



Amman Imman WATER IS LIFE

Bringing water and hope to those who have none

**Amman Imman: Water is Life
Herds for Economic Resiliency (HERds)
Grant Amount: \$49,402**

**Interim Report for Dining for Women
July 2017**

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Some of the women beneficiaries and their goats

Recap briefly what outcomes the project was designed to achieve

The Amman Imman HERds program loans female livestock to extremely vulnerable women for reproduction and lactation. The goal is twofold: (1) increasing the daily nutritional intake of beneficiary children, thus reducing chronic malnutrition and (2) building a women's "traditional bank account" through the creation of personal herds for economic resilience and autonomy.

Has funding changed for this project? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?

No, other than we were able to purchase goats at a cheaper amount, and hence we purchased three goats per women instead of two. While this brought our goat costs over our goat purchase budget, we will be able to cover this difference with AI funds that have no specific allocation.

Is your organization or project situation different than presented in the approved proposal? For example, new executive director, significant project staffing changes or NGO affiliation, loss of large funding, or other significant changes?

Recently one of our major funders decided to rescind funding for all their projects in Niger (including funding to other NGOs) due to perceived risks with insecurity. The foundation in question did generously give Amman Imman \$50,000 to help through the transition. Fortunately, donations received by other sources have allowed us to cover our other program expenses and projects, namely our mobile health clinic costs, allowing us to operate without interruption.

Also, our staffing has changed in the last few months. Until 2016 we had one field supervisor, one program director, and two field staff in-country. Currently, we have three in-country field staff and one field supervisor who is directly implicated in the set-up and management of the HERds program.

When we began the HERds program at the beginning of the year, we had recently hired an in-country director. This person was responsible for the set-up phase of the program in addition to expanding AI capacity within Niger. Unfortunately, the work completed for the HERDs program did not meet the program design that put the women of Tangarwashane as leaders of the project. Thus, we took extra time before purchasing any animals to diligently reintroduce the project components to the community with the women of Tangarwashane as the intended recipient leaders of the program.

The program's major activity of animal distribution was scheduled for the beginning of June. However, we delayed animal distribution until July to reinforce the program design.



Tinibate proudly shows her three goats that have been branded and vaccinated. She thanks Amman Imman and Dining for Women. (A permanent sign will be made after the fodder bank is set up.)

Have the number of beneficiaries changed? To report this please refer to the original numbers in your grant proposal under the *Numbers of women and girls Directly Impacted and population Indirectly Impacted.*

Yes. Originally there were to be 50 direct goat beneficiaries, and ten cow beneficiaries (totaling 60 recipient women). Today there are currently 41 direct goat beneficiaries. Since the price per goat was slightly cheaper than originally anticipated, we decided it would be more beneficial in the long term to provide fewer women with 3 goats each. Each woman's herd can grow more quickly, and we can make up the difference in Year 2 when the goats are distributed to the 2nd set of women. NOTE: We are holding off on the cow distribution until the winter. This consequently affects our indirect beneficiary numbers, given that our indirect beneficiaries are the children of these women.



A woman beneficiary and her goats, with her children

Furthermore, more than 45 additional women's co-op members benefitted from the program. These women took part in a leadership capacity by making decisions about the program, taking responsibility for identifying quality animals at the market and participating in the animal husbandry training. A few interested men from Tangarwashane also participated in the training. Through the training we were able to identify two men and two women in the community as local "veterinary" trained experts to help oversee the health of the program animals.

What challenges are you facing as you move forward with this project? How are you approaching these challenges?

We faced two main areas of challenge that delayed the implementation of the project. 1) Staff changes that impacted program start date (mentioned above); 2) Ensuring the implication of the women in all program activities meanwhile respecting the cultural practices of the Tangarwashane community.



HERds is a women-led project. As such a key component of the project is for women to be the decision makers and participants at all levels. One component of this leadership was for a group of Tangarwashane women to choose the first HERds program goats. The women needed to be involved in animal selection, not only to help empower them, but also to ascertain that they would be happy with the goats chosen to launch their personal herd. On the initial day (set in June) that we had planned to purchase goats at the market with ten women representatives from our women's cooperative, we were informed by the male leaders of the community that women in Tangarwashane do not go to the livestock market. Rather, going to the livestock market is a job for men. Hence, the women would not be allowed to go to the marketplace to choose the HERds program animals. The men had not understood the importance of women being the choice makers of their goats, and had therefore not informed us prior about this decision. We decided to hold off on the goat purchase until a compromise could be found. We remained in a deadlock for several weeks regarding this situation, attempting to find acceptable solutions for both parties. Representatives from Tangarwashane met with Ariane and our field staff, and together we came up with the solution of holding a mini goat market at Tangarwashane village, where women beneficiaries from Tangarwashane and neighboring communities would be allowed to attend. This is how the project was carried out.

Hence, rather than having the men purchase and choose the goats for the women at the beginning of June, the women were able to choose our first HERds program mother goats the last weekend of July. Through this process, Amman Imman staff and leadership, with the power of Dining for Women behind them, reinforced the value of empowering women in Tangarwashane.

Another challenge has been acquiring quality photos of the project. While we received photos from our staff, they are not trained in photography, and we were not totally satisfied with the quality of the photos. Also, many of the women of Tangarwashane are increasingly becoming conservative, and prefer not to show their face for photos when the photo is taken in public.



