



# 2019 Annual Report

## Friends of the Dogon

A year of regional unrest, before a global pandemic



**Dear Reader,**

2019 was a year of unrest across the Sahel, and particularly in Mali, making our help for the villagers of Doundiourou more urgent than ever. The violence in Central Mali continued to escalate, creating a refugee crisis. These internally displaced people (the more specific UN term for refugees within their own countries) fled back to their ancestral villages out of fear of ethnic violence in the areas where they had lived for decades. Doundiourou welcomed 150 desperate refugees and FOD supporters responded generously, providing them with shelters, mosquito nets and food for 3 months until they could harvest their own crops. That one of the poorest places on the planet has to endure the additional burden of housing and feeding refugees is heartbreaking, but the villagers showed inspiring solidarity and met the challenge with financial support from FOD.

There was also a bright spot in 2019: from January-May, the villagers built themselves a chicken coop with 100 chickens. This FOD-financed project now contributes to the nutrition of the villagers in the form of fresh eggs daily. We can only hope that the better nutrition will help the village in combatting COVID-19, should the disease reach Doundiourou.



<http://friendsofdogon.org/donate.html>

Facebook: [@FriendsofDogon](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofDogon)



*Finalizing the chicken coop.*

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First installment of aid for the refugees, July 2019.



## OUR MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Our mission is to support Mere-odjou, our partner cooperative in the village of Doundiourou, to combat poverty, malnutrition and desertification. To achieve this, we raise funds for the projects of Mere-odjou. These aim to achieve three main objectives:



- Generate income-earning projects for the locals to reduce poverty and malnutrition and to stop rural exodus in search of work.
- Improve the opportunities of local children to receive education, particularly girls.
- Combat desertification by planting multi-purpose trees.

*Doundiourou village.*



Increase in the number of  
pupils vs. 2018: **+56**  
children **(+38.3%)**



## ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019

### School meals: A third consecutive year of strong pupil enrollment

Due to the refugee crisis, we had to redirect funds planned for school meals for the October trimester to the refugees, and the canteen was suspended for three months. When we restarted the canteen in December, the success of the school meals in enabling parents to send their children to school was striking: school enrollment grew from 146 to 202 pupils, representing nearly a 40% growth in enrollment from the year before.

*Mere-odjou at work.*

As of December, one trimester of school meals costs 2600 CHF (\$3730 CAD). The resulting annual cost of 7800 CHF is considerably higher than last year due to the increased pupil base. While we are thrilled about this success contributing to improved nutrition and education, we have to look for ways to step up our fundraising to cover this significantly higher expense.

*Lunch hour for pupils of Doundiourou.*





*Building shelters for the refugees.*

## **The refugee crisis**

FOD faced a sudden emergency in late June, when ethnic conflict in Mali escalated to crisis levels, resulting in thousands of internally displaced people fleeing violence and returning to ancestral villages. This brought 150 refugees to Doundiourou. The priority was to provide them with food and shelter, and FOD supported the village with funds to buy tarps, mosquito nets and food. In a subsistence farming community such as Doundiourou, the refugees needed supplies for the first three months, after which they could feed themselves with the crops they planted on arrival.

## **Sheep rearing: on hold**

Until 2019, the sheep project had been the biggest FOD success in bringing money into the community. Unfortunately, the heightened tensions and violence in the region have effectively brought this initiative to a halt. With risks of travelling too high, sheep traders are unable to do business, and no new lambs have been available for sale since the spring. Mere-odjou made their last sale in June 2019, and currently have 38 sheep, with the rest of the money kept aside for an eventual return of the sheep economy.



*New village inhabitants.*

## **Free-range chickens in Doundiourou**

In January, the villagers started building a henhouse with FOD funds from an FOD Christmas chicken gift campaign, and by June, they had populated it with 100 young hens. The chickens have done well despite the heat, thanks to their spacious and well-shaded yard, and provide up to 80 eggs per day to the village, supplying a valuable source of nutrition. The sale of eggs and young chickens could also become an income source when peace returns to the country and regional markets resume.

