2019 -2021 TRIENNIAL REPORT

THE BARKA FOUNDATION
Burkina Faso – USA
MEANING OF THE WORD ‘BARKA’

Barka is an African word that transcends borders, languages and cultures. It conveys gratitude, blessing and reciprocity.

• BARUCH, a Hebrew word is related and means blessed, or “from You (Creator) emanates blessing”

• BARAKA, from ancient Sufi is also related; it is translated as “a blessing, or the breath, or the essence of life from which the evolutionary process unfolds”

• In Russian and Croatian a “barka” is a small and sturdy ship usually made of wood and built to travel long distances. In Albanian a ‘barka’ is an entire fleet of ships
OUR MISSION

The BARKA Foundation empowers communities in Africa to thrive through five areas of focus, all developed to reflect in-depth community engagement and partnership.

• Provide sustainable access to clean water, improved sanitation and hygiene education (WASH)

• Help communities achieve gender equality

• Develop community resilience through food security programs

• Utilize media and the cultural arts to strengthen the capacities of local populations

• Educate US students and communities about Africa
OUR VISION

• BARKA envisions a world where vulnerable communities in Africa are empowered to improve their livelihoods and build resilience.

OUR VALUES

• We promote sustainable solutions that respect the cultural context of local communities. Our operating principles are grounded in the following approaches:
  • Rights-based: practice Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)
  • Deep listening: partner with vulnerable communities to address needs
  • Cultural competence: promote appropriate technologies and practices
  • Accountability: accompany local partners in the long run
OVERVIEW

In 2020 and 2021, we experienced a time like no other:

• Burkina’s weak health infrastructure made the nation particularly vulnerable to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

• Repeated terrorist attacks against civilians by a jihadist insurgency led to the internal displacement of more than 1 million refugees and closed over 2,500 schools and 135 health centers.

• The intense terrorist activity in the East of the country forced us to expand our geographic focus to more centrally-located Ouagadougou.

• Climate change exacerbated existing issues of extreme poverty, food insecurity, and malnutrition.

The BARKA Foundation pivoted to respond quickly to these situations while maintaining a laser focus on long-term, sustainable initiatives.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

COVID Response
• Commissioned local women’s associations to produce soap and distributed 1,050 liters of soap to 5,000 villagers and internally displaced persons
• Conducted an educational campaign about the importance of handwashing with soap and COVID-19 prevention to 5,000 people
• Distributed 4,000 masks made by local tailors using locally grown cotton to 2,000 students and 500 prisoners

Food Security
• Supported food security through sustainable gardens for 3,000 people in 3 villages

Gender Equality
• Designed, funded, and began implementation of a first-of-its-kind menstrual cup pilot project to help overcome “period poverty” for 1230 Burkina Faso women and girls
• Explored the feasibility of an expansion of a Menstrual Cup Pilot to four West African countries: Ivory Coast, Senegal, Ghana and Liberia
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT.)

*Educate US Students and Communities About Africa*
- Paired students from two schools: Wyoming Seminary College Preparatory School in Pennsylvania and Middle and High Schools of Namoungou, Burkina Faso, to share experiences and learn about each others’ lives.
- Students from Wyoming Seminary created “Walks for Water” to raise funds for water-related resources needed by the Burkina students.

*Media and the Arts for Capacity Building*
- Designed a new media strengthening pilot project for media professionals and journalism students in Burkina Faso, funded by the US Embassy of Ouagadougou.
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The last two years have been among the most challenging, interesting, impactful, and transformative in BARKA’s 16-year history.

Ina and I left Fada on May 31, 2018, and for the next three years our local staff said it wasn’t safe enough for us to come back. Besides breaking our hearts, this forced us into new territory, literally and figuratively. We weren’t in Burkina ourselves during that time, so we focused on strengthening BARKA from the inside out. We developed new programs, applied for more grants, strengthened our Board of Directors, formalized internal processes to create greater efficiency, improved our accountability and transparency, embarked on and completed a strategic planning process, revised our mission, crystallized our vision, and re-committed to our values. Meanwhile, we relied ever more on our incredible team on the ground in Burkina, who rose to the occasion and was able to take on more work and responsibility despite spikes in levels of danger and vulnerability.

