



# Niamey School for the Deaf

2019 - 2020



Unifying people and mobilizing resources to expand quality educational opportunities for children in Niger



# Remember Niger Summer Interns

*Remember Niger is fortunate to have 5 talented student interns working on various projects this summer. Each intern has put together yearbooks for our schools in Niger. This yearbook was completed by Natalie Smith. We are proud of her hard work and dedication to children in Niger.*



## Natalie Smith

Hi everyone! My name is Natalie Smith, and this year I am working with Remember Niger to create yearbooks to show you all of the amazing things that our students have been working on throughout the school year.

I am a graduate of Ashley Hall School in downtown Charleston, South Carolina, where I began my journey with the Remember Niger Coalition in the Spring of 2017. Ashley Hall's partnership with Remember Niger introduced me to all of the amazing things that Kara and the team are working on in order to provide quality educational experiences for children in Niger, and I knew that I just had to be a part of an organization that is doing such incredible work.

As a French speaker and linguist at heart, I was interested in learning about the linguistic diversity of the region, as French is Niger's official language but Hausa is the country's native dialect. The foundation of my work with Remember Niger was based on my language skills, as I translated communications between students, teachers, and sponsors. Once I started working more closely with Remember Niger, I also started teaching classes about Niger to younger students at Ashley Hall. This was such a rewarding experience, not only because I was able to pursue my passion for the French language and education, but also because I was able to incite change for students in Niger while at the same time introducing my own students to the experiences of others in another region of the world.

To me, highlighting the similarities, rather than solely the differences, between Ashley Hall students and students in Niger played a very important role in cultivating a sense of empathy and connection between two seemingly different educational and cultural experiences. I always reminded the girls that even though Niger seems so far away and the culture seems so dissimilar to their own, it is important to remember that differences are ok, differences can be good, and we are actually more similar than we are different. My girls quickly recognized the connections that they had with students across the globe, and immediately wanted to learn more, get to know the students in Niger, and help in any way that they could. Seeing the desire and willingness to help coming from such young minds encouraged me to continue to educate myself and others about Niger, and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to continue our partnership throughout the years.

I am currently a junior at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, studying Political Science and, of course, French! After college, I plan to continue my academic journey in order to pursue a career in



academia and public administration. Studying both language and politics in an environment of higher education has further highlighted just how important it is to prioritize empathy and to understand that diversity of thought, experience, and opinion can be used as tools to improve the world for ourselves and for those around us. My work with Remember Niger has largely shaped how I understand myself and the world around me, and has inspired me to always work towards the furtherance of cultural and academic integrity.

Education is arguably one of the most meaningful but also necessary resources that an individual can benefit from. The work that the Remember Niger Coalition is doing is shaping the futures of young students in Niger and providing them with the tools to pursue a future that will bring every student fulfillment and joy. I am so thankful to work with such an incredible organization and to have witnessed the development of a community of individuals inspired to create positive change for children in Niger.

# Our Work

Remember Niger Coalition is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to unifying people and mobilizing resources to expand quality educational opportunities in Niger, Africa. We partner with and support Nigerien organizations who have a remarkable vision for their country and share our core values.

