



2018

# Impact Report



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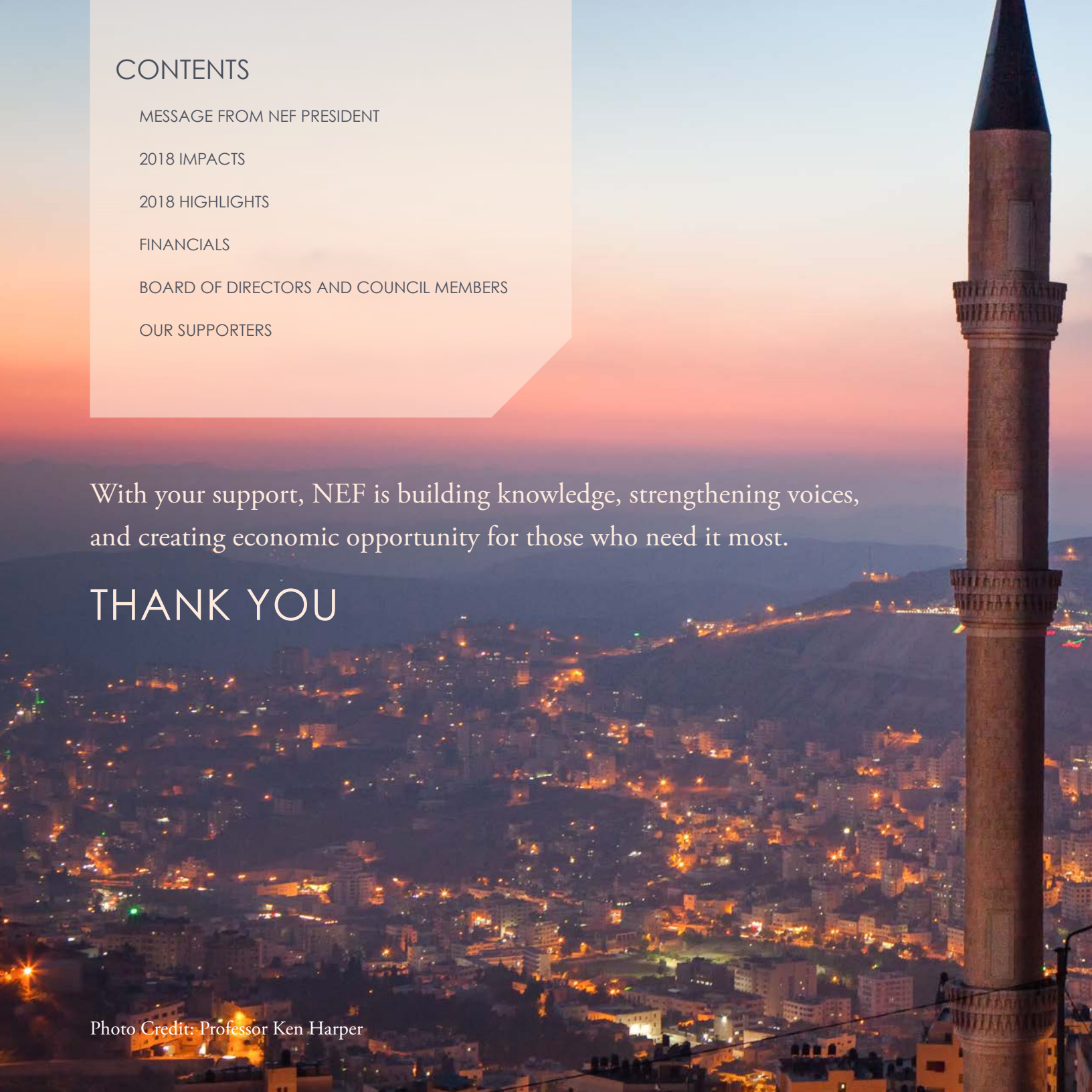
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

OUR SUPPORTERS

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







# Near East Foundation

## 2018 IMPACT REPORT





KNOWLEDGE

A photograph showing three young men in a classroom or workshop setting. They are gathered around a laptop, looking intently at the screen. The man on the left is wearing a blue t-shirt and has his hand on the keyboard. The man in the middle is wearing a black t-shirt and is pointing at the screen. The man on the right is wearing a blue t-shirt and is also looking at the screen. A water bottle is visible on the desk.



VOICE

A photograph of a woman wearing an orange headscarf and a black top. She is pointing her right hand towards a large sheet of paper that is being held up. The paper appears to have some text or a diagram on it. In the background, there is a chalkboard and some other people.



ENTERPRISE

A photograph of a group of people, mostly women wearing headscarves, sitting around a table. They are engaged in conversation and looking at something on the table. There are various items on the table, including bottles, cups, and some food. The setting appears to be a social gathering or a meeting.

