

AFRO MARKET

AFRICAN- CARIBBEAN- THE BLACK COMMUNITY BUSINESSES & SERVICES

SEP - OCT- NOV 2010 EDITION

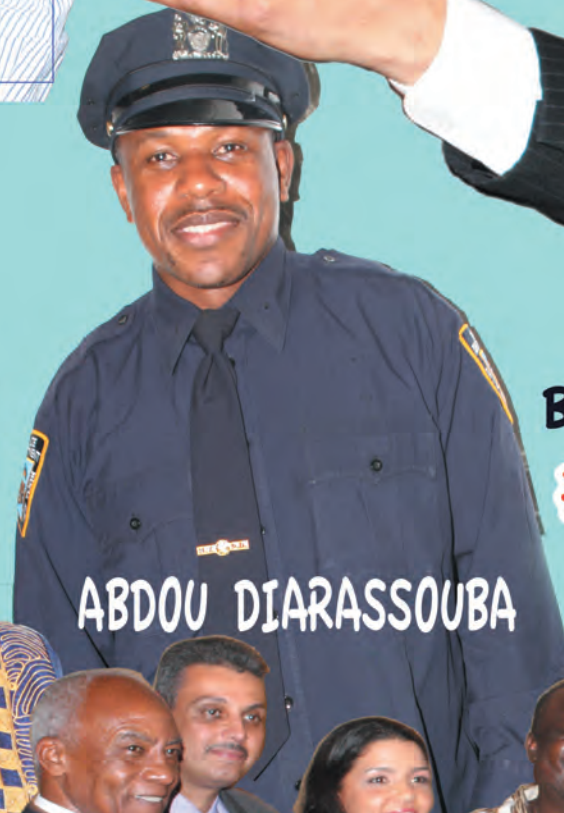
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DAY OF APPRECIATION



EDITORIAL



Daily News At Our Door

It was such an honor to receive a visit from the Daily News and have them report on Afro Market Magazine and me. It is very encouraging and shows that we are improving the quality of our jobs, though we still have to do more to better serve our communities. This report came just less than a year of the publication of this magazine. I would like to thank my partners SCORE who made this contact possible and Bruce Frazer, a financial writer and editorial consultant who conducted the interview.

Thank you.

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IN THIS FORTH ISSUE

Page 2	Publisher message
Page 5	Maiga Ismael (Counselor)
Page 6	Doke Diop
Page 9	Jose Toure
Page 11-12	People voice
Page 12	Alpha Kassogue
Page 14	Mandenko
Page 17	Diarrassouba (Police Officer)
Page 18-19	Day of Appreciation
Page 20-21	Maktar Seck
Page 22	Madame Amy Fomba

THE STAFF OF AFRO MARKET

Editor in Chief: Karim Diabate

Writers: Karim Diabate-Edine Jams

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MAIGA Ismael is a computer expert and consultant. Here he tells us what he thinks about the business of African restaurants and food markets. He also discusses what needs to be done to improve the quality of business and make it accessible to everybody.

Q: There are hundreds of African restaurants and food markets in New York. It's one of the Africans main businesses. As a counselor, what do you think of this investment?

A: It's one of the important economic activities in the African community. African people living in America want to keep their culture. But we have to rethink how we feed ourselves. The way we feed ourselves in Africa is not the same in the USA. It's a different environment so it has to be adapted. For example, you are a cab driver and you drive all day. If you're going to eat attieke or tchep djen, you have to know about the calories. Again, I wonder how they bring the food here from Africa. It's a matter of conservation and some foods have no labels with expiration dates. African food must have more regard for the quality.

Q: But once in a while they have the visit the food inspectors. Since they don't say anything, we assume the food is good.

A: We know what is good food but food inspectors ignore that. They don't know the level of fermentation of attieke.

Q: How do we get more organized in order to have better quality food?

A: We have to reach the next level. It's a big community and we have a big demand so our markets need to be more organized to make it grow, like the Nigerian movies that American people watch. Why can't we make African food consumed by American people the same way? But we have to do it according to the rules. Anybody who buys your food has to be able to see the label. In case of poison, we should know what to do.

