



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

## SHELTER FOR LIFE: ABOUT US

Shelter For Life International (SFL) is an international faith-based relief and development organization with over 40 years of experience in providing sustainable development and humanitarian assistance to post-conflict countries around the world.

We believe that sustainable communities are built through the shared involvement of local people who are empowered to be an integral part of the rebuilding process. With this grassroots approach, SFL enables people devastated by conflict and disaster to become part of the solution.

We strive to be socially and environmentally sustainable by employing cultural sensitivity, community participation, appropriate alternative technologies, and cost-effective methodologies to our programs, which are underpinned by human-centered design. Our results go beyond new shelters, roads, and water systems. SFL's comprehensive approach rebuilds communities, offers hope, restores dignity, develops local capacity, and creates environments in which communities can thrive.



### Our Mission

Demonstrating God's love by enabling people affected by conflict and disaster to restore their lives and rebuild their communities.

### Our Vision

To be one of the leading international Christian humanitarian aid organizations, providing disaster relief with long-term development and sustainability.

### Our Approach

We address disaster relief and the long-term development needs of the communities we serve, by tailoring and implementing a range of contextually appropriate programs.



## MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Conflicts and natural disasters that cause widespread displacement can lead to feelings of powerlessness. What can we as individuals do to provide help on the scale needed? Shelter For Life International (SFL) believes that even when we cannot provide direct assistance ourselves, we can still enable others to create positive change. SFL continues to make remarkable progress in its initiatives, especially in Afghanistan and West Africa.

In Afghanistan, we are collaborating with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to distribute food aid, enhance infrastructure, and create livelihoods. In Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau, SFL is dedicated to improving the production, processing, and marketing of cashews, benefiting thousands involved in the cashew value chain. In Senegal, through a partnership with the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), SFL has continued work to offer shelters and access to clean water for returnees who left their homes years ago due to conflict.

Your continued support has enabled us to make a significant positive difference in communities around the globe. For this, we are genuinely thankful.

The management and board of Shelter For Life International,

Brint Patrick, Chairman of the Board

Mustafa Omar, Chief Executive Officer



Brint Patrick,  
Chairman



Gordon Wright,  
Vice Chairman



Kyle Newkirk,  
Treasurer



Victor Weir III,  
Director



Thomas Lane,  
Director



Mustafa Omar,  
CEO



LIFFT-Cashew project field staff in Ziguinchor, Senegal

## AFGHANISTAN

In FY 2023, SFL in Afghanistan, in partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) implemented a total of 18 food distribution projects in eleven of the country's 34 provinces. In addition to WFP-funded projects, SFL also carried out food aid and emergency assistance funded by private foundations and donors. **Altogether 336,223 households (2,354,000 individuals), benefited directly from projects implemented by SFL.**

The main objectives of these projects were to improve food security, offer short-term job opportunities and improve income, reduce migration and accompanying instability, mitigate the impact of natural disasters, build resilience of communities to better withstand food insecurity and the effects of natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. The SFL programs targeted the most vulnerable families to ensure access to food and provide livelihoods. Project activities targeted the most vulnerable households and included construction of retaining walls and terraces on hillsides to prevent landslides, building and refurbishing canals and reservoirs to improve water management for agriculture, tree planting, food and non-food distribution, and training in local disaster risk reduction. In these projects food items were distributed in exchange for labor.

Since women play a key role in Afghan communities, SFL works to include the contribution of women in WFP projects. All projects are conducted in close coordination with Community Development Councils, district and provincial government authorities and agencies, including departments managing agriculture and irrigation, rural development, disaster management, and other stakeholders.

