



Burkina Faso Mission

Burkina Faso, formerly known as Upper Volta, is one of the poorest nations in Africa. It is landlocked and is located just south of the Sahara Desert. Burkina Faso's high population density and limited natural resources result in poor economic prospects for the majority of its citizens. It only was freed from under the rule of France in 1960 and now has a semi-republic government with a president. French is still the official language, but smaller villages speak their own tribal languages. Very recent statistics show that there is only a national literacy rate of less than 25%. The country has an education system set up, but charges students to enroll, thus limits to whom education is available. There are stringent national exams that students must pass to move from elementary to middle school, as well as from middle to high school then to university.

In 2007, Women to the World (WTW) partnered with the Lycee Technical Academy in Ouahigouya, located two hours north of the capital city of Ouagadougou. The school is one of the only privately owned technical centers in the country. Mr. SAVADOGO Sidi founded this school to serve the people in this village and give them hope for a brighter future.

Sex trafficking is a horrific reality facing many of the girls in Burkina Faso. Many are abducted off the streets and sold into the trade, while others are forced to sell themselves as a way of providing for themselves and their children. The philosophy of WTW is to prevent this atrocity by having the young women gain an education and administrative skills so they can obtain a reputable job. By being in school, there is less chance that the young people will be abducted off the streets. Upon a visit to the country, WTW Founder and President Doris Aldrich saw the large trucks that moved

through the capital city, transporting young women to various points of trade in the sex trafficking business. This is a real problem facing the country of Burkina Faso, but education can decrease the likelihood of sex trafficking.

At the Lycee, the students are taught a wide range of topics, including the main stream curriculum of history, French, English, geography, basic science, and mathematics, as well as computer and administrative skills. Once these women are empowered by even the most rudimentary communication, math, and social skills, they are able to **exponentially improve** their lives.

At the Lycee, trauma counseling is also offered. Of the female students, one-third of them have suffered genital mutilation at the hands of their parents. This traumatic event takes place as part of their culture, but it has lasting effects on their psyche. Counseling enables them to overcome the trauma and deal with the physical effects the mutilation has on their bodies.

Apart from the Lycee, WTW wants to sponsor micro-enterprise projects in agriculture. Well kits can be provided for \$1000 to drill wells for villages to use in agriculture. A cow can be purchased for a group of women for \$350 and can provide milk and farming labor for plowing fields. Animal husbandry projects are also being considered to bring better nutrition to the desolate region.

Currently there are 145 students enrolled at the Lycee, ranging in ages from 16 to 25. There are young men and women attending. The cost for each student to attend is \$100 for the school year (four quarters) plus \$50 for uniforms, provided by the school and \$10 per quarter for materials.

There is a computer network in place that was donated by supporters of WTW and shipped to Burkina Faso. However, there is no internet service to the school. For \$1000 the internet can be installed and service provided for one school year.

Please join us in our efforts to educate these young people and give them a bright future. Women to the World believes in our efforts there and that they are making a difference!