Q: Despite all, it's a good investment. Do you encourage people to go into that business?

A: It's a good investment, it's profitable but why most of them don't succeed is because they don't do it by the rules of the art. They have to bring the right products. The food has to taste good, consistent, and compatible to all environments. You see Jamaicans, they know about their food. They know what temperature they need to cook and for how long they will conserve it. Also the Chinese, they feed millions of American people. Africans need to do the same. They must be competitive and go to school to perfect their craft.

Q: Last words:

A: African restaurants need to write the exact calories of the food they give to people. African people need to check the daily calorie intake when they go to African restaurants to eat. And the older you get, the smarter you need to feed yourself.

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Name:Doky Diop
Occupation : Hair braider
Country: Senegal

Diara Doky Diop is a very dynamic and successful hair braider in Harlem. She

opened her salon in 2007, and in just three years she has been able to build a strong customer service base which has made her one of the most solicited hair braiders in the US.

“Hair braiding is not like any kind of job; it’s an art.”

Q: When did you create your business and how is it going?

A: I created my business on August 10, 2007. It’s growing slowly, but I’m building a nice customer base. They love us because they feel comfortable here, like they’re at home. We have good conversation, which makes them feel good and also makes them more than just customers.

Q: Opening a business like this requires a lot of money. Where did you get the money?

A: In 2001, I worked for a French company called Fopps as a salesperson. I saved some money and quit a few months later. Also, I did not speak English so I decided to go to school and get my GED.

Q: How many people work for you?

A: Before it was my sister and brother. In the beginning, we only sold supplies. So I decided to split my store and do hair braiding as well. Now I have a lot of customers. I used to hire people to do the work, but I see that it’s more productive if I take control of my business and take care of customers myself.

Q: What do the customers need?

A: Attention, good service, respect, and a clean, fresh, and comfortable environment. We spend most of our time here. We only really go home late at night.

Q: What is the nationality of your customers?

A: Most of our customers are American.

Q: There are so many hair-braiding salons. What do you do to stand out?

A: It is very important to respect the customers. If you respect them, they will respect you. Sometimes customers tell us they don’t go to other hair-braiding salons(like in Bronx or queens) because the workers are mean. It’s not so much that they are mean; they do not smile and are not very pleasant. They have no reason to be mean to customers. It’s more so that they have no customer service. When you sell your product, you have to sell yourself.

Q: Besides hair braiding, what other services do you offer?

A: We sell shoes, purses, silk, and fabrics. We also do make up, foulard, and whatever else the

customer wants. Even if we don’t know, we learn.

Q: Do you think hair braiders need to go to school?

A: Yes Africans need to learn English because communication is very important. The way we express things in our language is not the same as in the American language. For example, the way we ask a customer, like “what you say?” may sound as if we’re mad or screaming, but we’re not. Also, a customer’s hair may take more than six hours, so we have to talk to the customer during that time we’re braiding her hair.

Q: Is it a walk-in service?

A: Yes, but mostly we do bookings in advance.

Q: What are your busiest days?

A: It used to be Saturday, but not anymore. Everyday is different; sometimes Monday is good, but people have to come everyday if the business is going to make money.

Q: What is your goal?

A: I want to build a very strong business and have more customers. I hope that anywhere people are, they would want to come to my salon because of my nice work and attitude I also want to open more Doke stores in the city.

Q: What do you like about this job?

A: I like the people and I like to communicate. I like to talk; I’m a very friendly person.

Q: What problems do you encounter with customers?

A: Sometimes, customers will walk away after service without paying. So the customers we don’t know, we kindly ask them to pay prior to service.

Q: Any last words?

A: I would like to thank Fatima she is a hard worker. On another note, times are tough and we need to work hard and respect our jobs because our income is our life. Hair braiding is not like any kind of job; it’s an art. And we have to put hair braiding on a different level. Instead of competing, we need to come together. If we unite, we can grow our businesses like the Spanish. With love, help, trust and nice, clean hearts, I think we can do it because we have the courage to do this job well.

