FBF/APRODES Partnership

A Resounding Success Story

by Tom Fox (Peace Corps Director, Upper Volta), ’67–’69

The small NGO in the north of Burkina Faso, called APRODES (Action de Production pour le Développement Economique et Sociale), was supporting the Loulouka women’s garden cooperative on Lake Bam prior to Friends of Burkina Faso (FBF) involvement. APRODES helped the 35 members of this cooperative (near Kongoussi) to become organized so that they could: 1) obtain garden tools at favorable prices, 2) secure technical assistance from the relevant government institutions, and 3) market their produce efficiently.

In early 2006, APRODES submitted a proposal to FBF requesting $4,500 to purchase garden tools and irrigation equipment that provided a means for cooperative members to gain more reliable access to the water of Lake Bam. The proposal also called for an extension of the cooperative-gardening concept to another 35 women from Koumbango, an adjacent village.

APRODES, like FBF, is a non-governmental organization directed and managed by volunteers from the community and led by President Boukary Kinda. The organization’s goals fit well with FBF’s priorities. They include a focus on sustainable community development, indigenous capacity building, and economic empowerment of women.

Moreover, the proposal sent to FBF was well conceived with concrete objectives that appeared achievable. These included making better use of domestically available resources, strengthening the capacity of collaborative community efforts, adoption of modern irrigation technologies, augmentation of both vegetable production and consumption, and increased participant incomes. For these reasons, the FBF Projects Committee voted unanimously to fund APRODES’ Maraîchage des Femmes initiative.

In Spring 2007, APRODES approached FBF with a second, more modest grant proposal to enable the women in Loulouka and Koumbango to more effectively market their produce by increasing their capacity to transport and store onions until market prices continued on page 11.
Dear Friends,

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Kristie McComb and I am the new President of the Friends of Burkina Faso Board of Directors. I served in Burkina as a Community Health Development Volunteer from 2001 to 2003.

Some of you may be familiar with me, as I have worn about five different hats at one time or another over the past two years—Vice President, Membership Coordinator, Project Manager, Strategic Planning Committee Member, and NPCA Liaison. I am sincerely looking forward to my new role, especially in view of the infusion of new energy embodied in the incoming FBF team!

My first goal as President has already been met—that is, to ensure that no one FBF volunteer wears more than one hat at a time!

For the past two months, Tom Vollrath, Projects Chair and Suzanne Plopper, Treasurer (former Assistant Treasurer), and I have been working diligently to restructure the FBF leadership team and recruit members who have expressed interest in fulfilling key positions, both new and old. We are happy to announce that seven new people have volunteered to join our team. At least six of these folks, including myself, completed their Peace Corps service within the past five years.

We are happy to announce that seven new people have volunteered to join our team. At least six of these folks, including myself, completed their Peace Corps service within the past five years.

Though FBF could not be where it is today without the past leadership and commitment of people like John Sneed, Denny Fitzpatrick, and Bob Osborne, we feel strongly that the future of FBF will depend on the organization’s ability to get a new generation of RPCVs involved and excited about the possibilities with FBF!
New FBF Officers and Committee Members

Bob Coffey (Vice President). I’ve been a fan of Burkina since my two years (1967–169) as a well digger and mechanic in Peace Corps UV-1. For six or eight years following Peace Corps, I supported a young Voltaique in school, first in Tenkodogo and later in Ouaga. I’ve been proud to be a member of FBF since its inception, watching a few others put in countless hours keeping us organized and informed. More recently I’ve been an active member of the FBF Projects Committee since I had the opportunity in late 2006 to represent them while traveling in Burkina with my family. This summer I retired from a 30 year career in medicine, and while I’m moderately busy as a school board member and as a volunteer high school science and math teacher, I presently have the time and energy to work to help keep FBF strong and moving forward.

Michael Kolber (Secretary). I served as a Small Business Volunteer in Kongoussi from 2003–2005, doing microfinance with a regional credit union and conducting outreach with local women’s groups. I am now back in New York, studying urban planning at Columbia University and dreaming of going back to Africa. Until that time comes, I am excited about serving Burkina from afar as the Secretary of FBF.

Caroline Chambre (Community Relations Coordinator). Hi, my name is Caroline Chambre, and I served as a community health development volunteer in the Orodara region of Burkina Faso from 2002–2004. As is likely true for most RPCVs, my service was one of the defining experiences of my life, and I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to live and work in the Faso. A big part of what made my 2 years so memorable was the amazing spirit of community and hospitality I felt in my community—it truly epitomized the saying “no man is an island.”