Highlighted results of these projects:

- ✓ Food security and livelihood conditions improved among targeted populations
- ✓ Farmers in the targeted communities are better equipped to maintain their fields and irrigation systems
- ✓ Increased agricultural crop production through improved irrigation and water management
- ✓ More than 200 houses protected from landslides and floods by construction of protection walls and hillside terraces
- ✓ Soil stabilized and erosion reduced through planting of fruit and non-fruit trees
- ✓ Job opportunities provided for local populations, with resulting decreased migration
- ✓ Increased women's economic capacity through livelihood training including productive domestic gardening; increased economic activity in targeted communities
- ✓ Highly vulnerable rural households showed improved food consumption scores



Workmen employed by SFL in Afghanistan building a retaining wall next to a rural road

## SENEGAL: RETURNEE REINTEGRATION PROGRAM

The United States State Department through its Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) funded the Shelter for Life International (SFL) Returnee Reintegration Program in Senegal to assist with the return and reintegration of displaced people of the Casamance region (“Casamançais”) who have decided to return to their place of origin. The project (1) facilitated the resettlement and construction of basic transitional shelters for returnee families and (2) provided safe water supply infrastructure and latrines for over 3,000 returnees.

SFL began project activities in October 2022 by bringing together the Advisory Councils of each district in the project area. This project builds upon SFL’s two USDA-funded projects in the region: the first from 2012-2017, which focused on the construction and rehabilitation of farm-to-market feeder roads that opened the Casamance to commerce and travel; and the second from 2017 – 2025, which is improving the cashew value chain. The uptick in the local economy from these two projects has created an incentive for displaced people to return to their home villages in the area. **The project successfully achieved its objectives by assisting returnees and refugees in building over 300 shelters, constructing 300 modern latrines, and installing 15 new water wells equipped with hand pumps.**

Following the installation of the new water points, SFL worked with Ziguinchor’s Assane Seck University in early July and sent them water samples from each well to test potability through physico-chemical and bacteriological tests. The test results showed the water was potable, but that treatment was needed to reduce high levels of bacteria in the water at some sites. In collaboration with SFL, the Ziguinchor Hygiene Department treated all the well water and provided five village committees with sanitary kits for periodic well maintenance. Likewise, 300 beneficiary families received hygiene kits for hand washing. SFL provided construction materials and technical guidance that enabled beneficiaries to completely build their new shelters by July 2023. A thorough inspection was carried out on each structure before SFL handed them over to the beneficiary households to move in. These activities enabled the beneficiaries to easily resettle in their villages of origin. SFL achieved all project indicators.

To celebrate the project's success, a closing ceremony was organized in September, 2023, attended by the BRPM Senior Regional Refugee Coordinator and her team, a delegation of senior SFL members, and many project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

### Lives Changed Through Shelter

“My name is Awa Tendeng, and I’m the mother of 7 children. My husband and I fled our village of Mamatoro along with our neighbors inhabitants in 1992. Fleeing was our only option when armed men affiliated with the MFDC rebel group ransacked our village. We took refuge in Ziguinchor, in the Casamance region of southern Senegal. At the start of the conflict, we lived in constant fear and disarray. By the end of 1993, news reached us that all the houses in the village had been burned down and our village was completely empty.

“Living outside our village was extremely difficult for our family. My husband and I had to grow seasonal crops to support our household. However, in 2014 my husband fell ill with diabetes and could no longer do any hard physical work, thus leaving me as the sole provider for our family. Since then, we sank further into poverty.

*“Today, my family and I now have a new home from the Shelter For Life’s (SFL) reintegration project for returnees! We have built a new house on land belonging to my husband. In our home, I also take care of an additional six other family members which include my husband’s brothers and four grandchildren who are also poor and have nowhere else to go.*




*“The members of my household and I have regained our dignity and we have resumed our life in our community. I sincerely thank Shelter For Life for helping my family get a roof over their heads.”*





## LINKING INFRASTRUCTURE, FINANCE, AND FARMS TO CASHEW (LIFFT-CASHEW) PROJECT IN SENEGAL, THE GAMBIA, AND GUINEA-BISSAU

The Senegal, The Gambia, and Guinea-Bissau (SeGaBi) cashew production zone of West Africa encompasses a large geographic area of the three countries. Over the past few decades, the weakening of the cashew value chain in this zone left many farmers with a stagnating market infrastructure and without financial services and economic opportunity. To overcome these challenges, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food for Progress program is funding SFL to implement the Linking Infrastructure, Finance, and Farms to Cashew (LIFFT-Cashew) project in the SeGaBi. The initial six-year project from 2017 to 2023 was recently awarded a merit-based extension to 2025. The project is developing a regional and integrated cashew value chain by increasing cashew production, processing, and trade in local and international markets. This is accomplished through the construction of durable trade infrastructure, increased access to financial services, smallholder farmer organization, training to increase production and bargaining power, and building on the capacity of local processors to add value to cashews in West Africa. This program benefits smallholder farmers, a range of processors, and various other businesses along the cashew value chain.

