



2023 Annual Report

Friends of Niger (FON) is a charitable and educational 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation formed to initiate and support activities related to Niger and its people. Any person with a personal or professional interest in Niger is welcome to become a member.

Officers

Pres. Amy Wilson
Vice Pres. Alix Barstow Fedoruk
Treas. Gary Geoghegan
Past Pres. John Baird
CONUSA delegate Seybou Douma

Members at large

Mary Abrams
Kelsey Andersen
Brandon Bragato
Paige Pihl Buckley
Kimberly Dixon
Alhassan Ali Souna
Douglas Steinberg

Organizational Update

Our volunteer work force continues to be our greatest strength. Volunteers with a vast range of expertise play a key role in our interactive grant review process. This past year, 24 members volunteered to review grants and a subset of those mentored and championed the grants that were awarded. Three representatives (1 board member and 2 members) made in-person site visits to see some of the projects in various stages of implementation and completion this year.

In 2023, we give thanks to two of our hardworking board members who completed terms on the board and transitioned to other volunteer activities and busy lives. Gary Geoghegan stepped down from valuable service as Treasurer. He facilitated advances in fiscal management, initiating our use of Quick Books Online and filing the more demanding tax forms now required. We thank Kimberly Dixon for her insightful contributions and active participation in grant review and overseeing project implementation.

The board engaged a bookkeeping service to help keep the records and produce regular reports. This professional service complements our volunteer efforts and provides sustainability for the inevitable transition of board members. We moved our funds to a bank better suited to international transfers and are now able to rely exclusively on wire transfers to deliver grant funds safely and inexpensively to Niger. We entered into a service agreement with a Nigerien non-profit to help us distribute funds in-country when banking options fail.

Grant Program Overview

The Friends of Niger grant program is designed to support locally identified projects which demonstrate community support, are likely to succeed, and have an enduring positive impact. After three years, the grant process has matured and is highly effective.

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 applications 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	2023	2021 to present
Applications Received	62	142
Funds Requested	\$222,983	\$587,431
Volunteer Reviewers	31	85
Projects Funded	16	38
Total Funds Granted	\$63,281	\$158,090

Board members Mary Abrams and Alix Fedoruk co-chair the Grants Management Committee, which is composed of volunteers and board members. The Grants Committee recruited and managed 31 volunteers to review proposals and select grants for funding. Another 14 volunteers acted as Project Champions to facilitate the implementation of funded projects.

Projects Completed in 2023

Women

Many grants were designed to benefit women, supporting the belief that helping women benefits whole families and communities. This year, five grants specifically targeted women as participants and beneficiaries.

In Niamey, a group of 30 recovering fistula patients were provided in-depth training in sewing.



Trained seamstresses with their new sewing machines



Advanced dressmaking skills gained

All participants returned home with new skills to allow them to set themselves up in business and give them financial independence. FON conveyed additional funding provided by the Jane Huser Maxwell assuring that each participant received a sewing machine to take home.



Hamdallaye women display soap and incense products

Training in making soap and incense was provided to more than 30 rural women in Hamdallaye. By the end of the two-week training, several of the women were already planning to purchase raw materials and supplies to allow them to begin manufacturing and selling in the local market.

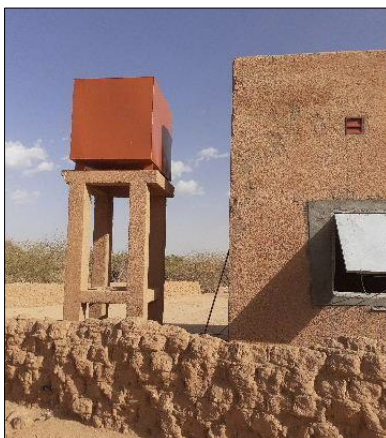
In the agriculture sector, projects to benefit women focused on gardening and sheep

fattening. A garden project in Agadez empowered 60 women by providing seeds as well as basic literacy skills to enable record-keeping. Also in Agadez, 20 members of a women’s cooperative were provided sheep to fatten and sell as well as training and support in improved animal husbandry methods.

Project / Organization	FON Contribution	Champion
Rural Vocational Training / DIMA	\$785	Amy Wilson
Sheep Fattening Agadez / APR EMITTI	\$4,658	Melissa Perera
Training and Empowerment of Women - Tchirozérine / TIDENE	\$4,917	Paige Pihl Buckley
Job Skills for Recovering Fistula Patients / DIMA	\$5,015	Amy Wilson

Health

Grant funds were awarded to help upgrade rural health facilities, to benefit whole communities.



Solar water system – Inwajoud, Dabaga

In the Agadez region, a remote health center serving 3,500 families set up a solar pump and piped water system to ensure the availability of clean water. Near Maradi, solar panels were installed on the Yekoua health clinic, providing 24-hour lighting for births and refrigeration of medicine. The project was made possible with matching funds from African Borderland Community Development Fund at Northeastern University facilitated by Bill Miles.



