



2020 Impact Report



2020 Brought
Extraordinary Challenges:

a GLOBAL PANDEMIC, ECONOMIC
CRISES, NATURAL DISASTERS,
CONFLICT *and* CIVIL UNREST

leading to a

DANGEROUS RISE *in* INEQUALITY,
FOOD INSECURITY, *and* POVERTY.

- but -

THANKS TO OUR DONORS *the*
NEAR EAST FOUNDATION *has* MET
THIS MOMENT *with* ADAPTATION,
RESILIENCE, INNOVATION *and*
CONTINUED IMPACT.



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Our Mission

Since 1915, NEF has worked with local partners to enable innovative, sustainable, community-led economic and social development across the Middle East, Africa, and the Caucasus.



Dear Friends,

It is due to your immeasurable commitment and generosity of spirit that I am able to report proudly that 2020 was a critical year of meaningful impact. In a year where our global community experienced extreme hardship and overwhelming loss, you helped NEF to make sure that communities most marginalized and affected by the impacts of far-reaching economic and health crises are not forgotten.

2020 was a year of adaptation, resilience, innovation, and impact – providing direct support to 878,246 people. The disruptions we faced challenged us to become ever more creative in our programmatic approach and operational efficiency. This has ensured that we can provide critical services to marginalized communities across the Middle East, northern Africa, and Caucasus, while maintaining progress in protecting livelihoods, improving incomes, ensuring food security, and preserving healthy communities.

Building on our 106 years of experience straddling the humanitarian aid/development nexus, we remain focused on community-centered, sustainable programs that move people from a reliance on short-term emergency aid toward long-term self-sufficiency.

It is unquestionable that the support of our donors and partners has enabled us to realize our mission during times of great need. I hope you will share a sense of pride in the achievements made by our collective action over the past year.

Thank you for your commitment to a better and more equitable future.

With sincere gratitude,

Charlie Benjamin
NEF President & CEO



Locally Led Development

We draw on more than 100 years of experience creating locally led and owned solutions to improve livelihoods and governance. 99% of our team are local to the communities they support.

Partnering for Progress

NEF partners with local and international private, public, and civil society actors to make a sustained impact on underserved communities. In 2020, we partnered with more than 400 local organizations, building their capacity to deliver effective livelihoods services.

Ensuring Inclusivity

We prioritize the empowerment and protection of women, youth, people with disabilities, displaced populations, and other marginalized groups across our programs.





2020 Impact

Through community-driven action, NEF's programs support marginalized and disenfranchised people across three interlinked program areas.



Shaping Brighter Futures
We believe that all people should have equal opportunities to build and sustain safe, dignified lives. To achieve this vision, we help people and communities move beyond survival by providing them with resources and tools to achieve a better future.

\$12.9 M
FUNDS
RAISED

21
PROJECTS
SUPPORTED

878,246
LIVES
CHANGED

EVERY \$14 RAISED = 1 LIFE CHANGED

Responding in Times of Crisis



As crises struck NEF partner communities, we leveraged our networks, local knowledge, and tested tools to support critical emergency responses and early recovery.

Global Pandemic

At the outset of the pandemic, we collaborated with local partners, health committees, and governments to incorporate **COVID-19 education and safety protocols** into existing initiatives. Our team launched **business adaptation & recovery initiatives** and an **online training platform** to help small entrepreneurs protect their livelihoods by ensuring business continuity, rapid adaptation, and enterprise resilience.

Conflict in Armenia

After the outbreak of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, we launched a rapid response program to **build the capacity of local NGOs** and community facilities in Syunik, Gegharkunik, and Yerevan to address emergency needs. So far, we have helped **623 conflict-affected people** through the distribution of food, hygiene kits, warm clothing, bedding, financial support, and other essential items and services.



Beirut Port Explosion

After a damaging explosion shook Lebanon's capital, we mobilized with local partners to support **small business recovery, shelter rehabilitation, and employment** in vulnerable, impacted communities. We've helped **130 small businesses** to recover losses and resume business activities. **130 skilled workers** are also supported to recover lost materials and secure employment, working on repair projects in impacted areas. Our response evolves as we address the impact of the explosion in addition to the ongoing economic and refugee crisis in Lebanon.

