



RCA Missionary Update

from the Johnsons

The Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger (EERN is its acronym in French) is the RCA's mission partner in Niger. Founded shortly after Niger's national independence in 1961, EERN is the oldest and largest Protestant denomination in this Muslim-majority (98 percent) country.

Located in the Sahara Desert, Niger is the world's poorest country (174th out of 177 on the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index, a composite measure of life expectancy, education, and living standard), and 50 percent of its population is under the age of 15. EERN ministries reflect this context: they focus on evangelization, education, health, and community development.

Tom Johnson, an international development specialist, and his wife, Aïchatou, represent RCA missions in Niger. They have three daughters, Marie-Florence, Laurey and Elisabeth.

Niger facts:

- Population: 11,361,000
- Size: 1,266,700 square kilometers (slightly less than twice the size of Texas)
- Major religion: 98 percent Muslim



MINISTRY

Community Development

LOCATION

Niger

PARTNER

Evangelical Church of Niger,
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

CONTACT

BP 250

Maradi 4000

Niger

Email: johns632@yahoo.com

Skype: tajohnsons

Hello Everyone.

January 2009

Our family would like to wish you all a Happy New Year 2009! We pray that it will be a year of blessings for you and your family. We're currently in Zinder because ALL (seven) of Aïchatou's brothers and sisters are home with all the spouses and children present, too (except one). This is the first time everyone's been together in years, so it is a special time for her family.

We hope that you had a merry Christmas. We spent this Christmas at the Dogon Gao Bible School. Classes have been out since the end of November, but there were still about 40 people (or so) who stayed at the school. We decided to roast two goats and Aïchatou fixed a rice and sauce dish and we treated everyone who was there to a nice meal. Several local villagers also came by and they shared in the festivities after our Christmas morning service. Aïchatou and I translated the words from "Go Tell It on the Mountain" in Hausa and we presented the song to the church.

Our family and the volunteer teacher opened presents on Christmas eve and I had fun telling the girls that Santa wouldn't come unless they were good. With Laurey, I had to repeat that message about every 30 minutes and I seriously wondered if Santa shouldn't be informed of her behavior so that he could take the appropriate actions. In

the end, Laurey's stocking was as full as everyone else's. Besides the usual toys that the girls received, I and Ayouba built a two-swing set for the girls and we placed it so that the other Nigerien kids could use it to.

My work at Dogon Gao has been advancing well. Everything is ready for the goats and we really, really believe that we'll have them in early January. We are expecting to purchase 25 young females and 25 nannies that have already given birth once or twice. This is good as that means we'll have revenue even earlier than we planned since some of the nannies will actually come with their kids and some of the young females may already be pregnant.

January looks to be busy as we get the goats settled in and then we work at getting a garden space fenced in at the Bible School as well as figure out a system of irrigation for the students to use.

PRAYERS AND PRAISES

1. Aïchatou's mental health is doing better. We know your prayers have been an important part of her improvement. Please don't forget her in the months to come.

2. We are thankful that we have a new advisory committee for the Bible School that is doing some excellent work and may finally be able to take the school to a higher level of quality. Please pray for a new teacher that the committee will hire to replace a teacher that was dismissed for his un-Biblical behavior.
3. Pray that my new computer will arrive in January with some visitors from the U.S. Pray that I'll be able to get all my data back and that I'll be able to get back in the swing of communications and work as quickly as possible. I'll be upgrading from Windows XP to Vista, so I hope not to have too many problems. I also plan on building a small mud-brick office outside of the home to work from so as to minimize any interference from

the family. Thanks to those who contributed to my new computer, which will be very similar to my old one.

4. We received word from the RCA Global Mission that we will not have a home assignment in 2009 because of budget cuts. With the worldwide economy in crisis right now, churches and individuals are cutting their contributions to missions. Pray that the mission will not need to make further cuts in their budget and that we will be able to manage our available resources well.

In Christ,

Tom and Aichatou

Tom, Aichatou and the girls

To access extensive information about the Johnsons, simply go to www.rca.org/johnson.