

Guide for Friends of African Village Libraries (FAVL) volunteers

Tuy province area, Burkina Faso

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Responsibility

You are about to embark on a potentially life-changing trip: volunteering in a small community library in southwestern Burkina Faso. The region you are going to is one of the poorest in the world. You will be surprised and challenged by what you see. People getting by on almost nothing. Children crowding around to read a book or practice their French, or read a book for the first time in their native language. You will also see how lucky you are to have grown up in a developed country. The comforts and knowledge that you take for granted, you will find absent at every turn. The goal of your volunteer stay is to learn and to help. Most likely, you are a university student or recent graduate and this is one of your first experiences abroad. Choosing to go to a very tough environment is a first sign of responsibility. There will be even greater challenges ahead. At FAVL, we want to emphasize your own responsibility to be prepared to the fullest extent possible. The more you know about Burkina Faso, the more benefit you will get from your trip. The more you understand the dangers of travel in the Third World- particularly health hazards, but also regarding personal safety- the more effective you will be as a learner and a volunteer. So please read this manual and other material we suggest very carefully. Ask lots of questions. Talk with friends who have traveled in Third World countries. Read websites devoted to Burkina Faso and West Africa in general. Read travel guides, especially the health sections. We recommend the [Bradt guide to Burkina Faso](#) (by Katrina Manson and James Knight) the [Lonely Planet Guide to West Africa](#). Both are available at Amazon.com, for example. Also take a look at the terrain and geography of Burkina Faso using Google Earth.

To be an effective volunteer in a library, you need to know how libraries work and what their purposes are. Please read the materials available on the FAVL website www.favl.org especially the links to various library guides. Visit your local library and talk with the children's librarian about your trip, and how you might be most effective. Spend some time watching how the children's librarians read stories aloud with children in the library. Go to second-hand bookstores and buy a few children's books that might be appropriate for a village setting and that you would enjoy reading aloud to children (e.g. picture books about a monkey who comes from the jungle to the city or a bear that eats too many blueberries...). It would also be helpful if you read some of the classic novels of African literature, such as [Things Fall Apart](#), [The Beautiful Ones are Not Yet Born](#) (from Ghana), [The Famished Road](#), [Nervous Conditions](#), and view some African movies (Burkina Faso is host to the triennial FESPAC Africa film festival in February). Since you are going to Burkina Faso, presumably you read French. Some of the classic [novels of West Africa are listed on our Amazon.com book list](#).

Your biggest responsibility as a volunteer is to communicate. The minimum we at FAVL expect from you is that you will write a trip report at the end of your stay where you will offer constructive suggestions about how to improve library services and the volunteer experience, and that you write an article (for your local newspaper or college paper) about your experiences (hopefully positive and inspirational) in Burkina Faso and in the libraries. A vibrant library will have lots of small groups (an "African novels reading club", a "Read to your little sister" club, a "Politics discussion club", and a "Reading the Bible club, etc.) that would meet periodically in the library. Those people then are the "volunteers" who can help out when the library needs advocates, etc. We are nervous that in the libraries we support we are moving too slowly (if even at all) in that direction. We are nervous that the library is more like a store, run by one person, with users who come for specified needs (study for exams, read the newspaper) and do not engage in any kind of community experience (sharing the reading experience). Your job as a volunteer is to help move the libraries in the right direction.

On the financial front, this is your trip and your volunteering effort, and so we expect you to be self-financing. FAVL's resources are limited, and we cannot finance airfare, lodging, food, or other travel expenses. What we can do is help with the logistics: find you a place to stay, usually meet you at the Ouagadougou airport, if not in Ouagadougou or worst case in Bolgatanga, and get you oriented when you arrive in Bolgatanga, and keep you busy with work in the libraries. In order to cover our overhead and basic costs of organizing your volunteer experience, we have instituted a non-refundable \$500 flat fee to cover fixed-cost support expenses (meeting you at the airport, staying in the FAVL guesthouse in Ouagadougou when you arrive and leave and in case of sickness, emails and faxes) and variable expenses of \$50 per week during your stay (staying in the FAVL guesthouse in Béréba, arranging for a companion and guide to accompany you and provide minor services in Béréba). Depending on the program activities you choose to implement, FAVL may or may not cover the expenses (buying books, materials, offering payments for assistants). We work this out on a case by case basis.

This is our first guide for volunteers, so one of your responsibilities is to improve it. Take notes during your stay, and please email them back to FAVL. We would appreciate full paragraphs that we can cut and paste into the guide directly.

FAVL is not responsible for your health and well-being while in Africa

Volunteers in libraries in Burkina Faso travel to Burkina Faso, inside Burkina Faso, and to other countries, as independent volunteers, and recognize that FAVL does not have the financial wherewithal or obligation to provide them with living support during the course of their activities, nor with emergency support. Volunteers undertake responsibility for their well-being while in Burkina Faso, and must take active steps to become informed of health and safety risks. FAVL staff in Burkina Faso will do everything they can to help you, but they are not trained medical personnel. Medical facilities in Ouagadougou are reasonably good, but of course lack much of the sophisticated equipment available in hospitals in the United States. You should have emergency evacuation insurance, and review emergency plans with Viviane Nabie and Koura Donkoui when you arrive, leaving them with instructions and contact information about who to call in case of emergency.

Although the West Africa co-director of Friends of African Village Libraries (Michael Kevane) is employed by Santa Clara University, FAVL has no official ties with the university and operates as a completely separate non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity.

What to do before departure

- Visit the website of the Embassy of Burkina Faso in Washington at www.burkinaembassy-usa.org
- Get your passport and make sure it will not expire in the coming months and that there are enough pages for visas and stamps (if you are already a world traveler). Download the application for visa from the Embassy of Burkina Faso in Washington, DC (www.burkinaembassy-usa.org/pdf/visacons.pdf). You may put on the application that you are going "To volunteer in a community library" as the purpose of your visit. Get your passport photos taken (Walgreens, Costco... good idea to get a half-dozen extra just in case). Send in your passport and application and money order and return envelope. Federal Express or similar service allows you to prepay the return envelope and remember to write down the return envelope tracking number before you send it. Getting the visa usually takes less than two weeks if you use Fedex or similar

service. You do not need to use a “Visa Processing” company. The Burkina Embassy is very reliable and fast.

- Buy a Burkina Faso travel guide. The Lonely Planet travel guides are excellent, as are the Bradt guides. Read the sections on health very carefully.
- Take care of health issues. You should consult your doctor who will recommend a travel clinic and get all vaccines and malaria prophylaxis that are required. Have your shots recorded on your yellow International Health Card that your doctor can give you. Read about health issues in Burkina Faso (malaria, salmonella, typhus, typhoid, meningitis, HIV/AIDS) online at the Center for Disease Control website. Consult with your family about your health insurance and make sure you are covered for travel. You might want to buy a useful medical book, Where there is no doctor.
- Purchase an International Student ID card and purchase supplemental travel insurance and emergency evacuation insurance. You should speak with your parents or guardians about your health insurance.
- Make a reservation and purchase your airplane ticket. Consider buying trip cancellation insurance, just in case. Generally a round-trip to Ouagadougou costs about \$1800. Consult STA travel... same place where you get the international student ID cards (which you should get)... they offer fares for students. <http://www.statravel.com/>. Air France and Royal Air Maroc are the two regular carrier .
- Let FAVL know your arrival time and flight information. FAVL will arrange for you to be met at the airport.
- If you are a university student or still living with your parents, then keep your parents informed. Parents will worry a lot about your travel. They are very concerned about your health and safety. The more you take the time to inform yourself and keep them informed, the more reassured they will be that you are capable of handling yourself in an emergency. If you adopt an attitude that they are over-concerned, or that knowing as little as possible about where you are going until the last minute is the best strategy, you are setting yourself up for family trouble.
- Get a ‘letter of introduction’ from FAVL and copy it, in case you visit local NGO’s and offices.
- Prepare an ‘emergency card’ that contains information on who to contact in case of emergency. A model of this card is on the FAVL website, and you should carry it with you at all times.

What to bring

Checklist of what things you should bring for travel to Burkina Faso:

1. ATM card for withdrawing money in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. ATM cards with the Visa logo are usually safe bets for being able to withdraw money, and ATM machines are the most convenient way to get local currency, the *CFA*. The current exchange rate is approximately 440 CFA per dollar (Dec. 2007).
2. International Health Card (Yellow card) showing Yellow Fever vaccination. If you do not have this, you risk being administered a large shot at the Ouagadougou airport.
3. Sunscreen- enough for the trip; usually it is not available in Burkina
4. Mosquito net for a twin bed and four pieces of string about 6 feet long each, to tie to places on wall (available in many camping stores)
5. Anti-malaria pills (consult your doctor)
6. Thermometer. Know how to read your temperature. Bring aspirin and ibuprofen.
7. Insect repellent (Cutter’s is good, and cream is much more compact than spray)
8. 2 twin-size sheets
9. Small pillow (then you can have it on the airplane)
10. Iodine tablets (for purifying water- camping stores sell these in small bottles, they are good for emergencies)
11. Half-liter, tough water bottle, for traveling
12. A money belt that you wear underneath your pants or dress, for passport, credit card and airplane ticket when traveling

13. Small flashlight and extra batteries
14. Do you wear contact lenses? Maybe leave them behind and bring two pairs of glasses, one for emergencies if they break. The village guesthouse in Béréba, and other village places you might stay, do not have nightstands, and sometimes you end up sleeping on the ground, and you wake up late at night and you step on your. Bring a glasses case that is rigid. Cheap sunglasses are far better than expensive ones since it is highly likely you won't be returning with your sunglasses...
15. 15 Powerbars in case you hate the food or need a late nite snack in order to go to sleep. Good travel food also.
16. Any medicines you might need.
17. Women- tampons and pads- not available in the village!
18. Small towel and toiletries (toothbrush, etc.) Very good to have a small plastic toiletries bag that is somewhat stiff on the sides and opens easily- you will be occasionally bathing outdoors in a shower stall, from a bucket.
19. Day backpack or bag that is lightweight, for your water, sunscreen, and work materials
20. Swiss army knife- always useful, esp. the can opener.
21. Flashlights and booklights for reading. (AA batteries are easiest to obtain.... AAA are harder but increasingly available). Solar chargers of batteries in our experience perform poorly, test before bringing.