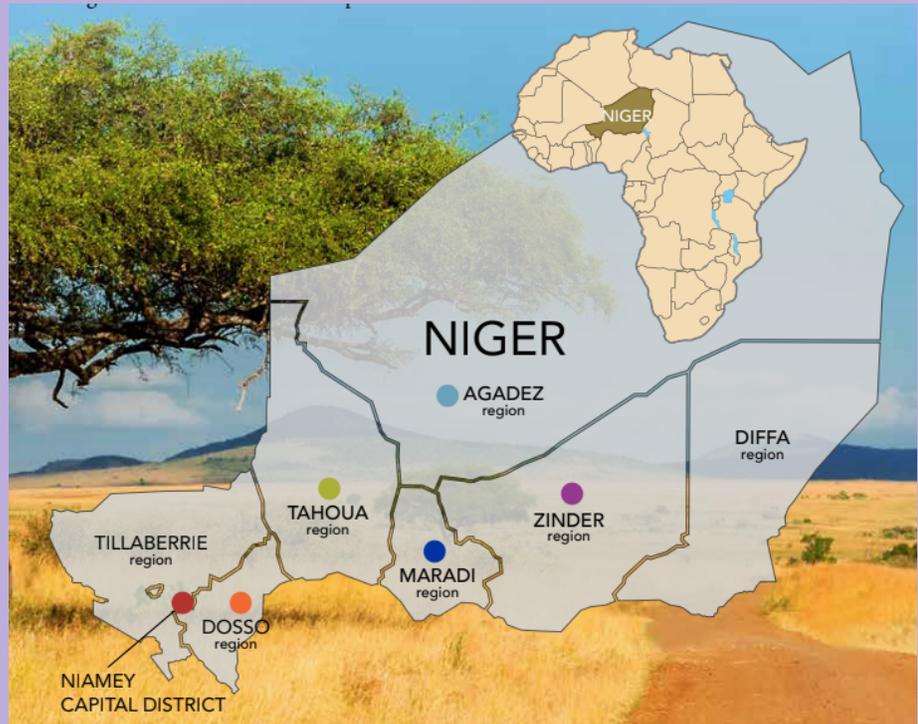


Through a holistic approach and by working side-by-side with our Nigerien partners, who own and operate their schools, we are able to ensure that more children receive a high-quality education in Niger, the least developed country in the world. In the 2019-2020 school year, we partnered with 13 schools and over 2700 students.

# About Niger

## Climate

Niger is located in the Sahara region of West Africa. The country has an extremely hot and dry climate, with temperatures averaging 88 degrees fahrenheit in the cooler months and 106 degrees fahrenheit in the warmer months.



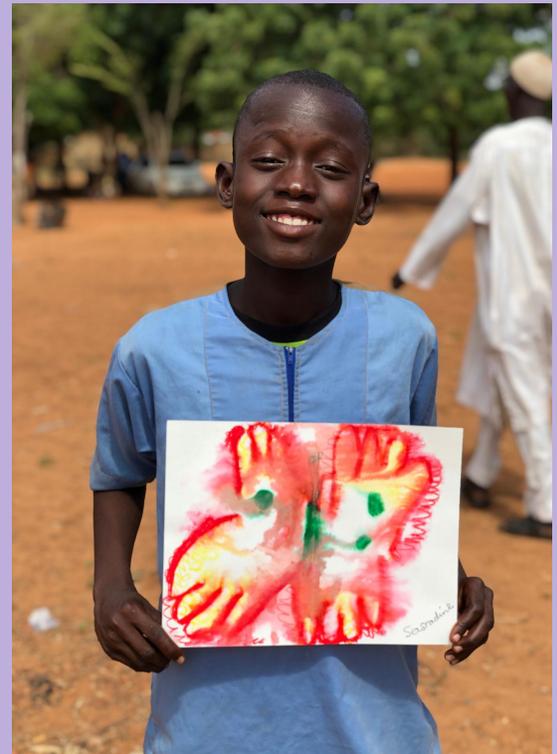
## Marriage and Childbirth

28% of girls are married before the age of 15, and 76% of girls are married before the age of 18. As a result, Niger is the country with the highest birth rate in the world, with the average woman giving birth to 7.2 children. Niger's current population is 22.2 million, but due to a population growth rate of 3.8%, the country's population is likely to triple to 63.1 million by 2050.

# Education

- 51% of children go to primary school
- 19% of children go to middle school
- Only 5% of children go to high school

Attendance rates for students with disabilities are significantly lower. At the Niamey School for the Deaf, in Niger's capital city, only 62 students have continued to middle school since 2007 because of the lack of specialized support at the public middle school. Of the students that attended public middle school, only 5 of those students completed school and went on to high school.



**By sponsoring a student, you are making a positive impact that will last a lifetime!**

# Niamey School for the Deaf

## History and Partnership

Since 2015, Remember Niger has partnered with the Niamey School for the Deaf, a primary school established in 1982 by the Niamey Association for the Deaf, with an aim to provide high quality learning opportunities for hearing impaired students throughout Niger. Today, the Niamey School for the Deaf serves over 160 elementary children each year.



Remembers Niger's work with the Niamey School for the Deaf is connected to several partner organizations. Since the Niamey School for the Deaf is a public school, Remember Niger works closely with its partners at the Nigerien Ministry of Education. Through this partnership, Remember Niger ensures that all permits for school operation are in place so that when construction projects are complete, students can enroll in and begin their education in Remember Niger constructed buildings.

Another key partner at the Niamey School for the Deaf is the broader Niamey Association for the Deaf. Our partnership aims to help to bring resources to a population of students that have been excluded and overlooked because of their learning differences.



