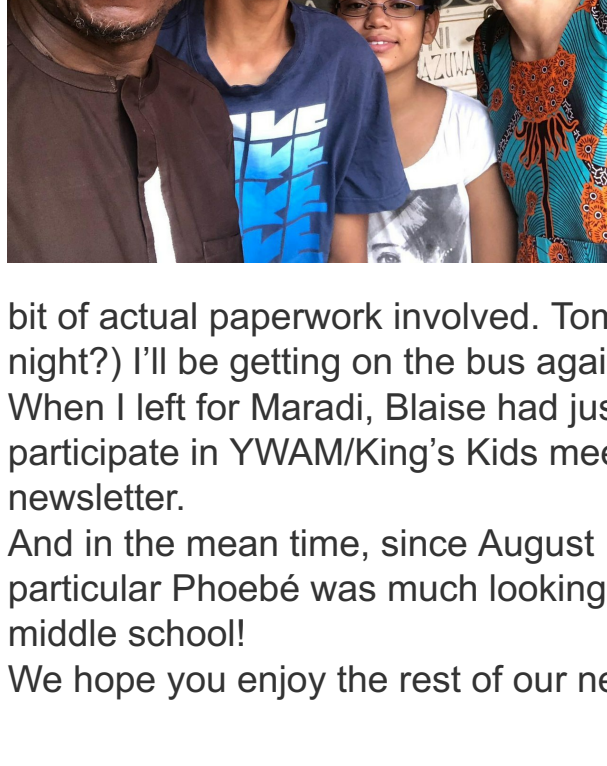


# Bene Koytara Goyterey

Those who work for God's Kingdom (translated from Zarma)



## Dear Friends



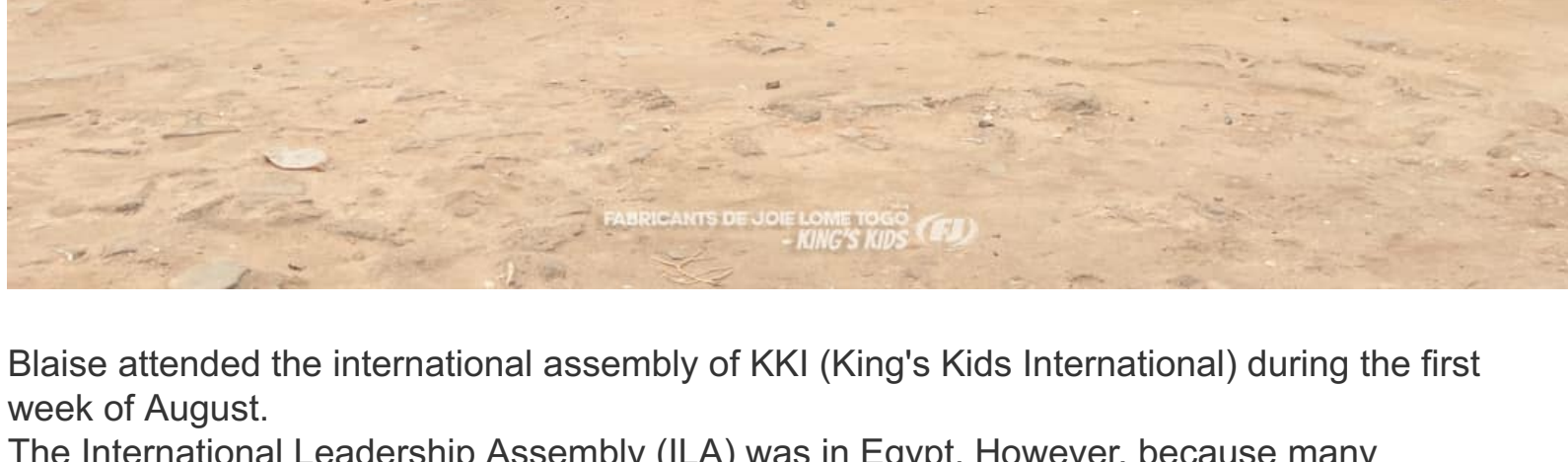
Once again I'm in Maradi. I arrived last Tuesday after a bus trip of about 12 hours and had a busy week with meetings to catch up with the SSCS team and discuss both the agricultural and health work. I heard some interesting stories again of which I hope to be sharing more soon. I also participated in meetings with the school board of the Académie Evangélique Cornerstone de Maradi – we made use of the occasion too, to take another look at the grounds for the layout of the buildings that we are still planning to build, now that building activities for the next building will soon be starting. And, of course, there was the usual paperwork for the admin- and accounting work to catch up on. I can do the computer part of it from a distance, but there still is also a bit of actual paperwork involved. Tomorrow (Monday) at 3 in the morning (or should I say: night?) I'll be getting on the bus again.

When I left for Maradi, Blaise had just returned on Saturday from his trip to Lomé (Togo) to participate in YWAM/King's Kids meetings. You can read about those meetings further on in this newsletter.

