



NIGER INFORMATION PACKET

General Information

- Do not invite anyone to the U.S. or make promises about helping someone get to the U.S. Discouragement results when promises are not kept. You are not going to help anyone immigrate.
- We all have good intentions, but often our intentions are not what happen. Do not promise anything unless you follow through. They will have a tendency to take your word as a promise and could lead to disappointment.
- If the individuals you meet tell you of their difficult life and their needs, do not give them money or promise to find ways of meeting their needs. If, when you are preparing to leave, the Lord clearly directs you to leave something with someone, do it through the missionary.
- Cameras are welcome when used with discretion. Taking pictures is completely acceptable after asking permission of the people involved.
- Do not take pictures of official buildings, airport, soldiers, police, etc.
- When shopping, do not flash money around.
- Watch out for pickpockets in crowded places, i.e., local markets.
- Do not bring valuable jewelry or clothing with you.
- Bring a waist or shoulder money pouch with you to carry your money and valuables.
- Do not forget that many do know English and can understand you.

Cultural Information

- Do not extend left hand or shake with left hand. (Left hand used for “hygiene”)
- Expect to hold on to a handshake for a long time, it feels uncomfortable for us; but it is normal for them, even during a conversation.
- Only shake hands with an African of the opposite sex after they extend their hand first. (Unless in church).
- Give your offerings with your right hand.
- Do not hold up hand and spread 5 fingers wide. (This is considered cursing to a Muslim.)
- Wave “hello” by fanning your hand from right to left. Waving by folding down your fingers to the palm indicates come here. This may be confusing for an African, especially the children.
- Do not show bottom of shoes.



Dress Guidelines

- **We want to respect their culture. We cannot minister to them if our appearance is a distraction.**
- You will have the ability to wash clothes – pack lightly
- No shorts or tank tops unless you are in your room or at the American Embassy. You can change into shorts once you arrive at the American Embassy, but you must travel to the Embassy in appropriate dress.
- *American Flag apparel - do not wear any clothing that has the American Flag on it.*
- Swim suits (one piece for ladies) – there will be swimming at the American Embassy
- Rain jacket for missions taking place July – September.
- Light jacket /sweatshirt (if mission in Niger is between November and January or if you are cold natured or may need it on the plane)
- **Men –**
 - Casual pants, jeans, scrubs, sweat pants, etc
 - Polo shirts and nice T-shirts.
 - Church services – slacks or Dockers with button-up or polo type shirt (no ties or suits).
 - *Please no piercings above your neck.*
- **Ladies -**
 - No see-through dresses or skirts (remember the sun is bright in Niger). There image of a “working girl” is see-through exposure. Ask a friend/store clerk to check for you.
 - Bring a slip (just in case)
 - Do not wear skirts or dresses with slits above the knee.
 - Jean, denim, chino, twill and other denser materials are recommended.
 - Materials with darker prints are recommended.
 - Mid-shin is halfway between your knee and ankle, the longer the better.
 - Keep in mind that when/if you cross your legs that your dress/skirt length should still cover you to mid-shin.
 - Do not wear short shorts or tight shorts.
 - Looser tops are a better choice than tight tops.
 - Regardless of what you see anyone else wearing it is vital that we respect their culture and heed the missionaries request.
 - Wear pants(jeans) under your dress or skirt for camels; ***not leggings***
 - Show examples of what to wear and what not to wear. If you have any questions, please contact the LINK office (email:contact@linkniger.com) Goodwill and other second hand stores are good places to shop.