Clothing to bring

1. Sturdy comfortable sandals
2. Flip flops
3. Old clothes with holes in them... Jeans are often too hot, so make the pants khakis or other cotton pants.
4. People in Burkina Faso generally do not wear shorts in public except when doing physical work or around the house. Women almost never wear shorts in public. Don't make yourself stand out if you are a woman; bring loose cotton long pants or long skirts. Bring shorts for around the house. Burkina is very informal for clothing and it is very hot in Feb-March (110+ many days!). Women do wear tank tops, especially in the village. Covering hair is not necessary, though it keeps the dust down. Many women wear kerchiefs (or wigs). I would bring cool skirts (most women in the village wear a single piece of cloth wrapped around their waist), and a shirt. T-shirts are fine and comfortable. It gets very dirty/dusty quickly, so avoid white- patterns work better. You will have fun, if you like fabric and making clothes, to buy cloth in the market (ask around for the prices) and have the tailors make things for you- generally they can replicate anything you bring them, though not great quality. In general you want to wear long pants and sleeves in the evening when the mosquitoes come out. Malaria is the major and serious danger. You *have* to be taking your malaria prophylaxis regularly. People in West Africa are pretty casual though about clothing- you still see the occasional woman without a top (older women, generally!) It is good for a volunteer to aspire to a level of professionalism that typical collegeclothing doesn't usually do... Some of the librarians, for example, always wear an ironed button shirt and long pants and shoes whenever they are working in the library... But volunteers will be a hit if they start to wear the pagna that women wear- a "wrap" like a sarong, or the open traditional shirts that men wear...
5. Bring at least one set of presentable clothes. You may only be in town for a couple days, but people you meet there will be wearing nice clothes. Guys should bring two decent button shirts, cotton and short-sleeved, women should bring two decent dresses or pant-blouse combo.
6. Hat- whatever you feel comfortable with. Sometimes it is very hot, and you have to wear some kind of hat.
7. You probably will do your own wash when in the village, so consider that jeans are very hard to wash by hand...

Arriving in Ouagadougou

Viviane Nabie, FAVL Ouagadougou representative, will meet you at the airport or designate someone to meet you. They will take you to the FAVL guesthouse in Zogona (see below), a 10-15 minute drive from the airport.

What to do in Ouagadougou

Viviane will help you get oriented on the first few days. The best thing to do is to plan on a walking tour of Ouagadougou. You can get a good map of the city at the DIACFA bookstore. Make sure you figure out where the

guesthouse is (there is a map in the guesthouse). Taxis in Ouagadougou are reasonably cheap, and a trip in town should cost about 200-500 CFA. The first working day in Ouagadougou, go to the U.S. embassy (or the embassy of your country) and register, letting the consular office know where you will be during your stay. The consular officials can be very helpful in emergencies. Stop at an ATM machine or bank on the days after you arrive, and withdraw about \$500 (about 250,000 CFA) to cover your expenses for the first month in Béréba. You should visit in Ouagadougou the libraries supported by US and French embassies. This will give you a good idea of well-functioning urban libraries. You should also visit the local bookstores (DIACFA and Librarie de la Jeunesse) and purchase several local novels. While in Burkina, reading local novels will set a good example for students, enable you to have something to talk about with the librarians, and also donate the novels to the libraries when you are finished.

Checklist of things to do in beginning of stay, while in Ouagadougou

1. Get FAVL guest cellphone from Viviane (the number is 226 76 40 89 23), learn how to use and recharge, purchase emergency recharge cards that keep in reserve
2. Visit two or three private medical clinics in area around the guesthouse, so as to learn locations of clinics near FAVL guesthouse. Viviane can take you to them.
3. Register contact information with U.S. (or other relevant) embassy
4. Leave emergency contact card with Viviane
5. Make short phone calls to parents and to FAVL contact in US, to ensure cell phone works.
6. Bring two locks and keys from Ouaga to use to lock personal effects in metal canteen box while in village
7. Buy a thermometer from a pharmacy in case you do not have one. Make sure you know how to convert centigrade to Fahrenheit (multiply by 9, divide by 5, add 32). So $40\text{ C} = 360/5 = 72$, plus $32 = 104\text{ F}$.

More information about Ouagadougou is at:

<http://www.ouaga-ca-bouge.net/-Ouaga-Info-.html>

<http://bethinburkina.blogspot.com/>

FAVL guesthouse in Ouagadougou

FAVL operates a small guesthouse/office in Ouagadougou. Bedrooms have beds and sheets. Salimata, a young woman, comes in regularly to clean and she can do your laundry. Small stores and restaurants are located nearby. The International School of Ouagadougou is just down the street, with a restaurant where you can get hamburgers and French fries, etc., and also meet people around the pool.



Staff

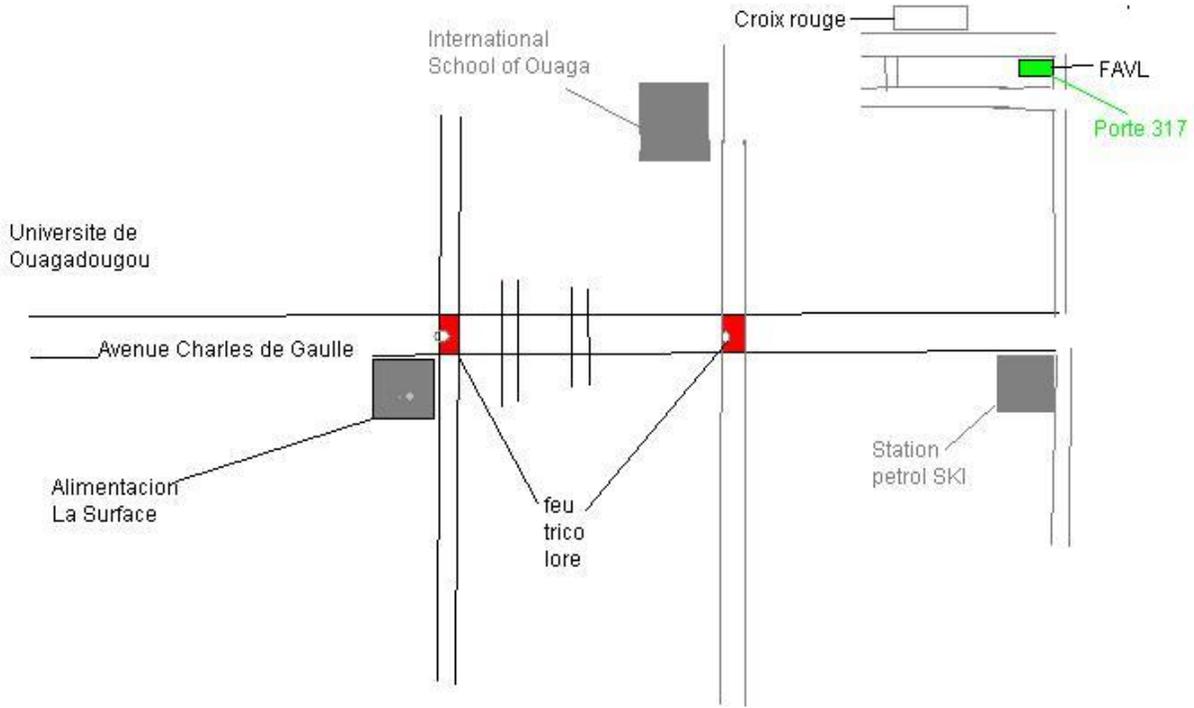
The house has five "staff". Nabie Viviane is the FAVL representative in Ouagadougou, and she is in charge of the guesthouse/office. Boureima is regular night guard. he speaks French. Seydou is the regular day guard. He does not speak French. Marcel is the "one night a week" replacement night guard. He speaks French. Salimata is the day cleaner. She will also do your laundry, within reason. You do not have to pay her to do your regular laundry (part of her salary). All of them are available to do odd jobs - go to the market to get this, etc. That is part of the responsibility of being a gardien. The guards in particular will be happy to run to the kiosk to get you beer and eggs and bread. it is nice to have them get bread in the morning. They like the chance to visit the store. (You're the "patron", remember.) You do not need to tip them (Generally speaking, please, do not tip them, since then they will start expecting it of every visitor). If you stay a long time, and they perform some valuable services, or you end up spending lots of time chatting with them, do feel free to leave small gifts- stuff you leave is always appreciated. T-shirts and other clothing is always fine. The best way to give a gift is somewhat casually- "Hey Marcel, I'm leaving tomorrow and can't take all my stuff, would you find this pair of shoes useful, for you or someone in your family?" For the first time visitor to Africa: Try to avoid the address-sharing that sometimes happens, unless you really like the person. Otherwise people will send you (at some cost) letters every 2-3 months asking for assistance. We'd rather you donated to FAVL than to an individual!

