

Presbyterian Gifts at Work in Niger

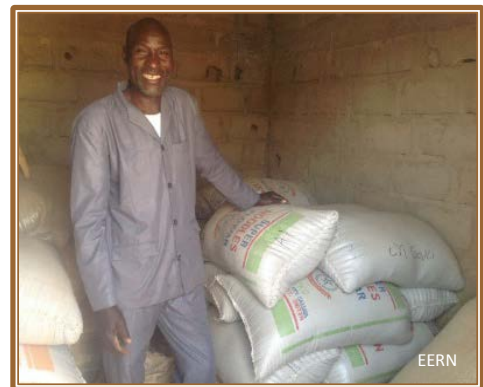


Presbyterian Hunger Program provided a grant to the **Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger (EERN)** to establish cereal banks in the regions of Maradi, Tahoua and Dosso in 2018. Six rural villages each provided a building to serve as a cereal bank (aka grain bank), training was provided, and locally-purchased millet was supplied to stock the banks. The EERN expressed hope that this could be a way to help solve one of the biggest difficulties that local communities have faced for a long time.

PHP supported the continuation of this work in 2019. The EERN asked its regional leaders to identify the communities most in need of assistance. 5 villages were identified in the regions of Maradi, Tahoua, Dosso and Zinder. Each local community decided on a place to hold the stores of grain. In this case, all the places were already-constructed structures that had served other purposes in the past. Each of the grain banks was supplied with 25 sacks (100 kg each) of locally-purchased millet.

How it Works

Each family that participates will initially be able to borrow a bag of grain to plant their fields. Once the crop has been harvested, an amount of grain will be returned to the bank, replenishing the stock so that they – and others – can obtain grain in the future. When a community runs a grain bank, farmers can borrow grain and then repay in grain after the harvest. The grain bank helps the community to avoid relying on speculators who buy up grain when it is plentiful and prices are low during the harvest season and sell the grain at high prices during the lean season.



EERN shared that they are particularly hopeful about the grain bank in one of the communities where violence between differing religious groups resulted in the destruction of three EERN churches a few years ago. They see the establishment of the grain bank as a new way to move toward reconciling the two communities.