With your support, NEF is building knowledge, strengthening voices, and creating economic opportunity for those who need it most.

THANK YOU

Photo Credit: Professor Ken Harper
KNOWLEDGE

VOICE

ENTERPRISE
Presenting NEF’s 2018 Impacts and Achievements

TO OUR SUPPORTERS:

With generous support of our donors and partners, the Near East Foundation continued to lead transformational change in the lives of the most vulnerable people in the Middle East, Africa, and Caucasus last year. Your support has been critical to our continued commitment to improving the daily life and futures of the people we serve, helping them to overcome conflict, instability, and inequality.

Every day, NEF’s team is on the frontlines of our world’s more pressing development challenges. They ensure that our community-driven programs are effective, innovative, honest, and true to our core mission. In 2018 we directly benefited 2.02 million people, including smallholder farmers coping with climate change, women and children displaced by conflict, and aspiring young entrepreneurs.

In 2018, I was fortunate to see many of our projects first hand – from our cross-border agricultural development work in Palestine, to our water and sanitation and women’s empowerment work in Sudan, to our entrepreneurship programs in Jordan and Lebanon. While I was heartened to see the transformative impact our work has on individuals and communities, I was again deeply moved by the incredible determination and resilience of the people we serve. Every day they face challenges that many of us cannot fathom, yet they remain hopeful about what they will make of their future. I am confident that optimism comes from knowing they are not alone. I hope as you flip through these pages, you too are filled with a sense of hope of what we, together, can accomplish.

It is truly an honor to do this work and to be a steward of your goodwill.

With sincere gratitude,

Charles Benjamin, NEF President
OUR MISSION

The Near East Foundation helps build more sustainable, prosperous, and inclusive communities in the Middle East, Africa, and Caucasus through education, community organizing, and economic development.

OUR VISION

NEF’s efforts are focused on helping people and communities move beyond survival by providing them with resources to achieve a better future.

WE WORK WHERE THE WORLD NEEDS US MOST

Armenia  Jordan  Lebanon  Mali  Morocco
Palestine  Senegal  Sudan  Syria  Iraq  Yemen

* Planned expansion
TOGETHER WE

Provided training and opportunities for safe and dignified livelihoods

Implemented community-led investments to increase access to life-sustaining natural resources

Helped some of the world’s most vulnerable rise out of poverty, regain their confidence, and achieve self-reliance

Paved the way for people to become leaders of change in their communities

In 2018, we directly helped 2.02 million people
Together we helped create or expand 15,243 income generating activities 78% Women

Increased the capacity of 317 community-based organizations and women’s associations

Provided community activities for 1,625 youth to improve life skills, financial literacy, and coping strategies

Improved 8,049 people’s confidence and agency 79% Women
Lebanon and Jordan

After eight years of conflict, the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis continue to take a significant toll on both Jordan and Lebanon’s most vulnerable families and communities. With an eye toward moving people away from passive aid and harmful coping strategies, and toward self-reliance, NEF remains committed to helping refugees, Jordanians and Lebanese access safe and dignified opportunities to start businesses, secure employment, access financial resources and earn a stable income.

To ensure its continued impact, this year NEF applied new learning to improve the livelihoods services offered at its Siraj Centers including updating its business development and financial literacy curriculum as well as formalizing mentorship opportunities and advanced business coaching.

Responding to feedback from female participants, NEF established its first child-friendly safe spaces in three of its Siraj Centers in Lebanon. Equipped with furniture, toys, activities, and staffed by trained caretakers, NEF is proud to be pursuing a higher level of commitment to supporting families as they work together toward a better future.

2018 also brought new partnerships and opportunities for innovation. In Lebanon, NEF will expand its sustainable livelihoods programs to Tripoli, an urban area with high concentrations of poverty and upwards of half-a-million refugees.

