

The Camel Express



Newsletter of the Friends of Niger

July 2023

Please note new address: Friends of Niger 4865 Hwy 234 Box 180, White City, OR 97503

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Dear Readers,

Board members and volunteer reviewers have been busy!! We have just wrapped up another round of grant awards and are announcing a call for proposals due September 1. There are 22 projects currently active or just recently completed with final reports pending. We continue to see improvement in the quality of project proposals and grantees are stepping up their accountability by sharing reports, photos and stories of accomplishments. Our list of potential applicants has grown to over 100 organizations and contacts in Niger.

Come join us! Consider volunteering to participate in grant review, serving as a project champion or join us on the board of directors.

Merci, Fofo, Mun godey, Tanimert, Foma, Thank you

Amy Wilson

1) Nine grants awarded in May

The grant review team has completed another successful round of grant reviews! Friends of Niger selected 9 projects for funding in May. All unsuccessful applicants were given feedback about what the review team liked and what would have made their proposal more competitive. Many thanks to our review team:

Abdou Illia, Alhassan Ali, Alix (Barstow) Fedoruk, Ashley Spencer Fairleigh, Cara Greger, Douglas Steinberg, JoAnn Lewis, John Baird, Katherine Long, Kelsey Andersen, Leah LaCivita, Mary Abrams, Melissa Perera, Paige Pihl Buckley, Scott Youngstedt, Susan Susanke, Amy Wilson.

A total of \$32,421 project support was authorized by the board thanks to the generous contributions of the members of the Friends of Niger. Volunteers have also stepped up to be project champions and liaisons for the following funded projects.

- **Rural Vocational Training \$750.** ONG DIMA. Artisan training will be provided in rural areas starting with soap making pilot with women in Hamdallaye.

- **CSI Water System 1,350,000 CFA.** ONG AFAA. A water system will be improved for a rural health clinic in the Agadez region.
- **Malaria Prevention Niamey 557,000 CFA.** ONG Failatoul Hairan (La Bienfaisance). Mosquito nets, medication and training will be provided to help prevent malaria for vulnerable pregnant women and children in Niamey.
- **CSI solar Yekoua 2,068,323 CFA.** Fédération Rayuwar Karkara des réseaux Mata Masu Dubara (MMD). Solar panels will be installed to provide 24 hour electricity to rural health clinic in Zinder region.
- **Milk Cows Abalak 2,850,000 CFA.** Société Coopérative Simplifiée des Femmes Couturières “FAKRU”. Milk production will be increased by adding dairy cows to existing sheep herd.
- **Sheep Fattening Agadez 2,769,980 CFA.** ONG APR EMITTI. Livestock will be purchased and training provided for women’s cooperative sheep fattening program.
- **Sheep Husbandry Balleyara 3,185,000 CFA.** ONG ODI Niger. Sheep will be purchased and training in animal husbandry will be provided to 20 disabled women.
- **School WASH Aguié \$2,500.** Remember Niger Coalition. Latrines and a WASH station will be constructed at a middle school in Aguié.

An Award of 2,922,500 CFA was made to fence a garden in the Zinder region contingent on a well being funded by another donor Subsequently, the well proved far too expensive and the project was abandoned.

2) Monitoring and site visits

Board member Alhassan Ali Mamadou Souana is a rock star! During his annual visit back home he has taken time away from friends and family to conduct sites visits to several FON projects. He has been dropping in on ongoing grants to meet with grantees and see how the projects are doing. Pictured here he visited 1) the malaria prevention project in Niamey, 2) the project to use biocontrol against millet miner in the Dosso region and 3) the artisan training programs in Niamey by DIMA. At the artisan training center he was joined by FON members Bill Miles and Scott Youngstedt. We look forward to hearing more about what he learned during his visits when he returns.



Alhassan at the Niamey health clinic and at the biocontrol project sign—note FON name and logo!