## **FOD corporate sponsorship**

Smart Cuts Ltd., our long-time corporate sponsor, continued supporting the work of FOD financially. We also took steps to start releasing FOD media content to enhance fundraising with Smart Cuts expertise. We look forward to another year of cooperation to the benefit of the villagers.



# ACTION PLAN FOR 2020

## Ongoing school meals

Guaranteeing the continuity of the school meals is the priority for us in 2020. This requires funding of 7800 CHF annually; we also aim for projects that will nudge the canteen toward self-sustainability, such as egg production and growing fruit trees.



Roof for the chicken coop.

## COVID-19

Writing this report in the spring of 2020, while large parts of the world are still partially shut down, we remain very anxious for our friends in Mali. The first Covid-19 cases were detected in Bamako and in Northern Mali in early April, but at the time of writing, Doundiourou's isolation has left it untouched by the virus. With no medical services, let alone hospitals with ventilators in the district, we can only hope that the disease will not become rampant in Central Mali. For the moment, the school is suspended, but the villagers are ready to restart as soon as the government allows.

## Tree planting / green belt: Major funding needed

Building a green shelter belt around the village to stop desertification, improve soils and retain water is our long-term goal. This includes planting fruit trees and medicinal plants to bring much-needed cash to the village. While we have developed a detailed plan for this project, we continue looking for a grant or a funder to cover the costs of such a large-scale project. The



villagers have been experimenting with raising a few seedlings to gain some experience with cultivating a variety of species.



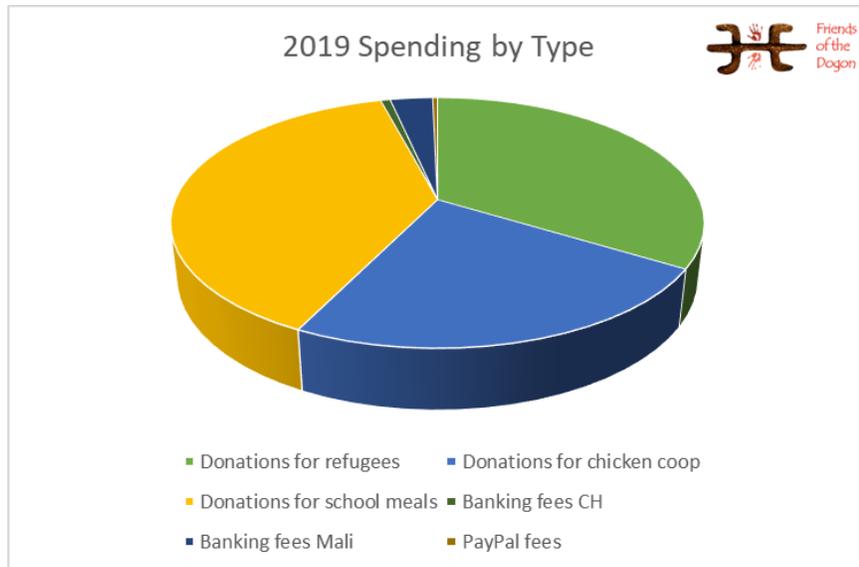
Potential future projects.

