



2022 GRANTS REPORT

Introduction

The Friends of Niger grant-making program is designed to support locally identified projects which demonstrate community support, are likely to succeed and have an enduring positive impact. The second year of our revised process has demonstrated continued growth and improvement in the quality and number of grant proposals received and in our capacity as a grant-maker. Board members Mary Abrams and Alix Fedoruk continue to co-chair the Grants Management Committee which is composed of FON volunteers and board members. Our process creates enriching opportunities for the involvement of FON members, many of whom have enthusiastically volunteered to help review grant applications and serve as project champions. We are proud to have funded 22 projects over just the past two years, moving a total of \$94,809 from our generous members to support important work for the benefit of our friends and colleagues in Niger.

The hallmarks of our process are scheduled grant cycles, transparent criteria, and clearly presented forms and instructions. All unsuccessful applicants receive feedback on what we liked about their proposals and what would make their application more competitive. Each successful proposal is assigned a project champion to act as liaison, facilitate communication, and provide any assistance needed to ensure successful implementation of the project.

GRANT-MAKING	2021	2022	TOTALS
Applications received	32	48	80
Funds requested	\$154,500	\$209,948	\$364,448
Volunteer reviewers	29	25	54
Projects funded	7	15	22
Funds granted	\$28,143	\$66,666	\$94,809

PROGRESS & RESULTS

BIOCONTROL OF MILLET BORER IN DOSSO REGION

Millet is under attack by an infestation of ‘millet borer’ larvae, reducing yields in some areas by up to 60%. In 2021 FON provided \$7,360 to the NGO Potentiel Terre to re-introduce an indigenous wasp as a biological control for this devastating pest in the severely affected Mokko Commune, Dosso Region. Funds are being used to raise awareness in the community, and train youth agents on wasp rearing and for disseminating wasps when millet borer attacks are detected. The project targets 12,394 agricultural households in 102 villages across the Commune. Following the training conducted in 2021, this year saw the release of wasps in response to attacks in the 25-village pilot area. The project will gradually scale up over three years to serve all targeted villages.

CONSTRUCTION OF A CLASSROOM ‘SEMI DUR’ IN TCHINWIZNI, AGADEZ REGION

The Assemblée de Formateurs et Animateurs des Associations (AFAA) facilitated the construction of a classroom in less than 3 months from start to finish with the help of a \$5,748 grant from FON. The villagers contributed funding and provided labor whenever possible and AFAA provided extra support and oversight to make the classroom construction a success.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN OUALLAM

FON granted \$2,624 to the NGO AfriYAN Niger (African youth and adolescents network on population and development) to train 50 children to make marketable handicrafts from recycled materials. Participants were trained to construct handicrafts from waste materials as an income generating activity while also improving the environment by removing waste. The successful program was led by young Nigeriens who coordinated with local authorities and held a fair to showcase the products crafted. The project was implemented over the summer and was well supported by local traditional and political leaders.



Clockwise: Eladab women's garden with new water tank; My Sister My Role Model participants with new school supplies; school room in Tchinzwini, Agadez, students and staff of the artisan training center in Niamey.

MARADI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

A grant of \$5,000 enabled the Parent Teacher Association led by the school principal to construct an elementary school classroom to replace one destroyed in a devastating fire in 2021 that killed 31 students. The grant, which was matched with a \$2,500 contribution from the Nigerien diaspora and the community, funded the construction of a concrete classroom for 70 students to replace the straw hut destroyed in the fire. Former FON Board member Yari Rabiou visited the construction in September and noted their heartfelt appreciation.

MAISON DE LA PAROLE - CULTURE AND ARTS CENTER

The town of Libore is famous for its great griot traditions. A FON grant of \$4,493 provided funds to GONI to create a center for sharing these traditions. The project will build a performance stage and rehearsal area for cultural activities related to the griot tradition and plans to serve at least 200 youth. Beyond this initial phase, they plan to create a digital library to archive the works of generational griots, providing an important cultural resource for the community and future generations.

MY SISTER, MY ROLE MODEL

FON provided \$4,520 to the NGO MICA to decrease child marriages and improve young girl school attendance and success in the Safo, Tchadoua, Aguié and Madaoua communes of south-central Niger. The project provides support for education and employs young, educated women who have participated in the leadership program led by the NGO Expanding Lives as mentors for 100 younger female students. The young girls have been selected and assigned their mentors for this school year. The mentors have met with the school authorities and the parents to explain their work with the young students. All the girls have now received school supplies and support for school fees. During the school year, the mentors will be in frequent contact with the girls to provide tutoring sessions and life skills training.

