



FRIENDS OF BURKINA FASO

ANNUAL FUND-RAISING CAMPAIGN



Dear Friend of Burkina Faso,

Most of us would heartily agree with former Peace Corps Director, Gaddie H. Vasquez when he said, “Never in the history of our nation has the mission of the Peace Corps—the pursuit of world peace and friendship—been more important.” The Friends of Burkina Faso is trying to do its part carrying on this quest by channeling energy and resources focused on Burkina Faso, a country that we all cherish.

FBF Projects aims to promote development in Burkina Faso at the grass-roots village level. If we are to sustain and build upon the momentum we have created, both financial gifts and dedicated volunteers are needed. I’d like FBF friends to consider stepping forward during our 2007 Fall Fund-raising Campaign and make contributions of either time and/or money in support of our outreach program. Your assistance is needed if we are able to respond effectively to incoming requests.

Let me briefly describe how FBF Projects operates and some of what we have accomplished this past year so that you may visualize how you might be able to help.

The current *modus operandi* of FBF Projects is that a designated member of our Committee collaborates with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and/or enterprising individuals who submit proposals on behalf of target groups in Burkina. We believe that this approach, though labor intensive, provides a promising avenue to empower villagers, enabling them to gain control and assume responsibility for their own development. It also builds institutional capacity, increasing the prospects for sustainable development.

The FBF/NEEED partnership has been a phenomenal success. “*La machine de l’éducation des filles est lancée,*” says Lacine Sawadogo, Project Coordinator for NEEED. Today, parents in the departments of Tangaye, Oula, and Namissiguima recognize the value of girls’ education. They are requesting NEEED support in ever greater numbers in the enrollment of their daughters in primary and middle school. FBF has provided financial assistance to NEEED’s girls’ education efforts since 2002. To date, through the “Lambs for School” project, FBF has supported 1100 of the approximately 2,000 girls currently enrolled in rural public primary schools and in the *Collège Modern de l’Amitié* (a middle school for girls). At NEEED’s request, FBF extended our support this year to 300 six-year old girls in 37 villages. The current cost of 10 years of schooling through the “Lambs for School” project is \$80/student.

(A “Lambs for School” certificate is enclosed for anyone wishing to give a gift to a friend or loved one this holiday season that will enable a young Burkinabé girl to obtain a primary and middle school education. Should you wish to give more than one certificate and support more than one girl, simply photocopy the enclosed certificate before signing it. Then give the gift certificate(s) to the person(s) of your choosing on whose behalf the gift(s) will be made and, of course, send your donation form with the total amount of your holiday gift(s) to FBF.)

I'd like to remind you of two other exciting FBF projects featured in the November issue of *The Burkina Connection*, which was recently sent to all members current with their 2007 dues.

❖ APRODES, a Burkinabé NGO in Kongoussi, initiated a relationship with FBF in 2006 that was deepened in 2007. APRODES submitted a proposal on behalf of women belonging to garden cooperatives in Loulouka and Koumbango in early 2006. The women needed financial assistance to purchase tools and irrigation pumps and guidance on how to use this equipment. FBF provided the funding and APRODES helped introduce the new technology. The result of this collaborative effort was that the women gained reliable access to the water of Lake Bam. They were able to substantially increase production of vegetables. FBF responded favorably to a second proposal submitted by APRODES in 2007. This year's funding from FBF was used to purchase carts and material used to build storage facilities. The women belonging to the garden cooperatives will now be able to take better advantage of seasonal price fluctuations and market their produce when prices are favorable.

❖ Besazuli Sulu is a NGO theater troupe from the village of Tiogo near Dedougou whose theatrical productions are designed to educate the public about health and disease. The troupe typically attracts 300 people to their performances as they travel throughout the countryside. Its members believe that, equipped with audio equipment, they will be able to reach larger audiences and be more effective increasing awareness about HIV/AIDS and the importance of behavioral modification. After numerous and lengthy exchanges with the leadership of Besazuli Sulu, FBF decided to support the troupe's effort by underwriting the cost of the audio equipment.

I'd also like to inform you about the launch of a very exciting and ambitious integrated rural development project whose beneficiaries include orphans who lost their parents either due to HIV/AIDS or the civil war in the Ivory Coast.

❖ The Omigbefite NGO in Loropeni submitted a proposal to FBF a couple of years ago which FBF came close to funding. The self-sustaining, income-generating aspect of the initial proposal focused on poultry production. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the Avian Flu epidemic prevented us from supporting the project. But the folks at Omigbefite proved to be very enterprising. This year we received a second, completely revised, proposal. You will learn all about Omigbefite from Bob Coffey, FBF project manager of his initiative in the next issue of *The Burkina Connection*!

Now is the time to renew your support for FBF Projects, for there is much work to be done. We welcome your talents, energies, and your financial support. If you have a question, idea, or willingness to participate in FBF Project work, please contact me (tom.vollrath@gmail.com), or any Projects Committee member (Marianne Bailey, Molly (Chambers) Burrell, Bob Coffey, Drissa Dao, Paul Dowling, Tom Fox, Anastasia Hopkinson, Suzanne Plopper, Sibiri Sawadogo, Etienne Yonly).

We hope you will join us in this great effort!

Sincerely,



Thomas Vollrath
Chair, Projects Committee
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