As such, I am excited to serve as the Community Relations Chair for FBF—to work with RPCVs and friends to keep that feeling of connectedness and cooperation alive in support of Burkina Faso. I look forward to working with FBF members on staying connected to the work of the current volunteers, the NPCA, and the Burkina community at large. A little more about me: when not dreaming of a hot plate of to and sauce, I spend my days working at Common Ground Community, a NYC-based non-profit whose mission is to end homelessness. I am a proud adopted New Yorker, happy to live in a city with so many West African communities and influences.

Tajanay Ki (Membership Coordinator). Hello Everyone! I’m Tajanay Ki and I’ll be the Membership Coordinator for FBF. I was a secondary education volunteer in Burkina Faso from 2001–2003. I taught Math and Physics/Chemistry at the high school in Solenzo. I currently live in Silver Spring, MD, with my husband, Philippe Ki, who was also a teacher at the high school in Solenzo. I currently work as a biomedical engineer for the FDA in Maryland. I’m excited to be working for the FBF because of the chance to meet new Burkinabé friends. I look forward to working with all of you!

Ashley Garley (Peace Corps Burkina Faso Liaison). My name is Ashley Garley, RPCV Burkina Faso 2002–2004. I was located in the “prettiest village” in Burkina, Tin, which is located in the southwestern part of the country near Orodara. I worked there as a health volunteer with two local nurses promoting the newly constructed health clinic, helping out with vaccinations, and working closely with a local theater troop doing sensibilisations. I found out about Friends of Burkina Faso briefly during my service and more directly at my COS conference. I was excited to learn about the connection it provided RPCVs to Burkina once returning back to the land of bonnes choses. My experience in Burkina was something I wasn’t ready to forget about and move on. I wanted to continue having some kind of connection to the country and people.

I currently live in the DC area and have been able to attend a couple of FBF activities. It’s a great time to share and learn from volunteers that were there when the country was called Haute Volta as well as those volunteers that have just returned. It’s also fun to see what kind of jobs people have and see “networking” in action. We all continued on page 4
New Leaders cont’d

have a special connection as Burkina RPCVs and it’s important to keep that Burkina connection alive.

Drissa Dao (ABURWA Liaison). My name is Drissa Dao. I was born in Morolaba, a rural city in the Kenedougou Province in the Bobo Dioulasso area. I, successively, attended the primary school in Morolaba, the secondary school and high school in Bobo Dioulasso, and the University of Ouagadougou. I also attended the National School of Finance prior to a five-year career at the Department of Treasury, a Direction of the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Burkina Faso. I have been living in the United States since 2005. I first learned about Friends of Burkina Faso when browsing on the Internet. I went over the goals and projects that I appreciated, and then decided to go ahead and become a member. I have always liked being active with nonprofit organizations in order to be somewhat helpful to the community that I live in. I think FBF is the ideal organization for me.

John Sneed (Website Content Editor). Hi, my name is John Sneed and I am the Director of Distance Education at Portland Community College. I have worked in higher education for 35 years in various capacities applying technology to extend access to and delivery of education, a mission not unlike a Peace Corps experience, only longer. I was a Volunteer in Upper Volta 1 from 1967–1969 digging wells in the Tenkodogo-Koupéla-Ouragaye region and living in Sangha on the Ghana, Togo, Upper Volta frontier. In the 1980s I began contacting old friends and gathering new ones in order to found the Friends of Burkina Faso, and served as President for a number of years. I have returned to BF twice on behalf of FBF and look forward to the next opportunity.

FBF Organizational Chart

Light orange = Directors on the Board (voting power)
Yellow = Standing Committees
Burnt orange = Committee Members (no vote)

FBF Listserv

- Are you looking for travel partners/travel tips for a return trip to Burkina?
- Do you want to locate long-lost Peace Corps friends?
- Are you recently-returned and looking for a mentor in your field?
- Do you have an interesting news article about Burkina to share with our members?
- Are you doing some exciting Burkina-related work that might interest our members?

If yes to any of these, our listserv is a great place to exchange information!

To join, please visit: http://apache.tamu.edu/fbf/listserv.html.
How do you talk to villagers and town people about diseases and sicknesses that could be averted by changing their behavior? Surely that is a question of the ages. And, in traditional societies, the question looms larger because risks of loss and death have increased so much in recent years; and yet the answers are fewer. To change personal practices, people have to be moved, both with their minds and in their hearts.

