

# Supporting Education in Niger

## David Smith - Rotary Club of Pagosa Springs

Niger is a land-locked West African country that is twice the size of Texas. About 80% of Niger lies in the Sahara Desert. In 2015, the United Nations ranked Niger 187 of 188 countries in human development.

Approximately 70% of its population cannot read. Yet, within the capital city, Niamey, there are high schools where students study biology, chemistry, physics and English. These students will likely play a major role in future economic development in Niger. The Rotary Club of Pagosa Springs is working with the Gaweye Rotary Club of Niamey to improve education in two high schools in Niamey.



The Gaweye Rotary Club of Niamey is a well-established, highly active club. Great folks to work with!

Funds from a District Grant were used to buy 3 computers and 2 digital projectors that will be used by the science teachers. These funds were also used to buy voltmeters and other supplies used for teaching physics. I spent a week in Niamey where I met with school officials, taught 2 short teacher training workshops, and developed plans for a global grant that will substantially expand our efforts to improve education in these two high schools.



# Supporting Education in Niger (continued) & Request for Project Support

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High school physics teachers use a computer provided by our District Grant to study simulations of common physics experiments. The combination of computers, projectors and simulated experiments is highly effective for teaching large, over-crowded classrooms. This equipment is also useful for showing Youtube videos.

Having completed an in-depth Needs Assessment, we are now preparing a Global Grant application which will be submitted to TRF in late May. The main objective of this program will be to support science and English education in two high schools. This program will build on experience we have gained through four Global Grants carried out in Senegal.

Supporting English language instruction is a new goal for our program. French is the national language in Niger. Little English is spoken. Yet, a country can be part of the modern world only if a substantial part of its workforce speaks English.

**We are looking for clubs to help us in two ways.** Of course, we will appreciate financial support. You can also help by hosting a small group of English teachers for a week in the summer of 2019. These teachers speak English, but have never visited an English-speaking country, such as England or the US. We plan to provide a month of practical training in English, but need Rotary Clubs to host the group for a week.

For more information, please contact David Smith (email: [dsmith7@unl.edu](mailto:dsmith7@unl.edu); tel: 970 264 6647)

