

# The Camel Express



Newsletter of the Friends of Niger

Volume 28 Issue 2



June 2013

## Kuli Kuli Promotes Fair Trade with Niger

Submitted by Lisa Curtis

When I don't finish my plate, I think of starving kids in Africa.

But it is not because my mother told me to. It's because I have a vivid memory of the young girls whom I befriended in Niger, West Africa, who took my food wrappers out of the trash and licked the slight residue that remained.

They say the Peace Corps stays with you. For me, the experience remains a significant part of my life, and fostered a devotion toward fixing the imbalance between the hungry and the overweight.

Witnessing hunger prompted me first to think more deeply about the problem. One hero in my field of development, **Amartya Sen**, has already illustrated that we have more than enough food to feed the world (we could feed 10 billion people!) and yet nearly a billion go to sleep hungry every night. When I studied why this happens, I noticed one main solution advocated: rich countries sending heavily subsidized crops abroad to poor nations. Yet this effort has proved to be inefficient and even hurtful if imported food lowers crop prices such that local farmers cannot sell their harvests. I noticed as well that a better solution than 'giving', even if one's intentions are pure, is to enable others to give. In agriculture, that means investing in farmers. *Cont'd on page 4*

## Mali and Niger in the New World Disorder

Submitted by Michael Short

The political situation in Niger has been negatively impacted by the events in neighboring Mali. A comprehensive summary of events was provided to FON by Michael R. Short (RPCV Cameroon 78-80) from the collapse of the Ghaddafi government in Libya in 2011 to the rapid shift in the political and social landscape in both Mali and Niger. A link to the summary is found on the FON website at [www.friendsofniger.org](http://www.friendsofniger.org). In Niger, in April 2011, a peaceful transition of power had taken place, when the new democratically-elected civilian president, Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, took leadership from a transitional military authority that had toppled the previous president, Mr. Mamadou Tandja. At the same time, the porous border area of Niger, Mali and Algeria was home to the active cell of *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Magreb* (AQIM) trading kidnapped Western hostages for huge ransoms, and benefitting from the lucrative trans-Sahara trade in guns and drugs. In Niger, however, which has been relatively quiet during this period, terrorist attacks are on the rise and there are signs that next chapters may be a bit darker. The full article will be sent to members who provided their e-mail address to FON.

## Galmi Hospital Update

By Chris Zolkowski

Salamatou was brought to SIM Galmi Hospital last week after being in prolonged labor for 2 days. She was hypotensive and showing signs of developing shock. We stabilized her with rapid administration of IV fluids and blood and took her to the operating room for an emergency delivery. It was too late for baby but not too late for mom. The prolonged labor had ruptured Salamatou's uterus and the baby had been floating in her abdomen probably since before she left her village. During her first surgery, we stopped her internal bleeding. The next day we performed a second surgery to repair her torn uterus. She is now doing much better. *Cont'd on page 5*



### Letter from the President

Dear members and friends,

It's the time of year for gatherings and get-togethers. We are pleased that so many of our members are taking the time to do just that and remember shared experiences in Niger (see page 5). Please send us photos and an update of your event so that we can post them on our FON website and in the Camel Express. It's always great to hear from so many of you!

While we don't share your personal contact information with others, unless you give us that permission (see the Marley reunion: thanks Joe and Sharon), we are asking you to send us some of your personal information with your membership form so that we can report aggregated statistics about who we are (see the membership information on page 6). Because our members are so mobile, it's hard to keep our membership information up to date, but we are trying.

Also with the current situation and issues in Niger (see page 1, New World Disorder), our FON efforts to support programs, projects, and individuals in Niger remain limited, but we are reaching out to the people and groups we have contact with in order to identify projects and activities that have merit in reaching the people of Niger (see Well Repair in Touloukh, page 4). We hope that by the end of this year, you will be reading more about new projects that your membership dues support.

Because so many of our members had personal contact and experiences in Niger with the Notre Dame orphanage and the Galmi Hospital, we hope that you will enjoy their updates (see pages 3 and 5). The compassionate work done by the staff at both the orphanage and the hospital continue to receive our support. Also, we want to send our sincere congratulations to both Nelson and Judith Cronyn on their new assignment to Niger (see page 3). We know that both of them will continue to positively impact the development of Niger and we look forward to reading about their work and experiences soon.

Peace, John

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**The Camel Express** is the periodical newsletter of **Friends of Niger (FON)**.

FON can be contacted via the post at  
 P.O. Box 5823

Washington, D. C. 20016-9998

Or by e-mail at

[president@friendsofniger.org](mailto:president@friendsofniger.org)

and you will find FON on the web and this newsletter in **FULL COLOR** at:

[www.friendsofniger.org](http://www.friendsofniger.org).