Food Crisis in Sudan

To address the food and health crisis in Sudan, we worked with partners to distribute more than **28,000 metric tons of food** in South Kordofan and to **support women's vegetable production and sale**. In parallel, we worked with the Ministry of Health to **activate local hygiene committees, upgrade water/sanitation infrastructure**, and provide **training and protective gear against COVID-19**.

Building Economic & Social Resilience



Creating Stronger Entrepreneurial Ecosystems

NEF takes a whole systems approach to building healthy entrepreneurial ecosystems, working with the private sector, financial sector, academia, government agencies, and professional associations. In **Morocco**, we worked with business incubators, Emerging Business Factory and Creative Hub, along with other key stakeholders to **improve business services** offered to more than **260 enterprises, including 50 youth-led “gazelles”** (high growth potential businesses). This effort created more than **350 full-time jobs** and has mobilized **\$3.5M in business finance and investment**.

Across **Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon** NEF’s **Siraj Centers** offer tested and adaptable services for **foundational business development** and **enterprise acceleration**, with an eye toward **diversifying and strengthening the market** - last year **creating 3,069 new jobs**. A network of **15 Centers** across the region now operate under a shared set of principles, share information and learning, generate wider evidence of impact, and are paving the way for programmatic self-sufficiency.

Inclusive Finance

Access to finance is a barrier to growth for many vulnerable entrepreneurs and is critically needed to reduce poverty and reliance on humanitarian aid. NEF designs **tailored lending products for hard-to-reach, vulnerable entrepreneurs** in dynamic, high threat environments. In parallel, we offer business strengthening services, peer-to-peer mentorship, and small group coaching to support business growth, loan repayment, and women’s leadership.

In 2020, NEF’s community **revolving credit fund** in **Jordan** made **82 loans** to vulnerable Jordanians, with a **100% repayment rate**. In **Morocco**, we worked with local partners to launch a first-of-its-kind **digital financing platform**, Tamwil, for entrepreneurs looking for business financing. In **Northeast Syria**, we launched a **community-based revolving fund** to support business growth for **480 entrepreneurs**. And in Mali, we created an **agricultural value chain credit fund**, ensuring access to finance for **3,364 small-scale producers and processors** in key agricultural value chains.



13,906
people with increased
income through
business expansion



18,934
people trained in
financial literacy and
business management



4,003
full-time jobs
created or secured



Nadra's Grocers | Lebanon

"My life has changed permanently and my children witnessed the change in our way of life. I am proof that a woman can work and help her family." said Nadra, reflecting on her life after starting her own grocery store. Nadra dreamed of starting her own business to earn enough money to support her children. Her entrepreneurial spirit led her to a NEF Siraj Center where she was helped to make her dream a reality.

Helping Businesses Recover, Adapt, and Grow

Through **Siraj Centers**, NEF works with local partners to offer a suite of services to help vulnerable, small entrepreneurs improve and scale their working capital, profit, and assets - preparing entrepreneurs for **long-term growth and success** and **providing critical income and employment** to the community.

Small entrepreneurs have access to **40+ Siraj training modules** focused on business development, marketing, financial literacy, protection and leadership, prioritizing women and youth as drivers of community development. In 2020, **3,485 businesses launched or expanded** with support from these services across **Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Morocco, and Armenia**.