# 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,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'C' followed by a horizontal line and two dots.

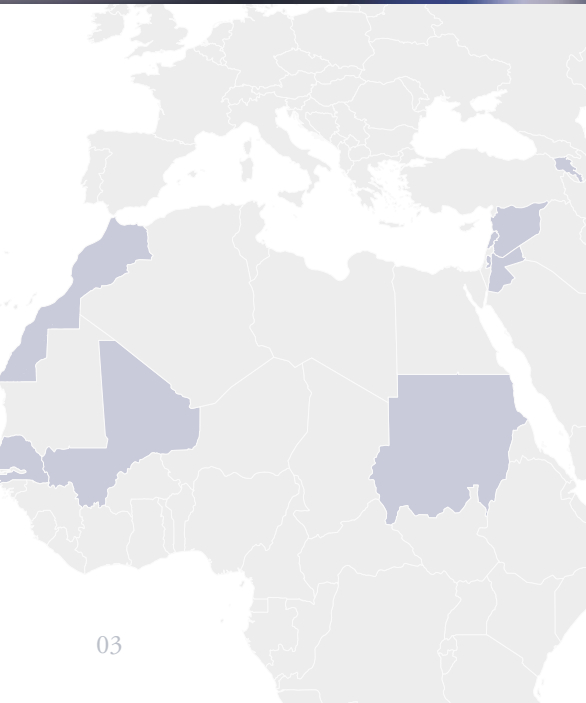
Charles Benjamin, NEF President

## 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



# This Year In: Inclusive Economic Development

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.



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

Asma, Lebanon  
Handicraft Maker

66% Average business  
survival rate

in Jordan over the last 5 years

87% of business owners  
have reported  
reduced debt

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.

Ahlam, Jordan  
Convenience Store Owner

"The training helped with book-keeping and accounting, but I also learned I could change my life. I found a purpose."





## 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.



26.5% unemployment among  
15-24 yr olds in Morocco

Middle East Monitor

“We were able to implement improvements that had seemed out of reach and gain the knowledge necessary to build systems for healthy organizational management. It provided us with the platform and capacity we needed to deliver services and solve the problems of our beneficiaries instead of focusing on our own.”

Spitak Helsinki Group,  
Armenia

## Kaoutar, Morocco Women's Clothing Designer

“Each one of us has our own story, our own thing to fight for. I think that empowering these women [that work for me], creating value in their lives, and being there for them, and myself, and my family is the path I choose to fight for. And I just go for it.”



## Armenia

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 **51% Women**

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

## 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.



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.”

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.

### 4 Local Climate Adaptation Funds (\$3.09M USD)

finance public good investments that support community-prioritized climate adaptation strategies

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.

“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



# This Year In: Stabilization and Peacebuilding

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



## Syria

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 northeast Syria to deliver these services.



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

UNHCR

## 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.”

## 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.

# 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.



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.”

32%

of Sudan's population is drinking contaminated water from unimproved water sources

reliefweb

## 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.

## 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.”

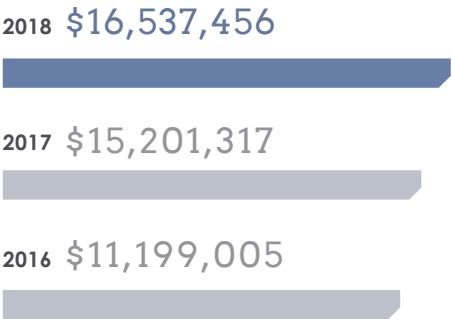




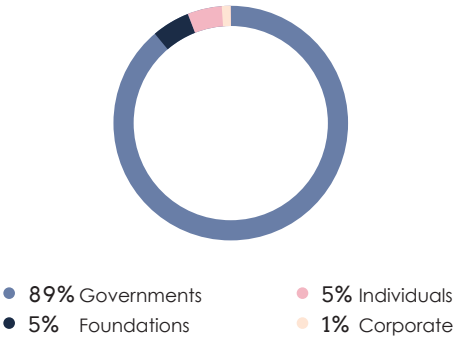
# Financials

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)