# Student Perspectives

The Niamey School serves as an elementary school for students in grades 1st - 6th. In conjunction with our partners in Niger, we provide an education for 187 students. The school has 7 classrooms in order to facilitate a comfortable and intimate learning environment



# A New Middle School is Under Construction

Exciting things are ahead! This year, we began to support the construction of the Niamey Middle School for the Deaf so that our students will have access to a specialized, quality education that continues after their primary school experience. Once students complete the elementary level of education at the Niamey School for the Deaf, they are eligible to move on to middle school in mainstream public schools. However, only 5 students from the Niamey School have graduated from middle school since 2007 because of the lack of resources available for educating students with learning differences. Through our partnership with the Niamey School for the Deaf, the construction of a middle school that fosters a purposeful and supportive learning environment will provide new opportunities for students to receive an excellent education that will allow for success in the future!



The Niamey Middle School for the Deaf will have 4 classrooms and a resource center in order to facilitate an interactive pedagogy that provides essential learning resources. Each classroom will be equipped with desks, chairs, a chalk board, and a teacher work space.

# Teacher Training

In September of 2019, Remember Niger held its first training program at the Niamey School for the Deaf: a five-day training program, attended by thirteen teacher and staff members, that focused on how to most effectively alongside students with learning differences as well as how to best use computers and other essential learning tools designed for hearing impaired and deaf students.



By the end of the training, teachers developed new technological skills and learned a multitude of programs and processes that would not only help them teach more effectively, but could also be passed down to their students.



With the completion of the training program, teachers have expressed that the knowledge and experience that they gained through their training has had invaluable results because it has significantly enhanced their ability to provide meaningful support to their students.



**Already, I can see the impact of the training in the classrooms. Teacher are integrating what they learned into our daily lessons. It was a very empowering experience for us all.**

**- Chaibou Audi, Director of the Niamey School for the Deaf**

# Outside the Classroom



One of our students' favorite parts of the day is the time that they get to spend outside with friends. Students love to play soccer and it is almost always a daily activity that everyone enjoys!



# Our Students





# Student Spotlight

Students at the Niamey School for the Deaf work as hard as their hearing peers with fewer resources and less support. Remember Niger's focus on supporting students at the Niamey School for the Deaf is because of its belief that all children should have access to high-quality education and also witnessing firsthand, the time, effort, and drive students at the school put into their studies. **One student in particular, Djibo, highlights what students from the Niamey School for the Deaf can achieve when they are given the tools and support they need.**

In 2019, Djibo passed his Baccalaureate exam. He is the first graduate of the Niamey School for the Deaf to successfully pass this exam, which every high school student must pass in order to graduate and move on to university. This is a



Djibo (pictured on the far right) with his family

remarkable achievement in and of itself, but it's even more impressive because beyond his hearing impairment, Djibo is an orphan. His father died shortly before he was born and his mother died while giving birth to him. Fortunately, Djibo has an older brother who loves him and highly values education. Djibo's brother adopted him and sent him to the Niamey School for the Deaf where he excelled. No one was surprised when, at the end of his studies there, he passed the national exam and moved on to secondary school.

There are abundant challenges in secondary school for students who are deaf. Niger does not have secondary schools specifically for deaf students. And, although the Nigerien government is committed to inclusion for special needs students, there are very few resources available to support deaf students. Djibo is a very resourceful young man and did everything necessary to succeed, including making friends with his desk mate. Each day after school, Djibo would copy his desk mate's notes from the lesson. In the evening, his older brother would spend hours reviewing the material with him until Djibo was sure he understood everything.



Djibo (pictured on the left) with friends outside of the Niamey School

Remember Niger believes that the new middle school for hearing impaired and deaf students will ensure that Djibo is not the only student to continue to university. There are many students waiting for their chance to continue their education and by opening a secondary school at the Niamey School for the Deaf, we can count on more stories of educational success, like Djibo's, in the near future.

# Christmas Gifts for Sponsors

Each year before the fall trip to Niger, we plan a holiday art project that the students make for their sponsors. This year, every student made a bookmark that included a self-portrait. Watching each student create their own drawing is always a lot of fun, especially because each drawing is so different and the excitement in the room is impossible to contain. It's always a joy to watch them embrace the opportunity to create a special gift for their sponsors!



# To our sponsors,

Thank you! You are amazing. The child that you sponsor would not be able to go to school without your support. Thank you so much for the dedication and love that you show your student each and every day.

- Natalie and the Remember Niger Team