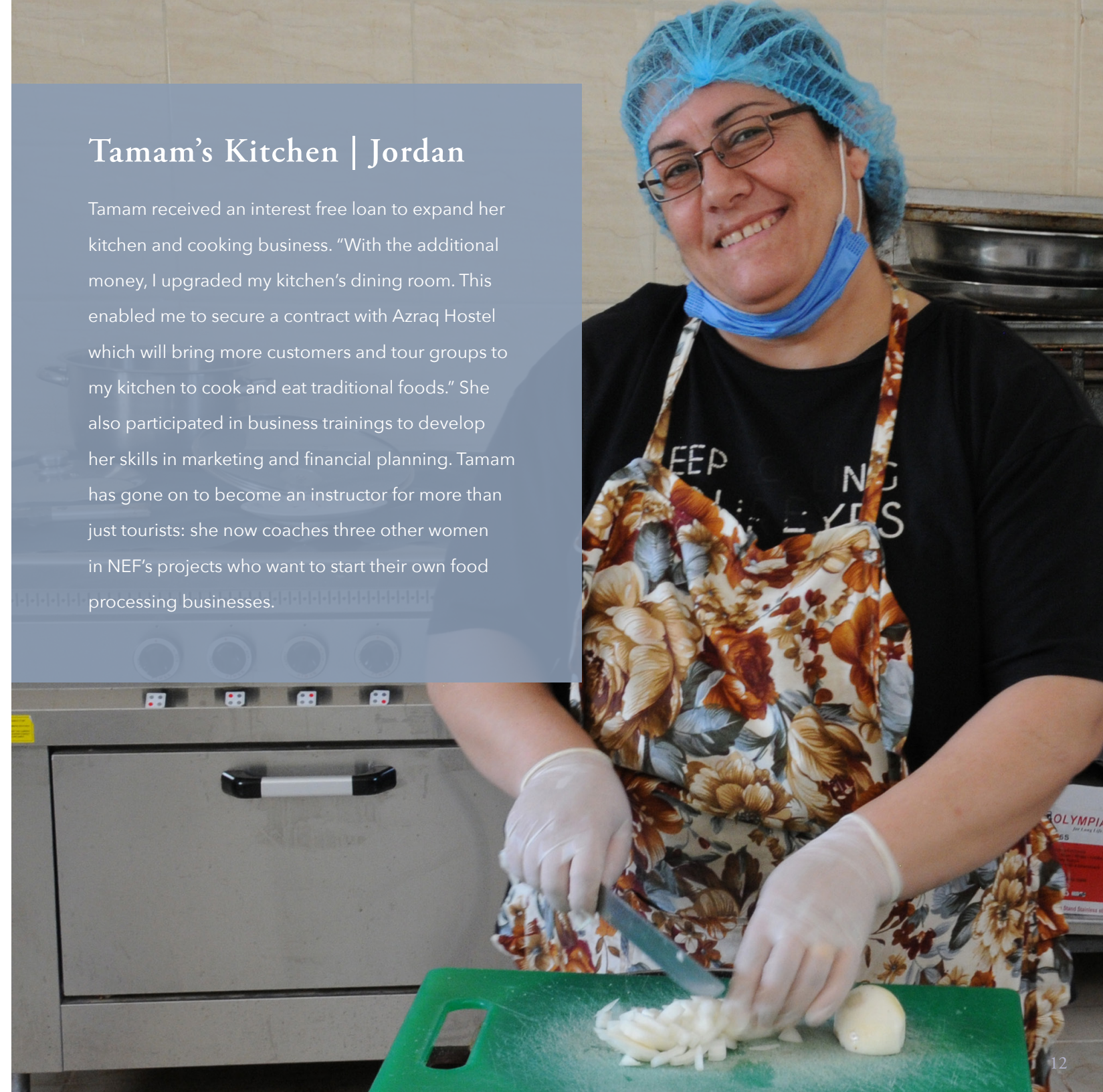
Going Digital

In April 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, NEF expanded its business services to include **Siraj Digital** - an e-learning platform. Since its launch, we have worked with **11 local partners** to co-deliver virtual trainings, graduating **3,372 entrepreneurs** in **Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria**.

Siraj Digital is available in Arabic, English, and French and uses technology that is accessible to vulnerable people in complex environments to encourage uptake and wide-scale use.

Tamam's Kitchen | Jordan

Tamam received an interest free loan to expand her kitchen and cooking business. "With the additional money, I upgraded my kitchen's dining room. This enabled me to secure a contract with Azraq Hostel which will bring more customers and tour groups to my kitchen to cook and eat traditional foods." She also participated in business trainings to develop her skills in marketing and financial planning. Tamam has gone on to become an instructor for more than just tourists: she now coaches three other women in NEF's projects who want to start their own food processing businesses.





Hygiène Pro Services | Morocco

Ranya (center) co-founded Hygiène Pro, a pest control business, with Jaouad (right) in 2018. Even though Ranya and Jaouad offered unique products and services, their business struggled. They worked with NEF to review their business plan, identify key challenges, and make a plan for growth. As a result, NEF helped them redesign marketing materials, provided one-on-one training on marketing techniques, and facilitated market linkages.