Meet Souleymane Bazie, Abdul Salam Koanda, and Hamidou Bako (President, Vice President, and Treasurer) of Besazuli Sulu, a grassroots organization that was founded five years ago by young Burkinabé farmers. Besazuli Sulu is a theater troupe whose performances and entertainment address public health issues. The 13 men and 5 women members of this NGO are volunteers who range in age from late teens to the early thirties. The group performs around Tioga, in the north of Burkina Faso, half-way between Koudougou and Ouahigouya.

Once monthly, the troupe goes to a nearby village or town to stage events. While enjoying the theatrical performances during the day, their audiences are informed, taught, cajoled, and encouraged to alter behavior in ways that prevent disease. In the evenings, Besazuli Sulu attracts younger people by having a dance. Actors and actresses present new concepts about family planning, forced marriages, female circumcision, safe sexual practices, mosquito nets, and the health advantages of consuming nutritious leaves from the Moringa tree.

After each event, the troupe has a question-and-answer session with their audience to promote understanding and to gauge the effectiveness of their messages. Condoms are also made freely available. As the troupe entertains, desired behaviors are modeled for people to imitate. People laugh, talk, dance ... and learn.

The troupe has had excellent success, attracting 300 people (on average) to their performances. Besazuli-Sulu members believe that they could double the size of their audiences and reach more young people by sponsoring more performances and evening dances if they had access to their own audio equipment.

Kelly Havner introduced the leaders of the Troupe to the Friends of Burkina Faso’s Projects Committee and helped them prepare a project proposal that was sent to FBF. This proposal requested funds for the purchase of audio equipment which its members believe would enable them to become more effective educating the public about public health issues.

As the FBF Projects Committee reviewed the Besazuli Sulu proposal, a number of issues were raised. One question was who would be responsible for providing FBF with feedback reports from the field, reports that would keep us abreast of the difficulties encountered and the progress achieved in fulfilling Besazuli Sulu’s implementation plans and target objectives? In response to this question, the leaders of Besazuli Sulu arranged for Lacina Bakouan, the director of Le Mouvement Burkinabé des Droits de l’Homme et des Peuples in nearby Reo, to communicate with FBF.

Monsieur Bakouan recently attended a Besazuli presentation in Tiogo on the prevention of malaria and wrote to us about his impressions. He was struck by how much fun the performance was for the villagers and how, at the same time, awareness continued on page 7.
Survey Results on Membership

In March of this year, the Board of Directors of the Friends of Burkina Faso (FBF), with help from an ad hoc strategic planning committee appointed late last year, prepared and distributed an internet survey to all of our known Returned Peace Corps Volunteer members, other FBF members, and potential future members of our organization. The Board undertook this survey in order to gather information to renew the organization and its web site, as well as to ensure that FBF continues to respond to the needs and interests of current and future members.

We took a convenience sample of our current and future membership base by advertising the survey through our organizational listserv, our membership drive mailing this past March, four listservs developed specifically for individual training groups (a popular communication vehicle among volunteers since 2000) and through our website. By early May when the survey was closed for analysis, 114 people had participated. It was exciting to see so many people take the time to share their interests and perceptions with us!

The number of responses received represented approximately 10% of all of the names in our database of active and past members. However, we do not have current contact information for a portion of the 1,100 members in our database. Thus, our true response rate could be higher than 10% if we counted only the number of “active” members we have in our files. Conversely, it could be smaller considering that some of our respondents came from a pool of potential future members who are not yet in our database. Unfortunately, we did not ask a question to determine membership status so we were unable to determine the response rate accurately. However, we did attempt to obtain current contact information in order to update our database.

The survey provided interesting and informative results that highlight the role that FBF plays in keeping our membership informed about what is going on in Burkina Faso. There is a great appetite for staying involved with Burkina Faso, finding ways to keep informed, and supporting FBF-funded projects.

Most of the survey’s questions addressed our members’ overall experience with FBF and their interest in various activities and services that should be provided by our organization moving forward. The most popular services or functions that received an “important” or “very important” designation from a list of 14 options were:

- Receiving recent news and information from Burkina Faso: 79%
- Contributing to development activities in Burkina Faso: 71%
- Receiving the Burkina Connection electronically: 70%
- Keeping in contact with friends: 67%
- Receiving information and links to the best sources on Burkina Faso: 53%
- There is a great appetite for staying involved with Burkina Faso, finding ways to keep informed, and supporting FBF-funded projects.

