

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



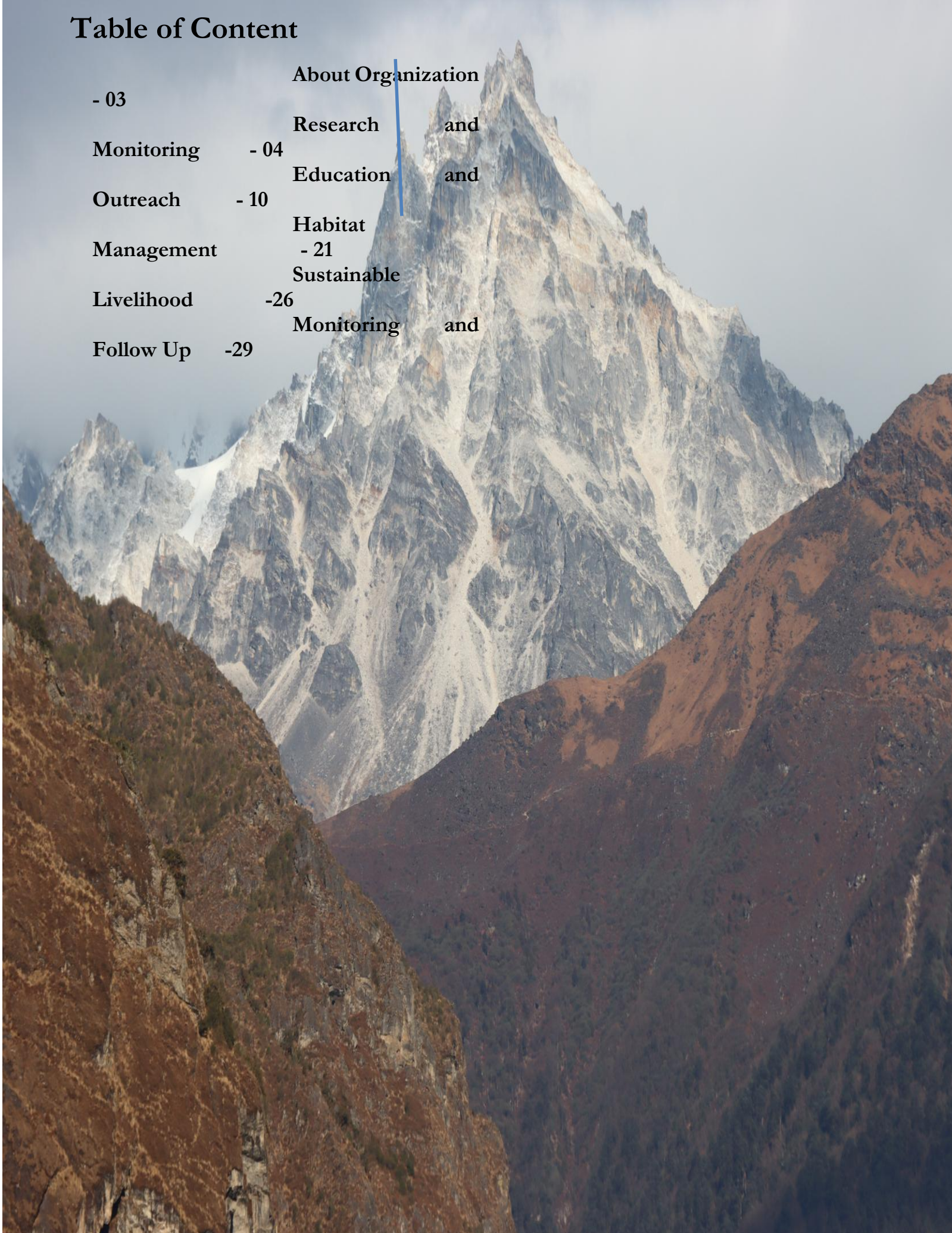
Submitted By

Himali Conservation Forum (HCF)



Table of Content

		About Organization	
- 03			
		Research and	
Monitoring	- 04		
		Education and	
Outreach	- 10		
		Habitat	
Management	- 21		
		Sustainable	
Livelihood	-26		
		Monitoring and	
Follow Up	-29		



About Organization:

Himali Conservation Forum (HCF), Taplejung was established on 30 November 2005 (15 Mangsir 2080). The main office is located in Phaktangkung RM-6, Lelep, Taplejung while the project management office is in Phungling M-07, Taplejung. Since 2010 HCF have been working as a local partner with Red Panda Network (RPN) of the project titled “Community-based Red Panda Conservation in Nepal”. The HCF have been working in 6 RM and 1 M of Taplejung district.

