

College of The Atlantic
Taibatou Adamou, Aniruddha Jaydeokar
Davis Projects for Peace 2022 Niger

Empower Women Entrepreneurs for Peace in Niger

Project Overview

Our peace project empowers the Fara'a women entrepreneurs processing food in Niamey, Niger by assisting them in establishing sustainable business practices, developing their brand to thrive as a sustainable enterprise. Women in Niger are the heart of a family and always go the extra mile to sustain their families. By empowering women, mothers, spouses, and sisters, we bring peace and security into their hearts, souls, and homes.

Background

The World Bank reports that Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world with 43% of the population living on less than one dollar a day. While agriculture is the major source of income for 80% of the population and contributes 40% to the GDP, it suffers from many challenges including harsh environmental conditions, lack of technological innovation, and no infrastructure for farmers to manage and market their produce. Consequently, 30-50% of the harvest is lost before ever reaching the market. This lost harvest leaves the farmers and their families in a state of extreme poverty, not having enough to provide food, shelter, healthcare, and education for their families. In the face of this adversity, a group of 10 women came together in 2019 and started a food processing business named the Fara'a enterprise – Fara'a translates to Joy in Hausa language. With the purpose of bringing joy and peace, Fara'a works with 10 farmers across the country to procure and process their produce into precooked millet couscous, baobab jam and pastilles (cookies), herbal teas, and other products to sell at the local markets. The commercialization of these products helps eradicate poverty for these farmers and women, allowing their families to access healthcare and education.

While their mission is admirable, Fara'a faces substantial obstacles. These women come from vulnerable communities and have little formal education. They lack the business training required to successfully run the enterprise including making sustainable financial decisions, developing their brand, and establishing their presence on digital platforms, which the Fara'a enterprise observed to be necessary in reaching their customers. Therefore, they are barely making any profit to keep the business running. As pioneers in the food processing industry in Niger, there is a demand for their products – especially the Kinkeliba (a very popular loose-leaf tea traditional to Niger). With the right support, the Fara'a women could meet the demands of this emerging market.

Project Break Down

Our project has two components to address the challenges of Fara'a: establishing sustainable business practices and developing their brand to thrive in the marketplace.

Sustainable Business Practices: This component consists of hosting a workshop focused on making financial decisions to sustainably grow their business and achieve their entrepreneurial goals. We will develop the content of our workshops with the support of Professor Jay Friedlander (the director of the sustainable business program at College of the Atlantic), the Maine Small Business Development Center finance professionals, and Kader Kaneye (a professional accountant with an MBA from Harvard University, co-founder of the African Development University in Niamey, and mentor to Taibatou).

Product Brand Development & Marketing: This component consists of certifying Kinkeliba tea through *Agence Nigerienne de Normalization, de Metrologie, et de Certification (ANMC)*, which is the food certification agency in Niger that ensures products are healthy for consumption and are processed following the national hygiene standards. Since Fara'a products are new to the market, the certification will help build

credibility and assure people of their good quality. Since the process will take two-to-three months to complete, we will make sure to provide all the help necessary for the Fara'a women to carry on the process in case we are unable to see the completion of the certification. We will also improve the design and branding of the products by working with graphic designer Alsu Shagieva. We will use the final design to customize the packaging and upgrade it to be biodegradable and eco-friendly, minimizing the enterprise's environmental impact. We will also be staying in constant communication with Ms Mélé Fanata for her input until all decisions concerning her enterprise are finalized. Finally, we will support the commercialization of the Kinkeliba tea by helping the Fara'a enterprise establish their presence on the digital platforms Facebook and Instagram—platforms that are most used by individuals to learn and interact with enterprises in Niger: We will create these social media accounts for Fara'a as well as the content to be posted. We will teach a designated person in the enterprise how to manage the accounts to carry on after the project ends.

The Team

Taibatou is a 4th year student at College of the Atlantic and native to Niamey, Niger, more specifically from the Terminus neighborhood where the Fara'a women are based and so has a direct connection with them particularly with the founder, Ms Mélé Fanata. Taibatou knows the culture, speaks Hausa (the native language of the Fara'a women), and understands their struggles, motivating her to support them. Having won *The Go Make a Difference Grant* in 2017 with her project FAM (Fight Against Malaria) that brought medicine and mosquito nets to her village, Taibatou observed that although the donations greatly helped her community, they were short-term solutions. In pursuit of sustainable solutions, this project for peace was born. Inspired by the hard work of the Fara'a women, Taibatou believes that with the right tools and knowledge, they can build the legacy of a successful enterprise that will change lives.

Aniruddha is a 3rd year student from India at College of the Atlantic and has been working in startups for the past 5 years. He has the entrepreneurial mindset needed for the success of this project. In 2016, he founded IGCSE Pro (www.igcsepro.org), an online resource for students taking the Cambridge IGCSE examinations. His website helped bring reforms to the overpriced tutoring industry and has served more than 500,000 students worldwide to access high quality educational resources for free. Aniruddha's upbringing in India allows him to understand the challenges faced by Niger since both countries are fast-growing, Global South economies. Being passionate about serving others, he is motivated to support the Fara'a women in developing and expanding their enterprise within Niger and beyond.

Taibatou and Aniruddha have both focused their college education on sustainable business and finance and have both experience in content creation and social media marketing. They are determined to bring their experiences onboard to help the Fara'a women entrepreneurs establish a sustainable business that brings joy and peace to the people of Niger.

Timeline

If our project is approved, we will collaboratively create the content of our workshops and the brand design beginning mid-March to June 2022. We will then implement the project in Niger with the Fara'a women in July and August 2022 starting with the certification process, followed by the workshops, and end with the product branding and marketing.

Project Impact and Sustainability

This project will directly reduce poverty for approximately 20 families with the potential to uplift many more as the enterprise develops. This will help build a peaceful, strong, sustainable community with the resilience to take on the challenges of the future. Through the delivery of sustainable business workshops, the project will elevate the financial position of Fara'a enterprise and that of the households involved further enabling them to invest in their children's education. Through the certification and marketing of loose-leaf Kinkeliba tea, the project will generate competitive advantage for the Fara'a enterprise bringing sustenance within a financially secure, peaceful future.

Name: Taibatou Adamou , Anirudhha Jaydeokar
Project Name: Empower Women Entrepreneurs for Peace in Niger
School: College of the Atlantic

Note: all funds in US dollars.

Projects for Peace grant:	\$ 10,000.00
Additional Funding, if any:	
Total funding available:	\$ 10,000.00

TOTAL FUNDS REMAINING:
\$ 10,000.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES:
\$ 10,000.00

Student Expenses					Project Expenses				
Airfare)_ Airfare for both Anirudhha and	Lodging_	Sim card and internet connexion	Food (Biweekly)	Transportation in Niamey City	workshop with all the equipments	Loose leaf Kinkeliba tea	packaging cost + Marketing costs	Graphic designer: Alsu Shagieva	Materials (notebooks, pens,
3000	300	200	400	100	300	5000	300	200	200
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
\$ 3,000.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00

Total Student Expenses:	\$ 4,000.00
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Total Project Expenses:	\$ 6,000.00
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