

# BURKINA CONNECTION



NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF BURKINA FASO

2014 - No. 2



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## MALALA: AN INSPIRATION FOR GIRLS' EDUCATION


by Suzanne Plopper, '67-'69

*We cannot succeed when half of us are held back.*

-- Malala Yousafzai, 2014 Nobel Peace Prize winner

### 2014 NEEED SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



 *Fatimata Madina Ouédraogo*  
Primary School Education



 *Salmata Ouédraogo*  
Midwifery



 *Sonia Marie Blanche Bado*  
University Studies in Law

In a recent address to the U.N. on gender issues, Emma Watson (of Harry Potter film fame) stated that, at current rates, it will take until 2086 for all rural African women to achieve a secondary education.

FBF is doing its part to address the important issue of educating rural African women. We are proud to be part of Association NEEED's very successful program aimed at accelerating educational opportunities for women in Burkina Faso. NEEED, in its 15<sup>th</sup> year supporting girls' education in northern Burkina Faso, is close to achieving its goal of demonstrating to all interested parents a strategy for enrolling their young daughters in village primary schools and supporting the remainder of their 13 years

of primary and secondary education. As NEEED closes in on its goal in primary and secondary education for village girls, it is stepping up its efforts to offer scholarships to young village women who have completed *collège* (middle school) and *lycée* (secondary school).

This school year got off to a fantastic start for the 29 young women in northern Burkina Faso who received post middle/secondary training/education scholarships from NEEED, supported by Friends of Burkina Faso. Six scholarships were for university studies, three for midwifery training and twenty for primary school teacher training. The university students will study medicine (1), science (1), law (2), and business communication (2). Our sincere thanks to our very generous partners: the Milton and Beatrice Wind Foundation, the Federation of American

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## HAVE YOU COMPLETED THE MEMBERSHIP SURVEY?



Help us to make Friends of Burkina Faso better than ever by completing our membership survey. Click the button below to complete the survey now.

**START NOW**

## GIRLS' EDUCATION, CONTINUED




 Anne Ouédraogo  
University Studies in Medicine

Women's Clubs Overseas, GlobalGiving donors, and our own generous members for making these scholarships possible.

For the young women who receive the scholarships, it is an opportunity they would otherwise not have had to obtain education/training and develop professional skills. Training of additional primary school teachers facilitates the expansion of primary school education in rural communities by enabling the government to extend the assignment of teachers to villages that have built simple classrooms in hopes of giving their children the chance to go to school. Scholarship recipients are assigned to such village primary schools upon completion of their training.



 Mariam Yaba  
University Studies in Science & Technology

We are very proud of the outstanding progress of the postsecondary education/training project over the past five years and what it has meant to young women in Burkina Faso who have benefitted from our scholarships. Beginning in 2010, when Friends of Burkina Faso offered 13 scholarships (the total for the program that year), our continued generous support of girls' postsecondary education in Burkina has been a major driving force in helping to attract additional donors that support the education of more village girls each year. Of the 83 students to whom FBF has provided scholarships to date, 29 have completed their training and are working (as primary school teachers, nurses and midwives), one is in her second year of a masters program in law, 52 are entering their next year of training and one is repeating her first year of study -- these are very impressive and hardworking young women!

Looking for the  
*Perfect Holiday Gift*  
for someone who has  
**everything?**

Help a Burkinabé girl **go to school**  
on **#GIVINGTUESDAY**

Make an online donation on #GivingTuesday  
-- Dec. 2nd -- through [GlobalGiving.org](http://GlobalGiving.org) to  
YouthSpark projects, like FBF's *Postsecondary  
Education for Girls in Burkina Faso*, and  
receive a **100% match** from Microsoft on  
individual donations of \$10-\$500.

To read more about this project and to donate,  
click [here!](#)



FBF PROJECT FEATURED IN  
NPCA WORLDVIEW  
MAGAZINE

To see the project highlight,  
click [here](#).