Accommodations and amenities

There are two bedrooms and the FAVL office. In the case of more than two visitors, Viviane will vacate the FAVL office and it will be used for guests. Viviane will occasionally work in the living room of the house. Please respect her need to work by not playing loud music or having loud guests during the daytime on work days. Each room has outlets, though you will need adapters (two round prongs to two flat prongs). Some appliances will require a transformer. Don't blow the fuses by using a blow drying without first testing. There is an iron in the house. Salimata can iron your clothes. Salimata usually folds and flattens clothes after drying in the sun, so they are fairly unwrinkled if they are cotton. Burkinabe in general wear colorful cotton prints that hide wrinkles very well. Burkinabe in general are not terribly judgmental when it comes to clothing. But women do dress up for occasions. If you have a local outfit made for yourself that is always appreciated (Viviane or Salimata would be happy to help find a tailor, and there is plenty ready-made clothing in the market.)

Directions

Several maps indicating the location of the guesthouse are below. If you are going in a taxi from the airport or downtown Ouagadougou, here are the instructions in French: "Je veux aller a Zogona/Zone du Bois, tout près de l'école international ou bien la siège de la Croix rouge. Prenez l'avenue Charles de Gaulle, continuez après l'alimentation La Surface. Au prochain feu (après La Surface), tournez a gauche. Continuez a droite, vous allez dépasser la station Petrofa, après il y a le mur de l'école international, vous tournez a droite, allez 100 mètres, dernier porte a gauche... avant le kiosk »



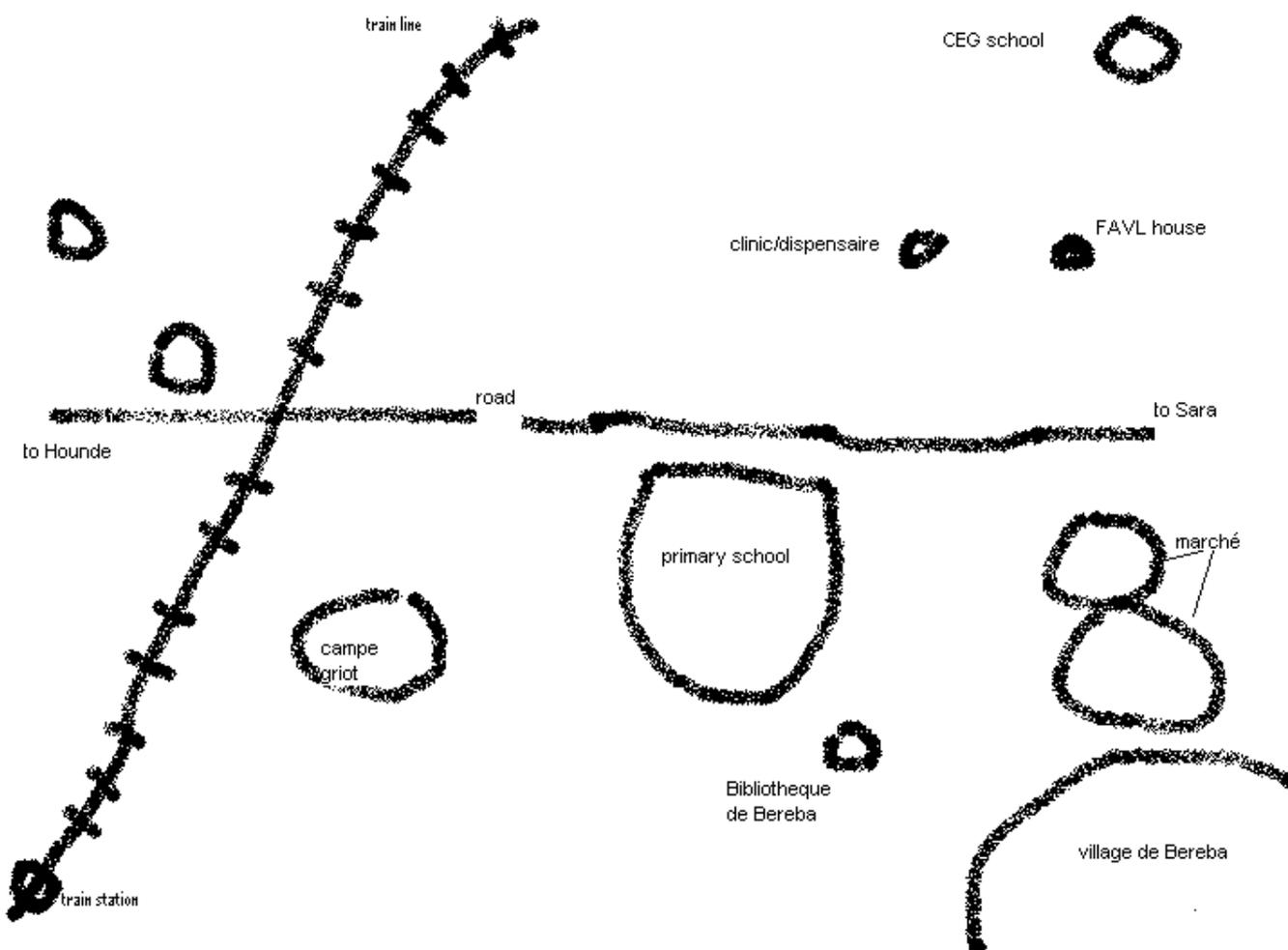


How will I get to the libraries?

The libraries that FAVL supports in Burkina Faso are located close to the town of Houndé, on the main paved road (Route Nationale Numero 1) between Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. Viviane Nabie (FAVL representative in Ouagadougou) will either go down with you in the car, or help you to take the train directly to Béréba, or help you to take a bus (air conditioned, four hour drive) to Houndé. More than likely, a FAVL librarian from the Houndé area will accompany you, so you will not need to travel alone the first time.

The FAVL guesthouse in Béréba

For your village stay, you will reside in the FAVL guesthouse in Béréba. This is a small house with cement floor and tin roof and mud-brick walls. There is no electricity and running water. A handpump is located about 100 meters from the house, and water is kept stored in a barrel in the house. The house is located about a kilometer from the library (a 15 minute walk). Viviane will give you instructions about where you will get the key. Below is a quick sketch of the village and house location, just to get you oriented. (FAVL would appreciate a more detailed drawing to include in future volunteer guide editions!)



Things to do when first go to Béréba

1. Leave emergency contact card with Donkou and Dounko
2. Visit hospital in Houndé and clinic in Béréba
3. Make sure mosquito net is set up in Béréba, and that have anti-malaria medicine
4. Visit commissariat and prefecture in Béréba with Dounko
5. Visit elders of village in Béréba
6. Put valuables into locked box, attach lock keys to house key
7. Learn how to use kerosene lanterns, lighting and cleaning and refilling; ask Dounko to purchase sufficient kerosene for 2-3 weeks
8. Visit handpump near house and fill bucket with water so that know how to get water
9. Visit primary and secondary school and introduce to directors and some teachers

Things to be thinking about every day in Béréba

1. Is the cellphone charged with electricity and units? If not, recharge in case needed during emergency.
2. Send Viviane an SMS indicating that health is OK and asking any questions

What will I do in the libraries?

The following is a set of suggested activities for volunteers. Depending on the background and preparation of the volunteer, he or she will work together with the librarians to agree on a specific program of activities. The volunteer is expected to take this as a serious commitment, and notify librarians in advance of planned travel. If you commit to a certain amount of work, and to being present in the libraries for certain periods of time, please respect your commitment. The volunteer program depends on volunteers being useful, and not being 'adventure tourists' who simply see the library as an interesting curiosity and are really interested in dancing, drumming and basket weaving.

What kinds of activities are appropriate for a volunteer?

Helping run the library

- Overhaul of the accession register and inventory: From time to time the accession register will become out of date and include many damaged or lost titles, and books weeded out of the library, and the register will need to be updated, with new books replacing the old numbers (record should be kept of the old books whose numbers are replaced). This is a good job for a volunteer, especially one who has computer skills and might have the time to enter or update the accession list into Excel.
- Checking out books and helping patrons. Maybe work with the librarian to give the librarian a break, or work at the same time as the librarian to watch how they interact with patrons. Give feedback to FAVL and to local coordinators and constructive feedback to librarians.
- Improving the system for book circulation: No system is perfect, and many volunteers have experience with libraries in developed countries. Short of developing a computer system, which would be too much technology, the volunteer might think of ways to improve the circulation system and record-keeping. The improvements should be thoroughly discussed and potential problems anticipated before implementation, though. Experimenting with a crazy idea may lead to a big waste of time and inconvenience everyone.
- Improve or develop a system for classifying books: many small community libraries use a 'color code' systems to classify books, putting pre-printed colored stickers or labels on the spine of the book to enable the librarian to quickly sort and reshelv books. For example, African novels might have a green sticker on the spine of the book. Alternatively, the volunteer might develop a modified Dewey Decimal system if the library stock exceeds 2,000 books, and includes a large section of miscellaneous fiction and non-fiction titles.
- Attend the 'once-a-month' librarian meetings in Houndé. The first 1-2 meetings you should be a quiet observer, but by the third meeting when you have had a lot of experience in the libraries, work with Dounko and Donkoui to share your thoughts or organize a training session.

Reading programs

- Reading programs. One of the hardest things in a village setting is organizing and sustaining a regular reading program, where children or adults meet regularly to read together or discuss a book they have read. A reading circle, for example, would be appropriate for young readers. A 'Read to your little sister' program might be appropriate for teenagers with younger sisters or brothers. A "Grandparents read books too" program might encourage the elderly to come to the library, demonstrating the value they place on reading, and enabling them to enjoy picture books and story books if they are not literate.
- Promoting the library in schools: Most schoolteachers are very happy to have a volunteer come to the classroom and bring an interesting storybook to read in class or during recess. The volunteer should prepare a handout and photocopy many copies to hand out to the students.