**Editor: Jude Andreasen**

Please send address changes and corrections, as well as any queries to **The Camel Express** at the address above.

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 PREFER TO RECEIVE YOUR COPY  
 BY E-MAIL ONLY.**

**FON is seeking a new editor for this newsletter. If you want to help but are not sure you have time to be editor, we will consider an assistant editor position. Please contact the editor if you are interested at [judeheyjude@hotmail.com](mailto:judeheyjude@hotmail.com)**

## Nelson Cronyn Appointed Director of Millennium Challenge Corporation for Niger

Niger Ambassador Maman Sidikou held a reception at his home on May 29, 2013 to honor the newly appointed Director for Niger at the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). Friends of Niger board member Penni St. Hilaire and her husband joined MCC and embassy staff to congratulate Nelson Cronyn on his appointment.

Nelson Cronyn has a long history of development work in sub-Saharan Africa, including tours as Peace Corps Country Director in Chad from 2003 to 2006 and in Burkina Faso from 2000 to 2003. He served as APCD for Agriculture in Niger from 1997 to 2000. He and his wife Judith are both Niger RPCVs (85-88; *Guidan Iddar and Tabalak*).



### Notre Dame Orphanage, Niamey, Niger Needs Your Support

Recently Sr. Brigitte-Marie, the director of the Notre Dame Orphanage, wrote Sue Bracken, FON member who served in Niger from 1966-68, about the orphanage. She has been a supporter of the Niamey Orphanage since 1997, when a small group of RPCVs returned to Niger to help celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Peace Corps in Niger.

The Fraternité Notre Dame Sisters arrived in Niger at the end of December 1996 and welcomed their first orphan in August 1997. In 1998 they acquired a space in an area of Niamey called Banifandou II, where many destitute people live. Currently they run an orphanage with 41 children aged between 8 months and 17 years, most of them are orphans or born from mothers suffering from mental illness. Five were sent by the court after they were found in the street abandoned just after delivery. Since these children did not get a chance to know their own parents and share a family life with them, the religious friars and nuns created a home where they all can live as brothers and sisters in a big family. Whenever possible, the Sisters suggest that an aunt or grandmother keep the child and in compensation, they support the family with infant formula, baby food, clothing, medical care and sometimes education. At the moment, 200 children benefit from this support, most of them babies.

But the facility is much more than an orphanage. Currently it serves about 150 children. Besides the orphans, it serves children whose families come for help; most of them are babies and newborns. Notre Dame provides these families with food, clothing, medical care and medicine. In 2003 they opened a school with only 14 students, this year there are 700 students attending from kindergarten to secondary school. Most of the children are unable to pay any fees and they struggle to pay the teachers.

In 2001 they opened a little clinic to serve the poor. Last year 16,798 patients came to get medical care, many served without charge. Medical care, gynecological care and ultra sounds are offered. There is also a small laboratory where people needing blood tests can have them done at less cost than at the public hospitals. The need for medicine to serve the poor is great.

Beginning in 2013 funds from Japan were used to build a maternity so women can give birth in safe conditions in order to reduce the maternal mortality rate, which one of the highest in the world.

Sr. Brigitte-Marie recently emailed their urgent need for a washing machine. None of theirs is working and cannot be repaired. They are currently washing all the clothes and linens for the children by hand. You can imagine how difficult that must be with the red dirt that is everywhere. Your tax-deductible contributions to support the work of the orphanage, clinic and school may be sent to FON.

Here is a link to a video of a visit to the orphanage that Boston University students made in 2009 and to the website of Fraternité Notre Dame.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z25DMYWWz68> and [http://www.fraternitenotredame.com/2011\\_2\\_0/niger.php](http://www.fraternitenotredame.com/2011_2_0/niger.php)

Continued from page 1

## Kuli Kuli Fair Trade

Eager to be part of this better solution, together with a few talented friends, I founded **Kuli Kuli**, a company producing nutritional bars from a plant I used to eat in Niger - *moringa*. Our mission is simply to nourish the world.

*Moringa Oleifera* is slender tree that is often said to be one of the **most nutrient-dense plants in the world** for its high levels of protein, iron, calcium, vitamins, and antioxidants. It is as perfect for vegetarians as it is for rural farmers who cannot afford meat, as it contains essential amino acids that the body normally cannot acquire from plant-based diets. Moringa leaves also contain vitamins A and C, more calcium than most other greens, and so much iron that doctors prescribe it for anemic patients. Best of all, it grows in sand soil with very little water, meaning that it naturally grows in places like Niger and India. It is an especially promising as a food source in the tropics because the tree is in full leaf at the end of the dry season when other foods are typically scarce.

