



BURKINA CONNECTION

A NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR THE MEMBERS OF FRIENDS OF BURKINA FASO



2021 Vol. 2



IN THIS ISSUE

RECENT
HEADLINES
[p.2](#)

NEW
FUNDRAISING
PROCESS
[p.3](#)

GLOBAL NEED
UPDATE
[p.5](#)

CALL FOR
PROPOSALS
[p.7](#)



MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:

- [DR. ELISABETH NEBIE - p.7](#)
- [KAIT BROWN - p.8](#)

PRESIDENT'S YIRI

By Aaron Buchsbaum, President, RPCV '08-'10



Greetings, FBF-ers.

We're nearing winter in the US and cold season in Burkina. A great commonality between them is, whether 25 degrees in New Jersey or 65 degrees in Kongoussi, everyone will break out their cozy hats and puffy jackets. I intend to bundle up, and share warm wishes across the ocean.

Another seasonal event: I recently enjoyed seeing neighborhood kids and parents coming around, during Halloween, ringing my doorbell and seeking out candy (confession: we handed out candy we bought last year... Please don't tell anyone). Greeting kids and parents, I found it's still awkward to socialize, and that COVID has really dulled what I thought were inherent and "untouchable" skills to just be a person. I was much, much better at conversations when living au village. I miss the community spirit that swept over all of us each day. That is a very hard thing to replicate.

Now on to a bit of business.

We're trying a new approach to Project funding. In the past, FBF has aimed for a December-ish fundraising period, then gathered proposals afterwards, and finally wired money around April or so.

Most of the funds – rarely enough to meet the full need, so please consider upping your donations --

Now, we're flipping the process. Number one, we'll collect proposals earlier from groups in Burkina (please encourage any associations you know to apply). Number

Continued on p.2



PRESIDENT'S YIRI Continued from p.1

two, FBF will select promising proposals and raise money to try to fund them – explaining what they are to FBF members and allowing you to select if you'd like your dollars to go towards a specific project or to be distributed equally among them.

Let me also express my great thanks for associations like NEEDED. As a long-time partners with FBF, their work on education and support for girls has appeared regularly as a special set-aside on our donation coupons and web pages. I'm sure you'll continue to see their name, this time alongside the other projects that we hope to support.

If you want to learn more, I recommend reading more from Caroline (Projects Officer) and Suzanne (Treasurer) in this issue. Thank you to our Projects Committee for discussing this new approach at length and deciding to give it a try.

In closing, let me say the obvious: all the community projects we hear about are important. We know FBF's new approach doesn't magically let us meet all our funding goals to support Burkina. But we do hope it motivates more contributions because we'll be able to clearly identify for you who is leading an initiative, where, and what they want to achieve.

Wishing you all safety and good health. As always, please write to president@friendsofburkinafaso.org with any questions or comments.

Cheers -- Aaron Buchsbaum, RPCV '08-'10, Sabce



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Recent headlines about Burkina Faso

- The thing about poignant triple-jump moments? They sneak up on you. 5 Aug 21 [\[Link\]](#)
- Bobo-Dioulasso's Grande Mosquée Falls after Rain 13 Aug 21 [\[Link\]](#)
- Key defendant in Burkina Faso's Sankara Assassination Trial Pleads Not Guilty 11 Sep 21 [\[Link\]](#)
- A 'Historic Event': First Malaria Vaccine Approved by W.H.O. 6 Oct 21 [\[Link\]](#)
- *The Gravedigger's Wife*: Somali love story wins Africa's top film prize at Fespaco 24 Oct 21 [\[Link\]](#)
- Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on vegetable production systems and livelihoods: Smallholder farmer experiences in Burkina Faso 31 Oct 21 [\[Link\]](#)
- Burkina Faso: Cycling Race Traverses Conflict-Stricken Burkina Faso 4 Nov 21 [\[Link\]](#)



Here's an invitation from the former Directors of the Peace Corps:
Help us tell the world about the impact of service in your life.