BARKA has essentially been learning how to adapt, grow, sustain itself, and evolve. It sometimes amazes me what this small organization has been able to do year after year on a shoestring. I’d like to focus on a few highlights from the last couple of years that I believe illustrate what BARKA is all about, what makes us unique and why our work is so vital:

• Development of a new Strategic Plan with new Mission, Vision and Values, all of which flow proudly from our past experiences

• The bolstering local supply chains in the wake of COVID-19
  • We didn’t just provide soap and masks, we provided work opportunities to local women’s associations and tailors who were out of work and suffering from lost income due to the pandemic and a complete shutdown of the tourism industry

• Historic menstrual cups pilot
  • Our tiny NGO has introduced menstrual cups to Burkina Faso, a game changing product for women’s menstrual health, and in the process, continued to break the silence around the taboo subject of menstruation

• New strategic direction to strengthen media capacity of journalism students and media professionals
  • This US-Embassy funded program advanced our reciprocity program (creating connections between Americans and Burkinabé) to new heights and depths

The other amazing thing I need to mention is that the cups pilot was so successful we are currently developing an expansion within Burkina Faso. Our approach will include a robust media campaign for television, radio, print, and live events, effectively integrating our past efforts in social art, theatre sensitization, event production, and media strengthening to introduce cups and break the taboo on menstruation at a national level.

It is a brand new day here at BARKA Foundation, the “Little NGO That Could”, and we’re glad you’re here. We hope you like what you see. We’re proud of our accomplishments and ask for your help to help us increase our annual revenue to the point that we can transition from an almost all volunteer staff to one with a mix of full and part-time paid staffers in both the US and Burkina Faso. We can’t do this without you. Thank you for your consideration, your interest, and your support.

- Esu Anahata, Executive Director & Co-Founder
LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

“Unprecedented” is perhaps one of the most overused words of the past two years, yet it is probably the most appropriate way to sum up BARKA’s recent work. The crises facing Burkina Faso were unprecedented in scope and scale, as described in this report. At the same time, BARKA’s response was unprecedented. BARKA has proven itself time and again to be a nimble, reflective organization, with its thumb firmly on the pulse of the needs of the local population in Burkina. As several crises unfolded over the course of the year, BARKA’s staff and Board pivoted quickly to identify, fund, and implement timely and impactful solutions. This is a testament to BARKA’s innovative and practical thinking, as well as its relationships built and nurtured over time on the ground.

As these times of extreme change continue, we have great confidence that BARKA will continue to identify and meet the most pressing needs of those in Burkina Faso. We continue to expand our reach and our impact, thanks to the dedication of BARKA’s devoted staff and to the generous contributions of our supporters. We hope you will continue with us on our journey. Barka!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (DECEMBER 2021)

E Scott Osborne and Tracy Heilman, Co-Presidents
Ina Anahata, Secretary
Adam Ruderman, Treasurer
Esu Anahata

Valerie Anastasio
Lakhdar Boukerrou
Alfonso Chikuni
Circe Trevant

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Scott Osborne
We must have done something good to have been blessed by Scott Osborne’s willingness to literally get on board with BARKA Foundation. Scott has spent years working internationally in non-profit management, focussing especially on sustainable development and gender equity. She works extensively with UN Women USA and writes and speaks regularly on international development and gender equity issues.

Valerie Anastasio
While Valerie has been involved with BARKA since 2011, we’re now delighted to welcome her to the Board. Valerie brings extensive development experience from years working with the Boston Children’s Hospital, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and Harvard University. We know her superb understanding of fundraising will help Barka bring in and use needed resources for our work.
STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS
Focus One: Provide sustainable access to clean water, improved sanitation, and hygiene education (WASH)

