

## Another school year successfully completed



Rissa Mohamadou, Head Supervisor

### Poem dedicated to TANAT

My beautiful, flourishing Tanat,  
 You who cultivate an ever-growing love  
 Learning, togetherness and friendship all in one place  
 I love you more and more as I look at you;  
 You Tanat, east of Abalak, overlooking  
 All the houses round about.  
 Let's go in and check it out  
 Let's see the neat classrooms, its administration  
 Library and information facility  
 Everything is designed with integrity  
 To provide an education of quality  
 You, Tanat, where leaders of tomorrow will be born  
 Able to open real pathways  
 To face their future  
 Let us all work in the same direction to achieve it  
 We, who are responsible for Tanat,  
 Because we love you, Tanat.

Rissa Mohamadou, Head Supervisor  
 TANAT Secondary School TANAT



Girls at the start of the 3km organised for National Women's Day in Niger.



### Year in Review by the Principal of the Primary School

"TANAT's 2017-2018 school year ends on a note of overall satisfaction. We close today with a count of 199 students, 95 of whom are girls. Attendance was good throughout the year, Although there were two cases of extended absence : one involved a broken arm suffered by a student in CI, while the other was a case of chickenpox, also in CI.

The formal education programme was followed faithfully and diligently in all the classes.

In March 2018, one of our teachers was able to attend an educational outreach programme with the administration and teachers of the Bayard Institute of Grenoble.. These exchanges enabled him to understand how a primary school functions in France and to improve his own practices. Upon his return, he was able to share this knowledge with his colleagues.

During the year assessments were organised. These allowed us to identify and target those pupils with learning difficulties. For these students, remedial sessions were organised by their teachers during the weekends. This

tutoring programme enabled students to improve their grades and helped record a large number of passes during the final assessment which took place from May 21 to 25, 2018. The overall results are: 186 students go up to the next class, i.e. 94%, while 11, including 3 girls, must repeat the year.

Most students who repeat have difficulties especially in reading, a prerequisite for acquiring knowledge in any learning discipline.

The members of the Parents' Association have been fully involved in the running of the school, in particular by contributing to the regular attendance of children in the extra classes for students with difficulties. This involvement of parents has motivated the teaching team to take special care of the children entrusted to them. Alongside the teaching staff, the school board participated in all the tasks during the year. They ensured the cleanliness of the premises and the surroundings of the school, together with the involvement of all the students."

Mouhamadoune Abdoussamed Primary School Principal

### News of the Secondary School

"Greetings, ladies and gentlemen. You, the lifeblood of Tanat; You our faithful partners; You our friends!

The Chief Medical Officer of Abalak District Hospital, Dr. Aouadé Hassane, held a talk at CSP Tanat to demonstrate to the students the value of donating blood. After this talk, many high school students volunteered to give blood in order to save lives. This gift of blood is consistent with some of the values of our institution, namely caring and solidarity.

After the school re-opened in October, a fire destroyed the solar regulator that supplied the classrooms with electricity. All attempts to restore the electricity supply proved futile. It took the arrival of Mohamed Aminane, a Tanat student from 2015-2016, in order for the classrooms to eventually be cooled sufficiently for pupils to be able to do their work.

Otherwise the school is fine, although it has certainly been shaken by a national strike, which it has nothing to do with. At first they were 2 or 3-day strikes, but faced with the government's deaf ear, students accelerated the movement by moving to an unlimited number of days.

This is why we called a meeting of all the student members of the Tanat Branch and the

Abalak Branch and their parents. During this meeting we told them that Tanat can no longer support these walkouts and that it was already too much. Let those who want to study come and those who do not can stay away. Many parents forced their children to resign right away, there and then.

The next day, classes resumed normally at Tanat, with a police security detail in place to protect us from any possible attack from the trade-unionists.

Just before Ramadan, the USN Women's Committee, chaired by Miss Kadam Idder, a final-year student at Tanat, organised a celebration on May 13th to commemorate National Women's Day in Niger. For the first time, this festival brought together all the schools in the city of Abalak. Several activities were on the menu: a 3 km Fun Run, a Lecture, a Parade to choose the best school uniform, Spelling games, TamTam in the evening.

I cannot conclude without expressing my heartfelt gratitude for all you do for TANAT. My team and I thank you most sincerely. "

Hassane Moumouni,  
 Principal of TANAT Secondary School

### Sponsor a class or a pupil of TANAT school

Sponsorships are essential to offer schooling to underprivileged children (pupil sponsorship) or to balance the running costs of the school (class sponsorship). TANAT School needs you and your friends to give even more children the opportunity to take charge of their future.

## An outdated view of a Stroke according to traditional belief

According to traditional belief, a disease that suddenly paralyses one or both sides of a seemingly healthy human being is not coincidental. "There is no smoke without fire," say the sages.