And in Jordan, NEF started implementing a revolving credit fund, accessible to entrepreneurs who would otherwise be unable to meet the traditional lending requirements of commercial banks. It will allow entrepreneurs with high growth potential to access the funds needed to expand or update their business operations.

“I now am truly happy because I am financially secure and self-reliant.”

Asma, Lebanon Handicraft Maker

“Ahlam, Jordan Convenience Store Owner

“The training helped with bookkeeping and accounting, but I also learned I could change my life. I found a purpose.”

66% Average business survival rate in Jordan over the last 5 years

87% of business owners have reported reduced debt
Sudan

Despite the intense unrest in the country over the last year, NEF has continued to make substantial progress helping women’s associations in Sudan develop market value chains for non-timber forest products. In poverty-stricken areas of Kordofan, NEF is introducing women’s voices into the negotiation process, creating market linkages, and establishing standard pricing for forest fruits grown and harvested by women. This is increasing household income and improving product quality – including gum arabic, a major ingredient found in most soft drinks – while reducing the degradation of the trees that produce them. The formation of local women’s associations has acted as cooperatives for efforts around marketing, commercialization, sales, fair price-setting, and management of these natural resources.

Haowaa, Sudan, Women’s Association Leader

“Before the project, our husbands never allowed us to get involved with these activities, not even visiting the markets. Now, after seeing the results of what we are doing through the project, we are attending project workshops and meetings. Now there is nothing stopping us from succeeding.”
Morocco

NEF’s efforts to promote entrepreneurship and job creation among young people in Morocco scaled up in 2018 as NEF increased engagement and support within the greater entrepreneurship ecosystem in the Safi-Marrakech region. Working with local partners, NEF embarked on efforts to help 260 established businesses scale-up their operations and create 100 new jobs using targeted training, technical support, peer networks, and individual coaching—these efforts are meeting entrepreneurs where they are and helping them rise to their full potential. For businesses lacking funds for re-investment or access to credit, NEF has been working to connect them with viable financing options. Also using a microfranchise option, NEF is improving market access, lowering the risks associated with business growth, and generating additional employment where it is severely lacking for young people in the region.

Morocco

This year NEF put 12 community-based organizations on the path to creating sustainable funding and implementing plans for improved organizational management.

NEF’s current efforts are strengthening the economic sustainability of Armenian organizations that provide greatly needed social services and economic development programs to disadvantaged women, especially those who have been victims of gender-based violence.

Our work this year focused on helping the 12 organizations selected to establish social enterprises to provide a sustainable source of funding for their programs in the long term while creating new jobs for women.
This Year In: Climate Resilient Development

Together we increased 1,185,995 people’s food security

Delivered 123 community-led investments to increase resilience to climate change

Supported 149 infrastructure repairs or upgrades

Broadcasted 90 radio programs on topics including natural resource and conflict management

51% Women
Mali and Senegal

2018 was the fourth year of the Decentralized Climate Funds (DCF) program, which NEF leads with consortium partners IIED and IED Afrique to strengthen rural communities’ resilience against disaster and the negative impacts of climate extremes. NEF and its partners have worked from the local to national level to lay the groundwork to help climate finance reach local communities – linking the most climate-affected communities with locally controlled investment funds while building the capacities of local governments to adopt inclusive planning and finance mechanisms.

DCF facilitates support for community-led projects, such as cereal banks and water basins for grain and water storage, building wells, improving irrigation systems, planting water efficient crops, developing vaccination parks, and teaching techniques for soil and water conservation – all measures that the communities selected to build their resilience to climate extremes and disasters.

“Only eight or ten percent of international [climate] funds reach local communities. We wanted to change this situation by establishing a mechanism that puts climate funds directly from the international level to rural communities that are directly impacted by climate change.”

Yacouba Deme
NEF Mali Country Director

Oumou, Mali
Women’s Association President

“We are now able to cultivate throughout the year thanks to improved water availability and securing the perimeter of our garden. Children are better fed and our husbands are proud of us.”