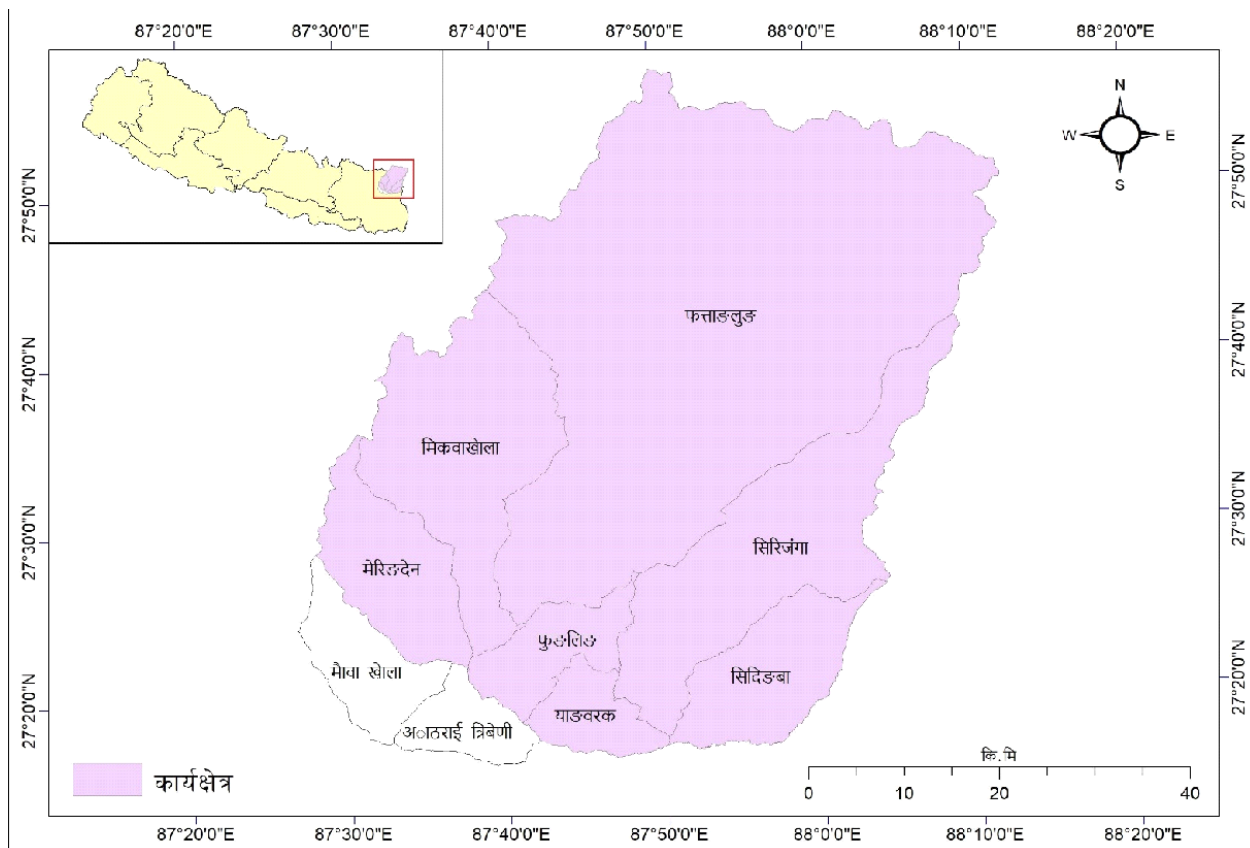
Goals of organization:

- To bring positive changes in the people's livelihood by managing the socio-economic and natural resources of the deprived tribes and underprivileged groups.
- To study and monitor by creating a foundation for study and research for forest and wildlife conservation.
- To conduct community development programs to enhance the economic condition of the local community and build the positive concept about conservation.
- To enhance proper utilization of local resources and to create a self-sustaining society.
- To aware people about conservation of nature, natural resources and wildlife.

Mission:

- Building advanced technology and self-reliant society.
- Increase conservation programs to enhance the identity of the nation.

Project Area



1.0 RESEARCH AND MONITORING



1.1 REFRESHER TRAINING FOR FOREST GUARDIANS

In 2023, 20 forest guardians (20 male) had participated in “Refresher training for forest guardians” which was held on 2 June 2023 (19 Jestha 2080) at Himalayan Habre Center (HHC). The main objective of this is to enhance the skills and knowledge of forest guardians in the monitoring of red panda & habitat, data correction and to instruct the use of field equipment.



Photo 1: Forest guardians learning to measure the DBH of tree



Photo 2: Group photo of Refresher training-2023

1.2 REGULAR MONITORING OF RED PANDA AND HABITAT

In Taplejung, a total of 22 Forest Guardians (FGs) monitored 10 Community Forest (CF) and 2 National Forest (NF) in 12 villages of 5 Rural Municipality (RM) and 1 Municipality (M). There are 12 blocks and 48 transects in which the red panda and its habitat are monitored. The given figure 1 shows the summary of indirect red panda sign occurred while conducting regular monitoring of red panda and habitat -2023.

