



FRIENDS OF BURKINA FASO

ANNUAL FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN



Dear Friends,

November 2014

The take-home message of a recent *60 Minutes* interview of Warren Buffett, Melinda Gates, and Bill Gates was that philanthropy can make a big difference—differences which governments do not seem capable of making. Philanthropic organizations such as the Ford, Rockefeller, and Gates Foundations tackle critical problems by underwriting science research, building strategic alliances, and promoting policies that work.

Small communities, such as the Friends of Burkina Faso and Burkinabé non-governmental organizations, can also make a difference. Efforts by friends to forge relationships that help lift the disadvantaged out of poverty have positive, direct effects. Such assistance may also have profound psychological effects that go beyond the temporary impact of modest financial support or a few hours of volunteerism. Just knowing that someone cares can often be as valuable as the assistance itself.

Here's a brief summary of what FBF and its partners have accomplished and are currently working towards:

The LPK Computer Expansion Project

Over the past two years, the Lycée Provincial à Koudougou (LPK) developed an innovative and rigorous computer-science curriculum, thanks to the leadership of PCV Ethan Heppener and Mahamadou Ziba who heads up the I.T. faculty at LPK. Over 250 students have taken computer classes and acquired valuable and marketable skills. Enterprising students became teaching assistants. Others learned how to repair computers and helped manage the lab. Earnings from repairing computers as well as school sales of refurbished computers to the residents of Koudougou generated revenue, enabling the I.T. program to purchase needed equipment. Exchanges between the LPK and FBF teams resulted in the adoption of innovations that improved the school's computer system. Bony Porrogho and Desiré Bansé, suggested that the LPK team install a “proxy-cache” server. This innovation enhanced stability, efficiency, and performance of LPK computers. LPK's most powerful computer, donated by Mead Over (RPCV), was configured as a “samba” server. This server enabled students to save their work and assignments in personal spaces on the LPK system.

Village Rainwater Catchment Basins

Kathleen McDonald (RPCV) and Seydou Traoré (PhD agricultural engineer and Fulbright scholar at Texas A&M) created a partnership focused on finding a viable solution to alleviate water scarcity in rural Burkina Faso. They are leading an effort to develop a prototype small rainwater catchment basin that can be replicated throughout the country. The model is to rely upon local materials, village labor, and incorporate such innovative technologies as satellite imagery, water irrigation and filtrations systems powered by solar and/or wind energy. Properly designed and constructed in appropriate locations, small catchment basins assure that water is available throughout the year. Small basins provide opportunities to increase agricultural production, improve villagers' health, and create local employment. Donations channeled through GlobalGiving as well as contributions sent

directly to FBF's treasurer earmarked for the Village Rainwater Catchment Basin (VRCB) project have provided them with a good start. Kati and Seydou are in the process of applying for grants from USAID and various foundations that are needed to obtain sufficient resources to implement their grand vision.

NEEED's education program

Suzanne Plopper (RPCV) and Laciné Sawadogo (Director of Association NEEED) continued their 12 years of collaboration, promoting girls' education. Their efforts address one of the most important findings in the development literature, namely that investing in girls' education yields high returns and empowers women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process. This year donations from FBF members and contributions from GlobalGiving donors enabled NEEED to enroll another 300 young girls into primary schools in northern Burkina Faso. Donations to FBF also enabled NEEED to award post-secondary school scholarships to 20 young village women for training as primary school teachers, six young women to pursue university studies, and three young women to obtain midwifery training.

Recent approval of the Tigoung Nonma project

Tigoung Nonma (TN) is a cooperative for the disabled in Burkina Faso. TN operates two primary income-generating activities: handicrafts and a catering service. Disabled artisan make and sell jewelry, baskets, textile products, ceramics and sculptures. Other disabled members operate a catering service that prepares and delivers meals to clients living in or near Ouagadougou. These revenue activities enable individuals belonging to the TN community to become autonomous and to participate in the socio-economic development of their country. FBF's Board of Directors recently approved a proposal by Tigoung Nonma to acquire a plot of land closer to tourist traffic and to build their own modes center. Mead Over (RPCV) graciously volunteered to be FBF's primary point of future contact with TN personnel. He is off and running, having established communication with the director, Mme. Zoénabou Savadogo, and facilitated TN linkages with the GlobalGiving (GG) community. British, American, and Burkinabé volunteers in Burkina are diligently working to mount the TN's project on GG's website. Look for rapidly advancing news and developments about this exciting undertaking!

This next year, FBF hopes to be able to provide additional support to on-going projects as well to other worthy initiatives that may come our way. Please, consider making donations to FBF Projects. Doing so is a great way to continue your commitment to the country that has been so important to those of us who have had the privilege to live in Burkina Faso and to get to know its people.

Remember, philanthropy is very powerful. It builds communities, strengthens friendships, leverages resources, and promotes social well-being!

Best wishes,



Tom Vollarth
Chair, FBF Projects Committee

Please note: 100% of project contributions made directly to FBF via our website or through the mail are wired overseas. FBF does not levy a tax on incoming funds to cover the organization's overhead expenditures or to pay salaries. To make a direct gift to FBF Projects, use either the attached contribution form, or use our PayPal facility by going to <http://fbf.tamu.edu/donations.php> and clicking one of the "donate" buttons.