



# 2023 Impact Report



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## Mission

Near East Foundation (NEF) works with local partners to enable innovative, sustainable, and community-led economic and social development across the Middle East, Africa and the Caucasus to realize more prosperous, inclusive and resilient communities.



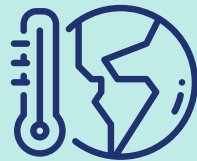
**511,017**  
people supported

**70.5%**  
are women, youth or  
people with disabilities

**236**  
communities  
strengthened



**77%**  
of participants increased  
their household income



**220,934**  
people improved their resilience  
to the impacts of climate change



**\$6,505,094**  
in grants/loans provided to  
support vulnerable entrepreneurs



# Impact



# Where We Work



**Mali**  
Success Story - pg.10



**Morocco**  
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**Lebanon**  
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**Armenia**  
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**South Sudan**  
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**Jordan**  
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**Syria**  
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# Success Stories

## SIGN LANGUAGE CALL CENTER INCREASES INCLUSION

NEF is working with local organizations in Armenia to ensure they have the resources necessary to take the lead in supporting the needs of their communities. Through this initiative, we supported the growth of the Armenian Deaf Society by helping them **open a sign language call center**.

The Armenian Deaf Society used funding and support from NEF to provide **training in Armenian Sign Language** to twenty community members and hired two of the participants to operate the call center. NEF's support also helped outfit the center with office supplies and communications equipment.



*The call center received 800 calls after ten months and helped twelve community members with hearing impairments find employment.*

**Community members with hearing impairments can access translators remotely by calling the call center.** The service is beneficial when communicating in banks, medical facilities, government centers, workplaces and educational institutions.

## YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS MAKE AN IMPACT

Samia and Nadia, students at the Cadi Ayad University in Marrakech, Morocco and co-founders of the Shrimp Green Water (SGW) startup, are two of the many young entrepreneurs participating in Near East Foundation's (NEF) **Youth Climate Innovation Incubator** in Morocco. The students **invented a water filter made from shrimp-shelling waste** and other organic matter to help solve the region's soil salinity problem, a serious environmental issue affecting plants' health and growth.

The startup was selected to participate in a three-month business incubation offered by NEF and our partner, Emerging Business Factory, where they participated in **training, networking and coaching sessions**.

*"The Youth Climate Innovation Incubator gave me the vision to transform my research work into a sustainable solution that contributes to the development of our society." - Samia*



Samia and Nadia are building on their success and were selected to receive competitive government grants. The startup has already participated in trade fairs, secured clients, and employed six staff members. **The success is a win for Samia and Nadia and farmers facing water scarcity in the current climate crisis.**



## AGRIBUSINESS OWNER INVESTS IN ANIMAL HEALTH

Amal and her family ran a small livestock business before needing to flee their home in Iraq due to war. **After being displaced, they returned to find that most of their livestock was gone.** Without proper shelter and little food or water, the 17 surviving animals were unhealthy.

With hopes of revitalizing their livelihood, Amal applied for a loan through Near East Foundation's Siraj center. **She received financial support and agribusiness training,** which helped her to grow the business.

*"We increased the number of sheep from 15 to 70, and we built the barn to protect the animals from cold weather and rain. We only had two cows, and now we have ten. We also bought watering troughs and increased our feed. Now our animals are well-fed and healthy."* - Amal



Amal experienced profound improvements in the health of her livestock, which resulted in an increase in births and her business' overall productivity. She now encourages other livestock breeders to invest in their animals' health and living conditions so they can have long-term, sustainable success.

## CO-OP STORAGE STRENGTHENS A COMMUNITY

In a small rural community in Mali, **farmers faced many challenges due to the lack of storage facilities and equipment.** The options were limited, and rental costs were high, which hindered the sales of harvests, most notably rice. Farmers had to increase the price of rice, making it unaffordable for many community members, and more people were going into debt. Parents pulled their children out of school to save money, and the children often begged or worked to support the family business.

With help from community members, **NEF constructed a cooperative storage facility** that houses up to 250 tons of product. Rice can now be stored and preserved in better conditions and at lower costs to farmers. A committee made up of members of the cooperative is responsible for ensuring the management and ongoing maintenance of the facility. This participatory approach ensures the facility's sustainability and strengthens ties within the community.