Indirect red panda sign-2023

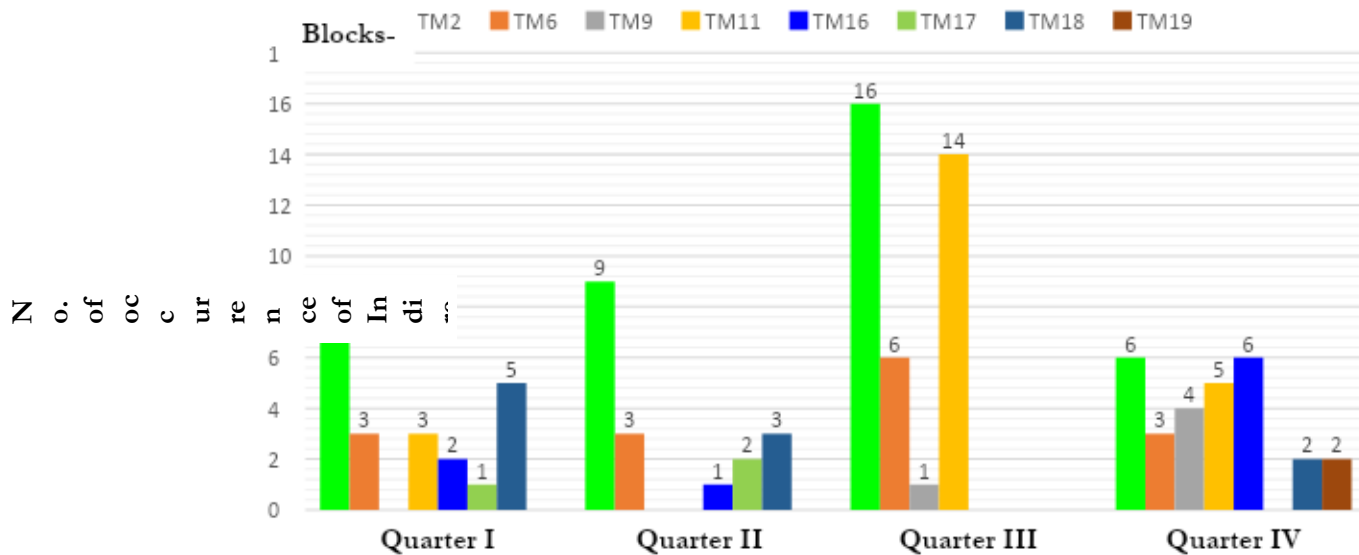


Figure 1: Summary of number of occurrence of indirect red panda sign while monitoring during four different quarter of 2023



Photo 3: FGs monitoring block and writing data

1.2.9 EMERGENCY FUND (RED PANDA RESCUE REPORTING)

With the main objective to save the life of injured red panda, Red panda was rescued in Baku village (N 27.50947 E 087.72350, elevation- 2071) of Phaktalung-4, Ikhabu, Taplejung on 6 December 2023 (20 Mangsir 2080). The rescued red panda's weight is 4 kg, gender-male, age-4 yrs, length-3 ft 4 inch. The Bhakhu village lies to the east of Uteseni NF. The snare was stuck in the neck of a red panda and seemed to have been there for more than 7 days. The rescue operation was done in presence of District Forest Office, Veterinarian, villagers, Forest guardian, Himali conservation Forum.



Photo 4: Veterinarian treating the injured red panda in Ekabhu

1.3 ANTI-POACHING CAMPAIGN

With the aim to collect data about the snares, traps, threats to wildlife done by poachers to harm wild animals and Red pandas in the forest and to identify the status of poaching activities. Anti-poaching Campaign was conducted in October-November in Taplejung district in 6 RM of 18 villages and 1 UM of 2 villages with the participation of 22 forest guardians, CFUGs members and locals in different community forests and national forests. After the approval from the District Forest Office and the community forest, Poaching activities were monitored in the community forest. In total **95.9km** were traversed, spending **140.5 hours** covering 14 CF and 1 NF. The total number of man days involved is 756 and only fewer poaching activities were recorded.