# PRESIDENT'S YIRI

by Michael Lavoie, '75-'77

*Kuilga san golom, bi nyebga golom.  
If the creek zigzags, the crocodile zigzags.*

It's time for the Friends of Burkina Faso to follow the advice of this wise Burkinabé proverb. The creek is zigzagging now beyond a doubt with changing times, passing generations, new technology and burgeoning social media.

As such, we're fortunate to have an infusion of new vision and enthusiasm from our new board members:

Aaron Buchasbaum, *Communications Officer*; Kristen Combs-Bicaba, *Newsletter Officer*; Ebben Wiley Bell, *Membership Officer*; and *Communications Committee Chair*, Emily Forsyth Queen. We're also lucky to have Membership Committee members Jon Underdahl-Peirce, David Greely and Cindy Guo, as well as Communications Committee members Chris Wells and John Sneed.

As a result of initiatives from these new FBF enthusiasts, we have just sent out a survey seeking the opinions of the membership on a variety of issues as we adjust our navigation for the future. Thanks to all who have completed the survey. Look to see the results of it take the form of action in the coming months. We have also scheduled an annual Board and Membership meeting for September 18–20, 2015 in Washington D.C.

I wrote the above words before we all learned of the dramatic and historic protests and resulting changes in Burkina Faso. Clearly, Burkina Faso is undergoing its own unprecedented zigzagging. FBF's unflagging support of Burkina has become more

important than ever. Foremost in importance, though, is our chief partner in Burkina, the Peace Corps. Our immediate question was, how are the PCVs and staff doing? We are heartened by the following report from Burkina Peace Corps Country Director, Keith Hackett:

*It has been incredibly interesting, and at times scary, to be living in Ouaga during this period of enormous change. Sadly, over thirty Burkinabé died in the demonstrations. However, I feel that the death toll would have been much higher if not for the level of restraint shown by the military and law enforcement officials. We have been in touch with our PCVs regularly and are happy to report that they are all healthy and safe at their sites. It was encouraging to see the people of Ouaga cleaning up the mess left by the demonstrators. We are hoping for a speedy transfer of power from the current military leader to a civilian-led transition authority who will govern the nation until the free and fair elections can be held.*

The FBF crocodile, like the Burkina crocodile itself, is zigzagging with the changing direction of the creek. Should anyone have any thoughts or suggestions regarding what FBF can do to better navigate these twists and turns, please let us know. Our contact information is available elsewhere in this newsletter.

Thank you again to all that you do to elevate FBF's service to its members and the people of Burkina Faso!



PRESIDENT'S YIRI



# BIG BOOST TO RAINWATER CATCHMENT PROJECT

by Tom Vollrath, '67-'70



*GWGL Field Team: (L to R) Aimé Severin Kima, PhD, Water Resource Engineer; Etienne Kima, Hydrolic & Irrigation Engineer; Laeticia Kaboré, Socio-Economist & Project Coordinator; Vincent DePaul, Agro-Economist*



*Vegetable Garden - Sisené*



*Onion Garden - Sisené*

The FBF/GWGL project -- *Rainwater Catchments: A Solution to Water Scarcity* -- received a big boost when GlobalGiving chose it to participate in EMC Corporation's employee giving campaign in June! Each month, new EMC employees as well as employees celebrating a work anniversary receive \$25 GlobalGiving gift cards to allocate to one of five selected causes of their choice. The 5 causes, including our rainwater catchment project, are featured on [EMC's land page](#).

Donations channeled through GG as well as contributions sent directly to FBF's treasurer in support of our Village Rainwater Catchment Basin (VRCB) project have generated more than \$22,000. Though this is excellent progress, the funds collected fall shy of the amount required to build a new rainwater basin for the village of Ramongo, as was originally intended.