To date, the LIFFT Cashew Project has:

<p>Improved Infrastructure</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Constructed and rehabilitated 136 km of rural agriculture feeder roads, linking more than 50 villages to markets</b></li> <li>• <b>Created 4,640 jobs through cash-for-work opportunities</b></li> <li>• <b>Rehabilitated 23 raw cashew nut storage facilities and constructed four new warehouses in collaboration with cooperatives and private partners</b></li> </ul>
<p>Increased Cashew Nut Production and Quality</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained 28,689 cashew producers in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and established 7 demonstration plots; trained 23,268 farmers in pruning, thinning, nut separation, drying, storage, organic standards and improved practices on 54,145 hectares of cashew plantations</li> <li>• Conducted a cashew farmer census for 11,905 farmers, including 2,165 women; facilitated certification of 3,027 farmers in organic cashew production</li> <li>• Trained 18 nurserymen and supported them with equipment including four modern shade structures and 24 chainsaws granted for pruning</li> <li>• Established 32 tree nurseries and 98,000 seedlings produced to support reforestation and plantation renewal</li> <li>• Sourced seed and scions of new cashew varieties imported from Vietnam; adaptability testing and multiplication is underway with the research institute and accredited nurseries in the three countries</li> </ul>
<p>Cooperative Development</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened 24 Cooperatives with over 5,000 members</li> <li>• Trained 408 cooperative management staff in capacity building, administration and financial management, member management, and services development</li> <li>• Provided 24 scales (8 1-ton and 16-200 kg), office furniture (16 sets of tables, chairs, and cabinets), and IT kits (six sets of computers, printers and internet modems)</li> <li>• Provided eight motorcycles and eight tricycles to support RCN collection</li> <li>• Provided 3,295 jute bags for post-harvest cashew nut quality retention</li> <li>• Collection and sale of 129,630 metric tons by cooperatives and farmers from 2020 to 2023</li> </ul>

<p><b>Improved Access to Finance, Market Linkages and Trade</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlocked more than \$840,000 in financing for cooperatives through public-private partnerships between cooperatives, financial institutions, and the Warehouse Receipt System.</li> <li>• Financed 104 women from two cooperatives for market gardening through credit scoring activity</li> <li>• Signed 53 commercial contracts linking buyers and cooperatives resulting in \$64 million in prefinancing leveraged</li> <li>• \$2,190,000 loaned to ten processors through the Cashew Fund mechanism to purchase raw nuts from cooperatives with \$4,641,041 in private investment leveraged</li> <li>• Established a country specific cashew sector Steering Committees to influence and advocate for policies favorable to the cashew value chain</li> <li>• Developed concept note for Food Safety Regulation for Cashew Processing Companies in Senegal</li> <li>• Implemented a Diagnostic study on cross-border RCN trade and a roadmap to establish a Single Cashew Market in SeGaBi; trained 1,777 (463 women) in entrepreneurship, savings, loans and financial management</li> </ul>
<p><b>LIFFT-UP Information Management</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed the Cashew Market Information System &amp; Indicator Management System</li> <li>• Mapped and georeferenced 2,057 cashew farms to facilitate organic certification for farmers</li> <li>• Ensured 7,052 people can cashew market data through social media networks and the project website</li> </ul>