Kuli Kuli aims to increase global investment in the agriculture of poor communities by engaging consumers living in the land of plenty with farmers in West Africa who cultivate moringa. Just like the idea behind **Fair Trade**, a certification showing that the farmers and workers are justly compensated, Kuli Kuli invests in farmers and provide them with new market opportunities. As an added bonus, when farmers grow moringa, this specific crop not only provides them with an income from exporting it, but also can nourish their home community's health.

Growing and utilizing moringa is not necessarily a new idea - in fact moringa production has already been taken up by the international development community, via organizations like Trees for Life International, Church World Service, Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization, and Volunteer Partnerships for West Africa.

But there is only so much that a few NGOs and Peace Corps Volunteers can accomplish outside of market forces.

**Kuli Kuli** is building Fair Trade 2.0, a way for consumers in the U.S. to gain access to healthy plants from around the world while supporting farmers in the developing world to grow and utilize more of these healthy foods. By carefully managing our supply chain so as to only source a portion of each harvest for consumption in the Western World and by paying fair wages, we can ensure that superfoods like moringa benefit those who need them the most.

## FON Provides Funds for Well Repair in Touloukh

The mayor of Ingall wrote to thank FON and provided an update. Sue Rosenfeld provided the following translation of his letter:

Work began two months ago and we are now in the final stage. We just need to complete surface repairs, such as the edging, the drinking troughs, sectioning, etc. I think we'll be able to finish the work this month. The Commune employed a man named Addal Agueyis to do the work. He was able to give temporary work to 12 men for a month and a half.

I'd like to thank 'Amis du Niger' (Friends of Niger) for their assistance which enabled us to repair this well, which serves both humans and livestock. When we buy a digital camera we will send you more photos. This report is brief. There are 16 to 20 other wells in the area in need of repairs. They were destroyed or damaged by last year's flooding.

Again, we offer you our sincerest thanks.  
Ghabdouane Mohamed, Mayor of Ingall





Continued from page 1

## Galmi Hospital Update

By Chris Zoolkowski

In 2012 the United Nations Save the Children rated Niger as "the worst place in the world to be a mother". SIM Galmi Hospital together with the Niger Ministry of Health are working to change that. The women of Niger need and deserve safe places to give birth. The traditional birthing attendants do an excellent job but they are handicapped in the absence of a tertiary health care facility, such as Galmi or a district hospital, where they can refer women who require an operative delivery or a safe blood transfusion or management of a complication that cannot be managed at the village level.

The obstetrical ward at Galmi Hospital has been a safe place for Nigerien women to give birth since 1950. But now this 60 year old building is showing defects caused by erosion of its foundations. We have a plan in place to demolish the old building and build a new and improved obstetrical ward. \$56,000 has already been donated towards the cost of \$362,000. We have used these gifts to begin the new foundation and are looking for help to raise the remaining funds to bring it to its completion.



Domin kowa shi samu lafiya!

Dr. Christopher  
D. Zoolkoski, RPCV  
Tahoua 1988-90



Above: Salamatou uterine rupture victim.  
Left: Galmi OB delivery.

On March 23, 2013, FON Vice-President Gabriella Maertens hosted 10 Niger RPCVs and one Nigerien at her home for a mini-reunion of volunteers living in the Greater Portland, Oregon area.

Seated left to right around table: Jennifer Mead, Filingué 86-88, Hama Karimoune Nigerien student at PSU, Angela Schug Gaya 99-2002 Sue Bracken Maradi, 64-66, Gabriella Maertens, Zinder 64-66. Standing left to right: Bill Stein Birni N'Konni area 90-93, Mary Abrams (Maradi 79-81 and CD 2006-2010), and seated back: Amy Wilson PCV Boula 82-84, Niger APCD 90-93.



