



## **NGO Committee on Ageing, New York**

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### **For Immediate Release**

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## **Announcement of the 2016 Awardees of the NGO Committee on Ageing, New York's Virginia Hazzard Legacy Fund**

The Virginia Hazzard Legacy Fund announces \$3,000 grants to four basic literacy and numeracy programs specifically designed for the 60+ populations in Mozambique, Mali, Togo and Nepal. The Fund was created with funds left to the NGO Committee on Ageing, New York by Committee member Virginia Hazzard, a former UNICEF employee who worked on children's programs in the Philippines and in China and, who in retirement, represented older persons through AARP at the United Nations.

The NGO Committee's first award in 2011 went to micro-financing projects for 12 rural older Pakistani women. As part of establishing bank accounts for each, the women were required to get national identification cards which also enabled them to vote for the first time. Their earned money contributions enhanced their status in their own families.

This year, the Virginia Hazzard Legacy Fund Subcommittee chose to offer support for literacy projects as a knowledge of basic reading, writing and counting are essential requirements for living in today's world as demonstrated by inclusion in the United Nation's newly approved Sustainable Development Goal on Education. Three similar literacy projects have been made possible by a generous donation to the Virginia Hazzard Fund from H. Abadzi.

Janet Sigal chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, New York stated that "The NGO Committee on Ageing, New York is very pleased to award grants to four very special projects. These projects will enable older women and men to gain essential skills of literacy and numeracy so that they can become more fully involved with their families and in their communities."

### **Projects Awarded Funding:**

Mozambique: The Regional Network for Advocacy in Youth and Adult Education (RAJANO) was founded in 2009. Mr. Valero Ussene, its General Coordinator, is the literacy project director. The funded project will involve 80 older women and 20 older men in learning basic writing and counting. RAJANO facilitators were trained by the International Council for Adult Education. The organization works with the Provincial Department of Literacy and Adult Education and with The National Health Services to ensure that best practices and health issues – for example –

the need for glasses are taken into account. There will be a mix of 2 hour Saturday group classes each with 10 older students as well as 2 hour per week home- based learning with facilitators. Materials will be produced specifically for this project.

Nepal: Ageing Nepal has worked with the older population of Budhanilakantha Municipality 12 outside of Katmandu, the country capital for a number of years. Project director, Mr. Bhumidatta Poudel, is trained in socio-economic research and population studies. Together with Older Persons' Associations, Day Care Centres and families with older persons based in Katmandu, the capital, 20-25 older persons will be selected to learn basic language and numeracy including such skills as using mobile phones and the tv remote controller. Classes will run 4 hours per day 5 days per week for 6 months. Special reading and teaching materials will be developed.

Togo: Association Tin Yal T Kua (ATYK): Mr. Kombate Lorimpo,, Executive Director of ATYK is the project director. 100 community active illiterate older women from a shea butter cooperative will be selected for this pilot project designed to enhance their economic prospects through gaining literacy and ability to calculate in their local language. Literacy committees will be responsible for locating the students, mobilizing additional resources, and monitoring and evaluating the program with the assistance of the Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Promotion of Women and the Literacy (MASPFA). Training will be held four hours per day three days per week. When/if needed, glasses will be provided by the government of Togo.

Mali IEP: Mr. Cheick Oumar Coulibaly, an experienced adult educator is the project director. This pilot project called "Alpha Sankore Older" will include two groups of 21 students each: rural men with an average age of 65 and urban women with an average of 60. It will be an intergenerational literacy and counting learning approach in Bambara, their local language. The project is based on the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Friere. Curriculum ideas will be drawn from older persons' traditional knowledge which will be incorporated into the interactive learning experience.

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