Himalayan Permaculture Centre
Report November 2017 - April 2018
Photo Gallery – Surkhet

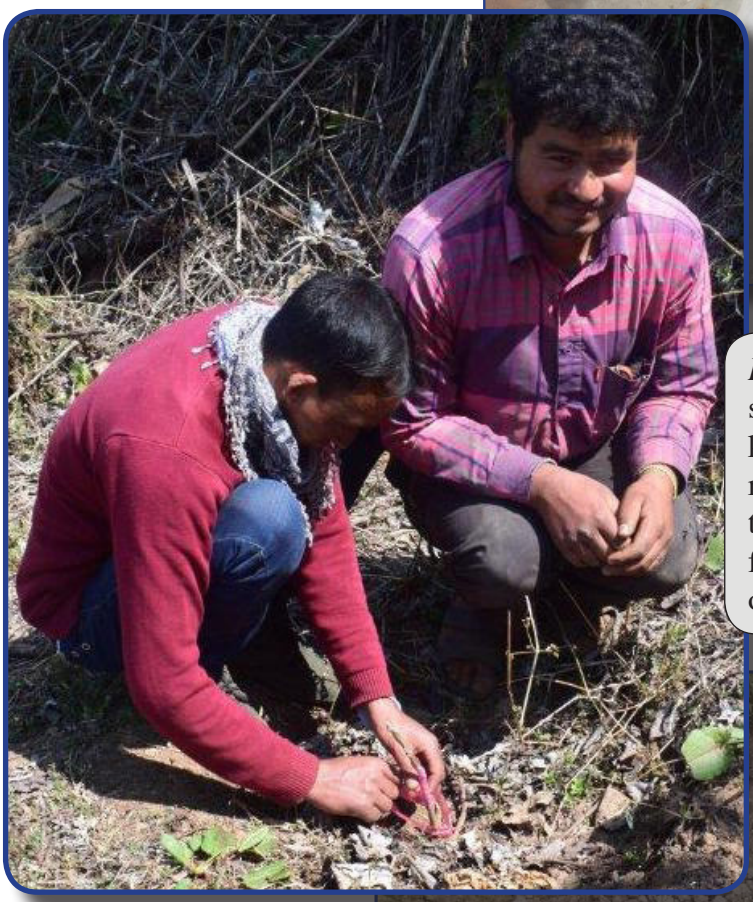
Left - Barefoot Consultant (BC) Bupendra Gharti of Ghatutol village (*Himal* group) next to a perennial tree kale, providing valuable greens year in-year out, without having to re-plant. Permaculture garden systems prioritise perennials because of reduced inputs needed.

Right - participants on a women farmers' training at Baragaun Resource Centre (RC) learn about Air Layering, a method of plant propagation where a ring-barked branch is wrapped in moss and plastic to promote rooting, before it is cut from the mother tree for planting.

Left - the women farmers' training participants learn how to prepare and establish a fruit nursery at the RC. Seeds of wild rootstock e.g. apple, pear, peach, apricot, almond and walnut are sown and used to graft improved varieties *in situ* where they will grow on until distribution and planting.

Left - Mrs Ganga Pun of Salkharkha village (Shanti group) with one of her broadleaf mustard plants she is growing to save seed. Plants selected to produce seed are specially protected, watered and nourished, and leaves are not picked for food, in order to give the best seed crop.

Right - inside a hot bed, where the nursery is underlaid with raw dung that provides extra heat, conserved by the plastic. This heats the soil, promoting early seed germination in cold conditions.



Left - HPC technician Dhan B. Nepali (left) demonstrates grafting walnut to Pal B. Khatri of Khalikharka village (Hariyali Krishi group). Walnuts are notoriously difficult to graft, with experts often not able to get better than 30% success rates, but some HPC farmers are achieving better than 50%. The benefits of trees fruiting early with good quality nuts are huge.

Right - CEO Bhuwan Khadka leads a session in observation on a 5-day farmers' training at Baragaun RC.

Right - Mrs Durga Bhatta of Hariyali Kirsak Group (Khalikharka village) mulching a newly planted grafted almond seedling. HPC gives special emphasis to nut trees because of their storage capacity, so they can be grown in remote areas and transported to markets without degrading.

Left - recent permaculture design course participant Purna Adhikari of Hariyali group (Khalikharka village) demonstrating a successful top-grafted pear tree on his land. Top grafting enables fruit trees to be grafted onto wild trees growing in the fields, so not even a nursery is needed.

Right - a cuttings' nursery of mulberry in Thulo Khaltakura village (Ujwal group). Mulberry is easy to grow, has multiple benefits (fodder, fuel, bee forage, fruit) and is ideal to grow in multi-layered agroforestry systems. It can also grow in Humla at high/cold altitudes.

Left - heavily mulched kitchen garden with brassicas growing on this bed, on BC Man B. Buddha's land in Khaltakura village (Jagaran group). The mulch conserves water, reduces weeding and provides long-term nutrients to the soil as well as protecting the soil surface. In the foreground is a young coffee seedling

Left - stretchers are distributed to groups in Surkhet. In areas where health posts (let alone hospitals) are remote, it is extremely difficult to transport patients that are unable to walk, and groups had requested that HPC provide stretchers under their Health program.

Right - women learn about cooking and processing nutritious foods from BC Mrs Hira Acharya in Khaltakura village (Jagaran group). Using mosltly the same local ingredients as would be normally used, but processed in different ways, cooks are able to increase the nutritional content of traditional foodstuffs as well as diversifying menus.