## Building Capacity

The Ajac Lukaal cashew farmer cooperative in the Casamance region of Senegal is one of 24 agricultural cooperatives with which the project is building capacity. Ajac Lukaal was established as a cooperative society in 2021, with 113 official members including 71 men and 42 women, and a network of over 1,000 cashew producing farmers. Mr. Ismaila Djiba, president of the cooperative, stated, ***“Thanks to USDA support through the LIFFT-Cashew project, producers now sign win-win contracts directly with international exporters”***. For example, Ajac Lukaal started by selling 821 metric tons of raw cashew nut (RCN) in 2020, and that amount has increased annually. “Recently we collected and sold 3,000 metric tons worth \$2.3 million in 2023.” In addition, every year more farmers register as members, and the cooperative engages in group sales to increase pricing power and earn significant profits for farmers. In 2023 alone the Ajac Lukaal cooperative registered 92 new members, including 78 men and 14 women. Since the beginning of the project, SFL partner cooperatives in the SeGaBi sold 129,630 metric tons of raw cashew nuts, amounting to \$110 million in sales value for farmers.

Between 2020 and 2022, partner cooperatives in the SeGaBi region leveraged approximately \$150,000 in cash and in-kind investment toward their agriculture and storage rehabilitation and construction activities. For example, the Ajac Lukaal cooperative rehabilitated 977 cubic meters of warehouse space to store 300 metric tons of RCN. The project has rehabilitated 23 cashew nut storage warehouses and constructed four new warehouses. SFL completed ten additional storage facilities by the end of 2023. **As a result, 23,268 farmers have applied improved management practices and technologies on over 54,145 hectares of plantations.** In addition, the project works to improve local cashew variety productivity and quality by working with cashew nurseries. Since 2020 these nurseries have produced over 98,000 seedlings, including 7,500 from Ajac Lukaal, used in agroforestry and reforestation of new plantations to renew old, non-productive ones.

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE OPTIMIZATION FOR PRODUCTIVITY IN HORTICULTURE (CROP-H) PROJECT IN THE GAMBIA

In 2023, SFL was awarded a \$27 million USDA Food for Progress grant in The Gambia named Climate Resilience Optimization for Productivity in Horticulture (CROP-H) with a goal to improve food security and expand the trade of Gambian horticulture products locally and internationally. SFL will work with smallholder farmers to double fruit and vegetable productivity and improve the trade-enabling environment with better sanitary and phytosanitary standards. The project's implementation zone currently includes all 6 regions of The Gambia but in the first two years will focus primarily within the same regions as the LIFFT-Cashew project which are the West Coast Region, North Bank Region, and Lower River Region, allowing rapid start-up and to quickly move activities to scale. During years three to five, CROP-H will expand activities to other regions and boost productivity and enhance value chain linkages. These activities will advance market access, food diversity, and food security within rural regions. The project is in the start-up phase and will begin field activities in 2024 after the baseline evaluation is completed and approved by USDA.

### DONORS AND PARTNERS

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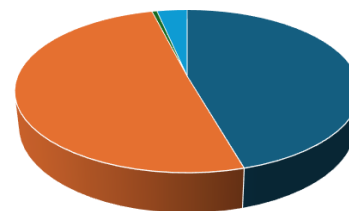
  
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## FINANCIAL REPORT

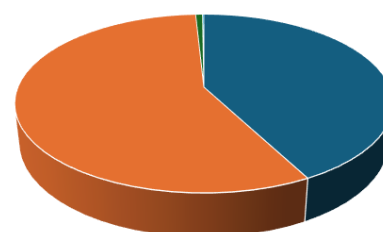
Revenue and Support	
Federal Grants and Contracts	\$ 3,303,794
UN WFP Contracts	3,665,101
Contribution and Support	39,926
Other Income	245,719
Total Revenue and Support	7,254,540
Expenses	
<i>Program Services</i>	
Senegal Program	2,772,371
Gambia Program	8,935
Afghanistan Program	3,732,303
Ukraine Program	45,893
Total Program Services	6,559,502
<i>Support Services</i>	
Administration	563,983
Fundraising	6,426
Total Support Services	570,409
Total Expenses	7,129,911
Change in Net Assets	124,629
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	2,097,876
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 2, 222,505

Revenue & Support



Federal Grants & Contracts  
UN WFP Contracts  
Contribution & Support  
Other Income

Program Services



Afghanistan Program  
Senegal Program  
Ukraine Program  
Gambia Program

This financial statement is audited



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