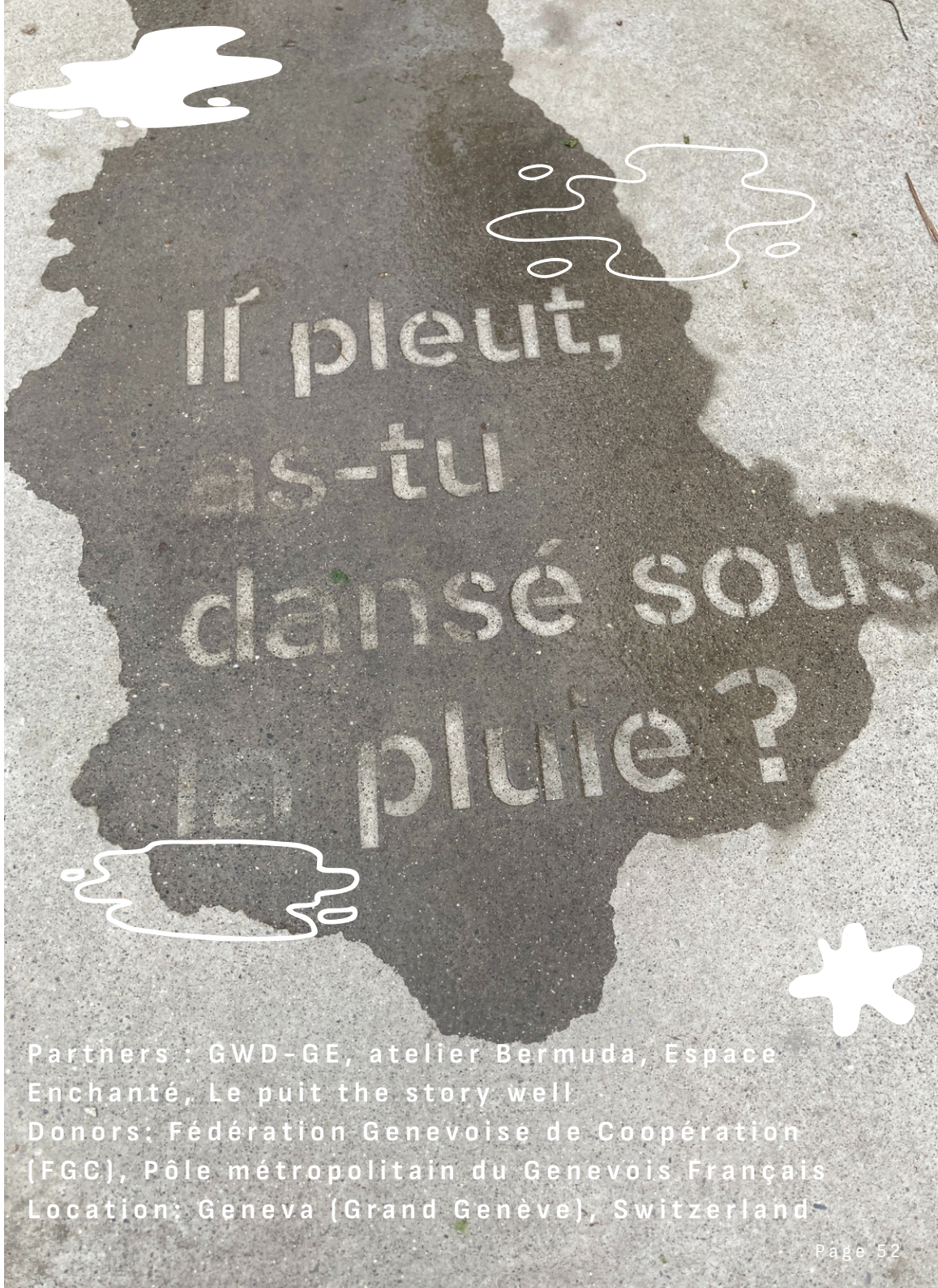
Launched in 2023 in Geneva, the **PluiË** project reimagines rain not as a constraint, but as a shared cultural and ecological asset.

PluiË proposes a rich variety of cultural and rain-awareness activities — including rain strolls and sensory explorations, street-art rain tags, ceramic workshops, participatory rain dances, storytelling events, and exhibitions — all designed to reconnect children and adults with rainwater through pedagogy, imagination, emotion, and shared urban experiences.

At a time when urban spaces are becoming increasingly impermeable and disconnected from natural cycles, PluiË seeks to challenge perceptions and foster a renewed relationship with rainwater — one rooted in learning, playfulness, and co-creation.

Achievements

- 150 rain tags
- 3 rain strolls
- 4 months of exhibition
- 15 porous jars created collectively
- 6 water dance performances
- 5 podcasts
- 1 TV episode "Esprit solidaire"



Partners : GWD-GE, atelier Bermuda, Espace Enchanté, Le puit the story well
Donors: Fédération Genevoise de Coopération (FGC), Pôle métropolitain du Genevois Français
Location: Geneva (Grand Genève), Switzerland

7. VOICES FROM THE FIELD


“I can wash vegetables with rainwater.
I’m very happy because I no longer have to
wake up at 5 am to fetch water.
Water is available at home, time is saved
and I am using it for doing other household
activities.” Shrikala Giri, Begnas Rain
Community, Nepal

"I love my land. I'm learning how to better take care of it and use the power of rainwater to help my crops grow. Rainwater is a blessing – and now, I know how to make it work for me!"
Fatou Diouf, Femmes de Terre, Kaolack, Senegal

8. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

9. OUR ORGANIZATION

Committee

Han Heijnen
President

Anne-Marie Khetib
Treasurer

Clara Ariza
Secretary

Margarita Pacheco
Founding Member

Bob Boulware
Member

Rachel Nisbet
Member

Darja Könnig
Member

Giulio Castelli
Member

Salvano Briceno
Member

Secretariat

Marc Sylvestre
Director

Arnaud Bourgeois
Administration
& Finance Manager

Florian Bielser
Program
Manager

Marion Dunand
Project Officer

Yasmina Beck
Head of
Communication
& Partnerships

10. THANK YOU AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to all those who make this journey possible:

- To the communities, whose strength, resilience, and everyday actions are the foundation of our work.
- To our local implementation partners, who turn ideas into reality on the ground.
- To the local authorities, who help build pathways toward lasting change.
- To our donors, for their trust and unwavering commitment.
- To our Rainwater Alliance members, for standing beside us in purpose and solidarity.
- And to everyone who contributes to this journey — by sharing knowledge, co-creating solutions, or simply believing in the power of rain — we are deeply grateful.

#RainForChange

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Glossary of Key Terms and Abbreviations

3D Participatory Mapping (3DPM): A community-based process that combines local knowledge with physical 3D models to map landscapes, allowing participants to visualize terrain, identify resources, and plan land use or development collaboratively.

Agroecology : A sustainable farming approach that applies ecological principles to agriculture, integrating biodiversity, local knowledge, and social equity to strengthen food systems and environmental resilience.

Agroforestry : A land use system that integrates trees and shrubs into crops and livestock farming to enhance productivity, biodiversity, and sustainability while restoring degraded ecosystems.

Bio-engineering : The use of living plants and natural materials to stabilize soils, control erosion, and restore degraded land, combining ecological processes with engineering techniques.

Bocage : A traditional landscape system characterized by small fields enclosed by hedgerows, trees, or earth banks, which protects soil, enhances biodiversity, and supports water retention in rural areas.

Cordons : Lines of vegetation, stones, or other materials placed along the contour of a slope to slow down water runoff, trap sediments, and reduce soil erosion in arid and semi-arid landscapes.

Deep-bed: A soil preparation technique that involves loosening and aerating the soil at greater depth to improve water infiltration, root development, and long-term soil fertility—especially in degraded or compacted lands.

Earth vegetative bunds : Small embankments made of soil, reinforced with vegetation (such as grasses or shrubs), built along the contour of a slope to slow water runoff, reduce erosion, and improve water infiltration.

Ecosystem Restoration : The process of assisting the recovery of degraded, damaged, or destroyed ecosystems to restore their health, biodiversity, and ability to provide essential services for people and nature.

First-Flush Filters : Devices used in rainwater harvesting systems to divert and discard the initial runoff from rooftops or catchment areas, which often contains dirt, debris, and contaminants, before clean water is stored.

Edge rows : Lines of trees or shrubs planted along the borders of fields or terraces to reduce erosion, improve water retention, and create microclimates that support soil fertility and biodiversity.

Gabions : Wire mesh cages filled with stones, used to stabilize slopes, control erosion, and slow down water flow in land restoration and water management projects.

Half Moons : Crescent-shaped pits dug into the soil to capture rainwater and organic matter, slow runoff, and support the growth of trees or crops in arid and degraded lands.

Household Water Treatment (HWT): Techniques used at the household level to make water safe for drinking, including boiling, filtration, chlorination, solar disinfection, and safe storage—especially in decentralized or off-grid settings.

Infiltration Ponds : Shallow basins designed to collect and store rainwater, allowing it to gradually seep into the ground and recharge groundwater while reducing surface runoff and erosion.

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) : A process that promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources to maximize social and economic benefits without compromising ecosystems.

Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) : The collection, storage, and use of rainwater from surfaces like rooftops or land to improve water availability for agriculture, households, and ecosystem restoration.

Retention Ponds : Engineered basins that temporarily hold rainwater or surface runoff to prevent flooding, trap sediments, and control water flow. Unlike infiltration ponds, the water remains on the surface and is either released slowly or used for irrigation.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) : Actions that protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems to address societal challenges—such as climate change, water security, or disaster risk—while benefiting biodiversity and human well-being.

Stone vegetative bunds : Structures made by arranging stones along contour lines and integrating vegetation to stabilize slopes, reduce soil erosion, and enhance moisture retention in degraded or sloping land.

Terracing : The construction of stepped, level surfaces on sloped land to reduce erosion, slow water runoff, and improve soil retention for agriculture and land restoration.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) : A public health framework that ensures access to safe water, adequate sanitation, and hygiene education to prevent disease and support human dignity, especially in vulnerable communities.

Watershed Management : A coordinated approach to managing land, water, and vegetation within a watershed to conserve resources, reduce erosion, and improve water quality and availability for people and ecosystems.

Water-Soil-Tree tryptich : An integrated approach that links rainwater management, soil conservation, and tree planting to restore ecosystems, improve water retention, and support sustainable land use. This triptych forms the core of nature-based solutions in dry and degraded areas.

Boulis, Calabash Cistern, Pokhari, Pumpkin Cistern, Zaï : Traditional rainwater harvesting techniques used in different regions—such as Senegal, Nepal, and the Sahel—to collect and store water for agriculture. While these terms are not used directly in this report, they reflect locally rooted practices adapted to specific soils, climates, and cultural contexts, and are an essential part of community-based water management knowledge.

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