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Mohamed Fofanah Dioula:

It does not inspire me much because we have had a lot of problems in Africa, financially and economically, for the past fifty years. We were supposed to do a lot of things by ourselves. I'm not satisfied because we have not achieved much. We have no light or clean water for our people. The governments are corrupt and they don't care about the pop-

Ouattara Tiebe: I don't think that we deserve to celebrate the 50th anniversary of African independence now, because to me, we still depend on the metropolitan policy. The French have all of the companies. We rule from another power and we don't have jobs in Africa for our people. So for me, these politicians are doing their own business when they celebrate this anniversary.

Mory Sylla Bamory: businessman

It is a good opportunity but the African leaders do not show what people need to see. They should show what has been done in the past fifty years in Ivory Coast. Since the independence, there has been progress and change. But after the death of the former president Houphouet Boigny, it's like we took a step back. Today we have no infrastructure; the economy, people's health, and the society have all collapsed. There is no cohesion; it's a total utopism. Africa's legacy is not a strong one. Maybe after the election, the new government will present a new program of development. The Ivorians would then have to be wise in their choice during the election because previous governments have been incapable of unifying the divided country. Therefore the 50th celebration of the independence should be an occasion for Ivorians to know where we are going, so we can stop the nepotism and regionalism for us to develop our country.

Yvette Allie Restaurant Manager

The African continent has not really seen much progress. The financial state and the economy are still the status quo; people are dying of hunger and medical treatment is scarce because there are no hospitals. People are still living in poverty and cannot even maintain the minimum for living. We, African people in the US, can help our continent. The African government needs to work with us so we can make this partnership easy and get positive results.

Bertini Heumegni: personal trainer; model; actor

My idea is that, it is time for change, I wish change for the whole african continent, but the African continent as a whole has not. We all know the state of African politics, so we know things need to improve. All of the presidents who have been in power over the past forty years need to step down and let the younger generation bring about change. We believe the younger generation has young ideology, young power, and can put a new spin on politics that can make a difference. Like Obama said, "Change is possible."





Name: Alpha Sory Kassogue
Country: Mali
Occupation: President of AMANI

Alpha Sory Kassogue is the president of AMANI. AMANI is the Malian Association in New York, which recently created a center with the support of the community. Kassogue, who has a master's degree in management as well as in finance, has worked in numerous NGO's, and in a bank. Afro Market met with him in his beautiful office.

“Every Friday, we bring our community members to the hospital”

- Tell us about your jobs.

-My name is Alpha Sory Kassogue and I am the president of AMANI. My term will run for three years and when it's over, I can run for re-election. It's a Malian Association and it covers 32 other associations. I'm also an agent in BHM, a bank of Habitat of New York. I work in an NGO African Services, which I would like to quit because I want to invest in my community. I want to help my community have access to affordable health care, education, after-school care for kids, citizenship tests, and much more.

-You have created a Malian cultural center. What is it about?

-It's a place for the community to meet, exchange ideas, and discuss our problems. It was created on March 21, 2010, exclusively financed by the members of the association and with the support of the community. We received some donations from Abdoulaye Traore Jagger, Sieba Coulibaly, Cheikh Aidara and Balla and many more who gave us computers. I would like to thank all of them on behalf of the community.

- How much was the investment?

-It was around \$12,000 while the rent is \$3,000 a month. It's a wonderful place with three offices, a meeting room, basement, and bathroom.

- In the past you had a center. Why was it closed?

- The closing was due to the lack of structure, experience, and leadership. But today, we have overcome our problems and struggles, because it's the honor of our country that we have to put first. This is why we have been able to open this new center without any problems.

-To be a leader is a big responsibility. What is the challenge you face?

-I'm not new in business and management. I have a lot of experience and I've learned quite a bit while meeting different personali-

ties over the past twelve years. These reasons are why I'm the leader of my community today.

-How did the community feel about you opening up a center for them?

-We had the grand opening on March 21, 2010. If you had looked at the DVD of the event, you would have seen that people came from everywhere. The crowd had so many important people that police came to ensure security. The ambassador of Mali was there, as was a delegate of Mali. Still, we are receiving more guess the minister of the promotion of woman visited us yesterday(04/14/2010)]

-What are the services and projects of AMANI?