- Promote books in the village. Take a blanket or large mat and a basket of books, and sit down under a shady tree with a secondary school student, and read books out loud to the children in the houses in the area. Get permission first from the parents in the compounds near the area where you will sit down.
- Poetry writing and reading sessions.
- A reading program. A friend writes: *“Our local (U.S.) library has a summer reading program with incentives which might be the start of a model. Each child receives a 'Summer Reading Program' form. It is single piece of paper folded in half to look like a book. The 'cover' of the book gives the program name and dates. The left inside 'page' has space for each child to write his/her name and age. The child then sets his/her own goal of either # of books or # of hours for the whole summer. On the right inside 'page', there are lines to record the names of each book (and perhaps the dates completed and the number of pages). On the back 'cover' are small pictures that the children can color in for each 15 minutes that they read. If they are still learning to read they can participate by having someone read TO them with the same choice of goals - # of books or # of hours. The prizes vary from summer to summer. Sometimes it is stickers, sometimes the choice of one of three books. Often all the children who reach their goals are also invited to a party at the end of the summer. Could you do individual prizes and then a group prize? Would a party to which they invite their parents be too much? Their names could be read and they could be given a certificate? A chart on the wall is often good incentive - but tricky in this instance if the goals vary? It sounds like you may be thinking of weekly goals and rewards. They would probably be more motivating, attainable and effective. Have you read Banker to the Poor, the book by Muhammed Yunus, on the logistics of the Grameen Bank's microlending? His method was exceptionally effective in motivating borrowers. He organized them into teams of 5 people. Each team chose a leader. Could you use a simplified version for the reading program? Or would you rather have individual goals?”*

Arts and crafts

- Decorating the library: The volunteer often has a good eye for aesthetics that comes from years of visiting museums and public spaces in places where art is abundant. He or she may be able to explore the marketplace for African art and paintings and drawings, and organize an exhibit for the library. The volunteer might be encouraged to raise the money for this exhibition; a typical traditional work of art can cost from \$20-\$30 dollars (with some art, such as baskets, being far less expensive), so a budget of \$200-\$300 would be sufficient. Educational posters are often available from the NGOs that are active in the area, especially United Nations organizations.
- Organizing crafts: Making piñatas? A great way to use old newspapers. Cut newspapers into strips, and mix with flour and water to make a paste. Decorate with paints purchased in town. Making origami, or Mexican Papel picado... bring your supplies, look on the web for guides.
- Put on a show at the library? Organize five groups of children and adults to perform at the library. Have a budget of \$100 for refreshments and a prize for each group. Invite 100 children to be the audience. Logistically challenging! Work with the librarian.
- Organize a drawing context with the librarian. Announce a small prize for the winner- set a theme. Have children of a certain age do the drawing in the library on a morning or afternoon.

Fundraising

- Locating book donations in large towns: Many large towns have sizable expatriate communities who often have lots of books and are willing to donate them to libraries. Peace Corps volunteers also frequently can mobilize resources for books. The volunteer can, on behalf of the library, approach these donors and arrange for book donations (and thank you letters)

Research

- Survey of secondary school students. You might design a questionnaire, or work with someone else to draft a questionnaire, and then work with the teachers in the secondary school so as to obtain information about library satisfaction, reading habits, library use, suggestions for improvement, etc. FAVL is very interested in obtaining reasonably sized samples of respondents (40+) so that we can have a good idea of what people are thinking

about and how they are using the library. The best samples are random samples. But focus groups and non-random samples of library users (everyone who comes to the library on a given day, for example) can also provide useful information.

- “Taste test” type exercises. Pick four books from the library stacks that are at the same grade level and can be read fairly quickly (i.e. children’s books). Ask a group of children to read all four books. Then ask for their opinions about the books. Why did they like some books and not others? This is an important question when we are trying to figure out what books are the best to stock in the library.

Interaction with FAVL librarians and staff

You need to be aware of the importance of maintaining good relations with FAVL staff and librarians. The staff and librarians do not have the education level that you probably have. They have not been reading all their lives. They have instead a wealth of practical experience about how to live in a very tough village environment. They have much to teach you if you are willing to learn. There are unfortunately lots of opportunities for cross-cultural misunderstandings. Not all the staff members are the ideal FAVL would like them to be. Our philosophy is to try to work with them as much as possible, to encourage them to aspire to and rise to their full potential. Sometimes conflicts will arise. One of the FAVL partners in Ghana wrote this about one of the volunteers:

“Also, with respect to the kind of work the volunteers are expected to do, it is only fair that at least the volunteers respect our opinions as to what work they should do. Just to give an example: The current volunteer, xx arrived here wanting to do literacy with the women. I thought having a volunteer interested in women issues was a fantastic idea. But certainly this is not the season for that. So I advised her against it ‘because the women are busy on their farms now and, at any rate literacy classes are held in the dry season’. I had a project (an advocacy project) which was approved in mind and even informed her about it – that if it got underway she could join in helping out with that. However, after a few days in the village she insisted that she wanted to carry out the women’s literacy and that she had already been approached by many women who wanted to come to the classes. She had also talked to young girls (students) who had agreed to help with the classes. Of course the local librarian could not give her the go ahead so they carried each other to me. After listening to her I gave it my blessing, just to let her learn the lessons the hard way. The first meeting she scheduled failed. When I later asked her at the village how many women had signed up she said five (5). Not only did she want to carry out the literacy project, but insisted that we allow her to engage one of those girls she had talked to. Not even my explanation that when it came to engagement of staff, it was the CESRUD Board that had the final authority seemed to convince her. To cut a long story short, I get the impression that some of the volunteers are either not well informed about the fact that the projects they are coming to are under some form of management or else disregard it. Perhaps it is not their fault, maybe they should receive more de-briefing from us.”

Professional demeanor and personal conduct

The librarians in FAVL supported libraries consider themselves to be professionals, and they expect you to act professionally. The librarians are not your tourist guide. If they take time to show you around, they are doing you a professional courtesy. They should always act responsibly and professionally towards you, and you should act the same way towards them. Your behavior in your lodgings should also be circumspect, taking care to present an image of “Where’s the party?!” Your good conduct is what keeps this program operating. Needless to say, HIV/AIDS is widespread in Burkina Faso and is transmitted through sexual intercourse. FAVL’s firm opinion is that you should not have sexual intercourse with ANYONE while you are in Burkina Faso. It is just too risky. We are sorry to have to be so frank about personal issues, but HIV/AIDS is one of the most devastating problems of sub-Saharan Africa, and it is irresponsible for a privileged volunteer to reinforce sexual behaviors that contribute to the spread of the virus.

Who is paying for what?

The email below was received from previous volunteers in Ghana (I have deleted the names), and is generally relevant for any volunteer:

I wanted to express a concern to you regarding our expenses while in Ghana. As you know, we took a plane from Tamale to the Accra airport and xx was kind enough to work out the details of our plane ticket and went as far as to purchase them for us. So we told xx that he could email us his account information so that we could reimburse him when we arrived back in the U.S. So about a week ago we received the email from him with the cost of the plane tickets, but included were also other expenses that we were not aware we were spending. They had asked us to repair the door handle at xx house because the screws had been loose and while we were there it fell apart, which we were fine paying for. And of course, I am paying for my hospital bills which xx was nice enough to take care of when I was so out of it. But there was an additional food charge of \$40 which we were not aware was being incurred. It is difficult to sort out the exact details of who bought what food and when because we weren't really keeping track of things but I would say that xx often bought us food, maybe one meal a day or so, but in turn there were days when we would buy everyone food as well. So we assumed that it was a casual we spot you one day you spot us the next sort of deal, but the bill seems to indicate otherwise. I have no problem paying for all of the food I ate as well as treating the guys to food at times, but the problem that we had with the way things were handled was that we were not informed of when and what we were paying for. There was also an added transportation bill, and I can recall only a handful of occasions where someone else paid for our transportation, and most times we were paying for whoever was traveling with us as well. So that cost seemed very high. Unrelated to the email we received, we were also concerned about the way in which we were often expected to pay for things at the library. We had no problem contributing to small things like buying books at the Ghana Book Trust or getting other supplies, especially when it came to a something we wanted to do like start a pen pals program or code all of the books. We both can appreciate that we are privileged and that we went into this experience knowing that we would be donating some of our monies to the library. But the reality of it is that we were on a tight budget and we knew going into the experience that we wanted to only buy what we needed and we knew that we wouldn't even been doing much traveling because we wanted to stay within that budget. So when we were asked to contribute things like the \$40 to paint a mural in the library, we felt somewhat uncomfortable. When we expressed that we simply didn't have enough funds for something like that, xx didn't press us further, but other times when we ran into small scenarios like this we were asked to contact you to see if we could get more funding. And at times we felt pushed to buy things that we didn't need but that were for our personal use (like plates, pots, silverware, tea, mugs, etc.). Perhaps the thinking was that we were buying things for the library that would be used for future volunteers, and that would be ok because it wasn't extremely expensive to purchase kitchenware stuff. But the problem that we kept running into was that things, particularly expenses, weren't being communicated, or at least we did not have the awareness going into this experience of what to expect. Even knowing that the way things work in Ghana or with the library is that the volunteers are expected to pay for things or it is customary for volunteers to always pay for whoever else is in their company or whatever is considered acceptable that would be good to inform future volunteers of so they can expect it and also budget accordingly. I do not mind paying the extra expenses we were asked to pay if you feel that this is appropriate. And I am not telling you this because I'm angry and want to vent. That's not the case. It was a concern we had while we were in Ghana that we felt you should be aware of and I don't know if it is something worth talking to the librarians about but at the least for future volunteers it would be beneficial to at least provide them with some sort of understanding of what they will be expected to pay for. We truly had an incredible time in Ghana and we loved working with all the people we did and we would just want the experience for the next volunteer to be as good as possible.