And in the mean time, since August 18, Caleb and Phoebe have started school again. In particular Phoebe was much looking forward to returning to school, because she was entering middle school!

We hope you enjoy the rest of our newsletter.

## International Leadership Assembly, King's Kids International



Blaise attended the international assembly of KKI (King's Kids International) during the first week of August.

The International Leadership Assembly (ILA) was in Egypt. However, because many participants could not get their visas arranged to travel to Egypt (due to Corona), the assembly was held in multiple satellite locations. Togo hosted one of these satellite meetings. Blaise also did not get a visa for Egypt and now he was in Togo.

The theme was: blow the trumpet!

Regularly they received video recordings from the ILA in Egypt. At the ILA in Togo were watched this videos. The program also included worship and prayer time. Workshops were given and regularly work was done in smaller groups. Each day there was special prayer time for one of the participating countries. For example, on the fourth day there was special prayer for Niger. Ministry description KKI: King's Kids International (KKI) is an international movement, embracing a kingdom lifestyle that is family-based and generationally linked.

Our purpose is to mobilize, equip, reach out and care for children, youth and families knowing God, bringing Him joy and making Him and His Kingdom known.

Founding Scripture, Deuteronomy 6:6-7: These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

We asked Blaise a few questions about this meeting:

1. For our perception, how many countries were the participants from?

There were 55 of us from Niger, Togo, Benin and Nigeria.

2. Has Covid thrown a lot of spanner in the works?

Of course, this pandemic has caused a lot of damage in our countries and has a great negative impact, travel has become difficult between countries.

In the different countries, corruption is increasing at the borders and at police stations. There are many Africans who do not believe in the great threat of covid infections.

At this meeting, participants had to respect the "normal" covid rules: mandatory wearing of mouth masks, washing hands and keeping one meter distance. We had to respect all that, every day and so you notice that this has a bit of an impact on the whole organization of this meeting.

But we are happy to respect that, because it is also well for us.

In Africa we often greet each other, we shake hands, but because of Covid-19 we can't do that anymore, whereas it used to be very common. (Actually the same restrictions we face here in the Netherlands and in so many places in the world).

3. In addition to being a participant, were you a speaker? What did you speak about?

Of course I was actually supposed to go to Egypt, but because my visa was also denied I came to Lomé, but I believe God wanted me to be in Lomé, according to the testimonies many were encouraged by my presence. I led a workshop with Ms. Odette She is the spouse of a friend of Blaise. She lives in Togo and also works for an NGO there. We gave a workshop together on building and supporting the local community with the help of NGOs. We told about our vocational training and trainings at Centre Caleb and about the trainings for FJ leaders at Quartier Libre. We taught them how to set up and guide the FJ's program, what possibilities and opportunities it brings, with one of our principles being to continue to build the community. We were happy to show that this is actually happening.

4. Can you briefly share what you yourself experienced? What inspired you?

I am glad I was here and it was nice to see young leaders grow in faith and awe of God. It is great to see this generation serving the Lord shoulder to shoulder.

I was able to pass on my knowledge to young people and encourage them to continue, which in turn inspires me to continue encouraging and training people to reach even more children and youth.

Merci beaucoup!



\*Source photos FJ LOME, TOGO\*

## Harvest

When I see the word 'harvest', here in Niger, on the edge of the Sahara desert, a lot of things come to mind, practical things mostly. For most people here, life is defined by agriculture. Mainly during the months of April and May the fields are prepared for sowing as soon as the rains come (usually around mid-June). When the first good rain has fallen, it is time to wait: will we get enough rain this year, so that we can actually harvest? And then the next question: "How much will we be able to harvest? That is, how much will we have in stock to eat, and how much can we sell so that we have money for other necessities? However, rain is not the only thing that crops need to grow well. Certainly, without (sufficient) rain there is no harvest. But, even when there is sufficient rain, in many cases the harvest remains very poor. The reason? Often more than one - for example, poor quality seed, no or insufficient fertilisation and poor maintenance of the crop during growth - to name the most important (and verifiable). In my work, together with my colleagues, I often see very contradictory situations. People are largely dependent on what they will be able to harvest in September/October, but they make choices that will have a negative impact on that harvest. We often talk about this, and that it is so difficult to change this because these are ways of working that people have grown up with. Logically, then, people do not simply accept that another way of working might produce better results under the present circumstances.