Packing Tips

- Packing Guidelines (Air France) – Carry on: pocketbook, coat, laptop, etc. and one carry on with all 3 dimensions (incl. wheels and handles) no more than 45” and no more than 26 lbs. Checked bags: 1 bag weighing no more than 50 lbs. each. 2 bags weighing no more than 50 lbs. each on missions longer than 1 month.
- Pack light! Imagine trying to get around with your luggage, on and off buses and trains, walking a couple of blocks, etc. If you don’t pack light, you will be sorry. You are the one who has to carry your luggage. Rolling luggage is recommended. We also recommend that you pack in a light-weight suitcase or duffle bag.
- Pack malaria medication, team folder and change of clothes in your carry on
- Coordinate clothes so they match and you can make several outfits out of fewer pieces of clothing.
- Coordinate with other people on your team when it comes to bringing blow dryers, curling irons, adapters, travel irons, and other appliances. These items can easily be shared.
- THINK COMPACT! The smaller the item, the less space it will take up and the lighter it will be.
- Ziplock bags are good to pack things that could leak or things you want to keep separate so they will stay nice. Remember your luggage will be handled in a very rough manner.
- Suggested luggage: 1 piece of luggage for clothes and daypack type backpack as a carry on. The following are types of luggage that have been found to be easiest to travel with. Whatever you choose, make sure it is sturdy.
 - Do not use luggage locks; they will be broken off
 - Backpack that can be carried as a suitcase or on wheels
 - A suitcase or large duffel bag - preferably with wheels
 - You may want to bring an extra bag, that will fold up, for bringing home any gifts or souvenirs you purchase
- Make sure each piece of luggage has a LINK luggage tag with your name, address, and phone number.



Packing List

- _____ Malaria Medication (**DON'T FORGET** to place in your carry on!)
- _____ Cipro and/or Z-Pack Medication (if you are bringing either of these, **DON'T FORGET** to place in your carry on!)
- _____ Clothing (**DON'T FORGET** a change of clothes in your carry on!)
- _____ Towels (2–thin), washcloth (not necessary, if staying at Niamey Bible School)
- _____ Soap and other toiletries (You don't have to bring toilet tissue unless you are concerned about it not being soft enough for you.)
- _____ Baby Powder (optional; recommended due to warm climate)
- _____ Insect repellants (100% Deet)
- _____ Shower shoes (ex. flip flops)
- _____ Flashlight and batteries
- _____ Personal medical supplies (Pepto-Bismol, Ibuprofen, fever reducer, band-aids, eye drops, etc.)
- _____ Sunscreen lotion, chapstick & sunglasses
- _____ Swimsuit (one piece for ladies) – there may be swimming at the American Embassy
- _____ Camera & film
- _____ Bible & journal
- _____ Note pad
- _____ Personal snacks
- _____ Gatorade or other re-hydration powder
- _____ Insulated water jug/bottle (optional)
- _____ Small bottle/box of laundry detergent
- _____ Small packets of tissues
- _____ Disinfectants (antiseptic wipes; i.e., wet ones, waterless hand sanitizer & Lysol for bathrooms)
- _____ Laundry bag (ex. trash bag)
- _____ Plug adapters and converters [transformers] (optional)
- _____ Earplugs (optional)
- _____ Alarm clock (battery operated)
- _____ Ziploc bags
- _____ Hat/Cap
- _____ Work gloves (2 pair) (C)
- _____ Work boots (C) (sneakers are acceptable footwear for Construction Missions)

(C) – Construction missions

DON'T FORGET!!!!MALARIA MEDICATION, TEAM FOLDER AND ANY OTHER ESSENTIALS MUST BE IN YOUR CARRY ON!



Team Relationships - *Investing in One Another's Lives.*

While reading this, think about the following questions:

1. As you read this, what things struck you the most? What were some of the more challenging statements for you personally?
2. How do you feel about investing in one another's lives on this mission? What might be some of the hindrances to deeply impact one another's lives? How far are you willing to go in making such an investment?
3. How can we practically implement some of the truths from this paper for our mission?

