



September 2023

Dear friends,

Sometimes years and even decades can pass without any noteworthy changes in life and ministry and activities. At other times, so many changes take place in a week that it feels like a year or more has passed in a week's time. The latter has been true lately both for the country of Niger and our family. And in both cases, there are as many unknowns in the current situation as there are knowns. Having said that, we wanted to share an update with you of the situation in Niger as well as our current realities.

Niger was turned on its head on the 26th of July by a military coup. Since then, news streams have been overflowing with different takes on the motivations for the coup, the possible outcomes, the regional and international response, and what is next for the traditionally silent country that few in the rest of the world hear about for long periods of time.

It is too soon to say where the balance of power in Niger will fall. The national sport of Niger is traditional wrestling, and it seems that there is a wrestling match happening between the military junta leaders on one side, and, on the other, several regional bodies and western countries. History shows that the population of Niger will, unfortunately, be the losers in almost every scenario. A favorite African proverb is, "When two elephants fight, it is the grass underneath that suffers." That is not to say that God is not able to work good out of whatever happens. Please continue to pray for Niger, for wisdom and guidance for the leaders and all intervening, and especially for the population of Niger who are truly at the mercy of the outcomes.

As for us, we can say for the moment that we are thankful to have our "own grass" that does not have elephants wrestling in it! We are hopeful for a restoration of peace and stability within Niger and certainly would ask for your prayers to this end. In the meantime, we are residing in Cedar Falls, Iowa, with green space all around us. This has been a huge blessing, in the midst of these challenging times, to have walking and biking paths nearby that are great spaces for prayer and reflection.

There is much yet to be determined about our situation. Just as we have questions about what all this means, we are sure you will as well! RCA Global Mission is working closely with our partner church, the EERN, to ensure that the ministry of CADR continues in a healthy way. We are providing technical support, when possible, from a distance. We are also using this time to do some debriefing and counseling and to look for opportunities for continuing education and other training. We are taking time to support our kids during the huge transition to attending school here. We ask you to continue supporting us and the ministry of the EERN through prayer and finances during this time of discernment. Pray for Chako and the whole team at CADR as they make decisions about moving forward in our physical absence. Pray for the director and staff at Sahel Academy as they attempt

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to provide an educational experience for the kids who remain in country while having even fewer teachers than usual.



A few weeks ago, Abby (9th grade) and Ben (3rd grade) began public school in the Cedar Falls school district, which has a great reputation. This is primarily due to the presence of the University of Northern Iowa next door, which is also where our oldest daughter, Lydia, studies elementary education. We are about 90 minutes from where Eliza has begun her premed studies at Iowa State University. Cedar Falls is also about halfway between our extended families. It is really wonderful to be near to family after so many years away. We are experiencing several things for the first time, having never put our kids in public school before. Abigail's 9th grade class has more students than all of Sahel Academy K-12! Naturally, it has not been an easy transition for her into a school where she knew no one, but she is starting to find community. Ben has found friends quickly and has loved this move so far.

We thank you for your continued prayers during this season of praying and discernment. We have some availability to speak with mission committees, individuals, and churches, either in person or via zoom or a video. We can be reached by email at jbeebout@rca.org (or sbeebout@rca.org) or by phone at (641)318-7409.

In Him,
Jeremy (for all of the Beebouts)