

## DM2009 Project Summary

Project Number: 5057      Booth Number: 93

Earth-Roofed Housing: Cheap, Sustainable Shelter to Face Desertification

COUNTRY: Burkina Faso

ORGANIZATION: Association la Voute Nubienne (AVN)

FUNDING REQUEST: \$101,000

**OBJECTIVE:** To test an innovative strategy for scaling up and accelerating the recruitment and on-the-job training of Nubian Vault (NV) apprentices and the growth of a self-sustaining market in NV houses. Since its foundation in 2000, AVN has trained about 200 masons in the NV technique, who in turn have built more than 900 vaults in Burkina Faso and neighboring countries, successfully validating the technique.

**RATIONALE:** Climate change, deforestation, and increasing population growth in the Sahel region of West Africa make it unfeasible to adopt traditional building methods using bush timber: around two-thirds of the estimated 150 million population in this region live in houses or shacks with roofs of imported corrugated iron and sawn timber. Buildings with such roofs have no thermal or sound-insulation properties, and are unhealthy and uncomfortable. The need for cash to purchase the imported materials forces many families into a vicious circle of poverty. AVN provides an affordable, ecologically sustainable alternative through its program "Earth roofs in the Sahel," training farmers and masons to build vaulted earth-brick roofs, using locally available materials, and creating a growing construction market for homes with a low carbon footprint.

**INNOVATION:** Through proactive collaboration with local village communities, over a 24-month period in a selected pilot zone in the region of Boromo, Burkina Faso, the Pilot Zone Development Program will develop, test, and evaluate a phased-implementation program of apprentice training and construction.

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