The official FAVL response (as of late 2007): Your responsibility is to be clear about expenditures with people beforehand. In general, you are responsible for your own food and transportation. Very often you will be traveling with someone (they will take you on the back of a moped). If it is FAVL business (visiting a library) you do not have to reimburse them. If it is personal business, you should. Your one-time fee will cover all these kinds of incidentals. Your fee covers the cost of lodging at the guesthouse and Béréba house. But your food is on our own

account in Ouagadougou. FAVL will arrange for someone to cook one or two meals a day while you are in Béréba, but this will be local food (rice and sauce, porridge and sauce- this is one of the experiences of being in a village!). You will talk with Viviane about a budget for this purpose. FAVL will also cover the expenses associated with traveling in the FAVL car to and from Béréba every so often. This will be worked out upon your arrival. If a FAVL employee asks you for money, and you feel uncomfortable, tell them to contact FAVL office (contact Viviane who can then contact FAVL-HQ). Obviously in a village setting lots of judgment calls are made about how to allocate costs.

Reflection

Many people will ask you about your experiences volunteering in a small community library in Africa. They might tell you about their cousin, who sends books from the elementary school to African libraries, or about a neighbor who built a library in Africa a long time ago when they were in the Peace Corps. While you are in Burkina Faso, it is a good idea to reflect on these activities: international charitable assistance—friendship with local libraries—where is its place in the scheme of things. At FAVL, our philosophy is that building the institution of the library-- as a set of persons and relationships working together to encourage reading—is more important than the physicality of the library (the building and the books). That is why we want to encourage volunteers; they add one more strand of connective tissue to what we hope will be a dense network of people, locally and internationally, who support the library. The building, shelves, books, tables, chairs, and manual of procedures ... they can all be established and turned over to a community in a month. But keeping track of the librarian, ensuring that they are excited about their job, that they see a future in the organization, that people who are responsible take on responsibilities, that authority is delegated to the right person, that village governance structures take increasing ownership over the library affairs, that volunteers from the village see themselves as having a role in the library and are effective in that role, that exhibits and programs unfold regularly in the library... all of these ongoing processes demand lots of personal attention and time, for years and years. Ask yourself what happens when that time commitment, over years, is successful? And what happens when it is not, when the effort is abandoned early on, and the library is left to itself with an ill-trained librarian who has no institutional network and few incentives to perform well left alone in a village in rural Africa?

For an example of feedback that we love to get at FAVL, here is an extract from one Ghana volunteer:

That is interesting to me that xx observed that there were very few girls at the library. Though we observed only one or two women that frequented the library, I would say there was about an equal number of girls and boys. Actually, at times it seemed that there may have even been more girls, especially those around age 10-12. I would say, however, that it seemed like there were a few more boys that came to actually study at the library than there were girls. Often, the girls would come to read children's books off the shelves (vs. education books) and there was an especially large group of girls that would come to the library in between school breaks and at night to come and sing and dance in one of the extra rooms. But especially because it was exams week while we were at the library, we definitely noticed a lot of boys and girls in general using the library to study, especially at night. So xx's experience seems quite different than what we noticed, but again it might have been because we were there two weeks before they started their exams and so now that they are on break there aren't as many individuals using the library as a study space. One thing I know that definitely attracted lots of the girls was having singing and dancing at night. About two weeks into our stay, a group of girls organized a performance for us, and from then on girls would come to the library in progressively bigger numbers to participate in singing and dancing, and I think to get a good laugh out of the solmias trying to dance! But we also noticed that when they would come to play during the day, they would often go to the library first and read through some books on the shelf, especially when we were working on coding the books. And I know from talking with previous volunteers that singing and dancing brought so many people into the library while they were

there, especially girls, so maybe xx might want to try and engage the girls that way. I know that xx was trying to start up a girl's/women's singing group, so that might be a good thing to get organized too.

And from another Ghana volunteer:

I have been devoting more of my time with the J.S.S students - usually they finish classes at 2 and they are increasingly coming into the library for various activities (the Origami classes are a hit!) Also, I've tried informal 'story circles;' where children (as well as JSS students) collaboratively tell stories together- (extended from a book) This proves to be quite fascinating - they often use traditional story motifs -- I have filmed many of these -- they will be fantastic Blog material for FAVL when I return. I am also in the process of working out space for a small 'story corner." This has been delayed because of the move and then, more recently, the mural. The chairs brought from Burkina are perfect -- they work quite well with small groups. Yes, I have been doing some stories/coloring/crafts.....I confess --- not much singing - I understand that xx did a great deal of this. Another project that I am working on is a "scholarship/funding binder" for the reference section. Since I have been here; I have been approached by many, many students asking me about scholarship and funding opportunities... After making several promises to forward information when I return to Canada; I thought that I may just do this on a monthly basis. There is no shortage of opportunities for grants, scholarships, bursaries etc. for African students; yet, very, very few have access to the internet to access this information. Getting to town, paying internet fees, etc; make this difficult. (I am quite excited about this -- hopefully xx will be willing to informally assess the success of this).

Previous volunteer contact information

Many of our previous volunteers are eager to help you with advice, and to hear how librarians and libraries are progressing. Help them re-connect with Africa by sharing an email update every now and then.

David Guo (2003)

Local culture

There are a number of websites that can get you prepared for Burkina Faso. Some of the ones we recommend:

Money

Currently there are no ATM machines in Houndé. Change enough money in Ouagadougou for your needs in the village, perhaps \$100 per week you will be there. Budget enough for your transport back to Ouagadougou and for emergencies. Transfers via Western Union are very safe and secure and can be picked up in banks in Ouagadougou and Houndé. Viviane Nabie can always send you a transfer to Houndé if you need funds.

Good sense

Do not travel at night. Do not walk around Ouagadougou alone if you are a woman, particularly at night. Do not get into a car of a stranger without someone you trust with you. Avoid public transportation that is not a recognized bus company. Do not smoke marijuana or take any illegal drugs. Avoid drinking *dolo* (home-brewed beer) as much as possible (it can make you sick since unclean water is often added). HIV/AIDS is prevalent in Burkina; do not have sex while you are volunteering with FAVL.

The French embassy notes:

Infrastructure routière. Il est très fortement recommandé de ne pas circuler la nuit sur les routes en raison du mauvais état de ces dernières, des animaux errants et des véhicules dépourvus de feux de signalisation, mais surtout compte tenu d'une forme de banditisme récurrente, l'attaque des voyageurs par des coupeurs de route,

lesquels n'hésitent pas à se livrer à des actes de violence sur leurs victimes, mettant leur vie en danger (agression à ou par arme blanche, arme à feu). En cas d'accident de la circulation, ne pas déplacer le véhicule et alerter police secours (faire le 17) ou la compagnie de gendarmerie la plus proche, ainsi que le consulat (N° d'urgence : 70.33.93.68). En cas d'accident corporel, prévenir les pompiers (faire le 18) ou "Burkina secours" si l'accident a eu lieu dans la zone de Bobo-Dioulasso (N° : 70.60.60.60).

Food

Here is what library science student Claudia Entrup wrote about food in the Ghana libraries: *"I cooked myself on a gas cooker that volunteer James Hooper had left in the house. Ingredients for an ordinary stew could be purchased in the village as well as rice and noodles. Other things like yam or plantain could only be bought in town (i.e. Bolgatanga). There was also the opportunity to buy prepared food in the village: boiled yam and rice with beans, Kenkey, spaghetti, meat, fish, boiled eggs and salad was available every day on the market. On a market day, which was every third day, other food like rice balls, TZ (short for "Tuo Zaafi", very popular local food made from millet) and Banku was prepared for sale as well. In town there was the possibility of getting all kinds of Burkina Fasoian dish. My host family sometimes prepared food for me, which was really great. Through this I got the opportunity to taste TZ, dog meat and soup prepared with groundnuts from the family farm. All different kinds of fruits were available in the area – mangos in Sumbrungu and apples, pineapples, oranges, bananas and avocados". (Yes, dog is a luxury meat item... not too common though. But if you see a dog on a leash, the owner is indeed taking it on a walk... to the market!)"*

Gifts for people in the village

You are coming to Burkina to volunteer, so do not feel the need to bring a lot of gifts. A small gift for the earth priest in Béréba is an excellent idea, for when you go to meet him and the elders. At that occasion, you should give your guide (Dounko or Donkoui) about 1000 CFA for them to order *dolo*, the sorghum beer, for the elders to drink. Something from the American West might be fun- a small knife? (But not in your carry-on bag- you must check it!) You don't need to bring any other presents- you are a student and people understand that! You may give gifts to anyone you like of course, but no one will expect much. You can always buy something locally, too.

Photography

Digital camera- a battery operated one might be easier than one you have to recharge, if you are going to stay in the village a long time. It is no longer necessary to have a photo permit, but it is good to have one just in case you are asked. Viviane can take you to the permit place when you are in Ouagadougou. A digital camera can be recharged in Hounde and Bobo when you are in Béréba. Then you can post photos to a flickr.com site (you might want to create before you go) and then share with friends and family. People in major towns are a bit sensitive about being photographed, so always ask for permission first. Treat people the way you would want to be treated- not as objects but as persons. In the village, same thing applies, but everyone is friendlier. It is always nice to have a film camera that you can then develop pictures and give back to people in the village. There is very little capacity in Ouagadougou (as of late 2007) to print digital pictures other than on regular paper at cybercafés.