Every Friday, we bring our community members to the hospital for visits and it costs them only fifteen dollars while the medication is only two dollars. We have Internet service for only five dollars, English, French, and our native language of Bambara for anyone who wants to learn. We are working with Senegalese, Togolese, and Uganda. We also give help to our embassy as we continue their services in our center after the embassy closes at 5PM. We had a special visit from Senator Bill Perkins and many more senators. Very soon we will be holding a dinner for them.

As the president of AMANI could you tell us what the link is between ATT Lobbo Traore Center and Malian Center?

People have to understand something: ATT lobo Traore center is a cultural center while the other one is a community center to help the community solve problems. A cultural center is just to sell the culture of our country.

Is it possible to put them together?

-It's not impossible, but ATT Lobbo center is a private investment; our center is for all Malian community. We can be in the same umbrella depending on the terms of contract and we would have to find a bigger place. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the owner for her good and brave initiative.

-What are the main occupations of the Malian community in New York?

-Many are going to school, while some are drivers. Most drive yellow cabs while a few drive GPC taxis. Other Malians work in delivery companies.

-How could you help those who want to open their own business?

-Good question. I sent a letter to Action New York to inquire about financial aid, but I don't like to make promises to anybody. We are doing our best.

-If you had to reward someone in your community, who would it be?

This is a tough question. I don't want to say the name of anyone, because there are so many of them. One would be me (laughs) because I did a lot for the community. If you want a name, I can say Sekou Ballo who was the first to celebrate the Malian Independence Day in New York.

Thank you

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Karim diabate Tosh

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Name : Moussa Kourouma

Country: Guinea

Occupation: President of Mandingo

Afro Market has met with Moussa Kourouma, the president of Mandingo, to talk about the association's programs, including the creation of a new mosque. Here is our interview.

Q: Could you tell us about the recent activities of the association?

A: I'm happy with this question. I think Mandingo is improving and we have everybody involved in the association. Last month, we had a meeting to explain the rules of the association and also talk about the presidential election in our country of Guinea to inform people on how to vote. Also we have helped our community send money back home to our villages so people can pay for their trips to come vote in the city.

Q: Have you mobilized your community to vote?

A: Before the election, a lot of people didn't know that our US electorate could have such an impact in Guinea. They thought it was going to be the same as previous presidential elections. This

time our participation is very important. It's the first time in 50 years that we have had a democratic election.

Q: Are more people subscribing to the association?

A: Every single day we have new members. Today we have more than one thousand people who go to our network on the radio talk show. All the small associations have joined Mandingo.

Q: How is the economical aspect?

A: People are donating. As a matter of fact, one member, Dr. Moussa Keita, gave us \$5,000 to improve our radio station and there will be more to come.

Q: We are holding interviews in the mosque now; is it your new mosque?

A: We are building a new mosque because we have a previous conflict around the old one. We have decided to move on to put an end to that conflict. Now we are working on the new mosque. We have spent more than \$10,000 for it. Now we need the contributions of our brothers and sisters.

Q: What is the next project besides the mosque?

A: We are in the process of going to other states to open some offices for our association.

Q: Any last words?

A: I call for everybody to unite and be strong to succeed in this country. We have to be together to work together.

Contact de Moussa Kourouma :917-749-1398

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SMALL BUSINESS

Moustapha Thiam a Senegalese taxi driver received a \$10 ticket from a police officer.



Moustapha Thiam, a Senegalese taxi driver has been issued a ticket from a New York police officer. I was going down the street on 116th Street from 7th avenue to Lenox Avenue, when I watched the scene. Surprisingly Thiam was laughing. The police officer accused him of making a U-turn, but he knows he did the right thing. And what was funny to him was that he received a \$10 ticket that he had never even heard of since he has been driving cab. Moustapha said he is

not going to recall the ticket because this is what the New York police officers are assigned to do.



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First Name: Abdou
Last name: Diarrassouba
Occupation: Police officer

Abdou Diarrassouba is a police officer in the 28th precinct. He joined the NYPD in 2005, a dream he's had since he was back home in Ivory Coast. Once in America, he worked hard to save money so he could be in the NYPD. Today he is a police officer in the United States protecting his community and helping them understand their rights and duties.