Why Relationships and "Team" are Important

- We minister out of our "Being" who we are in Christ. Our "Being" is developed in the context of the Christian community. A team or group of people who have come together for a common purpose can be a microcosm or "mini" Christian community.
- Many Christians have been infected with the most deadly virus of modern American life, what sociologist Robert Bellah calls "radical individualism". They concentrate on personal obedience to Christ as if all that matters is "Jesus and me", but in so doing miss the point all together about what it means to be a Christian.
- Some of the greatest growth you'll ever experience will come through sharing your life and ministering together with other believers. It will come through involvement in other's lives in the context of Christian community. God chooses to use others in our lives to mature us and deepen our walk with Him. This is God's design. Through sharing in other's lives, God changes us and them. Team experiences like the one you're entering into are unique opportunities for God to change and mature you through your involvement with others.
- Today there is a widespread belief that one can be a Christian or develop one's own faith system apart from involvement in Christian community. The proposition is ludicrous.
- The great commission is not to go into the entire world and make converts, it is to go into the entire world and make disciples. And if we're going to make disciples, we'll need Christian communities, because you cannot be a disciple of Jesus by yourself. That's right; you cannot be a disciple of Jesus by yourself!

Prayer

It is through prayer that we gain sufficient insight and power to accomplish God's work in and through us.

Role of prayer in team life:

- Visionary Role: Prayer secures vision for ministry – for you personally and in the same way for the team as a whole.
- Insight Role: Prayer leads the team to understand God's plan and purpose for the unreached. Prayer leads the team to understand God's plan and purpose for themselves.
- Relational Role: Praying together deepens relationships, builds camaraderie, fosters needed reconciliation, and provides encouragement. It's pretty difficult to pray with someone with whom you are angry. On the other hand, we don't know anything that can deepen relationships like praying together can. Sharing struggles and praying for one another has a profound impact on relationships. It goes back to this corporate dynamic of our faith.
- Intervention: Prayer will change the situations you face.
- Protection: Prayer is often preventative.

Helpful hints in praying for teammates:

- Envision what would be the very best for that person and pray to that end rather than bringing to God the list of difficulties or troublesome issues that you are dealing with that person about. It is easy to come grumbling to God about your teammates, but much more necessary to lay hold of better things for them through prayer.
- Ask others on your team how you can be praying for them, and then be sure to set aside the time to really do so. Write down their requests, if necessary, so that you'll remember how they asked you to pray.
- Initiate spontaneous times of praying together. You can never overdo this.

Servanthood

- Love is the expression of grace at work in a life.
- The fruit of love is that we serve one another. The spirit of serving is a fruit of grace (Gal. 5). In the realm of sin, my self-centeredness demands that I be served. In the realm of grace, serving becomes a priority of my life through love. The offender, you need to go immediately, ask for forgiveness and make full restitution. Even if it seems the other party is more at fault, take full responsibility for your own wrong.
- It's also important to take the initiative when you're aware of sin in the life of another believer. Don't start off by accusing, but rather ask questions that will help you both understand what's going on. You could say, "You know, the other night I noticed you in this situation. Would you tell me what was happening there?"

Guidelines for Confronting

- Let love cover (or forbear): Not taking up every offense and misunderstanding with your brother or sister, especially if it's just a difference that God's love can cover over. (i.e., the way someone eats their cereal in the morning, really can bug you, but maybe it's not enough of a reason to confront them for it.)
- Seek forgiveness: There will be times when love doesn't cover, but causes us to uncover that which is sinful and wrong. Often when we sense there is something separating us from a brother or sister, God will graciously point out where we have sinned against them. Also, if you think something is wrong between you and one of your teammates, or you may be aware that one of your brothers has something against you, take the initiative and go to that person to seek reconciliation and forgiveness. Satan longs for us to wait for the other person to come to us first, that way conflicts will grow between the body, and God will not receive glory. It's hard to be the one to initiate, but it's worth it. Please try anyway!
- Carefully confront out of love and with compassion and humility.
- Besides blatant areas of sin, you will also need to confront when someone has stated a commitment to do something and they don't follow through or they give up trying. Make sure your heart is right and you are confronting out of love and God's grace.

Journaling Tips

- Journaling will help you process during the experience.
- Journaling will help you deal with culture shock.
- Journaling will help you share about the experience after you return home.
- Journaling will give you something to look back on over time as you continue to process the work of God in your life.
- Questions to consider:
 1. What experiences or conversations have encouraged you recently? Why?
 2. What experiences or conversations have been difficult for you lately? Why?
 3. The things I want to share most with others when I get home are...
 4. An area where I see God working in me personally through this experience is...