A major victory took place in December 2018 when, with NEF’s support, the Government of Mali submitted its first application for direct access to the Green Climate Fund. This was achieved after nearly two years of sustained support from NEF and its partners to build capacities to access and manage the funds, and NEF will continue to support the Government of Mali as the process continues. This is a first for the country and will provide Mali with direct access to a fund set up by the international community to channel billions of dollars to help poor nations tackle climate change.

4 Local Climate Adaptation Funds ($3.09M USD)
finance public good investments that support community-prioritized climate adaptation strategies
Together we helped 2,054 farmers and food processors recover their livelihoods post-conflict. 34% Women

Supported 480 cross-border infrastructure repairs and upgrades.

Launched and increased the capacity of 7 community-based livelihoods Siraj Centers in Syria.

AND 8 supra-village associations in Sudan.
Since the fall of 2017, NEF has facilitated the recovery of agricultural communities and markets in Syria through technical training, value chain analysis, input grants, and access to equipment and supplies. By increasing access to sales channels and improving the quality and value of the goods being produced, NEF is improving the livelihoods, food security, and economic resilience of conflict-affected farmers and food processors. NEF is also helping to rebuild and strengthen essential agricultural value chains to accelerate economic recovery and reduce reliance on food aid as the country stabilizes. In the past year, NEF established seven Siraj Centers among some of the most vulnerable populations in Syria to deliver these services.

**Syria**

13.1 million people in Syria are in need of food, aid, and livelihood assistance

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**Sudan**

NEF continued to establish Supra-Village Associations, or SVA’s, in Central Darfur State. Made up of representatives from multiple villages and social groups, SVA’s facilitate the peaceful sharing of natural resources among ethnically diverse communities. Partnering with other local organizations, NEF provided Trainer of Trainers programs to members of subcommittees that are dedicated to conflict resolution, agriculture, forestry, animal health, pest management, and income-generating activities. Using this approach, NEF saw significant improvements in community organization and leadership, and increased representation for women and youth. SVA-led demarcation of livestock corridors and agricultural extension has largely contributed to environmental protection and income generation, creating tangible benefits for many communities.

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**Chief of Party, Syria**

“The local councils we’re reaching are excited and very supportive of the work and the progress made so far. We look forward to seeing the impact these efforts will have on not only the individual farmers, processors, and their families, but also on the agricultural sector within these communities.”

**Eissa, Sudan**

Village Chief

“This helped the village leaders by raising awareness of the importance of conserving our natural resources, especially the forests. It has decreased the amount of conflict between pastoralists and farmers in the area.”
This Year In: Water and Sanitation

Together we gave 596,271 people access to safe water and decreased sickness and time consuming, dangerous travel to water points.

Completed 6,708 infrastructure repairs and upgrades such as hand pumps, wells, and latrines.

Distributed 3,097 hygiene and sanitation kits and established or assisted 69 water and sanitation committees.
Sudan

This year, NEF’s teams in South Kordofan and Central Darfur reduced the risk of morbidity and mortality of nearly 100,000 people by improving their access to clean water and education on hygiene and sanitation best practices. Working within local communities, NEF mobilized Water and Sanitation Committees (WSCs). WSCs are trained on the best approaches for improving sanitation and hygiene, and on how to identify and prioritize infrastructure improvements – from water pumps to latrines. NEF helped to train and employ local craftspeople and artisans to manufacture and rehabilitate water pumps and latrines in 65 villages. NEF’s work to increase the technical and management capacity of local organizations to promote and facilitate good water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices also contributed to the increase in access to safe water and improved the coordination of local needs overall.

Palestine

Restricted access to land, water, agricultural inputs, and markets has harmed the agricultural sector and the welfare of Palestinian farmers. Cut off from new agricultural technologies, Palestinian farmers rely heavily on traditional practices, making it difficult to increase their income. To address this gap, NEF pursued improvements in productivity and market access through the adoption of improved technologies. Through a partnership with Netafim, a global irrigation manufacturer, and the Middle East Investment Initiative, NEF helped install 34 high tech irrigation systems benefiting 39 farmers and covering 120 hectares. Based on initial reports from cucumber farmers, the use of the new irrigation systems has resulted in a 30 to 40 percent reduction in water and pesticide use, reduced incidence of diseases, and reduced labor.