## Peace Corps Niger Reunion Invitation

July 25—28, 2013

The Marley Farm  
57818 Rush Creek Rd.  
Ferryville, WI 54628  
Contact Info: Tel: 608 675  
3122 or 608 606 2559  
jmarley@mwt.net

## Friends of Niger MEMBERSHIP

Here are a few snapshots (statistics) of

### Who We Are

There are 567 of us in the database! It's comprised mostly of RPCVs, but we also have former Niger Peace Corps country directors, and doctors and other staff, as well as ambassadors, Boston University/Niger Alums, and non-American friends. It's a relatively small number of people in the world who have ever lived and worked in Niger, so we are a unique community. Since 1962 over 3000 have served in Niger as Peace Corps Volunteers. Please help us get in touch with more of these former PCVs, and with others who have a special connection to Niger, so that we can continue to benefit the people and country we came to know and love. Here are the snapshot stats of who Friends of Niger is in contact with:

#### **NIGER RPCVs WHO SERVED BETWEEN:**

1962 - 1968 = 85  
 1969—1975 = 31  
 1976—1982 = 39  
 1983—1989 = 44  
 1990—1999 = 69  
 2000—2006 = 16  
 2007—2011 = 47

*Note: We do not have years of service for all 567 contacts.*

Gaya = 5  
 Madaoua = 5  
 Magaria = 3  
 Maradi = 10  
 N'Guigmi = 4  
 Niamey = 28  
 Tahoua = 9  
 Tilliberi = 4  
 Torodi = 4  
 Zinder = 8

*Note: We do not have location of service for all 567 contacts.*

#### **NIGER PC COUNTRY DIRECTORS & APCDS**

C. Payne Lucas CD— 64—66  
 Richard Elwell CD— 66—67  
 David Burgess — 82—84  
 Donoldo Hart APCD — 82-85  
 Lyn Gray CD— 86—89  
 Ken Patterson APCD — 92—95  
 Amy Wilson APCD — 90—93  
 Nelson Cronyn CD — 97—00  
 James Bullington CD — 00—06  
 Mary Abrahms CD — 06—10  
 Valerie Staats CD — 10—11

#### **NIGER PEACE CORPS DOCTORS**

David Nicholas — 63—66  
 Geraldine St. Onge — 66—68  
 Brian Dolan — 73—74  
 Aron Primack — 90—92  
 Allen Webb — 06—08

#### **LOCATION OF SERVICE IN NIGER** (various)

Agadez = 5  
 Air = 1  
 Birni N'Konni = 4  
 Bouza = 4  
 Diffa = 2  
 Dogon Douchi = 4  
 Dosso = 6

#### **WHERE THE RPCVS AND CONTACTS IN OUR DATABASE**

##### **LIVE NOW** (various)

CA = 53	NY = 21	Israel = 2
CO = 10	NC = 10	Liberia = 1
DC = 32	ND = 2	Mexico = 1
IL = 15	OR = 17	Niger = 5
ID = 1	UT = 1	
MA = 20	TX = 11	
MD = 23	VA = 41	
MI = 12	WA = 26	
MN = 10	Canada = 3	
	France = 1	
	India = 1	

CDs and doctors please send corrections.  
 For all, when you pay your dues, please give your years of service, etc. Dues are payable in January, but can be paid anytime, or not at all. We're just glad to be in touch!

## 2013 FRIENDS OF NIGER MEMBERSHIP FORM

**It's time to support Friends of Niger (FON) with your DUES!**

**Please send your dues in January (unless you paid anytime during 2012)**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(h) \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (w) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Connection to Niger (RPCV, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Dates in Niger \_\_\_\_\_ Location in Niger \_\_\_\_\_

Program or Involvement in Niger \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

*Membership Dues & Contributions Help Fund **FON** Activities - including The Camel Express, the FON website, the FON Archives, and local Nigerien Projects .*

**The Friends of Niger is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3).**

**Membership and contributions to Friends of Niger are fully tax deductible.**

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Please Check Appropriate Boxes

### MEMBERSHIP

☐ Individual \$20

☐ Family \$35 i.e. two members at one address

☐ **\$35 to cover Individual Membership in both FON & NPCA**

☐ FREE— New RPCV or new to FON, entitled to a 1-Year Free Membership

### GENERAL CONTRIBUTION

☐ In addition to membership, I have enclosed a contribution for FON overhead

### PROGRAM CONTRIBUTION

☐ Young Girls Education

☐ Micro Credit

☐ Chewable Vitamins for Kids

☐ Education/Training

☐ Public Health

☐ Water Resources

☐ Other specific project \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **Please send paper copy of the Camel Express by U.S. Mail**

☐ **Please send link to PDF version of the Camel Express by e-mail.**

☐ **Friends of Niger T-Shirts at \$15 each (Shipping Included)** \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt Sizes: S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ T-Shirt Color: \_\_\_\_\_ brown \_\_\_\_\_ beige

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Check or Money Order Payable to Friends of Niger and mail with this form to:  
P. O. Box 5823, Washington, D. C. 20016-9998**

### PRIVACY POLICY

*Your contact information is requested and maintained by FON so that we can contact you in the future. FON does not share your contact information with any third party other than with the National Peace Corps Association with whom we have a reciprocity agreement.*