Members Bill Miles and Scott Youngstedt tagged along with Alhassan for the tour at the DIMA training site.

3) Grantees keeping us up to date : reports from the field

Rapport de mission: Sheep husbandry project for handicapped women in Balleyara

Submitted by ODI - Organisation pour un Développement Inclusif

*Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre du projet : **Petite ferme d'élevage de moutons pour accroître l'autosuffisance des femmes handicapées et non handicapées dans la Commune de Balleyara**, une mission composée du Secrétaire Exécutif et d'un chauffeur été faite dans la commune de Tagazar/Balleyara en compagnie du Superviseur de ladite zone (Harouna) comme prévue, le Dimanche 21 Mai 2023. L'objectif de cette mission est d'une part, prendre contact avec les autorités municipales et les femmes bénéficiaires afin de les informer de l'acceptation de leur projet intitulé : « Petite ferme d'élevage des moutons pour accroître l'autosuffisance des femmes handicapées et non handicapées dans la CR de Balleyara ».*

D'autre part organiser une réunion avec les bénéficiaires pour élaborer une liste des bénéficiaires et rappeler de leurs engagements pris qui constituent d'ailleurs les premiers critères d'éligibilité avant l'octroi des animaux. Il s'agit de la:

- *Construction des hangars ;*
- *Disponibilité d'une mangeoire ;*
- *Disponibilité des sceaux ;*
- *Disponibilité d'au moins un sac de son ;*
- *Disponibilité d'un stock minimum de paille et des produits de déparasitage.*

Tous les membres du groupement Fama ont lu et accepté et signé les engagements en présence du représentant du Maire de la commune de Balleyara.

Fait à Niamey, le 25 Mai 2023.



- Meeting with local officials; check out this band of sheep purchased for the project



Meeting with women beneficiaries to explain required terms of participation.

4) Call for applications: respond no later than September 1, 2023

To all interested parties:

Friends of Niger (FON) is a non-profit association with the objective of promoting activities that promote the well-being of Niger and especially the Nigerien people. FON uses a competitive process for project funding, and we are currently launching a call for projects. Our grant-making program is designed to support projects that originate from and are supported by local people, meet the criteria for success, and have the potential to have a lasting positive impact.

Applications for funding must be received by September 1, 2023. All eligible applications will compete for available funds based on their score after evaluation by a committee. Note that the results of the competition will be announced on November 1, 2023, and the allocation of funds is expected after this date, so proposed projects must be scheduled to begin no earlier than mid-November.

We invite you to consult the information and application form in English and in French found on our website: <http://www.friendsofniger.org/grants/> The list of recently funded projects is also available to give you an idea of successful projects.

We encourage you to share this information with others who may be interested in submitting an application for a FON grant.

If you have any questions please contact us at projects@friendsofniger.org

5) Dancing with the Diaspora

More than 100 Nigeriens from around the east coast assembled in Greensboro for a Nigerien cultural gathering and fete. There was food and dancing to Mali Yaro and Ado Gwanja. FON was represented by president Amy Wilson and vice president Alix Barstow Fedoruk. Elizabeth Newman also participated.



Alix and Elizabeth; party goers showering the singer with praise and dollars-look closely for the floating dollar captured in this photo!

Other places where Nigerien diaspora congregate are Harrisburg PA, Washington DC, Ohio, Indiana, Nebraska and Arkansas.

6) Casual Conversation : Member Gathering August 22, 8 pm eastern

Join us online for an opportunity to chat and catch up with each other. There's no agenda here—just following up on a suggestion to start hosting opportunities for conversation [English – Hausa – Zarma – French ???], so we are just throwing out a date and hoping someone shows up!

Ka iri ma fakaray! Zo muyi magana ! Viens parlons !