ELADAB WOMEN’S GARDEN IN THE AGADEZ REGION

An existing women’s group requested assistance in expanding their capacity to grow vegetables which they dry and market. FON provided \$4,659 to the NGO TAMAKRAST, who worked with the women’s group, to drill a borehole and install a solar power system for the pump. Unfortunately, even after the well digger generously drilled deeper than agreed for free, the new well did not produce water. This motivated group of women worked with TAMAKRAST to develop a Plan B, which was approved and implemented with the help of FON champion John Baird. The garden expansion was achieved by using remaining funds to pipe water from an existing well and construct a storage tank near the garden site. The solar pump was financed by other funding sources and the women’s group and the local officials were thrilled with the resulting success.

JOB SKILLS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

FON awarded \$5,000 to DIMA, a Niamey-based training program started by a Nigerien artisan who now lives in the US. The grant funded a one-year training program for 72 youth, three quarters of whom are young women, to provide skills in weaving, leatherworking and tailoring that they can use to generate income. The training is followed by a 2-3 year apprenticeship to enhance employment opportunities. FON Board Member Alhassan Ali Mamadou Souma made a site visit in July and was very impressed with the program and the dedication of the instructors and abilities of the students.



Clockwise: Trainees learn about wasps for biocontrol of millet borer; construction of rehearsal hut for Maison de la Parole; Ouallam craft fair ; site visit by former board member Yari to Maradi classroom construction.

LANDSCAPE RESTORATION FOR ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY: BASELINE STUDY, NORTHERN TAHOUA REGION

A combination of climate change, economic insecurity, and social instability has devastated many grazing areas of Niger. In late 2021, FON provided \$5000 to the NGO Amman Imman (Water is Life) to fund a baseline soil and plant survey for a larger, multi-year landscape ecosystem recovery project to be funded by

other donors. As part of the vegetation study, the project team met with Peul and Tuareg communities using these lands to discuss reforestation with preferred indigenous trees and shrubs. The survey provided invaluable information on the current degraded status of these important grazing lands and established a list of preferred trees for future reforestation efforts based on the resources they provide for both livestock and herders. This information will form the essential groundwork for leveraging the resources needed for the long term environmental restoration goal.

RESTORING THE DIGNITY OF TAGALA KOYE

Chronically poor women in the Ouallam region engage in the difficult and hazardous work of selling sand in Niamey to make ends meet. Responding to a proposal to provide training for alternative occupations, FON provided a small grant of \$415 to the NGO Tagaz Espoir for initial outreach to determine the interest and preferences in participating in a training program to develop new employment skills. The successful completion of a survey of 297 women provided information allowing Tagaz Espoir to propose a tailoring training program for income generating activities that resulted in a successful award in the fall 2022 grant cycle.

SPECIAL APPEAL IN HONOR OF BRIAN 'BARKE' NOWAK

Friends and family of Brian 'Barke' Nowak honored his memory by donating \$6,351 to Friends of Niger. FON was honored to be designated by the family and incorporated these funds into support for the projects described here.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

FON supports other efforts in Niger that meet our guiding principles and criteria by providing fiscal sponsorship and administration. In 2022 there were two examples of this.

1. Fiscal sponsorship of a soccer league for over 200 youth ages 10-16. This project is being led by expatriates in Niamey. FON handles donations and remits funds through a Niamey Rotary Club.
2. Administrative assistance to TCP and the Coconut Grove Rotary Club in sending funds to Niger-based partner Potentiel Terre for a microloan program.

Grants Awarded November 2022

- Preventing Conflict and Strengthening Social Cohesion in Makalondi by Appui au Developpement et Aide Humanitaire (ADAH)
- Job Skills for Recovering Fistula Patients in Niamey by DIMA
- School Supplies and Materials Tchinzini, Agadez Region by Assemblée des Formateurs et Animateurs des Associations (Association AFAA)
- Training and Women's Empowerment in Agadez region by TIDENE
- Two School Gardens in Agadez Region by Les Puits du Desert
- End the Children's Suffering: School Equipment and Supplies in Filingue by Solidarité Environnement et Développement au Niger (SEED Niger)
- NAMU (Le Notre); Poultry Production in Zinder by MOUNE KOULOUDOU
- Restoring the Dignity of Tagala Koye, in Niamey by TAGAZ ESPOIR

This work is made possible through donations. Go to www.friendsofniger.org or write a check payable to Friends of Niger and mail to: PO Box 452, Haverford PA 19041.

THANK YOU!