

South North Nexus 2022 In Review

SNN Listened Locally and Contributed Globally



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South North Nexus Listened Locally and Contributed Globally in 2022

2022 was the year that South North Nexus (SNN) put learning into action. With our great teams, partners and donors, SNN listened locally and contributed globally. We heard the concerns of rural communities, especially women and children through our livelihood analyses. We implemented pilot projects throughout the world that translate knowledge into action. SNN worked with partners to help address the root causes of family hardship and crises due to climate, conflict, inequality and discrimination. Through these projects we supported innovative local solutions based on traditional knowledge, modern technologies and community innovations.



The 2022 Year in Review highlights some of our important learning and achievements in Colombia, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Mongolia, and Montana, USA. We are pleased to share with you our learning and achievements, and hope that you will join us as we continue to grow in 2023.

What We Do

South North Nexus works for innovative solutions, equity and social justice for all, with special attention to women and those most affected by climate and inequality. We take risks to learn, innovate, share, and promote successful actions that directly benefit communities.



SNN brings people together to:

Share solutions that build resilience to confront today's upending shocks

Strengthen livelihoods while assuring basic human rights

Promote dignity and justice for all with special consideration for women and marginalized communities

We are committed to sustainably protecting livelihoods, communities, and the planet.

What Makes Us Different

South North Nexus works for solutions to address the root causes of local problems that have global implications. We efficiently partner with local communities, listening and working together to find answers. We believe that open discussion and the willingness to learn will help us come together to address the most pressing challenges of our time.



Together we can positively shape our shared future!

2022 Highlights

South North Nexus in Numbers

In 2022 SNN achieved exciting results thanks to the contributions of our donors, team members, and volunteers, including:

2,530

Reaching more than 2,530 people and helping them build resilient livelihoods

6

Working in 6 countries

9

With 9 Partners globally

3

Starting 3 pilot projects in dry ecosystems

20

Assisting 20 individuals with their immigration legal fees

4

Completing 4 livelihood/economic studies

6

Developing 6 intern collaborations

SNN actions helped advance social justice, especially through information sharing and advocacy. Particular attention was paid to immigrant, human rights and social justice issues, including supporting concrete actions such as the introduction of the Montana Immigration Compact. In line with the Strategic Development Goals (SDG), SDG 16 fosters peaceful and inclusive societies and provides access to justice for all. SNN continued to follow the situation in Nicaragua.

2022 Project Highlights

Livelihood Study Shows Stress in Children and Their Parents at the US-Mexico Border

“Nobody will listen to us and hear our needs and stories. We need help with life issues.” - Honduran Migrant

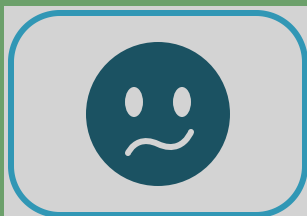


South North Nexus again traveled to the Mexico-US Border to better understand how women and children are coping with immigration rules that keep them in Mexico. Based on the findings of an exploratory trip to the border in August 2021, SNN conducted a livelihood needs assessment in March 2022 with special attention to:



Food Security

Nutrition, specifically for children under the age of 5



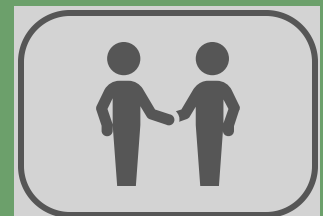
Stress

Stress in children aged 5-15, and their parents



Shelters

Site conditions in shelters



Partners

Potential partners

2022 Project Highlights

The SNN team met with local Mexican organizations in Ciudad Juarez, along the border between Texas and Mexico, and spoke with many migrant women, men, adolescents and children. Shelter, nutrition, child stress and immigration processing all emerged as pressing issues from the livelihood analysis. The child nutrition and stress assessments led to a better understanding of these problems and the partnerships required to undertake follow-up actions. The livelihood analysis produced a number of significant findings including the importance of:

- 1 Working with local and other experts to develop a family stress reduction program
- 2 Providing up to date information to families in shelters so that they can make important life decisions
- 3 Establishing shelter gardens in areas with limited space and water to provide nutritious food, and bring families together, building a sense of community
- 4 Advocating for families fleeing violence, food insecurity and the effects of extreme climate events, as they are simply seeking to keep their families alive under the most extreme conditions

"We went to the border to learn which meant talking to families, pastors and Government leaders, and letting our ideas evolve based on the local realities. We realized that while improving diets and nutrition was important, making a commitment to reduce the stress of children and their parents was equally important."

Deborah Hines
SNN Co-Director

2022 Featured Project

Therapeutic Shelter Gardens in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico

"All children respond to stress differently but parents are transmitting stress to their children as their stress is forgotten."

Pastor

Shelter gardens have many benefits but local authorities stressed the importance of bringing people together: people waiting to enter the United States from different countries such as Guatemala, Mexico, Haiti, Honduras, El Salvador, Venezuela and Nicaragua. Shelter gardens also bring families together to work on a concrete activity, allowing, at least for a few moments, the journey and other events to be left behind.