Photo 5: Trap set for bird in Terse Bhuspate CF in Sidingwaa-5, Limbuden

1.5 BASELINE SURVEY FOR POTENTIAL ECO-TRIP SITE AROUND HIMALAYAN HABRE CENTER

A Baseline Survey for Red Panda- based Ecotourism Development in Taplejung was conducted by HCF with the help of financial assistance provided by RPN and with the Professional field ornithologist Ramesh Chaudary from May 8-12, 2023. The main objective of this activity is to find out the presence of Red Panda in the Community Forests (CFs) located within the outreach of Himalayan Habre Centre (HHC). To conduct field surveys for the creation of appropriate walking trails in the CFs and to conduct feasibility study of Red Panda-based Eco-trips focusing on Himalayan Habre Centre. The baseline survey was done in 5 Community Forest i.e. Pathivara Shimbu CF, Phurumbu Kharka CF, Yamabung CF, Sayapatri CF, Mayam Patal CF.

Detailed Map of Red Panda Eco-trip Site around Himalayan Habre Center, Taplejung

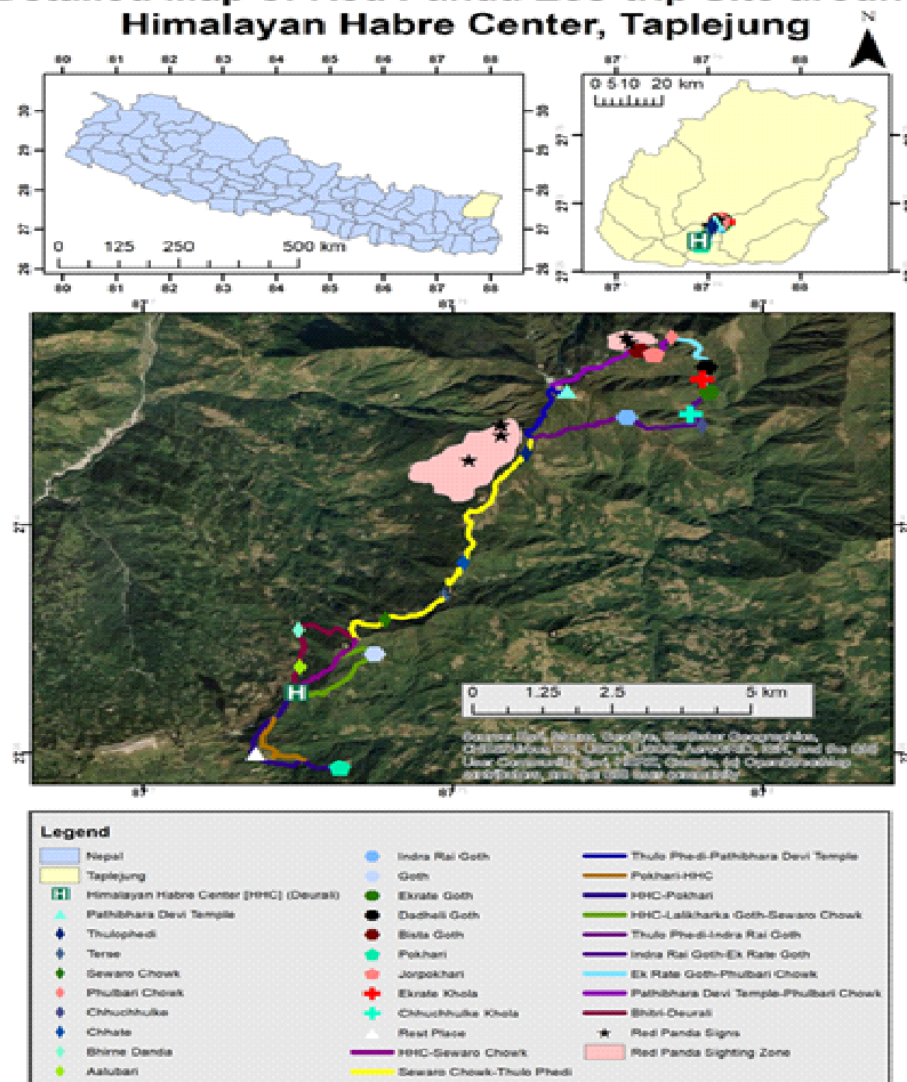


Photo 6: **Route Map** (Prepared by Wangchu Bhutia)

2.0 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



2.1 PUBLICATION OF RED PANDA WALL BULLETIN

With the motto of education awareness to the students about red panda conservation, a red panda wall bulletin was published in 11 Roots Shoots Groups of 11 schools of Taplejung district coordinating with teachers. Total 146 drawings, poems, stories and essays from 135 (77 girls and 58 boys) students were collected by the teachers and posted on the walls of every school. This activity is helpful to promote their creation. List of Roots and Shoots schools involved:

- i) Siddha Kumari Primary School, Tirringe
- ii) Mayam Higher School, Phurumbu
- iii) Chyaribuk Saraswati School, Lelep
- iv) Saraswati Higher School, Tapethok
- v) Kanchanjunga Higher School, Yamphudin
- vi) Siwa Higher Secondary School, Lingkheim
- vii) Mahendra Primary School, Linkhim
- viii) Laxmi Primary School, Sikaicha
- ix) Sudap Primary School, Mamankhe
- x) Laxmi Higher School, Mamankhe
- xi) Shree Saraswati Basic School, Fawakhola