Left - women from Manakamana and Lali Gurans groups of Baragaun take part in a training to make sanitary pads. Commercial pads are expensive if available, so being to make them at home offers a huge benefit to women.

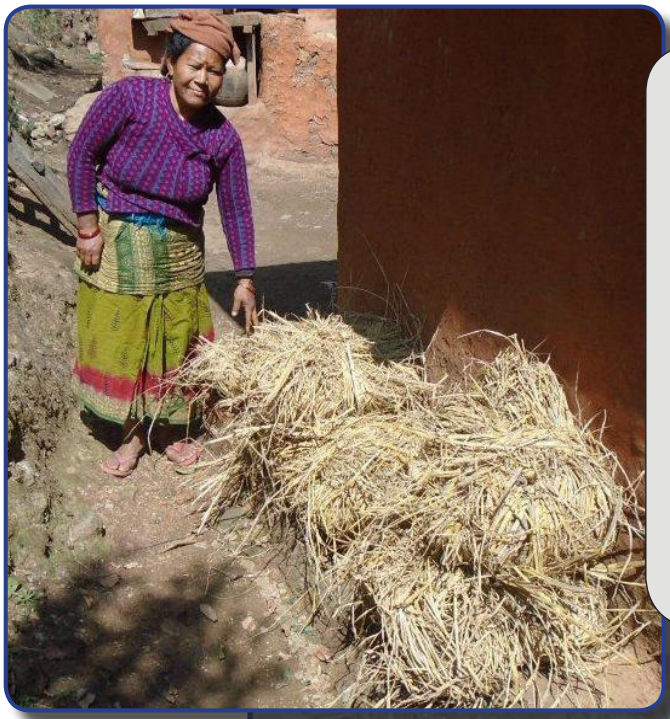
Right - Sets of the Farmers' Handbook (FHB) are distributed to groups in Surkhet. The FHB contains over 40 farmer-friendly techniques for increased domestic and farm productivity using local resources, and has been used in Nepal since 2001. It has recently been re-printed, a total of 10,500 copies have been made.

Left - beekeeping is an important part of HPC's work both for pollination of crops and directly for livelihood income from selling bee products. These are Newton hives in Khaltakura village. A total of **285.5kg** has been produced over the past 6 months from 83 locally-made improved hives.

Right - Dil B. Buddha of Jagaran group in his vegetable plot where he is growing radish for seed production, around a polyculture of garlic and broad beans. In the last 6 months HPC farmers have produced over **620kg** of vegetable seed for sale, exchange and own use.

Left - farmers on their field trip from Humla view Mrs Bal Kumari Pulami's organic cotton crop before harvesting in December. This is the second year of growing, and farmers are now starting to grow the next season's crop.

Right - one of the newly built handlooms at Pragatshil Krishak group's weaving centre in Salghadi village. The centre will home 4 looms and will process the organic cotton being produced locally. Other centres will process nettle and hemp fibres.



Left - Mrs Dammar Kali Gurung of Mabidanda (Janachetana group) shows her traditional method of "chitting" potatoes for planting. Chitting prepares the seed potato for planting by allowing shoots to grow, which speeds up sprouting in the fields. Here they are using straw to provide the dark conditions required.
Below - a vista of the Agricultural Festival that HPC now traditionally holds at its RC in Baragaun. Over 900 local farmers attended ths year, bringing demonstration farm products and handicrafts for prize-giving, and celebrating sustainable farming with dance, song, poetry and competitive sports. Participants also visited from HPC permaculture projects in Humla and from the Resilience Through Reconstruction (RTR) earthquake recovery project near Kathmandu.

Left - some of the prize vegetables on display at the festival, grown by the groups participating with HPC.

Right - Farmers from Humla visiting their Surkhet peers at the time of the festival, here viewing the 3-year old cardamom plantation of Kul B. Pun of Bhalim village (Shanti group). This year groups in Surkhet have produced over 300kg of Cardamom worth around 316,000/- (over £2100)

Right- women from HPC villages in Surkhet meet with Dr Anne-Marie to discuss benefits to nutrition from carrying out activities with HPC, including time savings. Agro-forestry, kitchen gardening, SRI, smokeless stoves, hygiene and drinking water are examples of integrated activities that contribute to health.

Left - farmers and staff from the RTR project near Kathmandu arrive at Baragaun RC on a farmers' field trip. HPC has provided 2 BCs from Surkhet to work with RTR where they are nearing the end of 2 yers' training and demonstration work with farmers in 2 earthquake affected villages.

Right - HPC's board committee, from left Mrs Anju Olli, Mrs Hommaya Gurung (also women's health BC), Mr Janga B. Buddha (Chairperson), Mr Chandra Olli, Mr Tek B. Pun (lead BC) and Mr Thaman Giri.

Left - In April HPC was honoured to receive a visit from Stuart Muir Wilson, grandson of permaculture co-founder Bill Mollison, who passed away on September 24th 2016. Here Stuart opens a plaque dedicated to Bill at Baragaun RC, where a passion fruit vine was also planted in his name. Stuart was in Nepal coordinating a project called "Make Nepal Green" along with other NGOs and took the opportunity to visit HPC, itself the "grandchild" of one of the first extensive and village-based permaculture projects in Nepal, the Jajarkot Permaculture Project which ran from 1988 - 2001.