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SERVED
MY COUNTRY**

Take the survey

NEW FUNDRAISING PROCESS FOR FBF PROJECTS: LE CHOIX EST A VOUS!

by Caroline Chambre Hammock, Projects Officer, RPCV '02-'04



Students attending the **Bilingual School** in Signoghin, just one of the many FBF projects.

Traditionally, FBF members have received our annual fundraising appeal in late fall, soliciting support for grassroots projects in Burkina that had yet to be selected. We had one long-standing project to which funds could be designated (the girls' education project in Ouahigouya), but apart from this, members' contributions were allocated once proposals were chosen by the Projects Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

We want to give members more agency in where contributions go in the year ahead. We also want members to fully understand project costs, which will hopefully inspire giving to help FBF fund each project as fully as possible.

This change means that members will not receive a 2021 end-of-year FBF appeal letter. However, 2021 donations are welcomed and encouraged! We recognize that some members may prefer to

make end-of-year gifts as part of a regular philanthropic practice. All donations made now will be gratefully received and will go towards projects to be funded in 2022. [\[Donate here.\]](#)

FBF is currently issuing a call for proposals to groups in Burkina Faso. As was the case last year, proposals may be for community development projects or for humanitarian assistance projects. The call for proposals is featured [on page 7](#) of this newsletter. Please share with your networks in Burkina! Last year FBF received 12 compelling proposals, and we are excited to see what this year's call will bring. Proposals are due by December 31.

In January, the Projects Committee will review and vet all submitted proposals. The Committee will perform due diligence in order to carefully select projects for funding support. Selected projects will then

2022 marks a new year,
and a new fundraising
process for FBF!

- New calendar for proposals and fundraising
- Projects announced in March alongside active fundraising
- Members will have the option to designate or make a donation to the general projects fund

**Donate
Now**

Continued on p.4





FBF received this certificate of appreciation from the **Croix-Rouge Burkinabè** in recognition of FBF's support of well construction for internally displaced persons in the Zoundweogo Province. The Croix Rouge received funding through FBF's Humanitarian Fund in early 2020.

NEW FUNDRAISING PROCESS *Continued from p.3*

be informed of FBF's decision and that active fundraising will begin.

Members will hear from FBF in March with details on the selected projects and the funds needed to make each project a reality. Fundraising letters will be mailed as well as active fundraising announcements on our social media channels and website. Members will be able to designate their donations to the project (or projects) that interest them most. Members will still have the option to donate to a general projects funds if preferred.

We are excited that this change will allow FBF to fundraise towards the actual proposals and increase YOUR say in where your dollars go. We hope this new process will resonate with FBF members and will also inspire increased giving.

It is thanks to members' support that FBF has been able to reinforce many transformative projects over the years – as always, thank you, merci, barka, a ni ce for your generosity and commitment to Burkina Faso!



Association Yanbuama received funding to train internally displaced women on shea nut transformation. These photos were from a recent follow-up visit. The women reported improved ability to feed and support their families thanks to their shea soap sales.



NEW 501(c)3 HOME FOR GLOBAL NEEED'S GIRLS' EDUCATION PROJECTS

by Suzanne Plopper, Treasurer, RPCV '67-'69



Global NEEED's Girls' Education Projects, in collaboration with Friends of Burkina Faso, have helped thousands of girls in the Ouahigouya-area complete their elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education over our 20 year partnership.

As this school year began, 17 young Burkinabe women entered postsecondary education/training thanks to FBF scholarships made possible by our generous donors. The scholarships include three university scholarships (one for studies in computer engineering and two for studies in biomedical sciences), twelve for midwifery training and two for nursing training. All scholarships support three years of education/training. Due to the continuing threat of terrorist attacks in the north, many village primary schools are closed, making it difficult for the teacher training school in Ouahigouya to place students in their second year of training. Thus, NEEED has decided not to support new teacher training scholarships for this school year. (The 20 midwifery/nursing students in the photo includes 17 supported by FBF and 3 of the 4 supported by the new Burkina Faso Girls' Education Fund. One student is missing from the photo due to a death in her family.)

