

Don Guizzetti – 11-5-2014

From my somewhat constrained perspective, each day brings life in Burkina Faso or at least my corner of Ouaga closer to normalcy. As I sit in my office the sounds of ordinary life are now more comforting. I can hear the Burkinabe staff talking and gibing each other as they go about their tasks. The young boys pushing cold milk and drink carts announce their presence with overactive bicycle horns. Myriad motos and the occasional unbelievably overloaded lorries keep the dust stirred enough to blur one's vision and clog the nostrils. Mothers on foot and bike with babies strapped to their backs and carrying ripe mangos or pails of water on their heads are on their way to or from the market.

Yesterday I ventured out for baby formula, groceries, and to buy a unit for my cell phone and I accomplished all of my goals. Both Bingo and Marina Market were open and crowded with pent-up demand. Eye contact with just one of the young men selling phone cards on Fada at the Pediatric Hospital resulted in half a dozen young men vying to sell me phone time. Being caught behind a broken down lorry kept me from blocking the lane and enduring all the beeping horns. Baby formula was trickier, but I settled for smaller cans to at least keep a modest supply available.

More prosaically, in the six days since I returned to Ouaga there has been only one water cut and no power cuts at home. The Moringa trees we planted in our very small patch of dirt are now taller than I. The neighborhood children are now all sporting the "Priez Sans Cesse" prayer bands and are still hoping that the handful of candy sticks I shared indicate an endless supply.

Neighbors have been quick to welcome me back and strangers amaze me by their knowledge of Janet's and my comings and goings. This is something easy to do when the objects of interest are the only two nasara living within a couple of kilometers at least.

The military and the opposition continue in their talks to find common ground in determining Burkina's governance. The relative calm suggests some degree of patience if not progress. My prayer life has improved markedly because of the great need and because the other half of me/us is still in the US.

The sounds of normalcy are comforting as the protests and violence of the past week pass from news to history. My iPad literally got stuck and would not allow me to turn this page this morning:

Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to the royal son!  
May he judge your people with righteousness,  
and your poor with justice!  
Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,  
and the hills, in righteousness!  
May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,  
give deliverance to the children of the needy,  
and crush the oppressor!

May they fear you while the sun endures,  
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!  
May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,  
like showers that water the earth!  
In his days may the righteous flourish,  
and peace abound, till the moon be no more!

(Psalm 72:1-7 ESV)