Conversely, there was much less interest in the following options—less than 30% indicated that these services or functions were “important” or “very important”:

- Receiving the Burkina Connection in hard copy: 30%
- Networking with other FBF members about professional development opportunities: 30%
- Participating in on-line discussions: 17%
- Participating in travel to Burkina Faso with other members: 17%
- Leading FBF as an officer or committee member: 9%

Most of the respondents, by a large margin, reported that they received their information on FBF’s activities via the Burkina Connection (75%). A much smaller percentage indicated that they got their news via friends who were active in FBF (32%), updates via the list serve (23%), and from the current FBF web site (18%). (Total exceeds 100% because the question allowed for multiple responses.)

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The Committee benefited from the presence in the country of (FBF member) Paul Dowling, an expert in HIV education. Paul happened to be visiting Ouagadougou in May. He generously took time from his busy schedule to meet with Souleymane, Abdul, Hamidou, and Kelly to review the Besazuli-Sulu proposal.

Paul found the members of Besazuli Sulu to be serious, responsible young men on a mission. “They are a local grass roots organization with little outside support. The members themselves came together to found the organization and my read is that they are in it for life…. Most of the members are local cultivators.... They are proud of their achievements and want to keep going.... They are already keeping a cahier (notebook) detailing all of their activities with estimated attendances which they showed me. I was impressed!”

Lacina’s and Paul’s feedback to the Projects Committee was most helpful, enabling us to make an informed decision about the proposal and to assess the progress these young people are having. I am pleased to report to you that the FBF Projects Committee voted unanimously to support the Besazuli Sulu Theater Troupe’s request for $1,200 to purchase audio equipment. We hope that this grant will improve the group’s public presentations and increase audience size. Most of all, we hope that important messages about good health practices will be heard, loud and clear!

Membership Survey cont’d

When we asked our members the three most important features that they would like to see in a future FBF web site, respondents identified the following priorities:

- Receive and/or contribute news about Burkina Faso: 59%
- Get more involved in FBF/Peace Corps projects in Burkina Faso: 45%
- Join/renew membership in FBK with on-line receipt: 35%
- Locate friends from your experience: 33%

A smaller number indicated interest in “posting pictures or stories” (18%), “reading/responding to a blog” (11%), or “participating in FBF governance” (3%).

The survey also polled respondents about how much they thought an appropriate annual membership fee should be. The largest percentage of respondents, almost 44%, said that $25 was an appropriate amount. Twenty-nine (29%) said $35 or more and 23% said $15 was appropriate.

We looked at responses from everyone combined and then divided the respondents into seven groups, depending on their period of service. The respondents were distributed fairly evenly over the periods of time that the Peace Corps has been in Burkina Faso, i.e. from 1967 to 1987 and from 1996 to the present. The period 1999-2004 had the most respondents: 41 or 36% of the total. Roughly 30% of the respondents served between the years 1969-1974 and an additional 28% in the ten year period between 1975-1986. Due to the absence of the Peace Corps between 1987-1996, there were only two respondents who were in Burkina Faso during the two five-year periods 1987-1992 and 1993-1998 and we assume that these respondents represent some of our other types of “friends of Burkina Faso” besides our traditional membership base of RPCVs.

Sixty percent of all respondents were part of either the health (30%) or education (30%) sectors. Sixteen (16%) percent were in agriculture, and 15.5% in water management.

Though we had anticipated that there might be differences in the attitudes and experiences among returned volunteers depending on when they served or on the types of activities in which they were involved, there were very few.

The survey also provided a large number of write-in responses that helped to further clarify returned volunteers’ interests and concerns, and expectations of what they wanted from their FBF membership. The Board will continue to assess the information and use it to help shape the future of our organization. Thanks to all of you who helped us by participating in this survey. Though this survey was a one-time event for soliciting feedback, please feel free to share any future comments or suggestions for improving your FBF experience to our Community Relations Chair.
In March 2007, I returned to Burkina Faso in the company of three teachers from Cranbrook Schools in Michigan. We were there to dedicate some projects and launch others in the village of Namtenga (south of Tougouri) where I had served as a well digger in 1975–1977. We did that and so much more.