- In 2020, the BARKA Foundation continued its long history working with the Rotary, an international service organization that raises funds for humanitarian projects. The Marblehead, MA Rotary Club agreed to be the lead club that will attract funds from rotary clubs worldwide to fund an ambitious 20-well project to address the extreme water needs in the eastern region caused by the crisis of internally displaced persons (IDPs). This project will not only drill new wells but will also ensure sustainability in the region by establishing local water committees which will collect funds from water users to ensure long-term service and upkeep. The wells will benefit more than 20,000 IDPs in Fada, a city whose water infrastructure was inadequate even under the best of times. We expect this project to be fully funded in 2022 and implemented in 2023.
Focus Two: Help communities achieve gender equality

- As the combination of the IDP crisis and COVID-19 presented new life-threatening challenges, particularly to women in Burkina Faso, BARKA supported local women's associations to produce and distribute soap to displaced and vulnerable populations. In doing so, we advocated for gender equality through entrepreneurship while addressing the urgent need for hygiene products throughout the region.

- In 2020, BARKA took its Menstrual Hygiene program to a new level with the development of a menstrual cup pilot project, the first in Burkina's history. We received funding from the International Foundation and Together Women Rise (formerly known as Dining For Women) and established partnerships with local social enterprise Menstru'elles and Femme International, a leading Menstrual Health organization in Africa. Together, we are continuing to fight for gender equality through implementing menstrual justice initiatives.

Key Advantages of Menstrual Cups

- **Economical**: Reusable, one cup lasts up to 10 years
- **Safe**: Made from medical-grade silicone, low risk of toxic shock syndrome
- **Convenient**: Can stay in for up to 12 hours, holds the capacity of 4 pads, underwear not required
- **Comfortable**: Once inserted properly the user cannot feel it
- **Eco-Friendly**: Zero solid or plastic waste
- **Easy to Use and Clean**: Very little water needed to clean it
- **Private**: No smell, less leaking and stained clothing
- **Promotes Confidence**: Increases comfort and confidence during everyday activities
ABOUT MENSTRUAL CUPS

“We have assembled the perfect team to implement this project: BARKA Foundation has worked in Burkina for over 15 years and has the cultural competency to introduce cups to the women of Burkina Faso; Menstru’elles is a social enterprise that will make cups available to women even after the project is completed, so that the demand this project creates will be met with a sustainable supply of cups; and Femme International is a Menstrual Health expert with 10 years experience with cups in Africa who will lead our trainings and oversee monitoring and evaluation.”

-BARKA Project Leader Martine Nazotin

“As revolutionary as cups are, this project is about more than that. It’s about empowering women through breaking the silence and stigma surrounding menstruation, better knowing their own bodies, managing their periods and menstrual cycles with proper information, creating change from within their communities, and advocating for more sustainable menstrual hygiene products and education.”

-Menstru’elles Project Leader, Adeline Tiendrebeogo
Focus Three: Develop community resilience through food security programs

- The IDP crisis and COVID-19 exacerbated food insecurity in Burkina Faso in 2020. We re-invested in three community garden projects in villages where we had previously drilled wells, enabling villagers to irrigate during the dry season and grow fresh food to support and supplement their diets. BARKA has continued to provide resources for building community resilience through the availability of sustainable food sources.
Focus Four: Utilize media and the cultural arts to strengthen the capacities of local populations

For our newest strategic direction, BARKA developed a media program to provide technical support and help strengthen the ability of local media organizations to tell compelling, effective stories. This builds on Barka’s media production experience and our interest in reciprocity programs between Burkina Faso and the US. The US Embassy of Burkina Faso provided us with a grant for the creation of public service announcements (PSAs) on key social themes related to BARKA’s mission: menstrual health and hygiene, peace-building, and COVID-19 prevention. Our Hollywood-based media partner, What Matters Productions, and NYC-based (Francophone) production studio Space Cowboys worked with us to implement this project as well as share their expertise with Burkinabè journalism students and media professionals from 3 of Burkina’s top television networks.

Testimonial

Moumouni TAMBOURA is a journalism student from L'Institut des Sciences et Techniques de l’Information et de la Communication (ISTIC). Six weeks after the media training with BARKA, he was on the streets of Ouagadougou covering protests against the government’s inaction against terrorism and insecurity. His video clip went viral.