When COVID-19 hit, Ranya and Jaouad were faced with new challenges. NEF supported them in developing adaptation strategies to help Hygiène Pro expand its services to respond to the health measures instituted by authorities. Hygiène Pro now offers full disinfection services, approved by the Moroccan Ministry of Health, for businesses reopening after the lockdown in Morocco. Despite the challenging economic times, Hygiène Pro has seen business growth and the addition of new clients, including service contracts with four tourist establishments and food factories.

“ With help from NEF, we [Hygiène Pro] were able to secure certificates, create a marketing plan, and expand our services to help enforce health measures and protect against COVID-19.

- RANYA

”

Protecting against Climate Shocks



Community Driven Climate Adaptation

Small-scale agriculture is the primary source of food for rural communities in the Sahel. Smallholders grow crops to provide their families with essential nutrition – but reliable access to water, seeds, and agricultural tools remains a challenge. Increased levels of insecurity and fragility caused by government instability, conflict, and a rapidly changing climate have worsened food security and harmed livelihoods.

NEF partners with civil society, local governments, and communities to develop **community-driven initiatives** to build climate resilience, protect resource-based livelihoods, and improve food security.

In **Mali**, we work across **80 communities** to support **local climate adaptation** projects that have improved food security for **114,884 people**. In **Sudan**, we support **sustainable agriculture production** to protect natural resources and increase food self-sufficiency, reaching **390,778 people** in North and South Kordofan.



538,066

individuals with improved food security and resilience to climate change



410,140

people with access to safe water



4,160

WASH kits distributed



Inclusive and Resilient Agricultural Value Chains

NEF works with local associations to advance women's livelihoods and strengthen their role in agriculture-based livelihoods. We help women strengthen their collective bargaining power and improve their incomes through access to finance, markets, and business management skills.

In **Mali**, we have supported **9,217 people** to adopt more **productive, market-oriented, and climate-adapted production and processing** practices - improving income and food security in rice, livestock, shallot, non-timber forest products (NTFP), fonio, and sesame value chains. In **Sudan**, NEF has **mobilized 12 women's cooperatives** working in the production of NTFPs and other cash crops such as hibiscus - **supporting 2,392 individuals (1,798 women)** to improve production, processing, and market access.

Collaborative Natural Resource Management

In **Mali**, we engage community leaders to develop local conventions and land-use management plans to improve food security, sustainable natural resource management, and conflict mitigation. Last year, we helped communities adopt **sustainable management plans and eco-efficient practices** to benefit over **43,781 hectares of productive land**. We have also formed **five Forest Brigades**, training **210 people**, including women, on forest regeneration, restoration, water and soil conservation and protection. In **Sudan**, we **rehabilitated 85 water points** and established **34 water and sanitation committees**, training members on improved water management and hygiene practices.

Fatoumata | Mali

Fatoumata, a mother of eight, was eager to improve her income. "I learned a lot from the training workshops and advice from the livestock service officers on best practices. I bought a bull at 150,000 Central African Francs (CAF) and fattened it to resell it for 300,000 CFA, making a 92,000 profit. I could not have made this kind of money in one year of selling mangoes and peanuts."



Creating Pathways for Recovery



Creating Opportunities for Economic Recovery

NEF is expanding opportunities among displaced people, returnees, and host communities to accelerate economic recovery, enable safe and voluntary returns, rebuild economies, and build resilience against destabilization. Through its **Siraj Centers**, NEF is working in conflict-affected communities to create **market-driven opportunities** for economic participation with the aim of helping people **recover their income** to meet basic needs and **strengthen their local economies**.

Key to economic recovery is engaging disenfranchised youth. In **Iraq**, NEF supports vocational and employability training for **265 young Iraqis** in trades linked to rehabilitation of community assets like information and communications technology and local vocational training schools.

In **Syria**, NEF improved livelihood opportunities and the economic resilience of **2,460 smallholder agricultural producers** and **food processors**. These efforts **improved the income** of farmers and producers by **712%**, on average.

Rebuilding Food Systems

In many conflict-affected communities, food systems have eroded and remain underdeveloped, informal, and unstructured – leading to heightened vulnerability and conflict. NEF works with **smallholder farmers** and **food processors** across these communities to **rebuild** and **reinforce food systems** to improve production, harvesting, supply chains, and consumption - creating new opportunities for **economic recovery** and **resilience**.

