

## **September 20, 2009**

### **Nomadic Notes**

**Dear Friends,**

**I arrived in Niger last night for what I hope will be a month filled with travel, planning this year's programs and attending a traditional Wodaabe festival.**

**We're in the last weeks of the rainy season. It's untypically humid, and quite hot. We're saved by the cloud cover. In October it will be dry but hotter still. You probably wouldn't enjoy the weather very much. Luckily, I'm carried along by the joy of seeing staff and friends.**

**Michel left his family celebration of one of Niger's most important holidays - Eid, the end of Ramadan - to meet me at the airport. Babanzara, our driver, left his family to take me food shopping. Abdoulaye, our day guard and housecleaner, is on vacation. He is about 19 and had not seen his mother, a Tuareg who lives in Agadez, in nine years. With the money he earns at RAIN he was able to take the bus to Agadez - a two-day journey - to visit her and his brothers and sisters. Though he has two more weeks of vacation he took the bus back to Niamey before the holiday so he could prepare the house for my visit and spend the weekend here with me. RAIN in Niger is quite a nice family!**

**Agadez has had terrible floods just two weeks ago. There were many fatalities and over 3,500 homes were destroyed. I look forward to checking in, and to see what progress the United Nations is making in providing emergency aid.**

**From Agadez I'll travel to the Wodaabe festival. The Wodaabe are famed for their celebrations and this year, for the first time, RAIN will be a participant. Our Wodaabe women's cooperative members will be there - we'll have a reunion and work on their new products.**

**More updates very soon.....**

**Bess**