



LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | ARCHITECTURE | ECOLOGE DESIGN | ECOTOURISM PLANNING | PHOTOGRAPHY

## **HITESH MEHTA FASLA FRIBA FAAK Associate AIA** **Poverty alleviation Bio - Dec 2021**

**Hitesh Mehta**, President of HM Design has 34 years of work experience and has consulted in 65 countries spanning six continents. He has, for many years, been working to alleviate poverty in indigenous/local communities and help protect endangered plant and animal species via benefits from ecotourism. He has worked on projects where tourism is used to channel money from tourists to local communities - Madagascar, Western Uganda, Ivory Coast, Rwanda, DR Congo, Tanzania, Kenya, Nepal, Australia, Timor Leste and Colombia. Several of the African Projects were part of the PRO-POOR Tourism efforts of the World Bank. As the designated Landscape Architect and Sustainable Tourism Physical Planner, Hitesh has provided Master and Site Plans to help create destinations that are low-impact and are a win-win-win - financially, environmentally and socially.

Hitesh's expertise is also on how to empower indigenous and local communities during the Planning/Design processes and he has conducted gender-inclusive participatory workshops in over fifteen countries. His specialization is to help local communities develop Ecolodges which have proven successful in helping financially benefit local communities and thereby, help alleviate Poverty. For example, Hitesh's firm drew up the initial Site Plan and Architectural Design Concepts for Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge which celebrated its 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021. Governor's Camp Collection operates the lodge, owned by the Sabyinyo Community Livelihoods Association (or SACOLA), which is comprised of surrounding communities. Through the SACOLA Trust, Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge has delivered over \$4 million in revenue since 2006 and has reached out to more than 6000 households from neighboring villages. With revenues from the Lodge, the SACOLA trust continues to diversify sustainable livelihood opportunities for community members that, in turn, remove the burden from the park's natural resources and its iconic mountain gorilla.

**HM Design**

918 NORTH-EAST 20TH AVENUE, FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33304, USA  
T: 954.999.0431 | E: HM@H-M-DESIGN.COM | W: WWW.H-M-DESIGN.COM