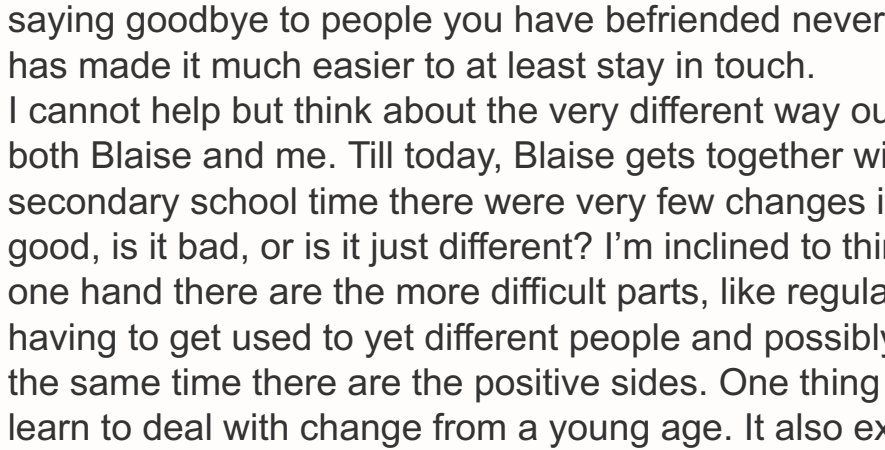
While I was thinking about the whole agricultural process to achieve a good harvest, it occurred to me that this whole process is actually a good life lesson for me. I don't want my life here in Niger, and in a broader sense here on earth, to be useless. I want my life to produce good fruit, in other words, a good harvest. But that does not just happen. To be productive in the various aspects of my life, I must first of all take good care of myself. Without sufficient rain, sufficient and good fertilisation, a good quality seed as input into my life, the harvest remains meagre.

Healthy eating, sufficient exercise, relaxation and sufficient rest (! exclamation mark to myself), and doing what is necessary (making good choices) to stay emotionally and spiritually healthy, are important. All those things are important, not as an end in themselves so that I can feel good about myself. They are important, even necessary, as preparation and conditioning for my life to produce good fruit, a good harvest.

Of course, I already knew that it is important to take good care of myself, otherwise I cannot function properly. But I had never thought about it in the way I have described above. For me, it has given an extra dimension to 'taking good care of myself'. What kind of harvest do I want to produce for my environment? And with that as a starting point, what is needed in terms of preparation and input into my life in order to produce that harvest? I am looking forward to, with God's help, producing a good 'life' harvest!



## Kids and a fluid community



VERANDERENDE VRIENDENKRING

"Ok Zara (not her real name), you may walk once more around the field with Caleb, and then we really need to leave", Zara's mum tells her. At the same time Zara's younger sister is playing with Phoebe. The sisters were classmates of respectively Caleb and Phoebe and they all became good friends. But now Zara and her sister are leaving Niger, because their parents have been assigned to a different country. So, as mums, we agreed that we would all be at the Sahel campus on this particular afternoon, so that our kids would have a last opportunity to meet, chat, play and say their goodbye's. Of

course, for none of the four involved this is the first time. As missionary kids they are growing up in a community with constant changes, a community with a rather high turnover of people. But saying goodbye to people you have befriended never gets any easier. Even though social media has made it much easier to at least stay in touch.

I cannot help but think about the very different way our children are growing up compared to both Blaise and me. Till today, Blaise gets together with friends he grew up with. Throughout my secondary school time there were very few changes in classmates. What to make of this? Is it good, is it bad, or is it just different? I'm inclined to think it's this last one: "just different". On the one hand there are the more difficult parts, like regularly having to say goodbye to friends and having to get used to yet different people and possibly make new friends very regularly. But at the same time there are the positive sides. One thing I see is that it creates the opportunity to learn to deal with change from a young age. It also exposes them to many different people from many different corners and cultures of this world. And what I observe is that these kids tend to focus on what they have in common, not on the differences between them. I think that this is something many of us adults can learn from, and I certainly hope that it is something our children will take with them in their baggage into adulthood.

With our love,

Blaise, Jeannette, Caleb and Phoebe

### To thank for:

- Blaise's worthwhile participation in the meetings in Lomé.
- That Caleb and Phoebe were able to return to school as foreseen.
- That despite doubts, there have not been major difficulties in supervising the SSCS work from a distance.
- For sufficient funds to be able to build the foundation for the next bloc of three classrooms for AECM.

### To pray for:

- That the rainy season will be long enough for the crops to develop well.
- There have been a growing number of cases of Cholera throughout the country – that people will be wise about hygiene.
- The preparations for starting with a new group at Training Centre Caleb and also a new group for the Discipleship Training.

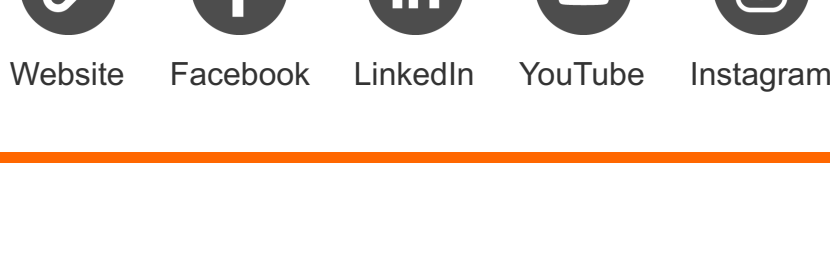
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