Communication

There are internet cafes in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. It is best to have a yahoo account in addition to your university account (if you are a student) as university email services experience frequent outages. Cell phones are available, and you may want to purchase one in Ouagadougou before you come to Béréba, if you are on an extended stay. A used phone costs about \$40 and a SIM card about \$20.

Contact information

Back in the United States

Michael Kevane

Friends of African Village Libraries

P.O. Box 90533

San Jose, CA 95109

Home # (408) 298 4048

Work:

Dept. of Economics

Santa Clara University

Santa Clara, CA 95053

(408) 554 6888

The FAVL addresses in Burkina are:

NABIE Viviane

Amis des Bibliothèques de Villages Africains

09 BP 938

Ouagadougou 09

BURKINA FASO

or

KOURA Donkoui

BP 51

Houndé

Province du Tuy

BURKINA FASO

See last page for phone number and email contacts.

Annexes

1. Osu Children's Library Fund guide to libraries in Africa
2. Medical information
3. Contact numbers and email addresses

How to Set Up Community Libraries for Children

Prepared by: Osu Children's Library Fund

The Joy of Reading

Every time we open a book, we discover something new – a beautiful story or a fairy-tale, the strange and wonderful habits of animals, the mysterious world of science, and the customs of people who live in a far-distant country. And every time we open a book, we learn something new – we learn numbers and letters, colours and shapes, poetry and songs. Books are, quite simply, windows on the world! A library is a place to read and to enjoy and celebrate books.

What is a children's library?

A children's library is a place where there are books, children and committed and enthusiastic staff to assist the children to develop their reading skills. Libraries depend on financial and staffing resources and come in a variety of styles.

Adult libraries and children's libraries, what is the difference?

When adults come to a library, they usually know how to read and they are seeking information on a specific topic, or a certain kind of fiction book to read. Adults will usually seek out staff and ask for assistance. If adults cannot read and if they are interested, they can be directed to adult literacy classes in their community.

Young children may not be able to read so they need to be attracted to the library and, whenever possible, assisted with their reading skills. Children need to feel comfortable in a library setting and should be gently encouraged to participate in the activities offered. The staff should play an interactive role with the children. It is a very demanding job, but also a very rewarding one.

Part One: Active Programming

"Few children learn to love books by themselves. Someone has to lure them into the wonderful world of the written word; someone has to show them the way..."Orville Prescott from "A Parent Reads to his Children"

The role of librarians cannot be more important for creating a nation of readers. Providing opportunities for children to read helps a great deal, but a library has the potential to offer so much more. For a child who is unable to read, active participation on the part of the librarian can play a major role and should be encouraged.

Story times

Story times should be considered part of a daily library routine. By reading aloud from books or telling stories, librarians can build up the vocabulary of library members and improve their listening, comprehension and observational skills. Good listening skills provide a foundation for reading later on and are, therefore, very important. If a child has never heard a particular word before it is unlikely that the same word in print will have any meaning. Many children come from homes where their parents are not able to read stories to their children; either they don't have the literacy skills or there isn't time. A library can play an important role here.

Story times may include the following activities:

- 1) **Telling a story** in English or in one of the local languages
- 2) **Reading a story**

First introduce the story by giving the title, author and illustrator and set the stage by telling a little of what the story is about. For example, in the story of Cinderella, you could explain that it is about a young girl who lives

with her stepmother and two mean stepsisters. Hold the book so that the children can see the illustrations.

Asking questions and leading a discussion of the story, thereby testing their understanding of the plot, the kind of characters, where the story takes place, etc.

3) Performing finger plays and singing action songs

4) Hearing and reciting poetry and nursery rhymes

5) Providing opportunities for quiz competitions

The types of activities will depend on the age and needs of the library members. There should also be opportunities for library members to take turns reading stories aloud. This will promote confidence in their ability to read and will encourage others to do so.

During a recent study, a Primary Five student achieved an exceptionally high reading score. When questioned she explained that she didn't have a book at home, but visited the library every day after to school to listen to stories and read. Daily story times play an important role at her library.

Puzzles and games

If there are funds in the budget, the purchase of puzzles and quiet games for in-library use add a great deal. Children certainly enjoy the challenge of completing puzzles; puzzles help with motor coordination, memory skills and understanding spatial relationships. Games also encourage cooperation among others and promote social skills. Careful attention to keeping the educational materials intact needs to be given as a puzzle or game with a missing piece is not much fun! At busy libraries we arrange for children to sign out their puzzles or games in an exercise book. It is required that they be returned intact to their original spot.

A small library in Ouagadougou takes great pride in their wooden, locally made jigsaw puzzles. The puzzles are used daily and, after 10 years, most of them are still intact!

Drama

Libraries are wonderful places where drama can be enjoyed. Stories, both from books and the imagination, can be acted out for other library members. Simple costumes and props add a great deal to the performance.

Guest speakers

Libraries offer countless opportunities to engage others from the community to share information. This can be in the form of talking about careers, news items and health issues.

At a children's library in Ouagadougou serving a poor, densely populated area, a doctor was invited to speak about abortions, a topic suggested by a library member. The questions asked by the teenage members of the library were well thought out and served an invaluable purpose.

Miscellaneous activities

There are no limits to the sorts of activities that can be offered through libraries. The types of programs depend on the resources available and the talents and interests of library staff.

A large library in Ouagadougou promotes free twice-weekly literacy classes, a wildlife club, a choir, two football teams and puts together a newsletter highlighting members' contributions. Although the range of programs seems beyond the typical library definition, books and literacy are still the essential component. One of the football teams is called the "Joy of Reading"!

Part Two: How to maintain and operate a Children's Library

According to the dictionary, a library is defined as, "a room or building where a collection of books is kept". A library can really be any size. It can simply be an area under the shade of a tree where children gather on mats, or a small room in a house, a school or a community centre. A library can also be a larger freestanding building accommodating hundreds of children. The size doesn't really matter. The enthusiasm and commitment of the staff members make the difference!

Whatever the library size, funds need to be spent wisely. The following is a breakdown of expenses excluding the costs associated with the library space:

Library staff

A library's success is wholly dependant on its staff members who, while working together, derive pleasure from their work and, more importantly, like interacting with children. It is important that the staff members work cooperatively; their roles need to blend in harmony in order for the numerous tasks of the library to be accomplished. Everyone should be encouraged to take ownership for having an organized, well-attended and attractive library and surrounding compound.

It is crucial that the library have at least one paid staff member (funded by the community, either privately or with government support) who will take the responsibility of running the library. This person will not only need to be in command of the day-to-day running of the library but will need to have a gentle, yet, firm character to manage the large number of children who pass through the library's doors every day. In addition to paid staff, teachers and community volunteers make a valuable contribution.

If the library is at school it is helpful to have library prefects or 'monitors' assisting the one overseeing the library's operation. The students should be selected from two different years to allow for continuity. Monitors are then given the responsibilities of daily cleaning, preparing the books in an orderly fashion and demonstrating book care.

Books

There is always a temptation to gather as many books as possible for a library. It is much better, however, to have a good selection of well-written and colourful books that you think the children might enjoy versus large numbers of inappropriate, drab-looking books. Keep all the books in good order and dust and clean them on a regular basis. Glossy-covered books can be wiped with a slightly damp cloth (with a small bit of diluted soap) and dried.

If the books are soft cover without a laminated finish they should be protected with a clear plastic cover. We purchase large clear bags (the ones used by the market women for selling quantities of food items) and cut them to the required book size. The plastic is held in place with clear tape. Another option is to order plastic sheeting in bulk from a plastic factory. They will make it according to the width and thickness required.

An inventory list should be kept of all books received. **If your budget is limited the books should be kept at the library and not loaned out, as it is very costly to replace books.** It is unlikely that an African child will have the financial means to replace a missing or damaged book.

We visited a new community library (serving both adults and children) in rural Burkina Faso and we were surprised to see thousands of books lining the library's bookshelves BUT not a single storybook seemed

appropriate for an early reader.

Where to keep books?

If funds are scarce, and, if the library is small, books could be kept in durable bags or lightweight metal boxes and brought out for library use.

For larger, permanent libraries, books should be placed on bookshelves with their spines facing out allowing the children an opportunity to read the titles easily. When making shelves, think of the types of books they will accommodate, as the shelf heights need to be appropriate. It is best if the top shelf is not too high; this is both to make dusting effortless and to give children easy access to the books. The surface of the top shelf may be used to feature newly acquired books. A library looks much better if there are not too many empty shelves; low bookshelves do not require as many books. Display racks can also be made with sloping shelves so books or magazines can be displayed individually.

For young children the best way to display books is using kinderboxes, wooden cabinets that stand slightly off the floor (they are divided into four sections and each section can accommodate approximately 25 books).

Whatever furniture is built try to have it well made with carefully sanded surfaces and nicely polished. Bookshelves that are not completely smooth will damage the books as they are taken off the shelves. Occasionally, the furniture should be checked for insect infestation; if that happens the affected wood should be removed immediately.

Sadly, many libraries make the mistake of investing large sums of money on bookshelves that line the walls. Their modest book collections tend to look insignificant in comparison to what their bookshelves can accommodate – very discouraging for all.

Other furniture

If the library is in a temporary structure mats can be used for the children to sit on and a stool or chair for the librarian.

For a permanent facility the furniture should include a desk for the librarian, small tables, chairs or stools for the children and mats for story time. If furniture is too big, a child will most likely feel awkward and/or inadequate. This can affect how they feel about themselves and their confidence or lack of confidence in their ability to read or attempt new tasks. If literacy classes are being held for adults, larger tables and chairs should be included.