Our hosts were Simeon Baguian and his sister Noélie Sandouidi Baguian, my host family’s kids from the 70’s, with whom our history is rich. After 23 years of regular correspondence, I previously visited them with my oldest daughter Katie in 2000. (See Burkina Connection, Summer, 2000.) Noélie has a small office supply/copy store in Boulsa that bears Katie’s name. Then, in 2005, Simeon and Noélie spent a month at my home in Michigan with my wonderful wife Carol and younger daughter Melissa. (See Burkina Connection, 2005, No.2.)

Between 2000 and 2006, there have been numerous projects with Namtenga thanks to my wife’s inspiration and the marvelous and enduring efforts of Cranbrook. These projects included a water pump, girls education awareness, school uniforms, a playground, school supplies, a cow, and a women’s co-op weaving studio. In that time period, US Ambassadors Tony Holmes and Jimmy Kolker both visited Namtenga to assist with those projects.

Our March 2007 visit brought everything and everyone together:

- Cranbrook teachers Margaret Charney, Peter Charney and Lynn Carpenter Bennett, along with Noélie, Simeon and myself, met with several current volunteers, led by Kevin Sweeney, at the Hotel Independence. It was thrilling and inspirational for all to see the unity of past and present and people devoted to great hope-filled actions.

- Several days of events in Namtenga opened with a celebration attended by US Ambassador Jeanine Jackson, who offered inspirational remarks about the projects, the advancement of education, and our special partnership. There was a procession of all the students and singing and dancing just like the reception Noélie and Simeon had received two years earlier at Cranbrook. At the grand opening of the Women’s Weaving Studio (Namtenga Suundo Ba-Biisi), Ambassador Jackson was the first purchaser of a pagné. The new water pump was dedicated in honor of the Cranbrook projects leader, Marcy DeCraene, who was unable to make the trip due to a medical issue. Ambassador Jackson, with help from Michel Kaboré of USAID who heads up the BRIGHT school project, delivered boxes of primary school books (obtained through a partnership with the World Bank) from the wonderful Joann Lockard of their Public Affairs Office. The village masks came out and danced in the morning ceremony and then again later in the afternoon for the first soccer game of the weaving sisters.

- Everyone was deeply moved by the success of the “Kids to Kids” pen pal project led by Peter, continued on page 9
Margaret and the Namtenga School teachers. Amid great cheers, we exchanged and matched over 250 letters from Cranbrook students to Namtenga School students, all of whom wrote responses that were later hand-delivered in Michigan, amid like cheering, to their Cranbrook pen pals. And thanks to the cell phone revolution, we had a cell phone hook-up at the new playground with about ten of the students from each school talking to each other. By the way, Kevin Sweeney heard of this and later did a similar pen pal project in his village.

- My church, Nativity Episcopal, donated money to help both the weaving studio and the Namtenga adult education class in Mooré reading.
- Michelle, the secretary of the weaving studio, was born and given my name when I was first in Namtenga. Lynn, the weaving instructor at Cranbrook, worked for hours with Michelle and her other “sisters” on various techniques and posted pictures of their “sister” studio at Cranbrook.
- We visited the Namtenga Chief. Thanks to music listening and reading, my Mooré remains in good shape. We talked of our zoodo (friendship) that has spanned 30 years, how we are all part of each other, how we maande neere ne a taba (do good for each other), and how Wennam (God) does not differentiate between people—those that respect Him and do good in the world gain His favor. We exchanged gifts with the Chief and received his gift of a sheep that we later gave to the school.
- Back in Ouaga, PC Country Director Marily Knieriemen welcomed all of us, including our Burkina hosts, for a wonderful lunch with warm discussions about the visit and encouragement for future Peace Corps postings, possibly even in Namtenga. We also stopped by the US Embassy for a warm farewell from Ambassador Jackson. Throughout the visit, Simeon (a Yalgado Hospital supervisor) and Noëlie (a small businesswoman in Boulsa), along with their respective spouses Micheline (a Ouaga school teacher) and Christophe (a government accountant in Dargo), grew their friendships with America. And they, along with their families, were generous and loving hosts. Thanks to all of them, along with Director Knieriemen, Ambassador Jackson and Michel Kaboré, for their unsurpassed Burkina hospitality.
- We also met with the Mayor of Dargo (Christophe’s boss), who is a retired colonel in the military. We spoke of much the same things as we had with the Namtenga Chief. He showed us a framed photograph of himself and two U.S. Army officers taken while he was visiting the United States in 1965 for military training. He asked for another photograph to similarly commemorate our visit with him 42 years later, and we obliged.