“If they want to succeed in this country, avoid problems and do the right thing “

Q: Could you tell us who you are?

A: I'm Abdou Diarrassouba, a police officer in the 28th precinct located in Harlem.

Q: When did you become an NYPD officer and what was your motivation?

A: It has been my dream since I was back home in Ivory Coast. At the time, I was not qualified so when I came in America, I focused on working hard. I was employed at a car wash, as a cab driver, and as a restaurant worker. I saved money and fulfilled my dream in 2005.

Q: What is your title in the NYPD?

A: I am an NYPD police officer. We all hold the same title unless you take a test to become sergeant, which is followed by lieutenant, captain, deputy inspector, inspector, with four more rankings that follow.

Q: Do you aspire to become an inspector in the NYPD?

A: My dream is to go back to my country and share my knowledge, help, and build my country to secure it as much as New York is.

Q: Did you have any prejudice before you became an NYPD officer?

A: When I came here, there were many killings. The job was not safe and my family told me not to join because it was a bad job. Cops are killed all the time.

Q: Did you ever encounter any problems?

A: Actually I never had any problems. You have to treat everybody as human beings. Just because you wear a uniform does not mean you can abuse your privileges.

Q: How does your community feel about you being an NYPD officer?

A: They appreciate it because I'm helping my community on every level and I love that. But we need more African people in the Department, especially from French speaking countries. There are only a small few in the NYPD. That makes the contact and com-

munication hard with the NYPD. I encourage all my brothers to join.

Q: Helping your community also means helping them understand the law in this country. Have you ever arrested African people when they break the law?

A: That's not what I hope for. I always tell my people to know their rights in this country. We, African people, don't participate in any meetings. We often have meetings in the precinct but they never show up. For them, it's a waste of time because they are busy looking for money.

Q: If you had to arrest them, what would you do and what would be the reason?

A: It would be for stupid things like drug dealing, domestic violence, and identity theft. So I advise them to do the right thing. When you start dealing drugs, don't think that the NYPD doesn't see you. They let you keep doing your thing until they arrest you. Like in Staten Island a couple of months ago, the police arrested some African people after two years of investigations of identity theft. And some Senegalese guys have been arrested for car theft. I urge my brothers to work hard and make money the right way to support their parents back home.

Q: Does your community see you differently in the uniform?

A: Of course my community does, but I don't. And I told them not to be scared of any police officer in uniform. When you see them, you can approach them because they are willing to help you.

Q: What do you like about this job?

A: I like helping my community. You know I'm always with my people, listening to them and always ready to help.

Q: What difficulties do you encounter?

A: You tend to come across some people who have attitude problems. Being a police officer, you have to control yourself to avoid problems.

Q: Does your community call you to intervene disputes?

A: Always, and I'm happy when they do. I always tell them that I'm no better than them. I ask them to avoid problems with people and to fix their problems within the family. Once a police officer arrests you, do not resist because he has more power than you do at that point. If you don't agree, file a complaint against him, but do not resist.

Q: Do you love this job because of the prestige, celebrity, or money?

A: Just love, there is no money in it.

Q: What else would you have done if you were not assigned to this job?

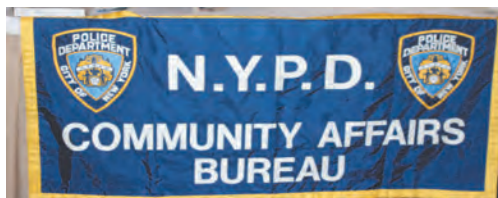
A: I was a cab driver and I'm still driving to take care of my family. I'm married and have six children.

Q: Your message to your community:

A: If they want to succeed in this country, avoid problems and do the right thing, especially our children who come over here and don't listen to their parents. They embarrass their community by getting involved in illegal activities and end up in police custody. I ask parents to come see us; we can help them and their kids.

