Dispositif d’Initiatives pour les Métiers de l’Artisanat

Annual 2022

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to give young people the skills to earn their living as artisans, to increase the incomes of practicing artisans, and to preserve traditional arts in Niger. We do this by providing training, equipment, and access to markets.

Background

What we do

We have established the only vocation training program focused on training young people in the trades of weaving, tailoring, and leather work. We provide the instruction, all equipment, supplies and transportation to the school. There is no required educational background to enroll in the school, and students receive up to 27 months of training in the program. Our school is located in Niamey, Niger.

History

Dispositif d’Initiatives pour les Métiers de l’Artisanat (DIMA) was founded in 2015 when the government of Niger granted the organization nonprofit status. A free vocational training school was opened in Niamey, Niger, in 2017.

The founders and staff are all Nigerien. Most are either master artisans or have provided support services to artisans.

Classes started with 15 students receiving three months of training in reading and writing. After that, DIMA set up a sewing workshop and the students began to learn tailoring. The training included lessons in sewing machine maintenance and repair and ran until July 2021. With a donation in 2019 from a group of Americans living in Niger, we acquired enough sewing machines for each student to have one to use.

In 2019, we opened a leather workshop and began training 15 teenagers. Over the summer break, DIMA arranged for several of the students to have apprenticeships at a major leather working cooperative in Niamey. All the leather working students received trained through July 2021. Also, in 2019, Remember Niger, an NGO headquartered in the United States, began providing financial support.

In 2020, in addition to continuing to train its regular students, DIMA trained 26 refugees from Mali in tailoring for several months with financial support from the International Committee for Emergency Aid and Development. The Support Fund for Vocational Training and Apprenticeship provided a couple of months of funding for our leather working program.

Also, in 2020, we launched a funding campaign on Global Giving to begin a weaving program. We raised enough funds to construct a shed to house the weaving equipment, install 5 traditional Nigerien looms and purchase tools and yarn. In February 2021, ten students began working under a master weaver skilled in tera-tera weaving, a traditional style of Nigerien weaving. A group of donors in the United States purchased and shipped a floor loom to the school.

The year 2021 also saw DIMA graduate the first cohort of tailoring and leather working students. In October of 2021, we enrolled a new group of students in the tailoring and leather working programs. We doubled the size of enrollment to a total of 60 students.

Activities in 2022

* As of the end of December 2022, our latest group of 60 tailoring and leather working students will have received a total of 12 months of training.
* We closed out our first Global Giving project, to start the weaving school, in January. Our goal had been to raise $10,000 and we received $16,593. We also started a new Global Giving project to fund the school's activities. We raised about $5000 in 2022.
* In February we surveyed our first group of 36 graduates from July 2021. We were able to locate 33 of them and they all had paying work.
* Our students participated in a Ramadan market in April and sold 127 items made at the school.
* We received accreditation as a vocational training school from the Nigerien Ministry of Education. This will allow our certificates to be used as proof of training around the country when our graduates apply for jobs and should make us eligible for funding from various government agencies.
* We were able to provide modest increases in wages to the staff.
* Dr. Amanda Gilvin, an art historian with expertise in West African weaving, gave 4 talks to weaving guilds in the United States about Nigerien weaving and our school. She raised $700 for us.
* The Remember Niger Coalition continued to be a valued supporter of our work.
* Friends of Niger gave us two grants. One grant was for supplies for the classrooms. The other grant will help cover expenses for a training program in tailoring we plan to start in early 2023 for patients at a national obstetric fistula clinic.
* The US Embassy in Niamey gave us a grant to purchase 20 sewing machines and a variety of other equipment and tools for our sewing classroom. This was an urgent need as we had doubled the number of students without adding additional equipment.
* L'Association des Nigérians Résidents en Italie and the Ministère de la Culture du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat also provided financial support.
* Dr. Genevieve Hill-Thomas, a professor at the Ringling College of Art & Design, donated two floor looms and a table loom to the school. She also donated her time to hold a two-week workshop at the school to train four experienced weavers and our weaving students on how to use the looms. To take advantage of this opportunity, we postponed some other projects and shifted funding to this activity. Within less than a month after the workshop, DIMA received a commission to weave 5 lengths of cloth to be made into men’s tunics.
* Total expenditures were $42,589 USD.

Income Statement 2022

 (USD)

Revenue

GlobalGiving $9739

Remember Niger Coalition 5860

Friends of Niger 9649

L'Association des Nigériens Résidents en Italie 400

Other donors 2487

In-kind donations 6000

Ministère de la Culture du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat 3333

US Embassy 5000

Sales 121

Total $42,589

Expenses

Management salaries $1331

Guard 839

Utilities 892

Cleaning 454

Accounting 161

Fundraising 1054

Administration $4731

Rent for classrooms $6908

Instructors' salaries 4136

Student transportation 1106

Classroom equipment and supplies 12,952

Weaving workshop training 7605

Accreditation fees 2349

Reserve fund 2228

Miscellaneous 574

Project expenses $37,858

Total $42,589