

Livelihoods Case Study

SUPPORTING MIGRANT WORKERS: MIGRANTS FROM LYBIA IN NIGER

COUNTRY: Niger

THEMES: Livelihoods; Migrant workers

BACKGROUND

During the 2011 revolt in Libya, many families from Niger, who were working in Libya, returned to Niger in order to avoid the conflict. When they arrived, they had no livelihoods or food, and so the 'Migrants from Libya' project was formed in 2011, in partnership with the Tearfund partner CEN and CRWRC and CFBG.

THE PROJECT

The project aimed to support 650 families from Libya, as well as benefiting the community. Each month, families were given 50 kg of rice, 5 litres of oil and 5 kg of beans in return for participating in training or community work activities. The project ran over 4 months, throughout which food was distributed, of which recipients had to work for 2 months. Five activities were developed for this purpose:

- **Collection of plastic bags**

Streets, alleys and squares were littered with plastic every day. Organised teams were sent out to collect the plastic and take it back to the church. This not only made the streets look nice, but also benefited animals and the environment.

- **Manufacturing bricks**

Workers received training and certificates on how to make cobble-based plastic bricks. Plastic collected from the streets is mixed with sand to produce bricks to pave the streets. So far they have had 1400 bricks, and have formed a cooperative so that they may be able to continue the business on their own one day.

- **Tree planting**

Trees were planted around the city to provide shade and make it look nicer. Trees are planted on the streets and are protected by mud bricks or branches.

- **Soil rejuvenation**

An infertile patch of land was offered by the Mayor for more than 200 migrants to work on. Each day they are transported to site to work on ditches which will irrigate the land with water from the rainy season. Seeds are planted with the hope that the land can be used for livestock and growing produce.

- **Gardening**

The city council has provided 11 hectares for workers to farm. Workers have prepared the ground and dug two wells to provide water. The land is divided into individual plots, one for each family, and vegetables seeds were distributed to be planted. Participants formed a cooperative to continue to support one another and decide on communal actions. This project should benefit hundreds of families, enabling them to grow their own produce to eat and sell.

IMPACT

When the migrants arrived, they were unhappy and had no sources of employment. With the help of the food for work scheme, they now have confidence and motivation. Because the scheme provides 4 months of food in return for 2 months of work, participants can use their time to begin to establish their own livelihoods, using the skills and resources provided by the scheme (e.g. land for farming, brick production etc.) There was good, active participation in the projects, with the projects having a positive effect on the community. Planting trees and collecting plastic improved the appearance of the cities, while creating bricks and preparing farming land provided potential for income from produce. The church hopes to set up more projects to benefit more migrants returning to Niger.