Now, back in Michigan, the friendships continue. Namtenga Suundo Ba-Biisi has filled Cranbrook’s order for 50 woven table cloths and 50 table runners that Cranbrook will sell, with every dime going back to Namtenga. Other projects, such as a garden fence, a sewing machine, a solar panel for the school, and a studio wall are in the works. “Kids to Kids” pen-pal writing continues. We run into people of all ages and invite them to become pen pals. And we spread the news of these friendships and the Peace Corps, which gave us the opportunity for them every chance we get, because tond ka twe saki ti a na yi zaalem ye! (We cannot accept that all this leads to nothing).
Expansion of Female Educational Opportunities Throughout Tangaye

The Lambs Project
NEEED is receiving more and more requests from parents and from villages not yet participating in their educational programs. Currently, there are approximately 2,000 girls from 37 surrounding villages supported by this indigenous NGO, with nearly 1,200 of them benefiting from FBF support through the lambs’ project. Students supported by the lambs project did very well last year. All girls entering primary school successfully finished their first year; and 68% of girls passed their end-of-primary school exams, qualifying to go on to middle school.

This summer, NEEED requested that FBF fund 300 students entering primary school—a 33% increase over our support during each of the last three years. The Projects Committee heartily approved this request!

The beauty of the lambs’ project is that it addresses an acute need to provide young girls with educational opportunities while securing commitments from parents to assume financial responsibility for their child’s education thereafter by raising and marketing lambs.

The College Modern de l’Amitié
The number of middle school students is growing and student performance has improved during the second year of operation at the College Modern de l’Amitié. Currently, 400 students attend 6ème, 5ème and 4ème classes, nearly double the number of students enrolled last year (215). Moreover, 77% of students passed their exams to advance to the next class this year, a 6 percentage point increase from the previous year.

FBF’s school lunch project has been a resounding success. To date, nearly $38,000 has been raised on the GlobalGiving website in support of this program, enough funds to feed students at the College Modern de l’Amitié for approximately 1 ½ years at a cost of just $.33 per day per student. Your support of this program is greatly appreciated!

Updates
· As the number of girls qualifying for college continues to rise, NEEED has begun the construction of yet another bloc of classrooms to accommodate an additional 400 students. It plans to limit enrollment at the College Modern de l’Amitié to 1,000 students eventually and is looking for other means to ensure that all qualified students have access to a middle school education.

· NEEED partners in Austria recently agreed to support the installation of solar panels at the College Modern de l’Amitié to facilitate lighting in the classrooms and administrative building.

· NEEED informed FBF recently that the cost of the lambs’ project has been rising since we first began our support in 2002 and that it can no longer operate on the basis of 2002 costs. The current cost of sending a girl to school (six years of primary school and four years of middle school) through this program is $80. The cost increase results from the rising price of fuel, devaluation in the U.S. dollar, and inflationary pressures in Burkina—all of which impact both the cost of school materials and the cost of lambs.

In appreciation
In addition to the generous support our membership has provided for the lambs project, construction of the College Modern de l’Amitié and the school lunch program at the college, we would like continued on page 11
Also to express our appreciation for generous support we have received from other sources:

- Lambs project
  - Pensionnat Notre-Dame-des-Anges (Montréal, Canada)
  - École des Ursulines (Québec, Canada)
  - Hanson McClain Retirement Planning
  - Yummy Dummy Chocolate Company
- Construction of the College Modern de l’Amitié
  - Lori Wasserman
  - Lance Klima
  - The family of Alex Koch
  - François Trahan
  - Robert Marcin
- School lunch program at the college
  - A number of jewelry stores affiliated with S. A. Gems Distributors

Other donors have requested to remain anonymous.

**School-to-school partnership**

In addition, a primary school in Trinidad (a small community on the north coast of California) asked to partner with a rural primary school in Tangaye Department. At Trinidad, the students and PTA agreed that for each “track lap” a student runs as part of their exercise, the PTA would contribute $0.05 to the partner school. Last year, students at the Trinidad school ran 3,500 laps, raising $175 for classroom materials for their sister school!

If you know of students who would be interested in partnering with a primary school in northern Burkina, we would be happy to facilitate communication, enabling schools to establish partnerships with each other.