Additional materials

Every library, large or small, should have a washbasin with soap and towels for children to wash and dry their hands before entering the library. Ideally, there should be two: one for washing and one for rinsing. Books are very expensive and children (and adults!) should learn early on that books require proper care. In addition to clean hands, those reading will need to be shown how to turn the pages carefully so that they don't tear. Books will last for many years if they are treated with respect. If care is not taken, books will only last a few days before being torn and soiled.

Lighting

It is important to ensure that the lighting is adequate, either ample natural daylight or good overhead electric lighting. Good natural lighting is far superior to overhead lighting for reading. Walls that are painted in white or light colours are more suited to libraries because they reflect light. Note: For ease of cleaning we recommend using a high-gloss paint for the first five feet from the floor

Ventilation

If the library is to be accommodated in a room or building, careful attention should be paid to ventilation. When air does not circulate properly, a room can easily become hot, humid and stuffy. These are conditions that make reading and learning very difficult.

Library hours

It is necessary to assess the needs of the potential library members prior to setting out the library's hours of operation. Staff should arrive punctually and welcome the children according to the posted hours of operation. If the library is closed, notification should be posted. Regular activities including story times should also be carried out punctually. Otherwise the children will lose interest.

A beautiful library

Attention to keeping the library clean cannot be overemphasized. Cleaning and dusting the books and furniture, and sweeping and damp-mopping the floors daily take a great deal of time. The operating hours of the library should provide sufficient time for this.

Libraries should be cheerful, bright and welcoming places. Visiting the library is not a required activity and, therefore, it is important to make the place as inviting as possible. Colourful wall hangings help, as do photos, banners and children's drawings or creative writing pieces. Changing the displays is advisable and, over time, it is good to highlight work from all participating library members. Every child likes to see his or her piece displayed!

Flowers and bushes planted outside add colour and make libraries attractive places to visit. A dustbin near the entrance will keep the place neat and will discourage littering.

Young library members were asked to draw pictures of their library and they exhibited them proudly on the notice board. Their pictures showed the library decorated with colourful flowers, curtains neatly pulled back and lots of smiling faces.

Respect for the library

Children should feel a sense of pride in their library and treat the room and its contents as property belonging to their community. This means that children should refrain from sitting on the tables, writing on the furniture or books, and keeping hands from the wall (soiled walls look unsightly).

"Don't touch the wall!" is probably repeated 20 times per day, in many cases by young regular members, at a busy library in Ouagadougou.

Although the library can be a lively place with quiet discussions among children and, possibly, singing at story times, shouting should not be permitted. If children are shouting or acting aggressively they should be quickly escorted out of the library and told to return another day. Food should be kept outside the library and chewing gum discouraged.

Evaluation of a library's performance

It is important to have a guest book for comments and suggestions. A written record of the library's performance also allows one to assess the library's development and progress on a monthly and annual basis. The statistical records should detail the daily attendance of all library visitors, indicate special programs offered and note concerns. Information regarding expenses could be included to provide an easy reference for annual expenses.

Costs Involved in running a library

The costs of setting up a library are completely dependent on the setting and size of the library. The initial expenses to set up a library are significant and there is often a big rush to raise funds for books and bookshelves. Sadly, very little consideration is given to planning for the month-to-month payments of the staff salaries and library upkeep. A library's success, however, relies on excellent staff and this falls apart quickly if money cannot be found for salaries. The community or school supporting the library should be involved in addressing these issues from the very beginning.

Many libraries think that they can generate ongoing funding from membership fees and user charges. Please think twice about doing so because it denies children from impoverished homes the opportunity to visit the library. On the other hand, there can be two levels of privileges: one where the member pays a fee for borrowing or one where in-library reading and library activities are free.

Conclusion

With careful planning and community support a library is a wonderful resource for children and their parents. Please keep in mind that a few good books and an enthusiastic librarian under the shade of a tree do more to foster reading than a big library with thousands of tattered and inappropriate books and uninterested staff.

NB Please feel free to copy these guidelines. Comments and suggestions should be sent to this address: kknowles@mts.net Our website address is www.osuchildrenslibraryfund.ca

Medical facilities and health issues

Be sure you have your emergency card at all times, and leave copies with the librarians, so that in case of emergency they can contact your relatives and FAVL. Béréba has limited emergency medical facilities. The *dispensaire* is located 100m to the east of the FAVL guesthouse in Béréba. If you are staying in Béréba for more than a week, please introduce yourself to the *major* (the nurse practitioner). There is a small hospital in Houndé. You may want to visit and find out their capacity to treat emergency cases. Please ask Donkou to take you there. In any medical emergency or serious illness, you should immediately notify Viviane, and she will arrange for your transport to Ouagadougou. There you should check into a private clinic for treatment. Be aware that even Ouagadougou has limited emergency medical care facilities. If you feel like you are getting seriously ill (high fever, vomiting) immediately seek medical attention in Ouagadougou. The most common and likely illnesses involve diarrhea and vomiting. In these cases, you will be greatly relieved by having a stool test and possibly a blood test (malaria tests are now easy to do and involve a pin prick). Stool and blood tests can tell you whether you have amoebic or bacterial infections, which require very different medications. You should take any prolonged or severe diarrhea or vomiting or fever very seriously and begin making plans to go to Ouagadougou. Don't try to "get better" by lying in bed in Béréba. Let Donkou/Dounko/Viviane know your condition immediately.

Here is a list of useful numbers:

The clinic we most recommend, near the American embassy, and used by many embassy staff. Dr. Koffi Ativon Tel : 70.20.56.06 is the doctor who can authorize emergency medical evacuation via Air France:

Clinique Les Flamboyants - Ouagadougou
Email: cmc.flamboyant@liptinfor.bf
tél/fax: 50 30 76 00

Hôpital de Ouagadougou
tél: 50 30 66 43 à 45

Hôpital de Bobo-Dioulasso
tél: 20 97 00 44

CMS - Centre Médico Social - Ouagadougou
tél: 50 30 66 07
Page Internet: [cliquez ici](#)
Email: cms.fr@fasonet.bf

Clinique Notre Dame de la Paix - Ouagadougou
Email: cndp@cenatrin.bf
tél: 50 35 61 55 à 57 fax: 50 35 61 63

Clinique Suka, 04 BP 8297 - Ouagadougou
Site Internet: <http://www.suka.bf>

Email: clinique.elfateh@suka.bf
tél: 50 43 06 00 / 01 fax: 50 43 02 89

Polyclinique Nina - Ouagadougou
Email: aliber@cenatrin.bf
tél: 50 36 33 81 fax: 50 36 34 54

Polyclinique Yentema - Ouagadougou
tél: 50 33 70 70 fax: 50 31 69 69

Pharmacie Diawara - Ouagadougou
(analyses médicales)
tél/fax: 50 31 30 56

Laboratoire du Centre- Ouagadougou
(analyses médicales)
tél: 50 31 35 37 fax: 50 43 02 89

Pharmacie Nouvelle - Ouagadougou
(analyses médicales)
tél: 50 30 61 33 fax: 50 31 51 32

Pharmacie du Progrès - Ouagadougou
(analyses médicales)
Email: kabore.a@fasonet.bf
tél: 50 43 01 62 fax: 50 43 00 7

Gynécologues :

Professeur Blandine THIEBA

Tel : 70.20.56.32

« **Clinique** Médicale Polyvalente Moussa Koné

»

Tel : 50.36.14.79

Professeur Bibiane KONE

« **Clinique** Médicale Polyvalente Moussa Koné

»

Tel : 50.36.14.79

Docteur Charlemagne OUEDRAOGO

Tel : 70.26.18.65

« **Clinique** Médicale Polyvalente Moussa Koné

»

Tel : 50.36.14.79

LABORATOIRES D'ANALYSES MEDICALES

Laboratoire de la **Clinique** Philadelphie

09BP863 **Ouagadougou** 09

Tel: 50.33.26.71

Laboratoire du Centre

06BP9081 **Ouagadougou** 06

Tel: 50.31.35.57

FAVL does not offer medical advice- consult your doctor about medical issues in traveling to Burkina Faso. A useful list of medical issues, to start with, is available from the website:

http://www.europ-assistance.com/uk/travel-information/sanitary-risks-health-advice-Burkina-Faso_BFA_1.html

reproduced here:

MAIN HEALTH RISKS

- *Malaria affects the whole country; strains are mildly resistant to chloroquine (zone 2).*
- *AIDS is highly prevalent.*
- *The country was affected by the avian flu epizootic in 2006.*

- *Burkina Faso is regularly affected by serious outbreaks of meningococcal meningitis, especially in Ouagadougou.*
- *There are cases of animal rabies in the country.*
- *Diarrheic diseases are common.*

FOOD SAFETY

- *Gastric diseases are common among tourists who are not accustomed to local food or who do not take precautions.*
- *Do not drink tap water and favor bottled mineral water, without ice ; avoid eating ice cream and sherbet.*
- *Avoid eating raw or undercooked dishes, especially meat or fish. If possible, order hot dishes.*
- *Bring anti-diarrhea medication with you.*
- *Wash your hands thoroughly before each meal.*

IMMUNIZATIONS AND MEDICATION

- *Travellers entering the country from an endemic area are required to present a certificate of immunization against yellow fever.*

Systematically:

- *Hepatitis A: the vaccination is available for children at least one year old. For persons who were born before 1945, who have spent their childhood in a developing country or who have had an icterus, it may prove useful to search previously for serous antibodies in order to avoid an unnecessary shot.*
- *Hepatitis B: the vaccination is available for children at least two months old.*
- *Diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis: get a booster shot before leaving if your last shot is more than ten years old.*

Depending on the duration and conditions of the trip:

- *Typhoid fever: if the stay is occurring in precarious hygiene condition. The*

immunization is available for children at least 2 years old.