Given the shortfall in accumulated funds, the consensus of FBF's Project Committee and FBF's Board of Directors is that the first priority for the use of accumulated funds is to repair the basin in Sisené built by GWGL. In 2012, a portion of this basin collapsed at one end due to a strong storm. The basin should have had an emergency spillway, known as a

*weir*, that would have controlled water flow properly. Sisené residents tried to patch the breach in 2013, but they were not successful. Currently, local engineers are developing a plan to construct the *weir* and repair the damaged basin. After obtaining estimates from several contractors, one contractor will be chosen to implement construction. Work is to be completed before the next rainy season, which begins in June 2015.

This past October, Kati McDonald, FBF's Vice-President, went to Burkina Faso to advance development of the prototype rainwater catchment basin. One outcome of her trip was the formation of a partnership between GWGL and WA-WASH, an

*continued on page 10*





# THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF EBOLA IN WEST AFRICA

by Mead Over and David Evans

*In 1987, only a year after I joined the World Bank, the institution assigned me to work with the World Health Organization's new "Global Programme on AIDS" to estimate the epidemic's economic impact. For the rest of my career at the World Bank and, since 2006, in my current job at the Center for Global Development, I have continued to work on the various economic aspects of the AIDS epidemic, with only temporary detours into the economics of malaria, hospital reform and most recently improving the efficiency of the way donors "buy" health services in recipient countries. One of my jobs at CGD is to blog, so when the Ebola epidemic broke out I wrote a couple of blogs about it that attracted some attention from my old colleagues at the World Bank. When the Bank's president, Dr. James Kim, asked the Bank's chief economist for Africa to estimate the impact of Ebola, I guess an economist specializing on AIDS was the closest thing he could find to one specializing in Ebola. He contacted me and invited me to join a group of about dozen Bank economists in order to grapple with how to measure the unmeasurable. Together with David Evans, who led the writing and analysis, I published the following blog in order to explain how we arrived at our numbers. As I recently tweeted, I agree with CNN anchor Isha Sesay's sentiment that "Ebola is not about you, America." I strongly support President Obama's position that flights from West Africa should continue and that passengers from the three affected countries should be given self-monitoring kits and otherwise be allowed the same travel privileges as anyone else. After all, each year a new strain of influenza emerges in Asia and subsequently kills about 20,000 Americans. But we quite wisely do not ban flights from Asia.*

The World Bank on [October 8th] released a report titled "[The Economic Impact of the 2014 Ebola Epidemic: Short and Medium Term Estimates for West Africa](#)," which we and other co-authors blogged about [...] on the World Bank's [site](#). The report's results have been summarized with various degrees of detail in the [Financial Times](#), [Le Monde](#), [El Pais](#), and the [Washington Post](#).

The bottom line is that in the more pessimistic "High Ebola" scenario, the impact on West Africa will total about \$33 billion over 2014 and 2015, which means that the epidemic will destroy about a third of the economic growth in the region. But the epidemic is moving faster than we economists can work. The latest information suggests that even

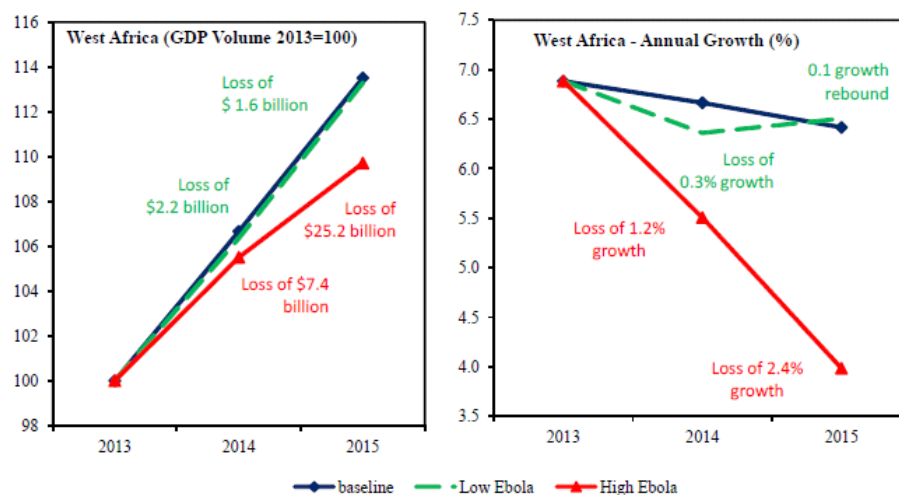
the World Bank's "High Ebola" scenario may be optimistic.

