



April 1, 2020

Dear Friends of Burkina Faso,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Friends of Burkina Faso, I would like to extend to you and your loved ones our warmest greetings and thank you for your ongoing support of FBF!

Zak ramba let's be clear - these are challenging times. We're all figuring out what to do with schools, businesses, and borders closed around the world due to the coronavirus pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is not sparing any country or group, and its impact is far felt. As a Ouagalais recently said to a FBF Board member, "*If the coronavirus pandemic is shaking our foreign friends who usually help us, and our own leaders, can you imagine how we regular folks here feel about it? Hope is all we have left.*" Like him, we hope that the pandemic will be over as soon as possible.

In addition to this global crisis, le Pays des Hommes Intègres continues to face threats and attacks from terrorist groups that have caused internal displacements and urgent humanitarian needs. As of this writing, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights estimates that the numbers of internally displaced people have risen to over 750,000. Our hearts and prayers go out to everyone affected, many of whom are members of this organization. The FBF Board and working committees are deeply concerned with the on-going humanitarian situation in Burkina, which could possibly be exacerbated even further by this current pandemic.

As a result, we are asking now for your support in three key ways.

1. Make a contribution to our emergency humanitarian relief fund.

The stories of violence and displacement have, sadly, become the norm in Burkina Faso. While FBF remains committed to its long tradition of supporting community development projects in Burkina Faso, we feel there are groups out there providing critical emergency assistance on a grassroots level to respond to the growing humanitarian crisis. FBF is issuing a call for proposals now to these groups on the frontlines doing this important work. **We are asking our members (and their friends - please spread the word!) to contribute to this emergency humanitarian fund.** In order to move fast, we need to both raise funds and collect proposals at the same time. We are asking for your contributions now while we simultaneously receive and vet proposals. We are committed to providing close communication with all donors about how the funds will be disbursed. **Your contribution in any amount** will provide a show of solidarity with the Burkinabe people during this challenging time.

2. Pay annual membership dues of \$25.

Please note:

The date on the upper left corner of your mailing label is the date when your membership dues expire/d.

Your continued support is vital to FBF as it allows us to sustain our volunteer-run, member-driven organization. Since Peace Corps suspended the program in Burkina Faso in 2017, there is no active volunteer presence,





making FBF's commitment to the country even more important as RPCVs make up such a significant portion of our membership. **Your membership dues help us sustain important traditions** such as the annual Award for Peace, which recognizes individuals who have contributed to peace and are Burkinabe or connected to Burkina in extraordinary ways. FBF did not hold a membership drive in 2019, and as such, many memberships have lapsed. Your \$25 dues renewal today will help keep our organization lively.

3. Share your skills.

Our older generations of RPCV members have been very involved for many years, working diligently for FBF continuity and advocating and supporting its ability to fund many grassroots projects in Burkina Faso. We welcome your views and energy to help keep our organization up-to-date, in tune with the current situation in Burkina, and full of diverse perspectives and experiences. **We'd love to learn more about particular skills that our members have that could be helpful to our organization.** When filling out the membership form, please note this and your interest in becoming more actively involved with FBF. All skill sets are welcome – note we are particularly in immediate need of legal-savvy volunteers, as well as those interested in helping oversee our technology platforms (great opportunity for experienced IT folks and newbies alike!)

Take action by May 10!

To make a tax-deductible contribution to our emergency humanitarian relief fund, pay membership dues, or share your skills – or hopefully all three! – either complete the attached form and return it to the address provided on the form, or contribute online:

- **Membership dues:** <https://www.friendsofburkinafaso.org/membership>
- **Humanitarian relief or Projects:** <https://www.friendsofburkinafaso.org/index.php/donate>

Contributions and membership dues are requested by **May 10, 2020.**

During this time of “physical distancing” (<-- *please still stay connected socially!*), we are all reminded of just how important connection and community are to us. We are so grateful for this FBF community and for your continued connection with us in all its many forms.

Sincerely,

 Rcv '08-'10

Aaron Buchsbaum
President
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↑ Please share
any thoughts!