In **Mali, Sudan, and Syria**, we work with women producers in the agriculture sector to **improve** the **processing** and **packaging quality** of their products and to access fairer and more **profitable sales channels**. Last year, these efforts improved the income of **12,677 conflict-affected people**.



405
local organizations with improved capacity for livelihoods services



1,069
infrastructure repairs and upgrades made



5,400
marginalized youth received skills training and social support



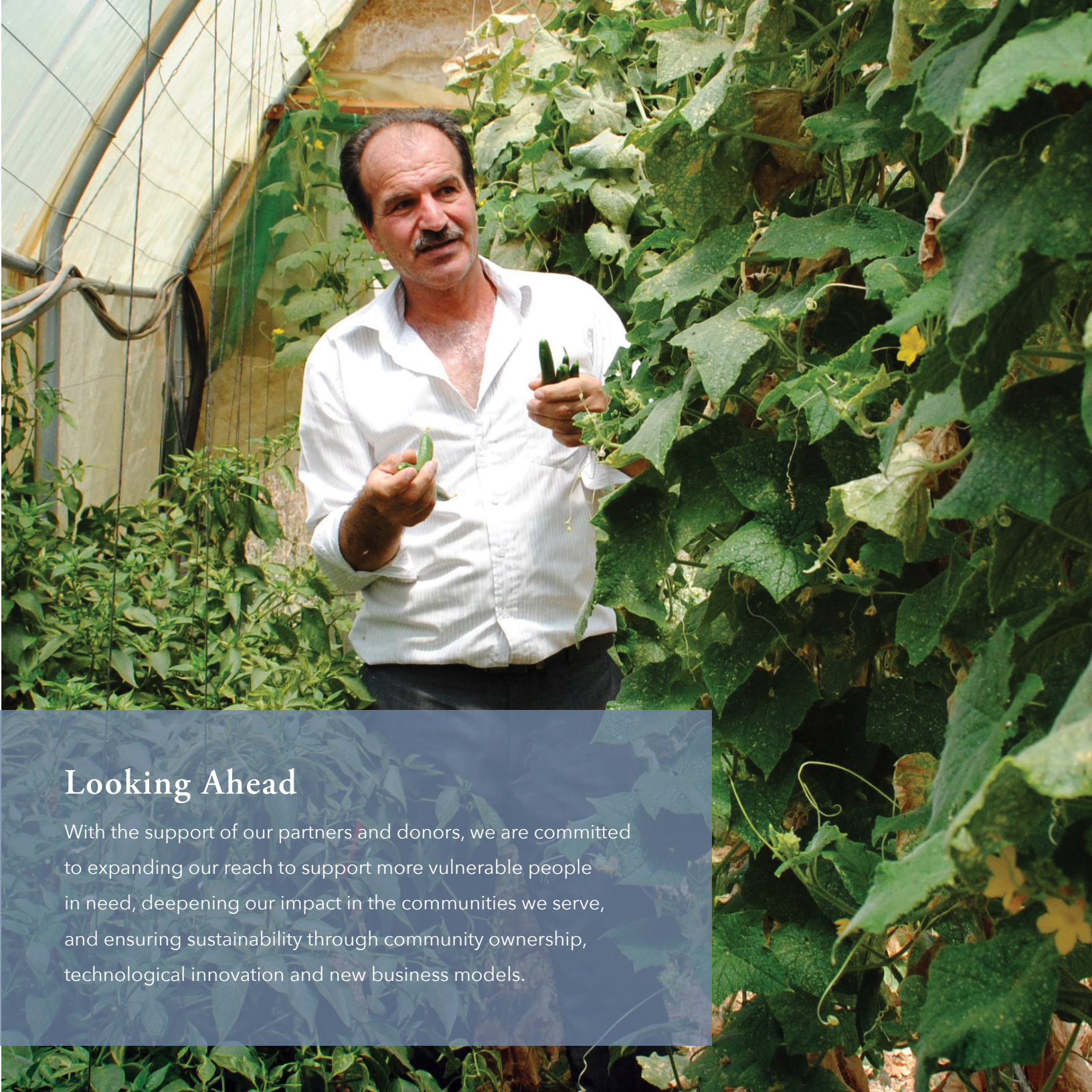
Mohammed | Iraq

Mohammed's long-time passion and aptitude for electronics led him to open a small workshop repairing mobile phones. "A friend brought NEF's program to my attention. I was able to register for courses to improve my skills - technical and entrepreneurial - to take my mobile phone repair workshop to the next level. I am happy with what I have achieved and that I am able to support my community."