# FOD IN FIGURES

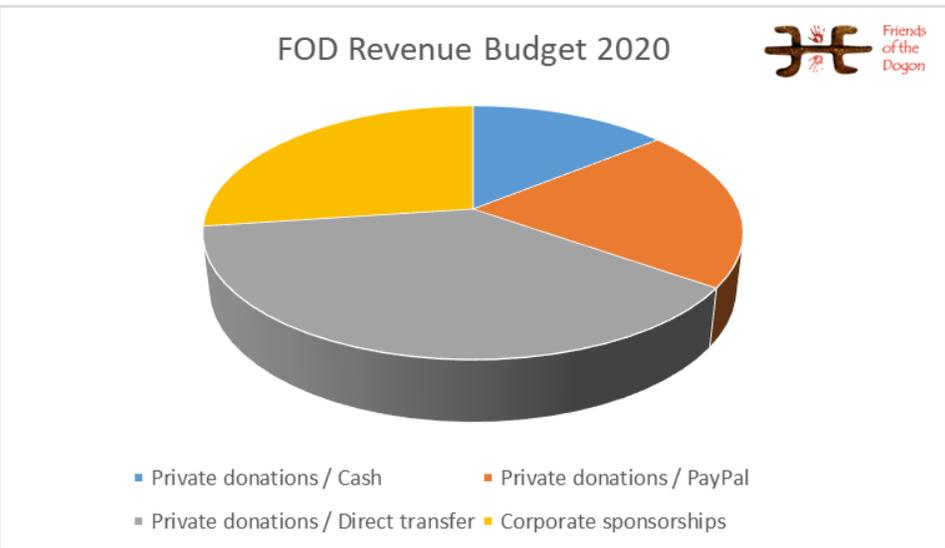
Total donations received in 2019: 10,135 CHF\* (2018: 6,185 CHF)  
 Percentage of donations reaching Mere-odjou: 95% (2018: 97%)  
 Donations and grants budgeted for 2020: 9,200 CHF

In 2019 FOD received 10,135 CHF in donations. This was 64% more than in 2018. This welcome surge in donations is primarily linked with the refugee crisis, when FOD supporters generously reached out to help the desperate internally displaced people. Our target for 2019 is 9200 CHF, and we believe this a realistic goal we can achieve through new corporate sponsors and innovative fundraising campaigns. For example, we plan to host an international mountain film festival in Leysin together with local partners to fundraise for FOD.

**We do not charge any administrative expenses, and all work is on a volunteer basis.** In 2019, 95% of donations were spent on projects in Mali. The remaining 5% consist of fees for receiving donations online through PayPal and banking charges in Switzerland and Mali for transferring money. The multiple transfers to Mali made during the chicken project and the refugee crisis increased our transaction costs, and similarly the percentage charged by the Malian bank increased during the year.



All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF). We received donations in five currencies (Swiss Franc, Euro, Pound Sterling, US and Canadian Dollars) from around the world. Online donations are continuously converted to the base currency (CHF) using the rates offered by PayPal, and cash donations based on the daily rates. We aim to keep foreign exchange conversion impact to a minimum.



Donations to FOD are tax-deductible in Switzerland.

\*1 CHF ≈ 1.03 USD ≈ 1.43 CAD

## FOD 2019 Income Statement (pre-audit)



All amounts in CHF

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>1.1.2019 - 31.12.2019</b>	
Private donations / Cash	CHF	633.00
Private donations / PayPal	CHF	829.25
Private donations / Direct bank transfer	CHF	7,473.23
Corporate sponsorships	CHF	1,200.00
Grants	CHF	-
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>10,135.48</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Charitable spending		
Donations for refugees	CHF	4,038.82
Donations for chicken coop	CHF	2,830.00
Donations for school meals	CHF	4,625.00
<b>Total charitable spending</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>11,493.82</b>
Banking expenses		
Banking fees CH	CHF	83.00
Banking fees Mali	CHF	368.18
PayPal fees	CHF	42.20
<b>Total banking expenses</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>493.38</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>11,987.20</b>
Financial gains	CHF	0.05
<b>Net result</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>-1,851.67</b>

## Balance Sheet (pre-audit)

<b>Assets</b>	<b>31.12.2018</b>	
Bank account balance 31.12.2019	CHF	2.27
Paypal account balance 31.12.2018	CHF	0.84
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>3.11</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Capital</b>		
<b>31.12.2018</b>		
<b>Capital</b>		
Remaining funds to donate in 2019	CHF	3.11
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Capital</b>	<b>CHF</b>	<b>3.11</b>

## WHO WE ARE



**Madame Atta Guindo**  
*President of Mere-odjou*

Madame Guindo was chosen by the women of Doundiourou for her seriousness and dedication and her ability to get along with everyone. Born in Toroli, a small Dogon village in the Seno plain, she married into Doundiourou where she farms millet, peanuts and beans and is the mother of 4 children. She never had the opportunity to go to school, but is dedicated to helping all children have access to education as well as to the socio-economic development of the village.