Fundraising for Global NEEED's girls' education projects (school lunches for village girls at the Lycee Moderne de l'Amitie and the Postsecondary Education for Girls Project) has been discussed by the Board of Directors over the past year. As 2021 comes to an end, the Board prefers not to commit to continue to fundraise for these projects on a regular yearly basis in the future. All funds donated to Friends of Burkina Faso for the above girls' education projects through the end of 2021 will be allocated to those projects as per the donors' wishes. All girls currently in school with FBF scholarships will be supported by their scholarships throughout the remainder of their studies.

In response to the FBF Board's discussions regarding Global NEEED, a new 501c3, the Burkina Faso Girls' Education Fund (BFGEF), dedicated to supporting the education of indigent girls in northern Burkina Faso, has been established. The BFGEF EIN number

(tax ID number with the IRS) is 85-3020769. A web site and Facebook page will be developed in the near future, along with a PayPal account. Beginning January 1, 2022, if you wish to donate to noon meals for village girls at the Lycee Moderne de l'Amitie and/or to the Postsecondary Education for Girls Project, your donation check must be made out to Burkina Faso Girls' Education Fund and sent to me: Suzanne Plopper, P.O. Box 395, Chester, CA 96020.

Several concerns motivated the establishment of this 501(c)3 to continue supporting the education of girls in northern Burkina Faso. Among them:

- The overwhelmingly impressive success of the girls we have supported through NEEED's girls' education projects over the years. FBF has supported:
 - ✓ Nearly 4,000 village girls through the Lambs Support Girls' Education Project (2002-2017) which supported village girls entering primary school. The initial investment we made in each of these girls (first-year school materials and a lamb which the girl and her parents raise and sell each year in order to buy school supplies for the following year and a new lamb) supported the student all the way through secondary school. An average of 84% of these girls have passed national primary school exit exams enabling them to continue on to middle school as compared with 64% of their peers throughout the region.
 - ✓ School lunches for girls from distant villages attending the Lycee Moderne de l'Amitie (2006 – present). Over the past six years, an average of 80% of LMA students passed year-end exams compared with 37% of

Continued on p.6



middle/secondary students nation-wide.


✓ Postsecondary education and training for qualified indigent girls (2010 – present). To date, FBF has supported the scholarships of 233 young women (of which 187 have graduated and 46 are still in training). All but four of them have succeeded in their studies (or for those currently in school are succeeding in their studies). In each of the four cases in which a student failed or dropped out of school, NEEED worked with the institution to identify another indigent young woman and transferred the remaining scholarship to her. Thus, all FBF/NEEED scholarships have supported/are supporting an individual's successful completion of her education/ training.

- My confidence in the management of these projects by Global NEEED Burkina: Since the beginning of our working relationship 20 years ago, NEEED has, without exception, been responsive and transparent in sharing information regarding all aspects of all of the girls' education projects. Concerning the postsecondary education/ training project, at the end of each school year NEEED sends copies of each student report card provided by the institutions the students are attending.
- The only opportunity for the large number of highly qualified young indigent women in Burkina to obtain secondary and postsecondary education is with outside scholarship support. As we all know, the education of many children in Burkina Faso, and girls in particular, is made impossible because of the lack of resources.

- The lack of education/training of women prevents them from participating in today's society and makes them unable to combat poverty and exclusion which impacts negatively each generation of children. The participation of women in

decision making at all levels of society is crucial for sustainable socio-economic development.

Support
Sababou Education Fund
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EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN
BURKINA FASO.

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The Projects Committee of FBF is currently accepting proposals for consideration for 2022 grant funding. Proposed projects must be related to community development OR related to humanitarian assistance.

Priority is generally given to proposals that:

1) Are initiated by Burkinabe, 2) Address one or more community's felt-needs, 3) Are managed by a competent non-governmental organization willing to assume fiduciary responsibilities, and 4) Build institutional capacity as evidenced by village-level participation and leadership.

FBF is a small organization with limited fund-raising capacity. Proposals that are selected by the Projects Committee will be presented in early 2022 to the membership of FBF for financial support, with the goal of raising a targeted amount of funds needed for project success.