The project started with a number of workshops in three shelters in November and December. In a short time, the project reached more than 255 participants with different nationalities, with the simple objective of sharing the garden idea and letting people talk. People liked the idea of producing vegetables and fruits for their own consumption. Having their own production allows for higher quality foods, which translates into improved nutrition for children.

Art and literacy activities were also started for children and adolescents who enjoyed reading and writing through stories and fables, supporting their academic development. Art, drawing and painting helps develop values, including persistence, patience, creativity and companionship, important for these children who have experienced so much.

In 2023 therapeutic gardens will be expanded and more children will have the opportunity to participate in arts and music classes.

Empowering Women in Turkana, Kenya Pilot Project

"SNN needs to continue to help us so that we can cope and live with drought."

Women in Turkana, Kenya

Kenya Results in Numbers

A total of 2245 women and their families benefited from the pilot project.

1120

Women participated in workshops covering over 10 topics

200

Households benefited from new water storage tanks

105

Women farmers received plants to start healthy gardens

20

Women sold vegetables to markets and schools

32

Jobs were created for women both on farms and small businesses

20%

Increase in access to nutritious foods from the community gardens products

20%

Increase in women's incomes

South North Nexus worked with Blessed Community Empowerment Organization (BLEC) and Inclusive Concepts and Innovations to empower women to build resilient livelihoods in Turkana, Kenya. A plan for a pilot project emerged from a livelihood analysis.

Empowering Women in Turkana, Kenya Pilot Project

The project started with stakeholder workshops that brought together local leaders, community members, and county, agency and national government representatives. They discussed challenges, priorities and needed actions. The pilot project was designed to test women-led activities that would enhance the resilience of their livelihoods in dry ecosystems. Discussions also highlighted the importance of increased access to water for human consumption and community horticulture. SNN supported water management actions including the installation of water tanks to reduce the frequent water shortages experienced by families.

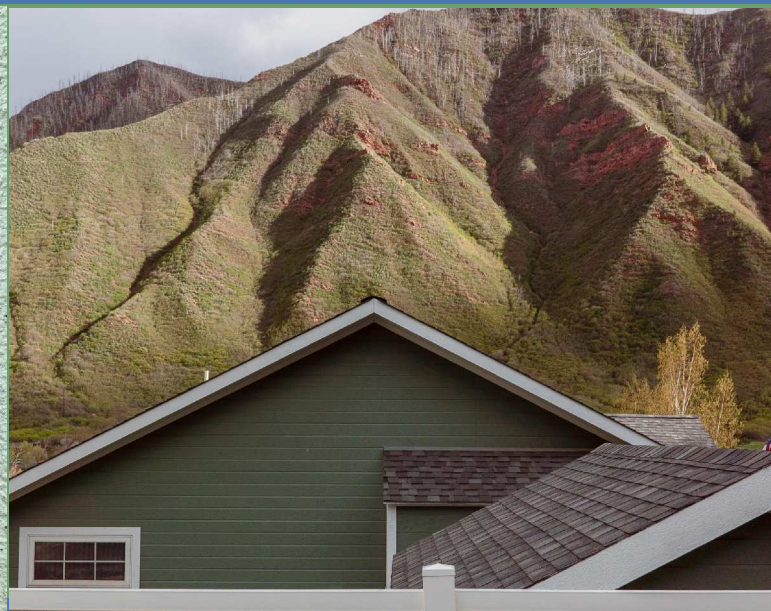


Training activities were organized with women on water management, business opportunities and women's rights. One objective was to build a culture of savings among group members and to sharpen business skills. The trainings focused on how to improve the quality of nutritious food products, identify competitors, and how to access different markets. The trainings increased women's capacities and skills, expanded their roles in the community, and increased income earning opportunities. These skills will enable women to better manage risk and mitigate the impacts from recurring drought.

The project will continue in 2023 with a deeper focus on responding to prolonged drought, adapting livelihoods and accessing safe water for women and their families

Supporting Immigrants to Integrate in Montana

It was a busy year for South North Nexus in Montana. We built on the livelihood study started in 2021 with the Montana State University School of Nursing, conducted 2 other studies to better understand the contributions of immigrants to the state's economy, and helped 20 people start immigration processes.



Conversations with a range of stakeholders centered around barriers to documentation, housing, medical care and equitable employment. The lack of documentation presents many complex economic, health, and social challenges that prevent immigrants from fully integrating into a new community. Major issues that people identified included, language, fear and stress. Immigrant workers and their families suffer from stress and anxiety due to their situation and are not able to obtain medical care except for emergency situations.

"Because we are not residents, we do not have a paper that gives us permission to be in Montana, we always have that panic, that daily fear of not having papers."
- Immigrant Worker

Based on these findings SNN undertook the following actions to support immigrants in the Gallatin Valley, working in partnership with local organizations.