Photo 7: Students publishing the bulletins in notice board of their schools

2.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION EDUCATION TEXTBOOKS AT LOCAL LEVEL

Out of 11 Roots and Shoots Groups, in 7 schools of Taplejung district textbooks have been teaching with the motto of education awareness to the students about red panda conservation. Total 148 (F-88, M-60) in class 6 and 159 (F-85, M-74) in class 7, conservation textbooks were distributed in 7 roots shoots schools. The list of schools where conservation textbook have been teaching is given below:

- i) Shree Mayam Secondary School, Furumbo
- ii) Shree Shidhakumari Basic School, Tirenge
- iii) Shree Siwa Higher Secondary School, Linghem
- iv) Shree Laxmi Secondary School, Mamangkhe
- v) Shree Mahendra Basis school, Linghem
- vi) Shree Kanchanjunga Secondary School, Yamphudin
- vii) Shree Chayaribuk Saraswati Secondary School, Lelep



Photo 8: Conservation textbook for school

2.3 RED PANDA CONSERVATION SCHOLARSHIPS AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

Under Education and Outreach program, Red Panda Conservation Scholarship was distributed to total 42 students (F- 23 & M-19) and total 22 (F-12 & M-10) children/siblings of forest guardians with the financial support of Red Panda Network, Himali Conservation Forum organized the program in 7 roots shoots schools of Taplejung district. Red Panda printed bag, certificate and NRs.2000 cash for clothing & NRs. 1000 cash for stationery items was provided as scholarship. The main aim of this activity is to support students in outreach for education.



Photo 9: Scholarship distributed to students of Kanchanjunga Mavi, Yamphudin



Photo 10: Bag distribute to younger sister of FG Ram Bhandari

2.4 INTERNATIONAL RED PANDA DAY (IRPD) CELEBRATION

In this year 2023, IRPD is celebrated with the intention to disseminate the message of stopping illegal poaching and trade of Red pandas among students of 11 roots shoots schools of Taplejung district. This year IRPD is on 16 September 2023. Different programs were organized in different 11 schools from 3 September 2023 (17 Bhadra 2080) to 11 September 2023 (25 Bhadra 2080) for IRPD celebration. The total number of students that directly participated in different activities performed in 11 different Roots Shoots schools during IRPD celebration were 92 students (F-62, M-30) and teachers were 110 teachers (F-40 & M-70).



Photo 11: : Group photo after essay writing program in Kanchanjunga Mavi., Yamphudin

2.5 RED PANDA CONSERVATION AWARENESS WORKSHOP

With the aim to aware people about red panda conservation and to disseminate the distribution, status, importance, conservation challenges of red panda and the rule and law of Nepal government against illegal poaching and trade of red panda, Red panda conservation awareness workshop was conducted in the remote areas of Taplejung (Table 1) where there is habitat of red panda.

Table 1: table showing the detail of location, date and participants of awareness program

S.N.	Location	Date	Participants		
			Male	Female	Total
1	Phaktalung- 1, Sawadin	25 August 2023 (08 Bhadra 2080)	16	9	25
2	Mirengden RM-5, Thukima	25 September 2023 (08 Asoj 2080)	20	5	25
3	Maiwakhola RM- 6, Fakhumba, Samtong	6 November 2023 (20 Kartik 2080)	13	12	25



Photo 12: Participants observing the printout of red panda facts

2.6 INSTALLATION OF RED PANDA INFORMATION BOARDS

Under Education and Outreach, with the Financial support of Red Panda Network, technical support of Himali Conservation Forum Red Panda Information Boards will be installed in 5 local levels including Phungling M, Meringden RM, Mikwakhola RM, Sidingwa RM, Phaktalung RM of Taplejung district. Conservation boards help to raise conservation awareness of red pandas among local communities, to empower local communities to contribute to conservation as it draws the attention of nearly everyone passing by the board. 10 red panda information boards will be installed in 5 local levels as in these boards all the information about red pandas are included such as its distribution, habitat and range, lifespan, threats, scientific classification, diet, Nepal Government's laws and message to protect this endangered red panda.



Photo 13: Red panda information boards installed in Phungling Municipality (Thokme Dhada)

2.7 RED PANDA CONSERVATION MESSAGE FLEX DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS

With the financial support of the Red Panda Network, Himali Conservation Forum (HCF) coordinated to install Red Panda conservation message flex in 11 roots shoots schools of Taplejung district. The main purpose of this activity is to educate students about red panda and its importance through message flex and to draw the attention of nearly everyone passing by the board to read and know about red pandas.