In my (Mead's) [blog on the previous version of this report](#), I described how the World Bank country economists assembled a picture of the epidemic's impact on Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, the three most affected countries, by direct observation of a selection of actual indicators, such as cement sales and visitors.

The difficult part of this exercise was to

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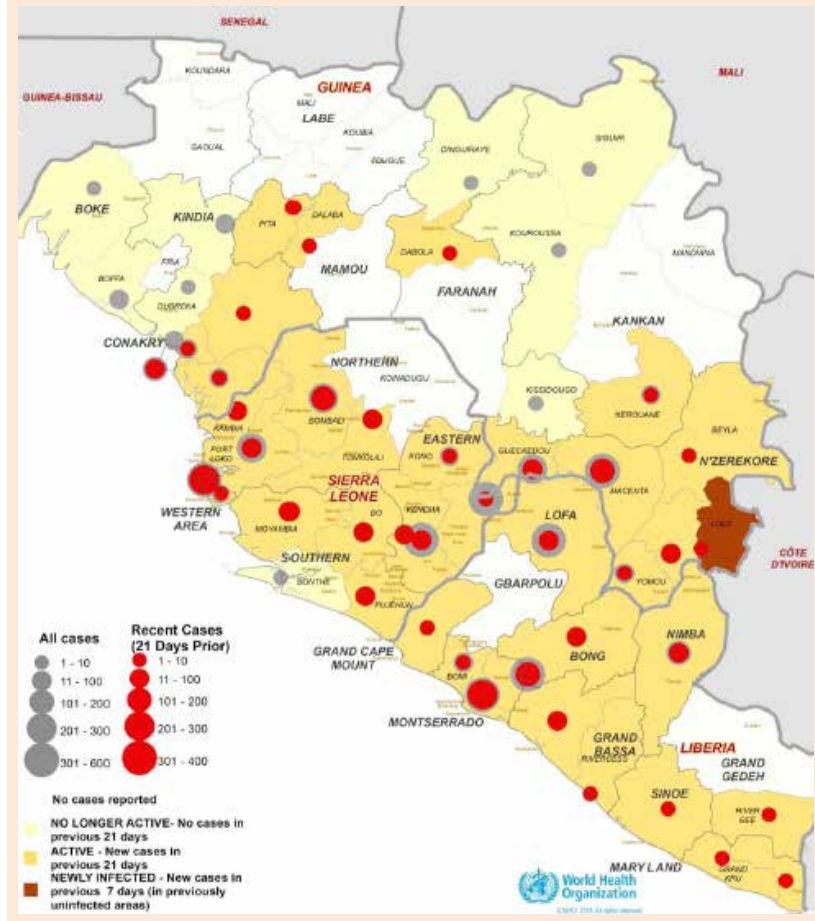
Figure 1: Impact of Ebola on GDP and Annual Growth Rates for West Africa



extrapolate these observations contemporaneously to the entirety of the three economies for third-quarter 2014 and then to project them forward to the fourth quarter and to 2015. While this process may be informed guesswork, it has the advantage of being based on actual observation. And it revealed that the third-quarter 2014 impact on Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea was far too large to be attributed to the medical treatment or foregone labor of the sick. So the estimated impact on the three core countries amounts to the first estimate of the economic cost of the “aversion behavior” that economic agents manifest in response to this rapidly spreading, often fatal epidemic.