Immigrant Legal Fund

The Immigrant Legal Fund helped immigrants and their families with legal assistance related to their residency in Montana, USA. With generous donations and collaboration with committed lawyers, SNN was able to help 20 individuals with their immigration processing. Issues that came to our attention include preparation for “court order to appear” dates, assistance with asylum requests, and responding to deportation orders. The generous donations SNN received helped families comply with their immigration responsibilities and helped ease the stress of living in a new country.



Economic and Labor Studies

SNN and Bienvenidos worked with Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District and Circle Analytics to better understand the economic contribution of immigrants to Montana's economy. The study found that immigrants are playing a crucial role in creating a dynamic and more prosperous economy for all in Montana. In the construction, service, agriculture, and tourism industries, immigrants are a critical part of the labor force. The numbers from the study highlight the important contribution immigrants make to the state economy.



Interviews with business owners, farmers, and ranchers highlighted the need to make it easier to hire immigrants. Navigating the immigration process is very difficult, especially for non-native English speakers and those without the means to obtain legal assistance. While employment is easy to find, undocumented workers are not always paid the going rate or retained if injured on the job.



47, 420

Montana's
Hispanic
population



**\$2.6
Billion**

In Economic
benefits



73, 895

Number of
Montana jobs
directly and
indirectly
benefited by
Hispanics



**\$139
Million**

Tax
contributions
from Montana
Hispanics

"We need the opportunity to start a new life here and that they give us the opportunity to get a work permit so that we don't go around hiding, so that we can work freely and go around honestly."

Livelihood Study Participant

Montana Immigration Compact

In our work with immigrant families, we have shown the importance of immigrant workers in the Montana economy. We have seen how individuals and families face significant challenges in participating in community life. Simple measures like access to a driver's license, or the ability to apply for housing without a Social Security Number, are denied to many of these families.



To help address some of these issues, South North Nexus and Bienvenidos introduced a Montana Immigration Compact late in 2022. This is a statement that acknowledges the benefits of the immigrant workforce to Montana employers and communities, and serves as a guideline to encourage regulatory and legislative bodies to consider measures that would remove unnecessary barriers to accessing safe and legal driving, employment, and housing. Already a number of businesses and prominent individuals have endorsed the Montana Compact.

Colombia Pilot Project - Community Ecosystem Services with a Nutrition Focus



South North Nexus is implementing a pilot project to develop skills and solutions with families, communities, and local governments that address the urgent climate impacts affecting people's livelihoods in La Guajira. The livelihood analysis highlighted several community concerns in La Guajira, and how climate is affecting the traditional way of life for the indigenous Wayu people.

Communities acknowledged the need to diversify livelihood assets, the importance of diverse economic activities for women, and the urgent need for more advanced forest and ecosystem management practices.



The project is helping to recover forests as a system that provides ecological, economic and food services and benefits. It is also putting food security and sovereignty at the center of local planning, with strategies that strengthen local and traditional food systems.

In 2022, working with over 170 community members, land was designated for the establishment of a community nursery that will raise 10,000 indigenous plants over the next 3 years with the aim of recovering degraded lands and improving family nutrition. The goal is to reforest or create 600 hectares of forest area, which will require long-term support from many actors.



Our Team

Our Team

— Co-Directors —



Deborah Hines
William Vigil



Board of Directors



Susan Higgins
Deborah Hines
Paula Milano
Helene Papper
Henry Vega
William Vigil



Co-Director Publication

"Critical Issues on Human Rights and Development" SNN Co-Director Deborah Hines examines the international legal bases that support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition and argues that hunger is neither inevitable nor acceptable. Edited by Stephen P. Marks and Balakrishnan Rajagopal. Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd

Interns and Volunteers

SNN is grateful to have worked with an impressive group of university students from Montana State University and O.P. Jindal Global University. Our interns contributed generously to research on migration, climate, gender, and project support issues. Their experience with SNN contributes to their professional development with “real life experiences”. SNN thanks each one of them and wishes them the best as they move forward!

"Becoming an intern for SNN was the highlight of 2022 for me. It gave me a different perspective of the world and helped me solidify what I want when I grow older. Going to Ciudad Juarez was an experience that I will forever use as a lesson and an inspiration."

Gloria Baldevia



"I am immensely grateful for the opportunity that SNN has given me as an intern. My findings and education throughout my journey with this organization has given me new insights on the state of Montana and globally. I'm proud to work with such an amazing group of people who are working day and night for the betterment of others."

Madeline Arndt

Donors

Thanks to our donors!

A heartfelt thank you to all our donors. Because of you, SNN can support solutions with those most vulnerable to shocks and help creating a more just future for all. What happens to our shared climate, lands, food systems, and water sources directly affects livelihoods, regardless of where we live today.

2022 has shown us once again the importance of connecting, sharing ideas and solutions, and collaborating for change. We all can be change agents, for ourselves, our communities, and beyond. South North Nexus is deeply committed to these goals.

Please join the conversation, volunteer and or donate.



We need you to make a difference!

Get Involved!

Connect With Us!

Thank you to all of those helping us make a difference!



We need YOU to make a difference!



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