**NEED cont’d**

Women have achieved *sur le terrain* have enhanced household welfare in numerous ways. Family nutrition has improved. School supplies have been purchased for children. And certain medicinal needs have been met. Perhaps even more important, the women have control over significant resources for themselves and their families.

We would like to thank PCV Chris Wilson for providing invaluable services, serving as an informal liaison between APRODES and FBF Projects personnel and helping Monsieur Kinda provide support to the women. Chris was able, for example, to recruit another PCV to help the women better manage their revenue through dues-paying solidarity groups. Thanks, Chris!

And thank you, Monsieur Kinda, for being an exemplary partner of Friends of Burkina Faso.

**APRODES cont’d**

were favorable. The FBF Committee quickly agreed to fund this supplementary request as APRODES had established an excellent track record and as the second proposal was, once again, well conceived. This second *tranche* of funds sent to APRODES was used to purchase four carts and supplies for the construction of eight granaries.

APRODES, under Monsieur Kinda, has been very conscientious in keeping FBF informed of its progress. Periodically, it has sent us detailed reports that include photographs and receipts for every expenditure item. The most recent report shows that each woman reaped net returns that ranged from $120 to $300, depending on the size of individual plots. As all FBF know, in this poor country, these are impressive numbers, especially for part-time work! The accomplishments the

**Friends of Burkina Faso**

- Maintains a network of RPCVs and friends of Burkina Faso
- Provides funding and assistance to support projects in Burkina Faso
- Improves social interaction, communication, and information exchange
- Educates others about the country and culture of Burkina Faso

A 501 (c)(3) non-profit charitable organization affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association

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Distribution of Needed Materials

Top: Lacine Sawadogo distributes school materials to girls entering primary school this year with lambs’ project support.

Middle: School materials to be distributed to primary school girls courtesy of the lambs’ project.

Bottom: 10 girls who entered primary school this year with lambs’ project support.
Top: A group of women in Loulouka who were involved in a market gardening project, along with PCV Chris Wilson.

Middle: The water pump and a field being irrigated in Loulouka.

Bottom: Laying pipe in Koumbango.
The former Ambassador to the United States, Tertius Zongo, is now the Prime Minister of Burkina Faso. Prior to his departure from the United States, the Association of Burkinabé in the Washington (DC) Area (ABURWA) organized a farewell ceremony, held August 12 at Howard University’s School of Medicine.

Tertius Zongo was born in Koudougou, in the middle-west of Burkina, and studied economics and accounting at university. He has served Burkina as Deputy Minister for Budget and Planning, Press Secretary, Deputy Minister for Finance and Economic Development, and as Economic and Finance Minister. In February of 2002, he became Burkina’s Ambassador to the United States and served in that position until he was named Prime Minister in June 2007. Prime Minister Zongo has also served as Burkina’s representative to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank, and the Islamic Bank of Development.

During his term as Ambassador, the Prime Minister strove to increase cooperation between the U.S. and Burkina governments and spoke on behalf of the many Burkinabé living in The United States.

At the farewell ceremony, FBF’s Kristie McComb assisted ABURWA by translating the talk of Dr. William Southerland, who expressed Howard University’s best wishes for the Prime Minister’s return to Burkina Faso.

According to ABURWA President, Mouni Kouda, the success of the farewell ceremony demonstrated the solidarity between FBF and ABURWA. The ABURWA Board of Directors sincerely appreciates the relationship and hopes that cooperation between the two organizations will continue to grow to the benefit of Burkinabé the world over.

The Friends of Burkina Faso would like to pay tribute to Prime Minister Zongo, who was always very hospitable and cordial towards our organization. As Burkina Faso’s Ambassador to the United States, he invited DC-area FBF members to participate in many Burkinabé-sponsored events, including celebrations of Burkina’s Independence Day chez lui.

In addition, he encouraged FBF and ABURWA (L’Association des Burkinabés de la Region de Washington) members to interact. The Prime Minister was a generous supporter of FBF Projects. There is no doubt but that Prime Minister Zongo’s strengthened the U.S.-Burkinabé relationship during his tenure in Washington, DC. Those of us who had the privilege of getting to know him will surely miss him. At the same time, we are very pleased for Prime Minister Zongo that he has been offered the opportunity to apply his talents in this new post within the Burkinabé government. FBF wishes to extend best wishes to the new Prime Minister!
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Simeon Baguian and Michael Lavoie at one of the Namtenga wells dug in the 1970s, which is now dry.