Thank you

NYPD : THE DAY OF APPRECIATION



The NYPD Community Affairs Bureau Bronx Outreach Unit has organized a Day Of Appreciation to take place on Wednesday, June 2010. This special event gathered hundreds of people, including a group of community leaders acknowledged for their commitment to their work. Ruben Diaz Jr. of the Community Affairs

Bureau welcomed each leader and encouraged them to keep up the good work. He announced that each leader has been accomplished in his work in the growth and development for the interest of the borough. He called for better security and asked parents to be more involved in the sensibilization of their kids.

by karim diabate



BOROUGH PRESIDENT RUBEN DIAZ



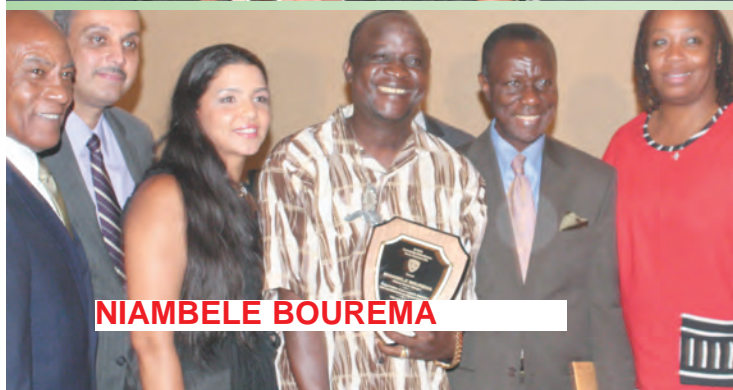
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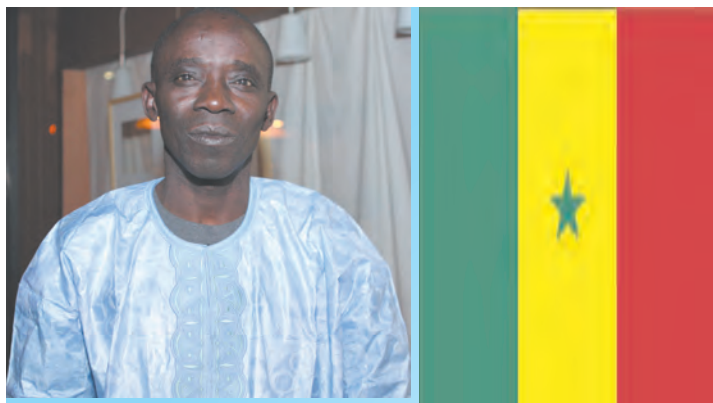
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Name :Moktar Seck

Country: Senegal

Occupation : Humanitarian

Moktar Seck is the founder of Orphan Children of Africa. Foundation that he has created in 1992 a few years after he came in the US. More than 20 years have passed, Moktar has sent almost half a million dollars in supplies in Africa specially in Senegal his native country.

Q: What was your motivation in creating a foundation for children?

A: When I was a child, I grew up without my father who had passed away. My friends' parents bought gifts for them. But my mom could not afford to buy me any. In my mind, when I grew up I knew I was going to help orphans. I came to America in 1985 and in 1992, I started collecting clothes, toys, and medical supplies which I shipped back to Africa.

Q: Was it easy for you to process all of this?

A: I spent ten to twenty thousand dollars out of my pocket every year to ship them.

Q: Besides helping children, do you have any other goals?

A: Right now I'm trying to legalize my foundation. I have a lawyer who helps me with a tax deductible for people who give me their money.

Q: To whom and where are the gifts going?

A: I am from Senegal and this is where I send donations. I also donate some books to Cameroon. In Senegal, I sent money to electrify a village of 600 **lepreu** who were living for 23 years without electricity. I pay \$400 to one hundred kids every week to provide them with clothing, **computers** and medical supplies. In 2000, I sent two containers of supplies for two thousand kids in Bjilor, pouponniere de medina.

Q: From the day you started your donations to now, what is the estimated value of your donations?

A: The media in Senegal said that it's estimated at half of a million dollars.

Q: You were in Senegal last year for more than 6 months.,What were you there for?

A: I just came from Senegal to make a donation of food supplies worth two million CFA (almost four thousand dollars) to an orphanage of six hundred kids in Mbour, a region of Senegal. I also donated to the Albert Royer Hospital, which I have been doing every year since 1999. They rely on donated medical supplies every year.

Q: How do people react to your contributions?