The mini goat market at Tangarwashane village

Yet another challenge has been using women from other communities that benefited from an Amman Imman HERds program in the past as trainers for our Tangarwashane women. Our local team has been hesitant to use these women for a variety of reasons: 1) They did not always run their HERds project as it had been established, and some of the changes they made to their programs were not always beneficial to the overall project, 2) They are not convinced that having the women from our other sites will be well received by the women of Tangarwashane. We are in the process of evaluating the reality behind these assumptions.

Have you revised your original objectives since the project began? If so, why? What are your new objectives?

Given the price of goats, and the fact that we have fewer beneficiaries than planned, we decided to purchase three goats instead of two per women. In this way, they will have more offspring per year, and more quickly grow their herds. We have also held off for the time being purchasing cows and setting up the fodder bank. The community did not want to purchase fodder during the rainy season, for fear that it might get ruined by rain, mildew, and insects. The fodder bank will therefore be launched at the end of the rainy season, in September or October. Furthermore, given the fact that it is the rainy season, the animals currently have enough grass to graze on. We have held off purchasing cows in order to first observe how women manage their goats in this particular community. We want to provide as much support as possible to these women before providing animals that are even more difficult to care for. We have made this choice despite the fact that cows will be more expensive to purchase as the year moves forward. We simply want to be sure that our cow distribution is successful.



The women with their goats under the shade of a tree

What progress have you made toward achieving your objectives? Please address each stated objective.

The Amman Imman: HERds program main goal is twofold. Loaning female livestock to extremely vulnerable women for reproduction and lactation will achieve our goals of (1) increasing the daily nutritional intake of beneficiary children, thus reducing chronic malnutrition and (2) building a women's "traditional bank account" through the creation of personal herds for economic resilience and autonomy.

As far as achieving these two goals, the process has only just begun. Both goals will take time to be achieved, as they rely on the small herds of each woman to grow, the ability to produce milk and the financial stability of each woman beneficiary. On the other hand, the program has made great strides affirming the autonomy of the women of the communities. For one, we have been reinforcing the women's cooperatives, and they have participated in every step so far. These steps have been:

- 1) Discussing at length with the whole community the goals and activities of the program, with both women and men leaders. Ascertaining that the AI team also understands these goals and steps, and the underlying purpose of these.
- 2) Reinforcing the Tangarwashane's women's cooperatives.
- 3) Identifying beneficiaries.
- 4) Establishing a special committee of women responsible for overseeing the project. This committee now meets once a week, and reports back to the women's cooperative. This committee will choose the fodder bank managers, and oversee them. The committee has a treasurer, secretary, and president, technical manager, and two auditors.
- 5) Animal husbandry training sessions held by the department of agriculture staff for our AI team and the women beneficiaries (and anyone else wanting to participate). This training session taught:
 - Best animal husbandry practices, including how to monitor their goats, and keep their goats in good health. They went over the main diseases, such as anthrax, Rift Valley Fever, smallpox, etc, and how to identify symptoms, modes of transmission, and prevention. They also went over how to prevent the spread of certain parasites, such as lice, fleas, and ticks.



The woman holding the notebook is reading and writing in Tifinar, the Tuareg alphabet. She was chosen to be on the committee to assess the results of the project.

- The trainers also went over how to keep the women healthy given that they are in close contact with animals; how to limit the spread of parasites and disease from animals to humans.
- 6) Goat purchase in Tangarwashane and distribution. Goats were chosen by the women beneficiaries. Three goats (a total of 123 goats) were distributed to 41 women.



Mr. Omar, from the Department of Agriculture, explains how to recognize symptoms of disease in the animals, and how to prevent and treat them

- 7) Livestock branding; the brand is “DW” for Dining for Women. We decided to brand instead of tag, because tags sometimes get ripped off. Also, in case of death, we can ask for the skin of the animal showing the brand “DW”.



Vaccination and deworming of the goats by the veterinarian

- 8) Livestock deworming and initial vaccination (additional vaccinations and training will take place in the following months).

NOTE: Our Niger supervisor and our three field agents were present during the entire purchase and distribution process. Also present were representatives from the Abalak mayor's office, and the department of livestock and agriculture. Through these representatives, the mayor "encouraged women to make good use of this unwavering support, and sent his warm greetings to the NGO Amman Imman and the organization Dining for Women." The village chiefs of Tangarwashane and Intatolen (the other beneficiary community) were both present during the training and distribution process.

Do you anticipate any difficulties in completing your project in the timeframe outlined in your proposal?

A majority of our project components will be accomplished within the timeframe outlined in our proposal. However, the goat distribution took place several months after the grant was approved, due to 1) best timing regarding the seasons, thereby impacting the chances of survival of the animals, and the cost of purchase, and 2) issues concerning disagreements about how to run the purchase and distribution of the animals. This delay means that the women received their goats midway of the program agreement. Therefore, the redistribution of the animals to new beneficiaries will not take place until the middle or end of next year, in order to allot time for the goats to each give birth to at least two or more babies.

Messages to the Dining for Women community

"The beneficiaries of the herds project unanimously expressed their sincere thanks to the director and founder of "Amman-Imman" and the association "Dining for Women" for their unwavering support. These beneficiaries admit that these skills will change their living conditions. On the one hand, they said they will not only have the milk to feed well the children and the rest of the family but on the other hand this livestock will multiply in number. That is why they are very proud of this happy event."

— **Riskouwa Tchisso Mamane, Amman Imman nurse and Field Team Leader**

"I encourage the women of Tangarwashane to make good use of the livestock program. I send my warm greetings to the NGO Amman Imman and the organization Dining for Women."

— **Bilou, Mayor of Abalak**