Born in Doundiourou Seno, Mamadou had to walk 8km for primary school, then attend secondary school 20km away. He tried to continue his education in Bandiagara but could not afford to finish his studies, returning to the village to work as a tourist guide to support the education of his brothers and sisters. When tourism collapsed, he gathered the women of the village to form an association to try to address the crisis. He has CEAP training (Champs École Agro-Pastoral) given by the FAO, after which he organized a group of 25 households to train them in agricultural and pastoral techniques and village saving and credit associations. Mamadou speaks 5 languages, including Dogon, Bambara, French, English and Peulh.



**Mamadou Guindo**  
*Field Coordinator of FOD and  
General Secretary  
of Mere-odjou*



**Serge Pfister**  
*President of FOD*

Serge worked on seven missions for Médecins sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders), as a logistician, administrator and project coordinator, in Sudan, Ethiopia, Congo and Myanmar. Presently teaching, he is active in several associations, with a focus on promotion of solar energy and support to refugees newly arrived in Switzerland. He is also a member of the city council of Leysin, Switzerland. (MSc Environmental sciences, UNIL, MEd Haute Ecole Pedagogique, Lausanne).



**Audie Hazenberg**  
*Vice-President of FOD*

Having lived in Tanzania for two years as a child, Audie has always been drawn to Africa. She studied lions for two years in the Serengeti before moving to humanitarian work for Doctors without Borders. She has worked as logistics coordinator for relief projects in the Republic of Congo and in Darfur, as well as in Myanmar. In between projects, she has guided bicycle and hiking trips around the world for Butterfield and Robinson, as well as pursuing personal bicycle adventures in central Asia. She currently lives in Switzerland where she teaches natural science at a post-secondary college. Audie is the Vice-president of Friends of the Dogon. (MSc Biodiversity Conservation, University of Leeds; BSc Zoology, University of Guelph; MEd Haute Ecole Pedagogique de Lausanne).



**Dr. Henkka Kuokkanen**  
*Treasurer of FOD*

Henkka is an international educator and academic researcher who has been involved in sustainability and corporate social responsibility for the past 15 years. Prior to his academic career, he worked in multinational business finance which led him to become an entrepreneur in corporate social responsibility consulting. His key research and practical interest lies in transforming the often abstract concept of responsibility into practical projects that create significant impact to local livelihoods. He also has experience serving on the board of an international research organization. Henkka, a native Finn, is based in the Alps. He is the treasurer of Friends of the Dogon. (PhD in Corporate Social Responsibility, Leeds Beckett University; MSc Economics, Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration).



**Saakje Hazenberg**  
*Secretary of FOD*

Saakje has worked in wildlife research for several conservation NGOs and now works in ecology monitoring in Jasper National Park in Canada. With her sister, Audie, she both lived in Tanzania as a child and worked guiding cycling trips for Butterfield and Robinson around the world. She has also travelled extensively on independent cycling epics, including a trip across Mali where she made friends with Mamadou and the villagers of Doundiourou. (MSc Forest and Nature Conservation, University of Wageningen; BSc Biology, University of British Columbia)

Craig is an entrepreneur from New Zealand, now based in Switzerland. His extensive world travels included a cycling trip across Mali with Saakje where they made friends with Mamadou and the villagers of Doundiourou. He is presently working on a new start-up company and is an advisor to Friends of the Dogon. (Bcomm Marketing, Auckland University).



**Craig Stoddart**  
*Adviser to FOD*

### Smart Cuts Ltd

*Professional partner and donor to FOD*

<http://www.smartcuts.ch/>



FOD would like to thank Smart Cuts Ltd for their commitment in supporting FOD since the early days, and their valuable financial support to the people of Doundiourou.



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Dogon

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