**Rice is now affordable for families,** saving them money on food and improving their living conditions.

*"This project has truly been a catalyst for economic development in our community, and I am grateful for the positive impact it has had on my family and myself."* - Mr. Souleymane Niagadou, president of the cooperative





# Programs

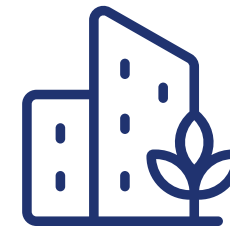
Near East Foundation's program strategy centers around **three interrelated focus areas** that support our partner communities' unique development priorities.

Our **twelve distinct programs** offer durable tactics that address *the root causes of challenges* and create *pathways for transformative change*.



## Inclusive Economic Development

- Access to Business Financing
- Entrepreneurship and Employment
- Innovative Financing
- Private Sector Development
- Strengthening Market Systems



## Climate Resilient Development

- Green Economies
- Locally-led Climate Adaptation
- Nature-based Solutions and Innovations
- Resilient Food Systems



## Stabilization

- Access to Essential Services
- Peacebuilding Through Cooperation
- Civil Society Contributions to Resilience

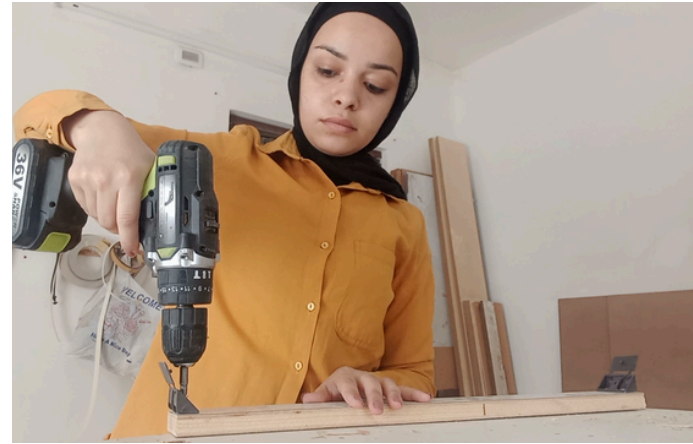


## Jordan

NEF's Refugee Impact Bond was certified as an Orange Bond in recognition of the central role the project plays in helping to create a world where gender equality is the prevailing norm.

NEF launched the Refugee Impact Bond in 2022, a major milestone as this is **the world's first refugee-focused impact bond**. It uses an innovative funding approach that focuses on flexible program implementation and lasting impacts. The model is proving to be extraordinarily successful as **participants exceeded expectations**:

- After ten months, **98.5%** of the first cohort of grantees remained engaged in an active income-generating activity
- **80%** of participants increased their household income



## Iraq

NEF launched the first-ever agribusiness lending program for women in Anbar, Iraq. More than 900 women-owned small enterprises completed a tailored business training program, and 600 of the participating businesses were competitively selected to receive a loan. Many of the borrowers used this funding to buy tools and supplies, expand safe shelters for their animals, and implement better agricultural practices. By offering this new opportunity for women to access financing in Anbar, communities are advancing economic agency for women.

# Programs

## Inclusive Economic Development



## Syria

In northeast Syria, **NEF is the only organization offering loans to vulnerable people so they can build sustainable livelihoods**. NEF provided 2,089 micro and small businesses with technical support and tailored loans. The lending portfolio is valued at \$2.9 million, and the default rate has not exceeded 1%. We are seeing successful results for borrowers:

- **76%** of borrowers reported improvements in self-confidence
- **72%** have improved food security
- **75%** have increased their household income

After listening to the needs of borrowers, **we launched two new types of loans for agriculture and innovations**. These are tailored to small and medium-sized enterprises ready to utilize larger loans. By expanding the financing available in underserved communities, we can make a more sustainable and significant impact on livelihoods.



## Lebanon

In Lebanon, **20,925 individuals** now have improved access to safe water and improved amenities powered by renewable energy.

Extensive conversations with community members informed NEF's innovative, locally-led approach.

Overall, the project supported **111 enterprises, 45 cooperative members, 1,000 farmers and 500 fishermen** to help them overcome barriers to generating income.



## Mali

More than 125,000 people in Mali boosted their resilience to climate shocks and increased food security through community-led natural resource planning. The ongoing NEF project strengthens local capacity to develop and implement inclusive initiatives to protect, conserve and restore natural resources.