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82053018522?pwd=ZzhzL09YQUJFOWVVK09nMk9FWjZ2Zz09>

7) Niger related News

- **2023 named International Year of Millets.** The United Nations General Assembly at its 75th session in March 2021 declared 2023 the International Year of Millets. FAO is the lead agency for celebrating the Year in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders. Millets can grow on arid lands with minimal inputs and are resilient to changes in climate. They are therefore an ideal solution for countries to increase self-sufficiency and reduce reliance on imported cereal grains. Two reports: 1--<https://www.fao.org/millet-2023/en>, and 2--<https://www.npr.org/2023/06/08/1180964010/the-united-nations-declares-2023-the-international-year-of-millet-2023/>
- **Black immigrants reflect on navigating their identities in the American South** /NPR <https://www.npr.org/2023/05/07/1174631480/black-immigrants-reflect-on-navigating-their-identities-in-the-american-south>
- **A Future with Fish: A budding fish farmer in Niger.** From online videos to building a tank and sourcing stock, Abdoul Majid Hamadou pins his hopes on fish farming in Niger. *link to 14 minute video.* <https://www.aljazeera.com/program/africa-direct/2023/7/4/a-future-with-fish-a-budding-fish-farmer-in-niger> from John Davison
- **Sudan's descent into violence poses new threat to volatile Sahel region.** Spillover from conflict risks creation of a corridor of instability stretching from the Red Sea to the Atlantic. <https://www.ft.com/content/3486161a-2fb4-4cf8-ae34-8772961b37eb>
Check out the animated time-lapse map Conflict in the Sahel: Violent attacks across the Sahel region, Jan 1 2012 to Jul 7 2023. Article posted by Scott Webb

8) In Brief –

- **Passing of Hassana Alidou** former Nigerien Ambassador to the US 2015-2018. *"It was impossible to know Hassana and not experience her care, kindness, and hospitality."*
 - **Tribute by the Africa-America Institute** <https://www.aaionline.org/the-passing-of-hassana-alidou/>
 - **Obituary** <https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/28181240/hassana-alidou/trenton/new-jersey/al-firdous-funeral-home>
- **Peace Corps volunteers from 2000-2002** are planning a 20 year reunion this summer in Wisconsin. Contact Virginia Emmons McNaught <emmons@educatetomorrow.org>
- **Peace Corps Commemorative site planned in Washington DC.** *At last, we'll create a permanent space in the nation's capital recognizing the work and ideals that animate Volunteers and their partners around the world.* Just steps from the National Mall, in a triangular park bounded by Louisiana Avenue, 1st Street, and C Street NW, lies the future home of the Peace Corps Commemorative—the nation's first commemorative work dedicated to the timeless search for world peace. <https://www.peacecorpsconnect.org/articles/a-walk-in-the-peace-corps-park-1>

YOUR DONATIONS FUEL THIS WORK

Friends of Niger is an organization founded by Returned Peace Corps Volunteers to initiate and support activities related to Niger and its people. We pursue three main purposes:

1. Connecting and engaging people who have connections to Niger including diaspora, and those who have worked or are working Niger,
2. Supporting development and humanitarian activities in Niger, and
3. Advocating for and educating about Niger

To donate write a check payable to Friends of Niger and mail to **Friends of Niger 4865 Hwy 234 Box 180, White City, OR 97503**, OR go to www.friendsofniger.org to use PayPal.

Board of Directors

Officers: Amy Wilson/President, Alix Barstow Fedoruk/Vice President, Gary Geoghegan/Treasurer, Mary Abrams/Grants Management Committee, John Baird/Past President

At Large Board members: Kelsey Andersen, Brandon Bragato, Paige Pihl Buckley, Kimberly Dixon, Alhassan Ali Mamadou Souna, Douglas Steinberg,
CONUSA representative: Seybou Douma

For more about Friends of Niger:

- Our website <http://www.friendsofniger.org/>
- Join & follow us at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/676485096587560/>
- Submit news topics and articles: camelexpressnewsletter@gmail.com
- Contact President Amy Wilson, president@friendsofniger.org

“There is no way to peace; peace is the way.”