Shaha | Syria

"I used to struggle selling my food products using traditional methods. I've now seen a big improvement after learning new skills," said Shaha. After Shaha's husband was killed in a bombing, she became the sole supporter for their four children. Shaha joined NEF's food processing training program to improve her income. She learned new ways of processing molokhia, apricots, cherries, makdous and more - improving the quality of her product and gaining the ability to financially support her family.





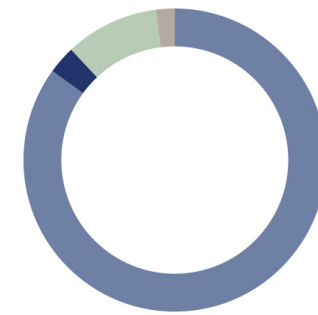
Looking Ahead

With the support of our partners and donors, we are committed to expanding our reach to support more vulnerable people in need, deepening our impact in the communities we serve, and ensuring sustainability through community ownership, technological innovation and new business models.

Financials

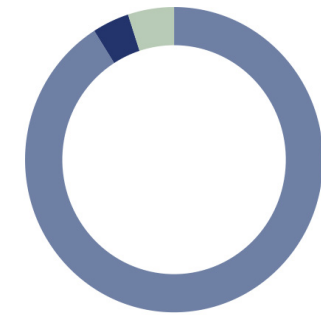
NEF is committed to providing the highest levels of transparency and efficiency. See our complete FY2020 consolidated financial report at www.neareast.org/resources/#financial-reports

FUNDING SOURCES



- 85% Governments
- 10% Private Contributions
- 3% Foundations
- 2% Other

ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES



- 91% Programs
- 5% Fundraising
- 4% Management and General

2020 TOTAL REVENUE \$12,997,784

2020 TOTAL EXPENSES \$13,446,458

NET ASSETS BEGINNING \$6,754,351 ENDING \$6,305,677

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 USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
 U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
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 World Food Programme

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 Al Hadatha Association
 Arcenciel
 Astghavard NGO
 Association Jeunes pour Jeunes
 Azraq Women Productive Cooperative Association
 Cluster Menara
 Emerging Business Factory
 Friends of Peace and Development Organization
 International Development and Peace Organization

Iraqi Al Amal
 Kapan Women's Resource Center NGO
 Kuforsoum Cooperative Association for Pomegranate Producers
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 Marrakech Generations
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 Qawafil Al Khair for Relief and Development
 Sanabel Nour
 Sevan Youth Club

SHEILD
 Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention for Local Development
 Sudanese Red Crescent Society
 Syracuse University
 UNICEF Water, Environment, and Sanitation Programme
 Women's Development Resource Centre Foundation - Goris
 Women's Support Center - Yerevan
 Youth Society for Self-Development

A community of generous donors makes our work possible. We are grateful for every donation we receive and we hope that you will continue to support NEF long into the future.

To see a complete list of donors for the July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020 fiscal year, please visit: www.neareast.org/2020-impact-report

A Trusted Steward of Your Philanthropy for Over 100 Years

91%

of donations go directly to supporting our programs



Cost-Effective Programs

NEF delivers high impact programs while keeping our overhead costs low, making the most of your donation. Your support helps build knowledge, strengthen voices, and create economic opportunity for those that need it most.

Charity Navigator

For the 6th year, NEF earned the top 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator. This has been achieved by only 11% of charities in the US.

Global Giving

NEF is recognized as a vetted member of the GlobalGiving community for being a trusted partner and global change-maker.

Better Business Bureau

NEF is an accredited member of the Better Business Bureau, meeting the highest standards for ethics and accountability to ensure confident charitable giving.





US HEADQUARTERS

110 West Fayette Street
Suite 710
Syracuse, NY 13202
United States

DC OFFICE

1875 K St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
United States

UK HEADQUARTERS

7-14 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4YR
United Kingdom

EUROPE HEADQUARTERS

Drève du Pressoir, 38
Brussels-Forest, 1190
Belgium



@NearEastFdn



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@neareastfoundation

www.neareast.org