# Programs

## Climate Resilient Development



## Morocco

In Morocco, NEF's Youth Climate Innovation Incubator supported the growth of 85 young entrepreneurs representing **32 start-ups focused on providing agribusiness solutions to the impacts of the climate crisis**. Entrepreneurs were given business development, life skills training, and networking opportunities to grow their businesses. Ten start-ups were selected for additional business development and financing and have since created 40 jobs, 20 of which are full-time.



## Sudan

In Sudan, 25,835 people increased their access to improved sanitation facilities. Thirteen communities were verified as “open-defecation free,” and **15,200 people now have access to improved water sources.**

NEF's WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) programming uses a locally-led approach that **trains and employs community members to maintain and manage the facilities,** ensuring their sustainability.



## South Sudan

In South Sudan, four new local inclusion-focused associations were established in communities with no access to financing to improve livelihoods. These are the region's first and only associations dedicated to livelihood planning. With NEF's support, they provided loans and grants to 1,420 individuals to increase income-generating activities. By leading the development of their communities, they provide stability and reliable access to resources.

# Programs

## Stabilization



## Armenia

In Armenia, NEF supported 30 local community organizations, which impacted 12,625 individuals (6,945 women, 947 children, and 812 persons with disabilities). The growth and sustainability of these local organizations strengthens their surrounding communities, making them more equipped to meet local needs rapidly and efficiently.

The project supported several special initiatives such as the establishment of a community-accessible greenhouse, a translation call center for people with hearing disabilities, and the implementation of a hydroponic system for cultivating green food for livestock.



# Crisis Response

## Syria



In February, a devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck Syria. NEF was one of the first organizations to respond to the needs of more than 12,000 people who live in the affected areas of Northern Aleppo.

Our preexisting work and our presence in the area allowed for a rapid assessment of needs. We combined vital emergency assistance with programs that support long-term recovery. Loans to new borrowers were designed for flexible repayment, and our current participants had opportunities to deliver essential aid to their communities by rehabilitating infrastructure, constructing solar lighting, and repairing water lines.

NEF contributed to the re-establishment of economic activity and the restoration of livelihoods, ultimately aiding in the long-term resilience of earthquake-affected areas.

In April, a violent conflict between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces erupted in Khartoum. The war has spread to other areas, and it has been devastating for the Sudanese as millions have been displaced from their homes and are seeking refuge in safer locations within Sudan and outside the country.

We ensured the safety of our staff, who were based in conflict areas. Then we established a new operational hub to continue our work, focusing on newly displaced people and provided more immediate cash assistance.

We continue to be nimble and support our teams' safety and the Sudanese people's needs during this critical time.



## Sudan



## Armenia

In September, after a ten-month blockade by the government of Azerbaijan, most of the ethnic Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh were forcibly displaced into Armenia. More than 120,000 people arrived with little to no resources to start their lives again.

NEF worked with ten of our trusted community partner organizations in Armenia to provide relief and recovery assistance for individuals and families affected by the crisis. To meet immediate needs, food and household items such as beds, heaters and washing machines were distributed. Support for sustainable livelihoods included job opportunities, training and skills-building focused on women's entrepreneurship. Legal advice and psychological assistance were offered to families who needed additional support.

A 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck Morocco in September, causing widespread devastation. For more than 35 years, Near East Foundation has partnered with many of the communities that were hit the hardest. We focused our efforts on rural areas, conducted an intensive needs assessment, and developed a plan.

Over 3,000 people will receive cash assistance, which can be used for basic needs, shelter, food and medical supplies. To support the recovery of income-generating work, an additional 300 households will receive cash assistance to purchase items like tools, equipment, seeds and livestock.

This will aid in the long-term revival of communities so they can continue their recovery when immediate aid is no longer available.



## Morocco



# How We Invested Our Funding

**\$17,412,791**

into program activities that transform lives and strengthen communities

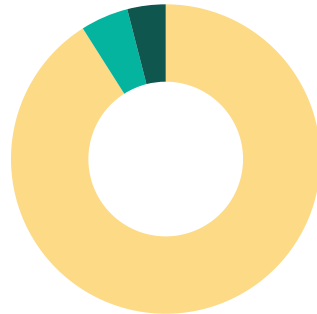


## Revenue Sources

- 86% Governments
- 10% Private Grants and Contributions
- 4% Investment Income

**\$925,094**

into operating expenses to support our expert team who makes our work possible



## Allocation of Expenses

- 91% Programs
  - 86% Direct Program Activities
  - 14% Indirect Program Expenses
- 5% Management
- 4% Fundraising