Solar panels – Yekoua Health Clinic

Project / Organization	FON Contribution	Champion
Health Clinic Water System / AFAA	\$2,326	Douglas Steinberg
Health Clinic Solar Power in Yekoua / Fed. Rayuwar Karkara	\$3,600	Alhassan Ali Souna

Education

Communities continue to demonstrate the value they place on education with projects to improve learning environments and provide support for students.

An innovative program employing older girls as mentors has provided school fees, supplies, and crucial mentoring to encourage more than 100 teenage and pre-teen girls in the Maradi region to stay in school and avoid early marriage.



Maradi area girls mentoring project



School gardens: education and nutrition

In Agadez, school gardens were developed and improved in two communities benefitting 270 students and their families. Grants in Tillaberi and Agadez provided basic school supplies and desks that show students that their efforts are important. In Aguié, latrines were built for middle schoolers to encourage attendance and promote hygiene.



Middle school girls welcome new latrines



Desks and school supplies



Project / Organization	FON Contribution	Champion
School WASH Aguié / Remember Niger	\$2,500	Mary Abrams
End the Suffering of School Kids / SEED	\$3,835	Ismaghil Ag Moussa
School Supplies and Materials Tchinzini / AFAA	\$4,156	Ismaghil Ag Moussa
My Sister, My Role Model / MICA & Expanding Lives	\$4,163	Leslie Natzke
Two School Gardens / Les Puits du Desert	\$4,794	John Baird

Community Conflict Prevention

A series of trainings, meetings and community engagement activities targeted women and young community leaders in the Makalondi area which has been experiencing social pressure and conflict from terrorist activity.



Conflict resolution training

<u>Project / Organization</u>	<u>FON Contribution</u>	<u>Champion</u>
Preventing conflict & strengthening social cohesion / ADAH	\$4,156	Douglas Steinberg

Ongoing projects

Malaria Prevention Niamey — Providing mosquito nets, medication, training to help prevent malaria in pregnant women and children in Niamey	\$980
Milk Cows Abalak — Increasing dairy production	\$4,775
Restoring the Dignity of Sand Carriers — Training and establishing women sand carriers in Niamey in new income generating activities	\$5,118
Poultry Production — Training and establishing women and youth producers outside Zinder	\$5,213
Sheep Husbandry Balleyara — Purchasing sheep and associated materials for 20 disabled women and training them in animal husbandry	\$5,486
Biocontrol of Millet Miner — Breeding and reintroducing an indigenous wasp to control millet boring insects in the Dosso area to increase yields (two grants)	\$7,360

Fiscal Sponsorship

FON supports other efforts in Niger that meet our guiding principles and criteria by providing administrative support such as money transfers. In 2023, there were six examples of this.

Niamey Youth Soccer — Youth Soccer League in Niamey sponsored by expatriates	\$1,650
Sewing Machines for Fistula Patients — Sponsored by Jane Huser Maxwell Fund	\$2,400
Solar Panels and Seeds — Sponsored by Joel Neuberg for the Village of Guéchémé	\$5,225
Microcredit — Sponsored by TCP Global, implemented by Potentiel Terre (3 grants)	\$33,000

Grants Awarded Funding November 2023

- School latrines for lycee in Tchadoua — MICA
- Empowering women through clean water — ONG Récupération des Mendiants (RECUP)
- Vocational training for girls who guide blind and disabled — MICA Maradi Women's Center
- Two school gardens Agadez — Les Puits du Desert and TIDENE
- Tailor and leatherwork training — DIMA
- School benches Tessaoua — CDGES Tessaoua
- Adding value to agricultural products Agadez — Tamakrast
- Sabon Gida school construction — Tagaz Espoir & Returned Peace Corps Volunteers
- Well rehabilitation Tabelot — AFAA

Annual Financial Statement 2023

<u>Beginning Balance Jan 1, 2023</u>		Checking/Savings Account Balance	46,073
		Money Market Account Balance	6,036
		Pay Pal Balance	3,572
		Cash/Undeposited Funds	850
Total Assets			\$56,531
<u>Income</u>			
Donations	30,173		
Interest Income	3		
Sponsored Project Income	22,880		
Total Income		53,056	
<u>Expenses</u>			
<u>Administrative, Fundraising</u>			
PayPal service fees	131		
Legal and Professional Services	400		
Printing-Postage-POBox	2,025		
Software, IT Services	225		
<u>Admin/Fundraising subtotal</u>		2,780	
<u>Grants Program</u>			
Grant Transfer Fees	1,438		
Grants Awarded	68,511		
Sponsored Grants	24,625		
<u>Grants Program subtotal</u>		97,354	
<u>Ending Balance Dec 31, 2023</u>		Checking/Savings Account Balance	11,973
		Money Market Account Balance	0
		Pay Pal Balance	16,552
Total Assets			\$28,524

This work is made possible through donations. Please go to www.friendsofniger.org or write a check payable to Friends of Niger and mail to: 4865 Hwy 234 Box 180, White City, OR 97503.