Photo 14: Students of Mayam Higher Secondary School, Phurumbu observing red panda conservation message flex

2.2 RED PANDA-BASED OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Red Panda-based outdoor education activity was conducted in Himalayan Habre Center, Deurali where Mayam Higher Secondary School, Phurumbu and Siwa Higher Secondary School, Siwa were invited for outdoor educational activities in HHC. These two schools are members of Roots Shoots group where Environment Conservation Education textbooks have been taught in class 6 and 7. The Mayam Higher Secondary School, Phurumbu was invited on 23 November 2023 (7 Mangsir 2080) and Siwa Higher Secondary School, Siwa was invited on 24 November 2023 (8 Mangsir 2080). The main output of this activity are Through hiking facts of Red panda, their habitats, foods, trees where red panda spent their most of the time were shown and briefly explained and the concept of Himalayan Habre Center and information about red panda through message flex was explained.



Photo 15: Mr. Wanchu Bhutia explaining the students about the trees that are found in red panda habitat



Photo 16: Students walking in front of camera trap by making sound of wild animals



Photo 17: Students writing the name of trees that they saw in Red panda habitat

2.10 FIELD DOCUMENTATION AND VIDEOGRAPHY SERVICES

Under Education and Outreach, Field Documentation and Videography Services activity is done to provide relevant information, data, and resources related to awareness topics of red panda. Ishtu Karkee, a content creator would create informative materials and submit the materials of Red panda and their habitat conservation and also post it on her own social media account. She created a video that introduced the red panda, discussed the government of Nepal's laws against poaching, and highlighted the significance of raising people's standard of living. The red panda and its habitat need to be protected by all of us, she continues.

2.11 RED PANDA RADIO JINGLE

- With the aim to disseminate public awareness about Red panda, Red panda Radio Jingle has been broadcast on Radio Taplejung (94 MHz), Taplejung. In jingle, the importance of Red panda and its habitat conservation, how to conserve the red panda is broadcast. From 1 October 2023 (14 Asoj 2080) to 1 December 2023 (15 Mangsir 2080). Red panda radio jingle was broadcast twice a day as per contract and Radio Taplejung themselves broadcast additional four times per day voluntarily. Tentatively 35,000 people have listened to this Red panda radio jingle.

3.0 HABITAT MANAGEMENT



3.1 DOG VACCINATION (RABIES AND CANINE DISTEMPER)

Under Habitat Management, a dog vaccination (rabies and canine distemper) program was organized in Taplejung by Himali Conservation Forum with the financial support of the red panda network, technical support of Phungling Municipality, Sirijunga RM, Pathivara RM, Department of Livestock Office. The program was successfully completed in 14 different locations of 1 Municipality and 2 RM with free distribution of anti-rabies vaccine, anti -worm medicine and vitamins to domestic and community dogs. The specific objective of Dog vaccination activity is to reduce Red panda mortality from rabies transmission after being attacked by free roaming dogs/domestic dogs in their habitat. Total 440 vaccines were given to dogs and cats.

Total Municipality=1

Total RM=2

Total anti rabies vaccine= 440

Total Dog anti-rabies vaccine= 403 (Community/Stray dogs=37 & Domestic dogs=366)

Total cat anti- rabies vaccine= 37

Total anti -worm medicine= 440

Vitamins capsule = 323



Photo 18: Anti-rabies vaccine program at Phungling M-11, Phawakhola

3.2 SUPPORT TO RENEW/REVIEW OPERATION PLAN OF CFUGS TO ENDORSE RED PANDA CONSERVATION MEASURES

The Operation plan is renewed by the financial support of Red Panda Network and technical support of Division Forest Office, Taplejung and Himali Conservation Forum. The specific objective is to promote the sustainable conservation and habitat of red pandas, to maintain the habitat of red pandas and other wildlife and human activities and to promote sustainable use of community forest.

Table 2: Table showing the name and address where the operation plan of the CF will be renewed:

S.N.	Name of CF	Total Area of CF	Address
1	Manabhara CF	184.12 Hectare	Mikwakhola RM-4, Sawa
2	Batase Dhamale Vitta CF	155.76 Hectare	Mikwakhola RM-5, Papung
3	Mayam Patal CF	395.81 Hectare	Phungling M-10, Phurumbu
4	Yamabung CF	117.65 Hectare	Pathivara Yangworak-3, Tiringe
5	Deurali Bhitri CF	103.87 Hectare	Phungling M-9, Deurali
6	Pathivara Simbu CF	399 Hectare	Phungling M-11, Phawakhola



Photo 19: General Meeting of OP renewal of Batase Dhamale Vitta CF, Mikwakhola-5, Papung

