

First start of TANAT school year in Abalak !

“ Educating a child is like growing a tree ”



“A child is like a little tree”, tells us Rissa, Manager of the Tanat School. “ Some trees have thorns, some are twisted, trees are more or less tall, however each one is useful ; they all bring shadow with their foliage, which then produces humus ; they give wood and some allow to cure diseases ; even thorns are useful for fences ; they may even be eaten by camels”

“From a child as from a tree, we expect a lot”

The school teaches him to behave in society and to find his right place. “Everybody can bring something to others like the tree does with its protective shadow. I want to put plants in the schoolyard and I wish that everyone may grow seeds. They will come to water them every day. Pupils are going to like the green of these plants and this will part of their education.”

« When he is 15 years old, he becomes an adult »

However, you must not take short cuts : when he is 7 years old, his curiosity must be aroused ; when 10 years old, he begins to want to imitate the adult and his competitive spirit should be enhanced.

School allows to bring elementary rules of what I call moral standards: respect, politeness, tidiness, cleanliness, punctuality, mutual aid

This school will be very different from what I knew during my career as a teacher during the last 30 years when I had often 60 or even 75 pupils in my classes, with several levels to be taught together. It was necessary to concentrate on the main subjects (mathematics, French language, study of the environment background) and let aside the casual and productive activities like knitting, stitching and weaving.



Rissa Mohamadou the academic director of the school

For the time being , **“let us start this new school who dazzled anyone who discovered it”**. Everybody is keen on having it beautiful and it will be even nicer when all our flowers and trees will have grown up.



Goal reached : the school counts 120 pupils, of which 36 are sponsored

4 classes are open : CI (Tuition for initiation to the French language), CP, CE1 and CE2. We had to refuse numerous registration requests in order to maintain the target of quality with a maximum of 30 pupils per class. With 60 % of boy pupils and 40 % of girl pupils, the objective of balance has not been reached this year. The 36 sponsored pupils have been carefully chosen among the most underprivileged (orphans, deceased father, or father without revenue or moved into exodus...) by ONODEP Association that manages the school, with tight cooperation with the community and district leaders ; 60 % of the sponsored pupils are girls.

First day in TANAT school



7h30 All the buildings are ready with furniture and school stationery.



9h All classes are full, there are only two pupils per desk instead of 3, even 4 in some schools.

Why I have chosen TANAT school

Pupils's parents' comments :

"It is the most beautiful school of Abalak"

"It is a school where everyone works, where there will be no strike, there will be computers, Rissa has a very good reputation."

"A school that make flowers grow"

"My daughters spoke to me all the time about Tanat school before its opening, even when I was sleeping."



8h fathers are those who take their children to school on the opening day.



10h visit of the authorities (Academic Inspector and Educational Union, Mayor and Counsellors of Abalak borough, General Secretary of Abalak borough headquarters, Representative of local traditional authorities and Heads of security forces) who all say to us:

"congratulation and good luck"



8h15 the headmaster calls each pupil in his class .



15h30 in the afternoon the pupils are coming back in line.

Playtime by the end of the day



18h the pupils are leaving, after lowering the flag, as in all the schools of Niger.



Rissa Mouhamadou, academic director

The School Team

The academic director

He is 54 years old ; he has been a teacher for 30 years , of which 20 as headmaster in a public school. Rissa is very well known in the region, with the reputation of “Mister who gets 100 % of success to the “Certificat d’Etudes”.



Mohamadou, teacher in CE1

« I like to teach since it is concrete and so we see the results of our teaching ».

23 years old, he graduated in “Ecole Normale”, then he has been working as a contract employee in the bush and afterwards he worked during three years for ACF.

The teachers



Abdoulkarim so called « Doula » teacher in CP
34 years old, “baccalauréat”, “Ecole Normale” in Tahoua and two years in a university in Tripoli



Ghoumar, teacher in CI

« I am happy to join this school since it is reliable and there will be no strike »

31 years old, married, a one-year old child. He graduated in “Ecole Normale” and he worked as a teacher in the bush ; then he has been hired by the public school in Maraba. Between these two jobs, he has been working during two years for ACF (Action against Hunger). In the public school he was faced with bad working conditions: late wages, up to 80 pupils per class, no educational books...

The guard



Ahmed Moussa Mohamadou so called « Kaloula »

“I want to make this school welcoming and nice, water the flowers and maintain the buildings in good condition.”

29 years old, a cattle breeder family in the bush ; has succeeded to the “Certificat d’Etudes” with Rissa as a teacher.



Mariama (Takajacht) , 20 years old, the secretary of the school.

CI Class (Initiation tuition)





Pupils in good health

Each pupil has been examined within two days by a very well organized team of 4 persons under the authority of Catherine, the doctor :

- Vision tests with Mohamed who is the optician for Masnat
- Audition tests with an audiometer lent by a french manufacturer.
- Measurements of the pupils and clinical examination.

to cure them in Abalak for the time being. Some auditory problems have also been detected, probably due to recurrent otitis.

Very few children are aware of how old they are but in general they are in good health .



It was difficult to get vaccination records. Very few children know how old they are but in general they are in good health. Candies make disasters and many teeth decay are noticed without any possibility

A medical file is now available for every child in the school, which will be reviewed annually.

Still needed 30,000 € for closing the budget for the first level

In order to complete the works and investments necessary for the primary school (first level) with the start of the CM1 in 2010 and of the CM2 in 2011, around 30 000 € remain to be found. Anyone who wishes to carry on supporting this fine project may send his cheque to the order of TANAT Association.

Very numerous sponsorships are essential

Sponsorships are essential for balancing the running expenses of the school, reminds Billou Mohamed Moctar, Chairman for ONODEP, even if many families pay for their children's schooling.



Schooling fees for the unsponsored children amount to 70,000 FCA per year (around 100 €). It is the average sum re-

quested in Niger for the private schools; this represents approximately the monthly salary of a state employee.

However, the wages of the school team plus the expenses and consumables reach 180 € per year and per pupil.

Up to now the pupils or classes sponsorships already received enable to balance the running costs for the current school year.

But Billou confirms to us that « **more sponsorships and more supports are essential to carry on properly the project** ».

The TANAT School Project

Given the state of the educational system in the Abalak region, in Niger, inhabitants have gathered inside the ONODEP Association of which Billou Mohamed Moctar, deputy mayor, is the Chairman, in order to create and manage a school.

The French association Tanat is devoted to supporting this project.

2009 - Stage 1: Start in October of the first level with 4 classes : CI, CP, CE1, CE2. After, CM1 in 2010 and CM2 in 2011.

2012 - Stage 2: Start of the secondary school.

2013 - Stage 3: Start of the high school.

The necessary investments for the first level amount approximately to 100,000 € and then 150,000 € for the secondary school and the high school.

A pedagogical and technical partnership has been set up with the Bayard school in Grenoble. Sponsorships take in charge the most underprivileged ones and balance the running expenses.

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