A: They are very happy. They know I would do more if the government made things easier for me, like make me pay taxes, or confiscating this money can go to the kids.

Q: Are donations put into the right hands?

A: Yes, I'm pretty sure because there are only three people doing

distribution, including myself.

Q: Do you feel as if you've achieved your goal?

A: It's like a dream come true. It's a frustration of my childhood to success.

Q: What is your biggest satisfaction?

A: There is a four year-old little girl in Senegal who got her two hands cut off from hot water and now she does everything with her two feet.

Q: Tell me about your family?

A: I'm a divorced father of **three** kids aged 19, 21, and 23. They are all very supportive of me, and what I'm doing.

Q: What is your last message?

A: I ask everyone to go to my website and donate. You can save the lives of children in Africa. www.orphanchildrenofafrica.org
N.B The website is in construction but you could find orphanchildrenofafrica on FACEBOOK.

Contact:646-233-7924

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Madame AMY FOMBA
Directrice EFCA

Le Mercredi 7 Juillet

Madame Fomba Directrice
de EFCA Enterprise
Immobiliere sise à
Abidjan Côte d'Ivoire a
rencontré la diaspora
Ivoirienne pour une séance
de travail. Initiée par Jose

Touré la rencontre qui a eu lieu au restaurant Café 2115 a réuni
une trentaine de personnes. D'entrée de jeu, des prospectus portant
les projets de la société ont été distribués à tous les invités.

Madame Fomba la directrice a présenté sa société et son partenaire la banque de l'habitat de Côte d'Ivoire BHCI. Elle a ensuite expliqué les conditions d'acquisitions des maisons et des terrains.

Au cours de la séance de travail, elle a présenté le plan d'un de ses sites sur la route d'Alépé nommé "opération les hautes de la djibi" qui projette la vente des terrains viabilisés et équipés.

Madame Amy Fomba a exhorté l'audience à ouvrir un compte à la BHCI qui est le garant de cet investissement. La confiance et l'assurance sont le socle de cette réussite. Plus loin elle explique qu'elle ne touche pas à l'argent du client. Le client a la possibilité de suivre ses opérations bancaires avec la BHCI qui définit les conditionalités.

Pour cela la condition première est l'ouverture d'un compte bancaire avec la banque de l'habitat de Côte d'Ivoire qui offre des opportunités de prêts bancaires. Voici les différentes étapes.

Etape 1: Vous vous adressez à l'aménageur foncier EFCA agréé par la BHCI. L'aménageur vous définit les formalités de cession et vous délivre un contrat de reservation

Etape 2: Vous ouvrez un compte Epargne Foncier (CEF) avec un montant de 500.000 cfa. Vous pouvez également verser dans le

CEF le prix d'acquisition du terrain. Ou vous ouvrez un compte Plan Epargne Foncier (PEF) pour une constitution progressive de l'apport initial de 25% du prix du terrain. Dans cette option, vous ouvrez le (PEF) avec 55.000 cfa puis vous cotisez 20% du salaire au moins pendant 36 mois.

Etape 3: Muni de l'attestation de reservation, vous vous rendez au service immobilier de la BHCI. Il sera alors procédé à une étude de votre capacité d'endettement pour déterminer le montant de crédit qui peut vous être octroyé pour l'acquisition du terrain.

Votre apport initial dépendra de votre capacité d'endettement.

La durée du crédit octroyé est de quatre ans maximum. Au terme des quatre ans, vous voilà propriétaire de terrain viabilisé et équipé

Etape IV : Pendant le remboursement du prêt d'acquisition, vous ouvrez un plan Epargne Logement PEL avec 25% du CEF ou du PEF à maturité, vous alimentez mensuellement le PEL à hauteur de 20.000 CFA minimum. Toujours pendant le remboursement de crédit, vous vous adressez à un architecte pour concevoir le plan de votre maison.

Un devis de construction vous sera délivré. Avec celui-ci et toutes les pièces administratives de votre terrain, vous vous adressez au service immobilier de la BHCI qui se chargera de déterminer le montant de crédit immobilier possible. En fin de

séance des clients intéressés ont pu remplir des fiches de renseignement pour l'acquisition des terrains.

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