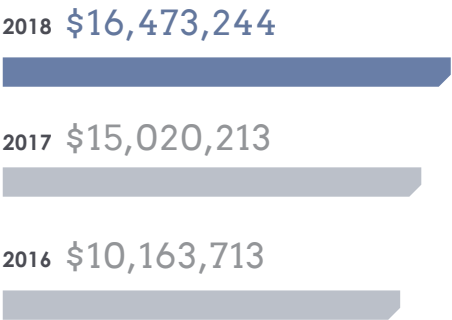
## REVENUE



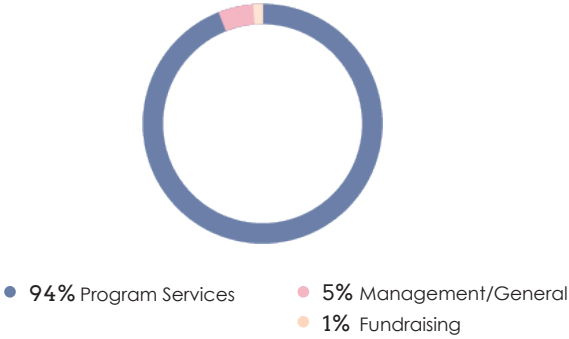
## 2018 FUNDING SOURCES



## EXPENSES



## 2018 EFFICIENCY



## NET ASSETS

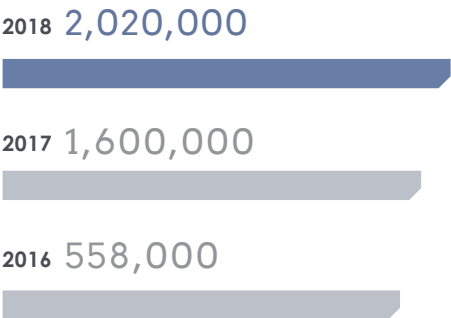
BEGINNING \$6,104,714

ENDING \$6,168,926

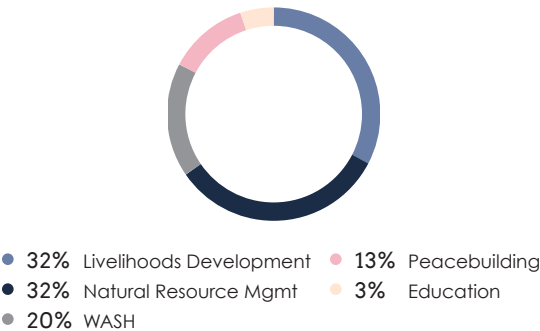
# Programs

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



## CORE PROGRAM AREAS



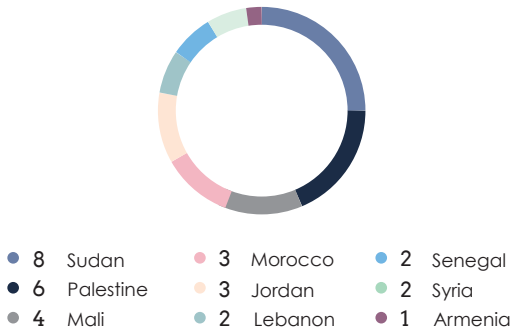
## LOOKING AHEAD

Expanding operations to Iraq in 2019 and Yemen by 2020



## PROJECT DISTRIBUTION

31 active projects in 9 countries



276 EMPLOYEES  
WORLDWIDE

99% OF STAFF ARE FROM THE  
COUNTRY WHERE THEY  
WORK

274 INDIVIDUAL  
DONORS



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

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

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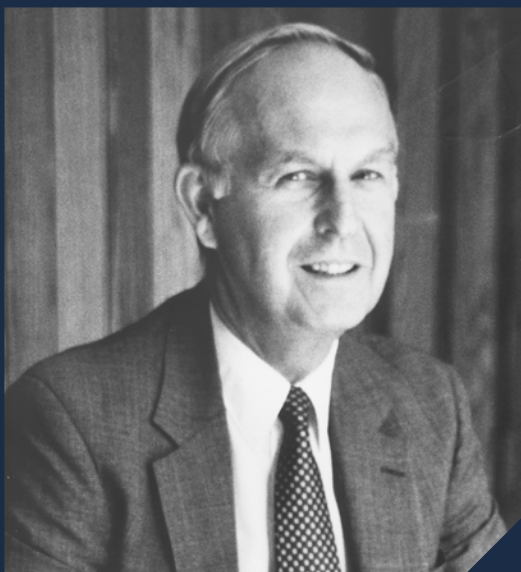
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Thank you to the community of generous donors that allow NEF to create positive change for families and communities in need.

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

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To see the complete list of donors for the July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018 fiscal year, please go to:  
[www.neareast.org/2018-impact-report](http://www.neareast.org/2018-impact-report)



Richard Charles (Chuck) Robarts  
(1932 - 2018)

## 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.

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.



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

### UK OFFICE

7-14 Great Dover St.  
London SE1 4YR  
United Kingdom

### BELGIUM OFFICE

Drève du Pressoir, 38  
Brussels-Forest, 1190  
Belgium

### DC OFFICE

1875 K St. NW  
Washington, DC. 20006  
United States

### CONTACT

info@neareast.org  
www.neareast.org





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