“What I loved about this program was having my film corrected when it wasn’t perfect. Plus the new knowledge I gained will allow me to find subjects that merit deeper observation. I am satisfied with the results and how my commitment, ambition and bravery were appreciated by the trainers. I hope to be part of this kind of activity again.”
Focus Five: Educate US students and communities about Africa

- BARKA connected with the Wyoming Seminary School in Pennsylvania in 2020 and began the development of a robust reciprocity program, partnering the American school with the Namoungou school of the eastern region of Burkina Faso, displaced recently by harrowing acts of terrorism and insecurity that are occurring with increasing frequency in parts of the North and East of Burkina Faso.

- During COVID mask distribution at the Namoungou middle and high schools, BARKA discovered the majority of students were living on their own, starving, with not even money to pay for water. Students at the Wyoming Seminary Upper and Lower Schools communicated directly with the students in Burkina and they learned about each other’s lives through email. While Burkina students shared stories about their challenges, American students organized numerous activities including a virtual walk for water that raised over $6000 to provide food in a school canteen, fees for water access for the remaining 3 months of the school year, and bicycles for 60 students who were walking miles every day to and from school. SEM is continuing its support in 2022. The collaboration was among the most successful in BARKA’s 16-year history and provides a template that can be expanded to other schools in the coming years. A film documenting their conditions can be found here.

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MENSTRUAL CUPS

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## OUR DONORS
### 2019 - 2021

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<th>Amount</th>
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PARTNERS

• Menstru'elles (Co-implementation partner, AFRIC’UP)
• Femme International (Monitoring & Evaluation partner, AFRIC’UP)
• Sirona Cup (Menstrual cup manufacturer based in India; provides cups at cost of production)
• Together Women Rise (Funder, AFRIC’UP)
• International Foundation (Funder, AFRIC’UP)
• US Embassy of Burkina Faso: (Funder, Media Strengthening)
• What Matters Productions (Production partner; Media Strengthening)
• Space Cowboys Studio (Production partner; Media Strengthening)
• Radio & Television Burkina (RTB) (Production partner; Media Strengthening)
• Burkina Info (Production partner; Media Strengthening)
• TV3 (Production partner; Media Strengthening)
• L’Institut des Sciences et Techniques de l’Information et de la Communication (ISTIC)
• The Rotary Foundation (Funder, 20-Wells Project)
• Crystal Rotary Club of Ouagadougou (Host Club, 20-Wells Project)
• Rotary Club of Marblehead, MA (Lead International Club, 20-Wells Project)
• Wyoming Seminary College Preparatory School (School partner, Reciprocity Program)
• La Belle Epine: School and professional collective of local trailers in Fada N’Gourma (Local mask production to fight COVID-19)
REVENUE AND EXPENSES

2019

Revenue
Grants - Government $10,000
Grants - Corporate $35,753
Grants - Foundation $4,000
Donations - Individuals $71,572
Donations - In Kind $12,000
Business Income $2,500
Total $135,825

Expenses
Program $98,987
Fundraising $12,139
Administration $19,958
Total $131,084

2020

Revenue
Grants - Foundation $2,000
Donations - Individuals $51,220
Donations - In Kind $22,000
Misc + Business Income $15,780
Total $91,000

Expenses
Program $57,871
Fundraising $19,006
Administration $15,226
Total $92,103

2021

Revenue
Grants - Government $5,600
Grants - Corporate $5,000
Grants - Foundation $59,976
Donations - Individuals $91,575
Donations - In Kind $22,000
Business Income $12,381
Total $196,563

Expenses
Program $125,543
Fundraising $13,593
Administration $14,118
Total $153,354
Obituary for Malidoma Patrice Some, Advisory Board Founding Member

January 30, 1956 - December 9, 2021

The name Malidoma means to make friends with the stranger, or befriend the enemy. In his indigenous Dagara tradition, babies are given names in vitro which define their purpose in life; when they hear their name called, they are reminded of their path. In Malidoma’s journey “the strangers” he was befriending were westerners who were thirsty for the spiritual knowledge and connection which he helped to quench by imparting what he referred to as “Indigenous African Spiritual Technology.”