- *Rabies: recommended for long stays in isolation. The immunization should be given to children as soon as they are able to walk.*
- *Neisseria meningitidis meningitis: for long stays or in case of close contacts with local population in an epidemic area. The immunization is available for children at least 2 years old.*
- *Tuberculosis: in case of a long stay, it is recommended to have children immunized against tuberculosis as soon as they reach the age of one month, and against mumps, measles and rubella when they reach the age of nine months.*
- *Recommended chemoprophylaxis against malaria: chloroquine and proguanil (commercial name: Savarine) or proguanil and atovaquone (commercial name: Malarone).*

In addition, the French Embassy to Burkina Faso offers the following medical observations:

Santé

A la suite de plusieurs accidents récents et compte tenu de possibilités de prises en charge en urgence extrêmement limitées au Burkina Faso, les voyages avec de jeunes enfants ou les déplacements de personnes souffrant de problèmes de santé sont fortement déconseillés.

Avant le départ : *Consultez votre médecin (éventuellement votre dentiste) et souscrivez à une compagnie d'assistance couvrant les frais médicaux le rapatriement sanitaire.*

Paludisme :

Prévention du paludisme : maladie parasitaire transmise par les piqûres de moustiques qui impose le recours à des mesures de protection individuelle (sprays, crèmes, diffuseurs électriques, moustiquaires...) A ces mesures, doit s'ajouter un traitement médicamenteux adapté à chaque individu : il convient de s'adresser à votre médecin habituel ou à un centre de conseils aux

voyageurs. Le traitement devra être poursuivi après le retour en France durant une durée variable selon le produit utilisé. Classification : zone 3. Durant votre séjour, et durant les deux mois qui suivent votre retour, en cas de fièvre, un avis médical doit être pris rapidement, pour mettre en oeuvre dès que possible un traitement anti-paludique éventuel.

Vaccinations :

▀ *La vaccination contre la fièvre jaune est indispensable (à pratiquer dans un centre agréé).*

▀ *La mise à jour de la vaccination diphtérie-tétanos-polimyélite est recommandée.*

▀ *Autres vaccinations conseillées (selon conditions d'hygiène et durée du séjour) : fièvre typhoïde, hépatites virales A et B, méningite à méningocoque (voir ci-dessous).*

▀ *La vaccination contre la rage peut également être proposée dans certains cas. Demandez conseil à votre médecin ou à un centre de vaccinations internationales.*

Epidémie de méningite : *Le Burkina Faso est régulièrement touché par d'importantes épidémies de méningite à méningocoque. La vaccination anti méningococcique (A, C, Y, W 135) reste fortement recommandée.*

Epidémie de grippe aviaire : *Le Burkina a été touché par l'épizootie de grippe aviaire en 2006. Il est recommandé aux voyageurs souhaitant se rendre dans ce pays de consulter l'encart "grippe aviaire" figurant en page d'accueil de ce site. La Direction Générale de la Santé recommande aux voyageurs d'éviter tout contact avec les volailles et les oiseaux, c'est-à-dire de ne pas se rendre dans des élevages ni sur les marchés aux volatiles. Les recommandations générales d'hygiène lors des voyages dans les pays en développement, qui visent à se protéger des infections microbiennes, sont préconisées*

Hygiène alimentaire: *(prévention de la diarrhée du voyageur et du choléra) Il est conseillé de ne pas boire l'eau du robinet : préférez les eaux en bouteilles capsulées. A défaut, consommez de l'eau filtrée, bouillie et décontaminée. Evitez l'ingestion de glaçons, de jus de fruits frais, de*

légumes crus et de fruits non pelés. Evitez la consommation d'aliments (poisson, viande, volaille, lait) insuffisamment cuits. Veillez à un lavage régulier et soigneux des mains avant chaque repas (hygiène très stricte des mains notamment au sortir des toilettes).

Sida : *Prévalence non négligeable du VIH - sida. Toute mesure de prévention est indispensable.*

Quelques règles simples :

évitez les baignades dans les eaux stagnantes (risque d'infection parasitaire).

évitez de marcher pieds nus sur le sable et les sols humides.

ne caressez pas les animaux que vous rencontrez, veillez à votre sécurité routière (port de la ceinture de sécurité en automobile ou du casque en moto).

ne jamais consommer de médicaments achetés dans la rue. Emportez dans vos bagages les médicaments dont vous pourriez avoir besoin.

Numéros utiles

A Ouagadougou

- ▶ *Centre Médico-social : 50.30.66.07*
 - ▶ *Médecin de garde : 70.20.00.00 (tél. cellulaire)*
 - ▶ *Clinique Notre Dame de la Paix : 50.35.61.53 / 55 - 50.35.71.06*
 - ▶ *Clinique les Flamboyants : 50.30.76.00*
 - ▶ *Clinique les Genets : 50.37.43.80 à 83 / 78.88.38.88*
 - ▶ *Clinique El Fateh Suka : 50.43.06.00 à 01*
 - ▶ *Clinique de l'Est : 50.36.66.74*
- A Bobo Dioulasso*
- ▶ *Hôpital Sanou Souro : 20.97.00.44/45/47*
 - ▶ *Burkina Secours : 20.97.01.43*

Emergency medical situations

Here is the explanation for the ISIC emergency evacuations benefit of \$300,000 (other insurance carriers may offer more or less): The Insurer will pay this benefit up to the Maximum Limit shown on the Schedule of Benefits. The Insurer will arrange for emergency medical transportation services required by the Insured as the result of an Injury or emergency Sickness during a Trip.

Covered Expenses: *The Insurer will arrange and pay:* (a) Reasonable and Customary Charges for medical services required for evacuation to the nearest adequate medical facility or home if medically required. This service will be arranged only if the Insured's Physician determines that adequate medical treatment is not locally available; (b) up to \$5,000 for Reasonable and Customary Charges for escort expenses required by Insured, if the Insured is disabled during a Trip, and an escort is recommended, in writing, by the attending Physician; (c) Reasonable and Customary Charges for services for transportation of the Insured's remains to his/her place of residence if he/she dies during a Trip. Services must be provided by a provider designated by the Insurer. **Additional Benefit:** In addition to the above Covered Expenses, if the Insurer has previously evacuated an Insured to a medical facility, the Insurer will pay his/her airfare costs from that facility to the Insured's Return Destination, within one year from the Insured's original Trip Completion Date, less refunds from the Insured's unused transportation tickets. Airfare costs will be economy, or first class if the Insured's original tickets are first class. This benefit is available only if it is not provided under another coverage in the policy. **Additional Exclusions:** In addition to the General Exclusions, the Insurer also will not pay for services arranged without the Insurer's prior consent or approval. Timely notification by the Insured to the Insurer's designated provider is required, with regard to Emergency Evacuation.

In order to best assist you if you have an emergency medical condition, you should do the following:

- Make sure your cellphone is always charged, with units available to call Ouagadougou or your home
- Make sure Viviane, Donkouï and Dounko have your home contact information
- Verbally remind Viviane, Donkouï and Dounko when you are there, that in case of

medical emergency when you are incapacitated, they should call your home (and either Leslie Gray or Michael Kevane). It is your responsibility to make sure that they have your contact information. Make sure they (and the FAVL office and your parents) have the telephone number for your emergency evacuation insurance provider.

- Visit the clinics in Ouagadougou where you would likely be treated in case of emergency (Les Flamboyans in Ouagadougou)

In an emergency medical situation, FAVL staff members will assist you to get to Ouagadougou, will take you to a private clinic in Ouagadougou where you may be attended, will make every effort to contact your emergency contacts and FAVL officers in the U.S., will notify the Consular office of your Embassy if they are unable to contact your family, and will assist you while you recover in any feasible way, including coordinating with the clinic physician for an emergency evacuation if that proves necessary.

Notes

Contactes FAVL Burkina Faso

| <i>Nom</i> | <i>Prenom</i> | <i>Village</i> | <i>Poste</i> | <i>adresse</i> | <i>tel mobile</i> | <i>email</i> |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| SANOU | Dounko | Béréba | Animateur/Bibliothecaire | BP 51 Hounde | 76 67 87 51 | Dounk2@yahoo.com doukaye@hotmail.com |
| KOURA | Donkoui | Hounde | Coordinateur Tuy | BP 51 Hounde | 76 66 52 41 | donkoui@yahoo.com |
| KOURA | Ivette | Béréba | Bibliothecaire | BP 51 Hounde | 76 16 20 18 | |
| OUEDRAGO | Sylvie | Koumbia | Bibliothecaire | BP 51 Hounde | 70 15 77 12 | |
| NABIE | Viviane | Ouagadougou | Coordinatrice nationale | 09 BP 938 Ouagadougou 09 | 76 65 62 54 | 50 43 24 66 nabieviviane80@gmail.com |
| PEMOU | Lucie | Sara | Bibliothecaire | BP 51 Hounde | 76 15 79 06 | |
| KEVANE | Michael | USA | FAVL President | PO Box 90533, San Jose, CA 95109 | 76 40 89 23 | 1-408-445-6888 mkevane@scu.edu |
| GRAY | Leslie | USA | FAVL Vice-President | PO Box 90533, San Jose, CA 95109 | | 1-408-298-4048 lcgray@scu.edu |
| BOUE | Halidou | Dohoun | Bibliothecaire | BP 51 Hounde | 76 13 54 93 | |
| DOMBOUE | Hakahoun | Karaba | Bibliothecaire | BP 51 Hounde | | |
| OUEDRAGO | Bibata | Koumbia | Bibliothecaire | | | |
| FAVL volunteer phone | available for use while in | Burkina Faso | | | 226 76 40 89 23 | |