Mohammad, Palestine
Cucumber Farmer

“I will be able to reduce water usage, fertilizers, and the number of workers needed. I will also be able to irrigate my farm any time during the day or night.”

Izzaldin, Sudan
WSC Leader in Dambar

“Our community suffers from many diseases due to the lack of safe drinking water. The WSC was formed to address this, and we have already started to implement WASH practices to address and solve these issues in our area.”

32% of Sudan’s population is drinking contaminated water from unimproved water sources

reliefweb
Financials

NEF works to provide the highest levels of transparency and efficiency. See our complete FY2018 consolidated financial report at [www.neareast.org/download/financial_statements](http://www.neareast.org/download/financial_statements).

### REVENUE

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<td>2017</td>
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### EXPENSES

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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>$15,020,213</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$10,163,713</td>
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</table>

### NET ASSETS

**Beginning** $6,104,714  
**Ending** $6,168,926

### 2018 FUNDING SOURCES

- 89% Governments
- 5% Foundations
- 5% Individuals
- 1% Corporate

### 2018 EFFICIENCY

- 94% Program Services
- 5% Management/General
- 1% Fundraising
Programs

NEF continuously strives to achieve excellence in operations and organizational management. We are focused on increasing programmatic innovation, implementation, and learning in order to increase our impact.

PEOPLE SERVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
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CORE PROGRAM AREAS

- 32% Livelihoods Development
- 32% Natural Resource Mgmt
- 20% WASH
- 13% Peacebuilding
- 3% Education

LOOKING AHEAD

Expanding operations to Iraq in 2019 and Yemen by 2020

PROJECT DISTRIBUTION

31 active projects in 9 countries

- 8 Sudan
- 6 Palestine
- 4 Mali
- 3 Morocco
- 3 Jordan
- 2 Lebanon
- 2 Senegal
- 2 Syria
- 1 Armenia

EMPLOYEES WORLDWIDE

276

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

274

99% OF STAFF ARE FROM THE COUNTRY WHERE THEY WORK
A Trusted Vehicle for your Philanthropy
for over 100 Years

COST EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS

NEF delivers high impact programs while keeping our overhead costs low, making the most of your donation.

CHARITY NAVIGATOR

NEF’s commitment to accountability and transparency has earned it a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent charity evaluator.

GLOBAL GIVING

In 2018, NEF was recognized as a vetted member of the GlobalGiving community for being a trusted partner and change-maker in the world.

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.

ENDING POVERTY STARTS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY.
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Marrakech Generations
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Netafim
Org. for Voluntary Humanitarian Assistance Program
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Sudanese Red Crescent Society
Syracuse University
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Working Women Society
Youth Society for Self-Development

Thank you to the community of generous donors that allow NEF to create positive change for families and communities in need.

We are grateful for each and every donation received, and hope that you will continue to support NEF long into the future.

To see the complete list of donors for the July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018 fiscal year, please go to:
A special thank you to Syracuse University for enabling NEF to draw upon the talent and creative energy of the academic community to help address critical challenges while training a new generation of leaders who will guide the future of social and economic development worldwide.

Remembering Chuck Robarts

In 2018, NEF said goodbye to Richard Robarts, a revered leader of the Near East Foundation for nearly 22 years (1982-2003), whose philosophies and impacts are still very much present at NEF today.

NEF is forever grateful for Chuck’s contributions and the countless lives that he touched. For his dedicated service to the organization and to changing the lives of those in need, NEF dedicates the 2018 Impact Report to his memory.

Richard Charles (Chuck) Robarts
(1932 - 2018)