Through the elaborate system of sacred teachings, rituals, and technologies from an unbroken line of Dagara culture that still exists intact today, Malidoma not only introduced thousands of people to his own rich spiritual tradition, he also helped countless people discover their own purpose. That’s what his work was most about: defining purpose, achieving spiritual fulfillment, connecting directly to Spirit and the Ancestors for guidance, and utilizing this ancient wisdom to cultivate a relationship of reciprocity with the indigenous paradigm. Two of the people most touched by the power of this work were the co-founders of The BARKA Foundation. Ina and Esu met in 2003 at a gathering of Malidoma’s first 5-day workshop at the “East Coast Village” in Cherry Plain, NY, one of the many communities that sprung up around Malidoma’s work since the early 90s. For many years, Malidoma had been bringing people to his village in Dano, Burkina Faso, to experience African spiritual technology firsthand. In 2005, Ina and Esu traveled to Burkina together to work with Malidoma, and the native healers, diviners and medicine people of traditional Burkina Faso. Esu remarked to Malidoma on that trip how amazed he was that a “nice Jewish boy from Queens” could find his life purpose in the bush of Africa. After their trip to Dano, Ina & Esu found their way to Fada N’Gourma, the land of milk and honey, and well, the rest is history as they say. Simply put, without Malidoma, there would be no BARKA.

We’d like to recount some of the pearls of wisdom that Malidoma shared with us.

• Malidoma taught us about the importance of “showing up”.

• He said that when you’re born, many arrows are slung in your direction. Most of them bounce off harmlessly. The one that pierces and wounds you, points toward your gift.

• Malidoma said whenever things are too easy, you’re not on the right path.

• He said things like: “If you’re going to fail, fail big”, and

• “If you go forward, you die, if you go backward, you die, so go forward.”

• Malidoma was learned. He had doctorates from the Sorbonne and Brandeis. He used language like no one else we knew. When he gave a lecture, which he always did extemporaneously, it was like he would search for the heart of every person in the room, and then once he touched each one, he would elevate us all.

• Malidoma talked about waking up our “indigenous selves”, and colonizing modernity with indigenous wisdom in order to bring balance and heal the world.

• He bridged a gap between an ancient civilization and a post-modern one, and it wasn’t easy. His life was a complete and total sacrifice to his purpose.
It was Malidoma who taught us about the indigenous paradigm which informed BARKA’s approach from Day One and provided us a level of access to village life and culture seldom afforded to westerners. Malidoma knew he was responsible for what Ina calls the “Divine Choreography” that brought BARKA into being and he himself called Ina and Esu his heroes. They took his work further out into the world than anyone. He once said Ina was the most African woman he knew in the US. Esu had the privilege of being with Malidoma at the 2017 International Water Day Conference at the Vatican, and arranged for him to speak there. They slept in the same building as the Pope, and one morning almost had an audience with him.

The loss of Malidoma is for us like the loss of a parent, elder brother and friend all at once. We feel less secure knowing he’s not on the planet. Yet he always taught us that when someone dies, they enter the realm of the Ancestors, and that your relationship with someone can continue to grow and develop once they cross to the Other Side. In fact, once an Ancestor reaches their final resting place (through a 5-day ritual process known as Ancestralization), they can become even more available to you than they were in life. Malidoma was ancestralized immediately following his funeral in Dano in January. Esu was fortunate enough to attend, and he filmed the 3-day ritual process which he will edit into a short film. Click here for a sneak preview of the culminating dance that took place to end the funeral.

We know Malidoma’s work was not done. It will continue through the work of all the lives he changed, and all the people he influenced so deeply. BARKA Foundation is just one small part of his legacy.
BURKINA FASO KEY STAFF

- Gaoussou “Peace” Sarambe - Director of Communications
- Yoni Idrissa - Technical Assistant, Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene (WASH)
- Barkie Thiombiano - Security
- Karim Combari - Director of Cultural Affairs
- Boly Soumaye - Animator, WASH Consultant
- Maitre Bakary Tou - Legal Council
- Luc Yoda - Finance and Administrative Advisor
- Posibo Thiombiano - Office and Grounds Maintenance
- Martine Nazotin- Menstrual Health Program Manager