

Stichting VivaSahel

Passeerdersstraat 20 B

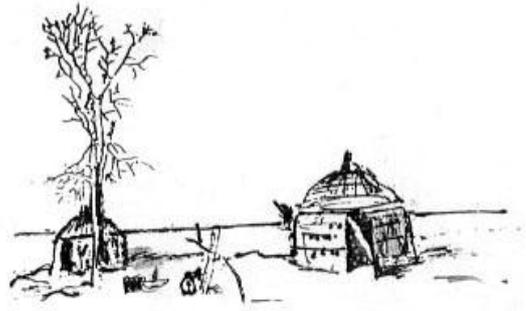
1016 XC Amsterdam

tel: 020 4222494

e-mail: stichting.vivasahel@gmail.com

website: www.vivasahel.nl

INGbank: **4138986**



I am **Marlies Swen**, the Director.

Let me introduce myself: Several years ago I met Dogo, a man from Niger. This acquaintance has had quite an influence on my life. He told me about life down there, about destitution and poverty. I decided to do something. I have set up a foundation and started a number of projects. I have worked together with several sponsors, private ones as well as large organisations, i.e. Oxfam/Novib, Wild Geese and Nuon (a Dutch electricity company). A few churches have also given their support.

We have dug a well in Abala and one in Hainistimorou, both small isolated villages in the interior of Sahel, a long way from more densely populated areas. Both wells are 50 metres deep and are used intensively by nomads and farmers – but also by the women, whose task it is to fetch water for the whole family. The wells are equipped with a winch system which facilitates the hoisting of water considerably.

In Tounfaliss we have started a sewing workshop for girls and equipped it with 17 sewing machines. This gives them a chance to acquire a skill. Since there is access to water and electricity it is possible to organise literacy classes in the evenings for those who are interested.

In Tamaci and Niamey women's groups have been given micro credits in order to make them a little less dependent on their men.

Two years after founding Viva Sahel we introduced the use of the plow, pulled by cows, in Tounfaliss and Tamaci. The millet fields are very large and with a plow it is possible to work faster and to cover larger areas.

We have also introduced Zogala. From its seeds grows a tree whose leaves are both nutritious and tasty.

Viva Sahel has supplied a grain bank in Tamaci (since two years ago there was a famine, a result of a bad harvest and a plague of locusts). When we made a visit a little more than a year ago the women asked for a grainmill. Spending a few days in the village we could see how much easier their work would be if they had one. Now they do.

During our visit we also went to see families living in settlements far from the village, where there are no roads or streets, only sand tracks. There we allocated a donkey cart to each one of ten settlements on a micro credit scheme, in order to facilitate their work in the fields, make it easier for them to transport their goods to market, and, above all, to make it possible for them to take women suffering complications in childbirth to a medical centre.

As the nearest larger medical centre is at least 25 kilometres away, Viva Sahel has decided to build a bigger medical centre in Tamaci. It will cost quite a lot of money: the estimates indicate a sum of about € 48.000.

Through the years I have, via Dogo, become acquainted with a number of people in this neighbourhood in Niger. They have formed an association with the aim of helping us with our projects. This is working extremely well. Thanks to the fact that the mobile telephone network has been extended in the direction of Filingué (i.e. in our direction), it is now much simpler to communicate. It is also a great help that Dogo lives here in the Netherlands and is always able to telephone our contacts in Niger. He speaks Dutch, Hausa, French and also Djerma. A true interpreter.

Stichting VivaSahel

Passeerdersstraat 20 B

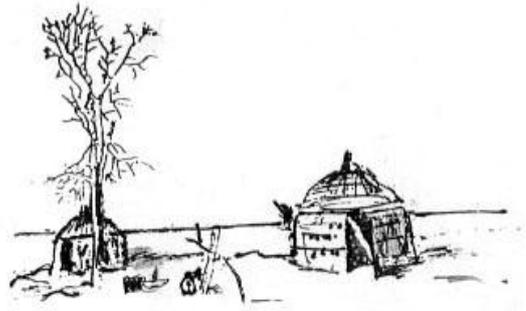
1016 XC Amsterdam

tel: 020 4222494

e-mail: stichting.vivasahel@gmail.com

website: www.vivasahel.nl

INGbank: **4138986**



Alice Bergmans, Treasurer

Because of my husband's work I have lived abroad for 27 years: four years in Spain, the rest in England. There I have been closely involved in voluntary work with pensioners and children with a mobility handicap. I have also published children's books. Since 1995 we are back in the Netherlands. I did several jobs as a volunteer. Now I work, again as a volunteer, for Gilde, where my job is to find Dutch mentors for foreigners, with whom they get an opportunity to speak Dutch. This scheme gives them a chance to get to know Dutch culture and customs. I am also, since eleven years, treasurer for our Residents' Association and for one or two more organisations, all very enjoyable work. I met Marlies in a choir. I was impressed by her concern for the miserable conditions in Niger. I wish to help her with her projects, set up to create a better life for both people and animals in this vulnerable region.

Liny van Paassen, Secretary

After completing my studies in Classics I worked for a few years at the university as a researcher. I then taught Latin and Greek to both adults and children in Secondary Education and in Continuing Education institutes. At the same time I was an active member of the Association MVM, an organisation which promotes equal rights for men and women. Through the vivid and stirring reports from Marlies I am well aware of what she has done in Niger and what she wants to achieve further, and I have decided to help her.

Nel Dekker, Committee Member

After my degree in Germanic Studies I have taught German for many years in schools in Hoorn, Amstelveen and Amsterdam. I have always been interested in development aid issues. My long friendship with Marlies and her commitment in Niger have been determining factors for me when I decided to become an active member of her foundation.

Advisory Board

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Mr. L.W. Poesiat, | Honorary Consul for Niger in the Netherlands. |
| Paul Rosenmöller, | Former member of Dutch Parliament, programmer for Dutch television. |
| Jan Pronk, | Professor Development and cooperation/ aid and development (ex minister) in The Hague. |
| Josée van de Laar, | lawyer personal injury and mediator, Amsterdam. |