The current report is more ambitious, because it predicts the impact of this aversion behavior on the entire West African economy. The country economists estimated the percentage reduction in the growth of GDP in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone due to domestic and international aversion behavior as described in the previous [blog](#). Then the economist running the Bank’s [MAMS](#) model found a “reasonable” combination of reductions in capital and labor and increases in transactions costs, which would produce this large a reduction in output growth in Liberia, the most seriously affected country in the world. These percentage reductions in factor inputs and increases in transactions costs were then scaled to all the countries that are represented in the Bank’s [LINKAGE](#) model of the global economy. The LINKAGE model was then run to capture the interaction effects among all the world economies. The results for a “Low Ebola” and a “High Ebola” scenario are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 2: Geographical Distribution of new cases and total cases in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone



The resulting “High Ebola” estimate of a \$32.6 billion impact on West Africa thus captures not only the expected cost of the aversion behavior in West Africa, but also the expected cost to West Africa of the expected aversion behavior elsewhere. For example, the model allows for small percentage impacts on the transaction costs in the United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, and the United States due to sporadic Ebola outbreaks, each of which has a small probability of being generated by travel from West Africa. Since any reduction in the GDP growth of these rich countries reduces their demand for imports from West Africa, this “general equilibrium effect” further reduces West Africa’s growth.

But over the month that we economists have been working to gauge the size of its economic impact, Ebola has continued to move. WHO says that:

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# BOOK REVIEW : THE GOLDEN HOUR

by Jonah Busch, '00-'02

Let's face it, fellow friends of Burkina Faso, there are not enough novels about Burkina.

We don't have an *Eat, Pray, Love*. We don't even have a *Kite Runner* or a *Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. Our brushes with American pop culture are so few that we still remember them years later—Jon Stewart mocking the Ouagadougou skyline as a goat standing on a hill. Homer Simpson reviewing his phone bill and wondering, "Burkina Faso disputed zone? Who called all these weird places?" Burkina has been treated as a stand-in for somewhere distant and backward, when it's been treated at all.

Thank goodness for Todd Moss' new novel *The Golden Hour*. At last friends of Burkina Faso can enjoy a popular book that pays respectful homage to West Africa.

*The Golden Hour* is a fast-paced political thriller in which a nerdy American diplomat has 100 hours to reverse a coup, stop a terrorist plot, and rescue a hostage. The story takes place in Mali, not Burkina, but it's peppered with delicious lines like "The Scorpion counterterrorism strike force may be moving southwest toward the border with Burkina."

Friends of Burkina Faso will find Moss' West Africa instantly recognizable: the shimmering heat, the harmattan winds, the kora music, the bustling markets. The details are all there, right down to the presidential *pagnes*.

But West Africa is no mere backdrop in *The Golden Hour*. This isn't James Bond breezing superficially through some colorful but interchangeable tableau that's Haiti one day and Thailand the next. Moss has known and loved Africa for decades, from his college days voyaging cross-continent with his future wife, to a tour as the Bush-era State Department's top diplomat in West Africa. He paints his pages with a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges of modern Africa, as evidenced by this gem:

*Papa secretly planned for the day his 3-D seismology studies might inadvertently hint at an oil reservoir rather than an aquifer. He decided he would do the only sensible thing: delete the data.*

The drama of *The Golden Hour* plays out not just in West Africa but also inside the powerful institutions of Washington, D.C. Readers of *The Golden Hour* are given backstage passes to the byzantine corridors of the State Department and the White House. Moss treats us to front row seats as the turf battles flare in inter-agency meetings and on conference calls.

But in case you were worried, not all of the infighting is of the bureaucratic variety. There are real battles too! After all this is a book with two AK-47s on the cover and a third on the side jacket.

And did I mention there's a Peace Corps volunteer? There is! And she craves Philly cheesesteaks!

Full disclosure: I started reading *The Golden Hour* because Todd is the Chief Operating Officer at the Center for Global Development, where I work, so I sort of had to. But I kept on reading because I couldn't put it down until the last turn had twisted.

I don't want to give too much away. Pick up this delightful page-turner and enjoy it for yourself. I expect *The Golden Hour* will find a happy home in many a Peace Corps *maison de passage* in West Africa, and many a Kindle in Foggy Bottom.