**\$758,470**

into fundraising to build a strong community of dedicated donors who grow our impact

**2023 Total Revenue \$20,531,424**  
**2023 Total Expenses \$19,170,787**

**Net Assets**  
**Beginning \$7,094,921**  
**Ending \$8,455,558**

# Financials





## Featured Local Partners

Abna El Sudan Development Organization (AEDO)  
Agate Rights Defense Center for Women with Disabilities NGO  
Alabathize  
Arcenciel  
Association pour l'Appui au Développement Intégré (AADI)  
Athar Association for Youth Development  
Azraq Women Productive Cooperation  
Beit el Baraka  
Centre for Emergency and Development Support  
Emerging Business Factory  
Families Development Charity Association  
Friends of Peace and Development Organization (FDPO)  
Gam Loui Payam Level Association  
Global Aid Hand  
GRADAC  
Guier Baai Payam Level Association  
Hope Restoration South Sudan (HRSS)  
Idoun Charitable Association  
Konykubai Development Association  
Kuforsoum Cooperative Association for Pomegranate Producers  
Sanabel Nour  
Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention for Local Development (SHEILD)  
Sudanese Red Crescent Society  
Syracuse University  
Tahfeez Association for Leadership and Development  
Taron Youth Development NGO  
United Iraqi Medical Society for Relief and Development (UIMS)  
WINNET Goris Development Foundation  
YCCD (Youth Cooperation Center of Dijilan NGO)  
Yethku Baai Tueng Development Association

# Special Thanks



## US Board

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Rana Gillmon, Vice Chair  
Johnson Garrett, Secretary  
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Mona Eraiba  
Johnson Garrett  
Cat Essoyan Hopen



# Special Thanks

## Funding Partners and Major Donors

### \$50,000+

Armenian Communities Department  
of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation  
Aurora Humanitarian Initiative  
Bogosian Quigley Foundation  
Center for Disaster Philanthropy, Inc.  
Cleveland H. Dodge Foundation  
Dadourian Foundation  
Elsa & Peter Soderberg Charitable Foundation  
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands  
European Union  
Ferd  
German Agency for International  
Cooperation (GIZ)  
Global Resilience Partnership  
Government of the Netherlands  
Ikea Foundation  
International Maize and Wheat  
Improvement Center (CIMMYT)  
International Organization for Migration  
Islamic Relief USA  
Linda Jacobs  
Norwegian Agency for  
Development Cooperation  
Novo Nordisk Foundation  
SNV Netherlands Development Organisation  
Stockholm Resilience Centre  
Syria Recovery Trust Fund

United Nations Development Programme  
United Nations Office for Project Services  
United Nations Population Fund  
United States International Development  
Finance Corporation  
US Department of State - Bureau of  
Administration  
US Department of State - Bureau of Population,  
Refugees and Migration (PRM)  
USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance  
Vitol Foundation  
Whole Planet Foundation

### \$49,999 - \$10,000

Carol B. Aslanian  
Myrna Barakat  
Mona Eraiba  
Johnson Garrett  
Rana Gillmon  
Jeff Habib and Jessica Lowery  
Randa El-Sayed Haffar  
Patrick Malkassian  
Haig and Connie Mardikian  
Shant and Christine Mardirossian

### \$9,999 - \$5,000

Shahnaz Batmanghelidj  
Wesley and Susan Hayden  
Seth and Cassie Hollander  
Bryan and JoEllen Ison  
Dee Robarts  
Mark Rutherford and Melissa B. Dodge

### \$4,999 - \$1,000

Carol Amirian  
John and Christy Ashby  
Ara Bagdasarian  
Court Ballinger  
Stephen Craxton  
Janet Davidson  
The Fullgraf Foundation  
The Greene-Milstein Family Foundation  
Charles and Kathleen Hinkaty  
Souren Israelyan and Angeli A. Lavilla  
William and Judith Jones  
Umar Kahn  
Richard and Barbara Lacy  
Stephen and Leslie Malottt  
Robert P. Morgenthau  
Mostafa Family Charitable Trust  
Julia Norman and Thomas Mullins  
Rosalind O'Campo  
Holly Pittman  
Joan Rothermel  
Karen Bedrosian-Richardson  
David Russell  
Joyce and Joe Stein  
Eric Widmer and Meera Viswanathan







Transforming livelihoods and strengthening communities for more than 100 years.



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