A traditional healer interviewed on TV about the spells people cast responded with the words:

"Personally, if someone provokes me I can make an entire side of his body go lame, or even both sides; it will depend on the gravity of his action."

That's Africa! Is justice in one's own hands? That's to say that there are genies in the service of man. And we use them wisely, regardless of the price to pay after good service has been rendered.

Ultimately a Stroke, in traditional language, means a bad contact with an evil genie or altercation with a malicious person; hence the paralysis of the limbs.

Only traditional healers are the last resort to counter the powers of this curse.

In Abalak, in Hausa and Fula society, it is clear that traditional treatment is viewed more highly than modern medicine. If you see a Fula person in the hospital, it is because all other hope has been exhausted.

Since this disease is intimately related to the human race, it can occur anywhere, in any place and under any circumstance and without any apparent symptoms.

We can try and screen for it by using modern methods such as a scanner, a blood pressure monitor and the like, which have helped to demystify the impact of empiricism and tradition in the treatment of these disabling diseases.

But in rural or farming areas like Abalak, the traditional treatment for stroke was with the help of a "traditional therapist" and was performed quite simply as follows:

Reciting verses from the Koran (when the milieu was of the Islamic faith) or trance dancing (in an animist milieu). This action is intended to rid the victim of the dark and evil genie.

Then begins the treatment, comprising a fusion of several medications (essentially based on tree bark) used as a drink and an "eau de toilette" / cleansing spray.

The victim lays on his back and the entire paralysed area is covered from head to toe with a special product.

Lastly, a white shroud covers the afflicted side. The unaffected side is left in the open air. Then we wait, regularly renewing the toilet water, herbal tea and other concoctions.

The end result is that within a few months the victim gives up the ghost. The shroud that used to cover just a part of the body will now cover the entire body.

For the treatment of Stroke, the choice between modern and traditional medicine used to lie in the financial means and the ability of the victim to cope with multiple ordeals.

Modern medicine is the safest route, but requires long and expensive treatment that is not always within the reach of the average person living in a rural community.

That is why, unable to do anything to save the patient, many had no other recourse than to turn to the network of traditional healers who still continue to peddle their mythology.

Alichina Kada - Censor of TANAT Secondary School, recovered from a stroke that struck him 3 years ago.



Ramlatou Echeffer

### Remembering Ramlatou

TANAT Secondary School was severely tested on April 28th by the premature death, following an illness, of one of our finest pupils who was always first in her class.

Ramlatou Echeffer left us in the prime of life, leaving behind a class that is saddened and friends who continue to mourn her loss. She had represented TANAT several times as a winner of the Award of Excellence.

## Mealtime with the Tuaregs

Meals usually bring together men on one side and women on the other; sometimes parents eat before the children do. But mealtime is rarely the occasion for lively conversation or an exchange of ideas.

It is not proper to raise one's voice, conversation should be reduced to a bare minimum and one should wait until the end of the meal before asking questions or introducing a topic for debate.

Indeed, among Tuaregs from the Sahel a classic incongruity consists in interrupting the meal to ask the others a question, however banal, which would not be in direct relation to the meal or to the discipline of the conversation that was going on before the start of the meal.

Enquiring about this or that person, asking if this family is still camping in the same place, banalities if they exist in Tuareg conversation, show that the person who asks such a question feels free to share his ramblings with others.

This incongruity is called "Sunti" and anyone

who commits it shows a lack of self-control and exposes himself to public ridicule. The smartest individuals anticipate the mockery by prefacing the question with the words: "Sunti said: Did so-and-so go to the market today?". The fact remains that during a meal, maintaining "tekaraqit" (proper behaviour) is more than ever important.

The main dish is placed on the floor, the guests sit around on mats or blankets and eat in silence at an equal pace, resting their spoon in the dish after each mouthful, without anyone trying to speed ahead.

The meal is always richer and more copious when a guest is present. Hospitality is a trait common to all nomadic tribes where a stranger who travels in deprived areas can count on the generosity of the welcome in the encampment. The food offered varies according to two criteria: the relative wealth of the person receiving the visitor and the quality of the stranger/visitor, or the special ties that bind him to that individual.

Taken from "The Tuaregs of Niger" by Edmond Bernus

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## TANAT School

Given the state of the education system in the Abalak region of Niger, residents banded together in 2008, within the ONODEP association chaired by Mayor Billou Mohamed Moctar, to create and run a school that would cater for pupils from nursery school to final year graduation, in partnership with the French TANAT association.

The educational aim of Tanat School is to:

- Welcome boys and girls regardless of social, cultural or religious background.
- Give young people entrusted to them not only a solid school education but relevant training to prepare them for life as responsible men and women.
- Maintain a family atmosphere that allows young people to feel loved, recognised, supported and listened to.