3.3 SUPPORT TO NURSERIES

Forest Conservation Nurseries were established with an aim in restoring Red panda habitat and reconnecting fragmented forest so that Red pandas and other threatened wildlife can flourish. There are 4 nurseries in Taplejung where Communities nurture and manage the samplings of the nurseries. These nurseries help to prevent the cutting of bamboo and other plants for their livestock in the habitat of red pandas by replanting in bare areas and in near from human settlement. The output of these nurseries are given below:

Table 3: Table showing the list of plant species with its respective count in **Harkate**

S.N.	Species	Count	Planted Year
1	Bhalu Chinde	2585	2022
2	Tenga	150	2022
3	Bhalu Chinde	3200	2023
4	Tenga	700	2023

Table 4: Table showing the list of plant species with its respective count in **Deurali**

S.N.	Species	Count	Planted Year
1	Loath Salla	124	2022
2	Tenga	250	2022
3	Bhalu Chinde	72	2022
4	Bhalu chinde	15	2023
5	Rani Champ	157	2023
6	Ghurash	130	2023

Table 5: Table showing the list of plant species with its respective count in **Bhalugaude** from year 2020-2023

S.N.	Species	Count
1	Loath Salla	5665
2	Gopi Chinde	1010
3	Tenga	592
4	Satuwa	563
5	Dhupi	200
6	Nigalo	105

Table 6: Table showing the list of plant species with its respective count in **Tiringe**

S.N.	Species	Count	Planted Year
1	Gogun	200	2023
2	Nebaro	350	2023
3	Timur	150	2023
4	Kutmiro	296	2023

5	Kuniyo	100	2023
6	Satuwa	95	2023
7	Bajre	295	2023
8	Tenga	150	2022
9	Bhaluchinde	40	2022
10	Dudhilo	50	2022
11	Loath Salla	200	2022



Photo 20: Sapling of Tenga

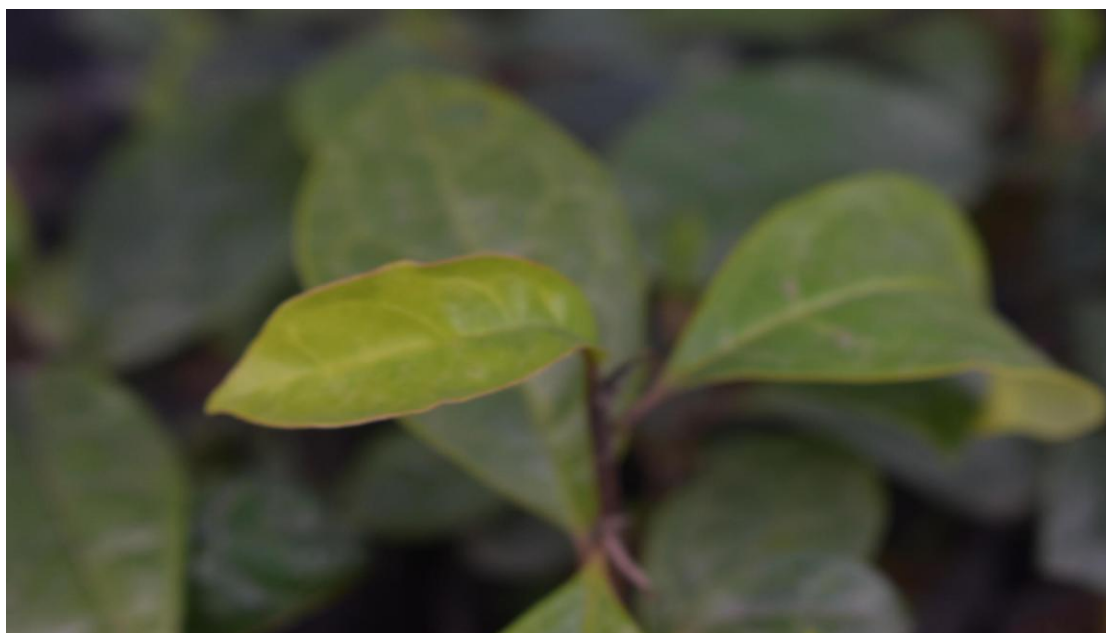


Photo 21: Sapling of Rani Champ

3.3.3 INSTALLATION OF WATER PIPE IN NURSERIES

Under habitat management, as a support to nurseries water pipe was installed from Bich Kharka to nursery located in Harkate and from Pokhari (N27.20822 E87.4389, elevation-2256m) to nursery in Tiringe (N27.20864 E87.43997, elevation-2204). The main aim of this activity is to minimize the scarcity of water in dry seasons and to watered seedlings and saplings present in nurseries. Out of a 300m water pipe 170m was laid in the nursery of Tiringe on 30 August 2023 (13 Bhadra,2080) and the remaining 130m was added to Harkate nursery as the water source was farther. So, in Harkate nursery total 430m (300m+130m) was installed on 24 August 2023 (7 Bhadra, 2080).