## SHARE YOUR STORY



The  
*Burkina Connection*  
is a biannual  
newsletter. If you are  
interested in sharing  
a story, a memory, or  
some photos, please  
contact  
[fbnewsletter  
@gmail.com](mailto:fbnewsletter@gmail.com)

THE GOLDEN HOUR



Burkina  
Connection  
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## RAINWATER CATCHMENT, CONTINUED

organization funded by USAID and based in Ouagadougou, that provides village services in water pumps, sanitation and hygiene. Kati mobilized local resources by obtaining commitments from Burkinabés willing to provide leadership in the field. Local GWGL team members include Laetitia Kaboré, *socio-economist & field project coordinator*; Aimé Severin Kima, *water resource engineer*; Etienne Kima, *hydolic & irrigation engineer*; and Vincent De Paul, *agro-economist*.

Kati and GWGL's field team paid a visit to the *Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles (INERA)*. Accompanied by INERA's assistant director and water engineer, Dr. Samandougou Yaya, they journeyed Djonga, a village located in the northern desert area of Dori. The group had extensive discussions about rainwater-catchment-basin designs suitable for Burkina Faso. Dr. Yaya, was captivated with the VRCB technology. In Kati's field report, she quoted him as saying:

*I am working now for over 30 years as a water engineer in rural villages in Burkina. I see that the new technology you can bring us is exactly what we need. It promises to provide water year-round for our villagers!"*



*Repairs made by Sisené to Basin*



*Sisené Water Basin*

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE RAINWATER CATCHMENT PROJECT, visit our project page on [GlobalGiving.org](http://GlobalGiving.org)

**SAVE THE DATE**  
SEPTEMBER 18-20, 2015

Join FBF in Washington, D.C. for a weekend of reunions and reminiscing.

Keep an eye out for more details!

STAY CONNECTED  
WITH FBF

'Like' us on  
Facebook

Join the conversation, information and photo sharing, and keep up-to-date on all things Burkina. [Link](#)





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To contact a member of the leadership team, please visit <http://fbf.tamu.edu>.



## TIGOUNG NONMA, CONTINUED

The new PCD, Keith Hackett, put me in contact with Katie Gehron, a Peace Corps volunteer who is beginning her third year of service. Katie agreed to provide FBF with third-party oversight in the field.

At the September Projects Committee meeting considerable attention was devoted to TN's revised proposal. This proposal seeks funding to construct a relatively durable *atelier* for TN artisans on land to be purchased that is more centrally located to tourists than their current workshop. The Committee expressed willingness to support this initiative -- provided that TN established a relationship with GlobalGiving (GG) and assumed primary responsibility for launching its project on the GG website. Project Committee member Mead Over volunteered to oversee this activity on behalf of FBF.

At its October 20, 2014 meeting, our Board of Directors formally approved FBF support of the TN initiative. On the basis of recommendations from the Projects Committee, the Board agreed to match as much as \$8,300 in GG donor contributions should the TN project be mounted on the GlobalGiving website.

Given the green light, Mead informed folks at TN about FBF's proposed level of support. Zoénabou Savadogo and her colleagues at TN joyfully accepted

the terms of the proposed TN/FBF partnership. During the last few weeks, Savadogo, Gehron, and Alison McGonnell (British volunteer assigned to TN) have been working diligently to complete the application forms in time to qualify the TN project for GG's *Open Challenge*, a program designed for new projects.

Stay tuned for more information coming your way as events unfold and progress is being made!

To learn more about TN, I encourage all to visit TN's [website](#). This informative and impressive website identifies TN's history, its artisans, prices for handicraft items, and ways for consumers to purchase them on the web.



*British and Burkinabé volunteers at the TN Cooperative*



*Pictured above: (L to R) Zoenabou Savadogo, Director of TN; Leonie, Artist & Mother; Cecile, Artist & Mother*