



November 2017

Dear Friends,

Burkina Faso has long been considered an oasis of peace. In recent years, however, it has experienced tumultuous shocks that have disrupted the economy and adversely affected many. The Burkinabè people have been courageous and virtually heroic in their responses to these disruptions. For example, many participated, at considerable risk to life and limb, in demonstrations resisting the attempt by Blaise Compaoré to change the constitution in 2014 allowing him to serve yet another presidential term after being in power 27 years. The “people’s resistance” forced Compaoré to flee the country. Thereafter, democratic elections were held and the winner, Marc Roch Kaboré was sworn into office in 2015 followed shortly by the formation of the new government.

More recently, Burkina Faso suffered a series of terrorist attacks by extremists affiliated with al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, beginning with jihadist commando raids in Ouagadougou in early 2016 and subsequent attacks in the northern parts of the country bordering Mali and Niger. Such acts of violence have not only resulted in the loss of lives and property but they have traumatized individuals, businesses, and foreign aid organizations. Sadly, we witnessed the Peace Corps’ evacuation of all of its volunteers this past September following another attack against a restaurant in Ouaga.

**Despite these sobering events, now is not the time for FBF to withdraw its support. Rather, now is the time for our members to come together and show that we, as a group of concerned individuals, value and care for Burkina Faso, its people, and its culture.** One way we can do so is to continue supporting community-based projects that have been approved and/or are likely to be approved in the near future, pending completion of our vetting process and the availability of our resources.

FBF encourages supporters to designate donations as either 1) “restricted”, which support the education of girls and young women in programs sponsored by our local partner, NEEDED or 2) “non-restricted.” The latter option gives FBF the flexibility to allocate resources to whatever vetted project it highly values. Examples of how “non-restricted” projects funds could be used this next year include possible extension of the AIVPDL agricultural project for a second year and the proposed Fulani school initiative that the FBF Projects Committee views favorably but has not yet been approved.

### **AIVPDL’s agricultural project in South-Central Burkina Faso**

With financial assistance from FBF, a group of retired agricultural professionals in southern BF began working with 375 farmers, half of whom are women, earlier this year. These experts, all of whom who work *pro-bono*, are helping these producers increase their production. To date, AIVPDL has raised awareness among these farmers about the importance of restoring soil fertility through the use of organic fertilizers; launched training programs about modern crop management techniques; and provided the farmers with improved seed. AIVPDL would like to amend its program educating farmers about ways to



mitigate control water flow, erosion, and stem the loss of organic material that often occurs following heavy rainfall. They also hope to be able to include another cohort of 375 farmers to their program in 2018.

### **Fulani school initiative**

Fulani women approached [Father Maurice](#) asking his help for building a primary school in their village of Signoghin, near Bittou. He suggested that they write a proposal and submit it to the local mayor, which the women did. Shortly thereafter, the village chief and his delegation approached the Inspector of Primary Education for assistance. The Inspector welcomed and was surprised to learn about their interest in having a school. He thought, as others have, that the Fulani were not interested in formal education. Here's what the Inspector said to the delegation: "Unfortunately the government does not have the financial means to offer Signoghin a school. But if you build this school yourself, according to the standards of the State of Burkina Faso, the government will provide the teachers." He encouraged them to seek financial assistance from friends, both in BF and abroad. Father Maurice approached FBF about forming a partnership with his organization, called [SEDELAN](#); [ABADAS](#), a NGO in Arradon France; and local supporters finance school construction. To date, 68% of the funds needed to *complete the first phase of building* the school have been donated, including 1.0 million FCFA from the Fulani herders themselves; and another 12% has been pledged by the major's office of Bittou. The school plans to welcome its first class of students on 1/15/18, under an *apatam* (ie., straw hanger) until the concrete classrooms are completed. FBF may be both willing and able to complete the current funding gap following our fundraising campaign.

There are three ways that you can contribute to our Fall Fundraising Campaign: One is to make a financial donation to FBF projects is to complete the enclosed donation form along with a check and send them to our treasurer. Another option is to contribute electronically and directly by clicking the [donate button](#) on our website. Finally, you may donate to one of FBF's projects posted on the GlobalGiving website, namely for [NEEED's girl scholarships](#) and/or its [School Lunch](#) program.

**As an additional incentive to give to FBF between November 23 and December 31, we are raffling off a framed, one-of-a kind vintage map of Burkina Faso. This map, drawn by Robert Toé and based upon field research conducted by Guy Le Moal, outlines in impressive detail the various ethnic and language groups across the country. The map was donated to FBF by former Peace Corps Country Director, Douglas Teschner to raise funds for FBF Projects. All donations that are \$500 or above will be entered into a hat and the winner will be selected at the first Projects Committee meeting in the new year.**

As always, we appreciate your continued solidarity with Burkina Faso. Now more than ever, we need the support of our many members to show our friends and loved ones in Burkina Faso that we stand with them in these challenging times.

Best wishes for a joyous 2017 holiday season!