Photo 22: People carrying water pipe to Harkate



4.0 SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD



4.1 NETTLE REFINING AND WEAVING TRAINING AND MACHINE SUPPORT

Under Sustainable Livelihood, Nettle Refining and Weaving Training has started from 12 October 2023 (25 Asoj 2080) to 60 working days in Phungling Municipality-10, Phurumbu. With the financial support of Red Panda Network and technical support of Himali Conservation Forum. In order to carry on with the 2021 Nettle Refining and Weaving Training that was held in Phungling Municipality-10, Phurumbu, and to train and provide opportunity to local women to become financially independent., this training has begun. In the training period, trainees learn about the method of collection of raw materials, extraction of nettle thread, weaving and the training was facilitated by Mrs. Asha Limbu. Machines like Beating machine, Hackle machine, Improved Charkha, Debarking, Hand-loom, Crill-ghar, Ward pin drum, Roller machine etc. were also supported to facilitate training. Total 15 local women have participated in nettle refining and weaving training.

During 60 days training period, 7 kg nettle thread is processed from 745 kg of nettle plant and 32 m cloth is weave from these thread.



Photo 24: Trainee weaving the nettle fiber in hand loom machine

4.2 RUG WEAVING TRAINING

“Community-based Red Panda Monitoring in Eastern Nepal”, a program of Red Panda Network (RPN) in collaboration with Himali Conservation Forum (HCF), Taplejung has aimed to empower and lift the livelihood of the rural communities through several vocational trainings with the aim of making the conservation efforts more effective and efficient. Thus, RPN along with HCF conducted a one-month Rug Weaving Training to train the women of the project areas on how to traditionally design and weave the red panda rugs. The training had started from December 8, 2023 to January 8, 2024 (Mangsir 22- Poush 23, 2080). Total 10 participants had participated and the training was facilitated by Mrs.Dawa Phuti Sherpa.



Photo 25: Participants fixing the frame

5.0 MONITORING & FOLLOW UP



5.1 DISTRICT PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AND PROJECT SHARING WORKSHOPS AT FIELD

Under the Monitoring & Follow up program, project sharing workshop of program 2022/2023 was conducted in

- Srijungha Rural Municipality, Taplejung on 25 May 2023 (11 Jestha 2080) in presence of total 7 local representatives (7 Male).
- Maiwakhola Rural Municipality, Taplejung on 30 May 2023 (16 Jestha 2080) in presence of a total 21 (5 female & 16 male) participants.
- Phaktalung Rural Municipality, Taplejung on 9 June 2023 (26 Jestha 2080), total 5 local representatives (5 male) attended.
- Miringden Rural Municipality, Taplejung on 9 June 2023 (26 Jestha 2080), total 10 local representatives (10 male) attended.
- Mikwakhola Rural Municipality, Taplejung on 8 June 2023 (25 Jestha 2080), total 15 local representatives (14 Male & 1 Female) attended.
- Sidingba Rural Municipality on 30 May 2023 (16 Jestha 2080), Taplejung, a total of 13 local representatives (9 male & 4 female) had attended.
- Phungling Municipality and Pathivara Yangworak RM on 7 July 2023 (22, Asar 2080) in presence of a total 27 (M-25, F-2).



Photo 26: Presentation of activities done in Sidingwa RM

5.2 COORDINATION MEETING/WORKSHOPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

To effectively coordinate with concerned stakeholders of Taplejung, the program was organized by Himali Conservation Forum (HCF) with financial support of Red Panda Network. Coordination meeting was held on 6 October 2023 (19 Asoj 2080) in presence of a total 6 (all male) participants in Phungling Municipality-7 Taplejung. On several topics like role of Municipality, District Forest Office to conserve Red panda in Pathivara area and other in other possible habitat.



Photo 27: Delivering presentation in front of stakeholder

5.3 LOGISTIC SUPPORT TO DIVISION FOREST OFFICE

Under monitoring and follow up, field gears and GPS are distributed to the District Forest Office, Taplejung. Total 25 (male=18 and female=7) staff members of DFO have received field gears and 6 handheld GPS. This logistic support is provided with the financial support of Red Panda Network and technical support of Himali Conservation Forum. Total 7 handheld GPS were each given to District Forest Office, Dovan Sub-Division Forest Office, Tellok Sub-Division Forest Office, Mikwakhola Sub-Division Forest Office, Mirenden Sub-Division Forest Office, Sidingwa Sub-Division Forest Office, Pathivara Sub-Division Forest Office.



Photo 28: Group photo after distributing logistic support to District Forest Office, Taplejung