Final grant amounts are subject to the donations received by FBF during the fundraising period. Grant funds will be disbursed in the second quarter of 2022, and applying organizations should factor this funding timeline into their project planning.

Application guidelines can be found in English and in French at <https://www.friendsofburkinafaso.org/projects/grant-proposal-guidelines>.

Proposals must be submitted by 31 December 2021 to projects@friendsofburkinafaso.org.

Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

DR. NEBIE NAMED ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT ASU

Dr. Elisabeth Nebie was recently named Assistant Professor at the School of Human Evolution and Social Change and the Center for Global Discovery and Conservation Science at Arizona State University.

Dr. Nebie's work integrates ethnography with spatial & participatory methods to examine environmental changes, climate adaptation, food security and migration. Most of her research has focused on the Sahel region of West Africa, more precisely Burkina Faso, her home country, and Senegal.



Trained as both an anthropologist and an international development expert, she seeks to produce research that informs inclusive policies, sustainable development programming and targeted and efficient humanitarian interventions. As part of this engagement, she has worked for the International Development Research Centre, the International Livestock Research Institute, and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society, and collaborated with UNESCO, UNFCCC, and the World Food Programme.

To learn more about Dr. Nebie and her work, visit her [website](#) or [Google Scholar Profile](#).

SAHEL RESEARCH GROUP HIGHLIGHTS DIRE SITUATION IN BURKINA

The September 16 edition of [Sahel Research Group's Weekly News Brief](#) highlighted the dire situation in Burkina Faso:

In total, more than 1.4 million people have been forced to flee their homes as a result of the attacks in Burkina Faso. Additionally, an estimated 4.8 million people are food insecure of which 2.9 million people are in acute food insecurity.

The article linked to sources from the [Norwegian Refugee Council](#), [The Defense Post](#), and [Le Monde](#).



RPCV's DECAF COFFEE NOW AVAILABLE IN DOROTHY LANE MARKETS

Kait Brown, Burkina RPCV and decaf coffee startup founder, is celebrating her company's first major retail account — on the shelves of the local grocery store where she got her very first job as a teenage barista.

Kait's decaf journey began many years ago. She was living in Chicago, working a corporate gig. Her then-boyfriend had just moved to town to make a go of it when her father was diagnosed with cancer. She realized her caffeinated coffee habit was magnifying her stress and restless nights.

So she set out to find good decaf — a journey that ultimately took her around the world, meeting with coffee farmers and natural decaffeiners, and Savorista was born. Today, the company offers a variety of decaf and half-caf coffees in whole bean or various grinds, including some limited-edition flavors.

This summer, Savorista launched its new line of single-serve pour-over coffees, available in both decaf and half-caf flavors.

Want to try Savorista coffee for yourself? [Order online at savorista.com](https://savorista.com), or, if you are in the Dayton, Ohio area, grab a bag at your local Dorothy Lane Market.

Kait Brown was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Burkina Faso where she worked with small-scale farmers to build a sesame cooperative. In the Peace Corps, she saw first-hand the power of business to create a positive impact. She launched Savorista in 2018 to disrupt the decaf coffee market.

Kait loves coffee (obviously), traveling around the world, and spending time with friends and her husband. She enjoys brainstorming, collaborating to accomplish big goals, and mentoring.

Kait is also a new mom - Congratulations, Kait!

Learn more about Kait's coffee journey through her website: savorista.com.



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Looking for the perfect holiday gift for your favorite bookworm or Burkina-phile?

Check out this **BOOK LIST** for the young and young at heart!



ABOUT US

Friends of Burkina Faso is a 501(c)3 nonprofit affiliated with the National Peace Corps Association. We maintain a **network** of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) and friends of Burkina Faso. We provide funding and assistance to **support projects** in Burkina Faso. We strive to **improve social interaction**, communication and information exchange. We **educate** others about the country and culture of Burkina Faso.

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Image courtesy of Caroline Chambre Hammock,
taken during a recent visit to Burkina.