



November 2018

Dear Friends,

Greetings and warm wishes from all of us at FBF!

In this season of giving, we encourage you, as a friend of Burkina Faso, to generously contribute to our annual Fall Fundraising Campaign in support of FBF-approved projects. Doing so will enable us to help generate goodwill and improve the lives of Burkinabe in communities throughout BF. **There are three ways that you can contribute:**

- Electronically contribute through the [FBF website](#).
- “Snail mail” a completed [donation form](#) along with a check to our treasurer.
- Donate to one of FBF’s projects on the GlobalGiving website, namely [Post-secondary Education for Girls in Burkina Faso](#), [Lambs Support Village Girls' Education](#), and/or [Needed: School Lunches!](#)

I’d like to turn your attention momentarily to an informative article in a recent issue of *The Economist* entitled [Doing Good, Doing Well](#). It identifies changes in foreign aid being provided by non-profits and for-profits. The article provides evidence that a growing share of aid is being funneled, not through NGOs, but through consultancies and other private sector contractors that profit from the work. The fact that “nearly a quarter of USAID spending in 2016 went to for-profit firms, a share that was two-thirds higher than in 2008” has implications for foreign assistance in the future. Private firms’ comparative advantages often lie in providing “technical assistance”, for example streamlining a country’s tax code. They tend to rely on subcontractors and who are flown in periodically or for as long as the project lasts. This model means that firms may be less likely to understand local cultures or be interested in cultivating relationships with host-country nationals. Non-profits, by contrast, are motivated by altruism and typically form partnerships with host-country individuals and communities. They consider whether proposed projects fit with their goals and objectives and whether there is suitable participation and buy-in from the local population before committing financial support.

#### *The FBF Way*

FBF, like other non-profits, aims to help build individuals and indigenous institutional capacity with its support of vetted projects. To the extent that we are successful, our investments will have a lasting multiplier effect over the long run. To illustrate the effectiveness of our efforts, a brief description of the agricultural project in South-Central Burkina Faso follows:

Leslie Berger, a charter member of FBF, and her counterpart when she was a volunteer, Patrice Yameogo, former Burkinabe agricultural extension agent, maintained correspondence for more than 30 years. Patrice is now president of a Burkinabe NGO called AIVPDL whose members are retired agricultural professionals willing to work pro bono and share their agricultural expertise with local farmers. In 2016, Leslie encouraged Patrice to submit a project proposal to FBF on behalf of AIVPDL. AIVPDL took an eclectic approach in developing its program, accounting for nature's assets/limitations, knowledge of local farming ecosystems, and scientific findings about yield-enhancing technologies. The proposal focused on educating subsistence farmers about sustainable ways to modify their farming practices that promised to increase food production. Innovations introduced included the use of improved seed and organic fertilizer- composted manure that the farmers produce themselves.

With financial assistance from FBF, AIVPDL has been working with 675 farmers, half of whom were women. By all measures, the project is successful. Participating farmers have increased their on-farm productivity and, thereby, reduced household poverty and food insecurity when overall agricultural production declined throughout the country. The success of the program stems, in part, from the team's ability to secure the support of government officials and village leaders who inspire and recruit farmers to join the program. Success is also due to effective training sessions AIVPDL personnel holds with project participants on a regularly scheduled basis.

Given the emergence of extreme partisanship, disharmony, and hardship throughout the world, we need to show our friends and loved ones in Burkina Faso that we stand together with them in these challenging times.

Best wishes for a joyous 2018 holiday season!

Tom Vollrath  
Chair, FBF Projects Committee

P.S. Remember, you can channel your contributions to projects that either: 1) support the education of girls and young women sponsored by our local partner, Association NEEED (ie, [Post-secondary Scholarships](#), [Lambs for Girls' Education](#), [School Lunch Program](#)) and/or 2) support other projects that the organization believes merit support based upon examinations and recommendations by our Projects Committee. The latter option gives our organization the flexibility to allocate resources to projects this next year that it highly values based upon expectations of high returns and interest in diversifying our portfolio throughout the country. Examples include possible extensions of financial support for the AIVPDL agricultural project in Binde, Manga and Gogo, the bilingual (Fulfulde/French) Peul school in Signoghin, the BF Girls' Scholarship Fund based in the Passore Province, and the Tigoung Nonma workshop for disabled persons in Ouaga. Decisions regarding the extension of financial support for the aforementioned projects, and consideration to fund other project proposals that we may receive, always depends upon 1) a thorough vetting process and 2) the availability of funds in the FBF Projects account that have not been earmarked by donors to be used in support of the NEEED educational projects in northern Burkina Faso.

P.P.S And remember, FBF and GlobalGiving are 501(c)3 non-profit organizations and donations are tax deductible as permitted by law.