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General Information

- Do not invite anyone to the USA or make promises about helping someone get to the USA. 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. 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.
- Cameras are welcome when used with discretion. Taking pictures is completely acceptable after asking permission of the people involved.
- **It is illegal** to take pictures/videos of the airport, official buildings, embassies, soldiers, police, etc. Failure to obey this law puts both you and your fellow teammates at risk.
- 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.
- As guests in Niger, **it is imperative** we respect our Niger leadership's request when it comes to financial giving and offerings for LINK Niger staff and missionaries in Niger.

Please do not give offerings directly to the LINK Niger staff. It creates unrealistic expectations and possible disappointment by the staff with regard to future teams. What you may think is a small gift may, in reality, be a large percentage of their salary and will cause significant issues/challenges in the employer/employee relationship. Please know our Niger staff are paid well. They receive bonuses, health benefits, paid vacation, and Niger's version of social security. Our Niger leaders have made these salary and benefit decisions and it's not our place to determine how a staff person should be compensated.

In addition, please do not give offerings directly to missionaries who assist your team during your mission. They are not compensated by Effective Ministries, Inc./LINK. They have requested to receive offerings from the team as a whole and not from individual team members.

On the final day of your mission, we will take up a team offering for the LINK Staff and missionaries. Please feel free to participate as generously as you wish in this team offering and this will be a great blessing to those receiving it. Matthew 6: 3-4 says, *“But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”* May your heavenly Father reward you for your generosity.

Niger Cultural Information

At the LINK we believe it is very important to respect the Nigerien and Muslim cultures while we are serving in their country. Please observe the following sensitivities.

- Do not extend left hand or shake with your left hand (the left hand is often used for hygiene purposes). However, don't be concerned if someone (esp. a child) grabs or shakes your left hand.
- Expect to hold on to a handshake longer than you may be accustomed to, even while conversing. This is normal Nigerien culture.
- Shake hands with the opposite sex only if they extend their hand to you first (the church family and Christians outside of church excepted).
- Give your offerings with your right hand.
- Do not hold up your hand with your five fingers spread wide (this is considered cursing to a Muslim).
- Do not point your finger at anyone directly. This is considered the passing of a curse.
- 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.
- Refrain from hugging someone of the opposite sex unless they initiate the hug.
- Although it may feel uncomfortable, holding hands is an expression of friendship in Niger. It is only acceptable with the same sex (men with men, women with women) and never with the opposite sex.
- Husbands and wives should refrain from public displays of affections (even holding hands).
- Team members of the opposite sex should refrain from touching each other, this includes: holding hands, massaging shoulders, hugging, sleeping on each other's shoulders, etc. even at the LINK Outreach Center.

Packing List

The following **MUST** be with you at all times during the mission starting the day of departure:

- _____ Copy of passport
- _____ Copy of yellow fever certificate
- _____ Insurance certificate
- _____ USA and Niger contact numbers list

It is imperative you have all of these items on your person (not in your carry-on) for the duration of your mission.

Items you NEED to pack:

- _____ Malarone tablets (Malaria medication)
- _____ Azithromycin (Zithromax Z-Pack) medication
- _____ Personal medications/prescriptions/supplements/vitamins that you take regularly. Pack extra in case of a travel delay.
- _____ Airborne (or similar product) 4 doses for the mission
- _____ Team Member Packet (including VIP Kit & Individual Leader instruction sheet)
- _____ The LINK Outreach Center "Things You Need to Know in Niger" booklet
- _____ Small packets of tissues (also great as toilet paper when out on the road)
- _____ Disinfectants, antiseptic wipes (i.e. wet ones, waterless hand sanitizer)
- _____ Flashlight and batteries (if you are not using your cell phone as a flashlight)
- _____ Personal medical supplies that you are accustomed to having in your everyday life (i.e. Tums, Pepto-Bismol, Tylenol, Advil, etc.)
- _____ 100% Deet for Mosquitos
- _____ Sunscreen lotion, Chapstick/lip balm with sunscreen, etc.
- _____ Sunglasses and hat/cap
- _____ Camera
- _____ Bible & journal/notepad
- _____ Special dietary restrictive foods that you may require (i.e. gluten free, vegan, etc.)
- _____ Personal snacks (i.e. crackers, nuts, candy, cereal/oatmeal, caffeine-free tea, etc.)
- _____ Ziploc bags
- _____ Nasal saline spray solution for nasal dryness (optional)
- _____ Earplugs (optional)
- _____ Compression socks (optional)
- _____ Power converter for personal items such as C-Pap machines, etc. (optional)

****Make sure you refer to the LINK Missions Dress Code to confirm appropriate clothing is packed.***

ITEMS AVAILABLE AT THE LINK OUTREACH CENTER. You DO NOT need to pack the following:

- Sheets, blankets, pillows, towels
- Soap, shampoo, conditioner
- Toilet tissue for your bathroom
- Bathroom deodorizers
- Assorted Insect repellent
- A first aid kit (a fully stocked first aid kit is available with band aids, Neosporin, etc.)
- The First Aid Leader for your team will carry a small first aid kit during the mission.
- Gatorade powder for the team
- Laundry detergent
- Blow Dryers in each bathroom
- Adaptors for electrical plugs

Packing Tips

- Packing Guidelines for the LINK and Air France –
 - All team members may bring a carry-on suitcase only.
 - This carry-on may weigh no more than 26 lbs.
 - It MUST not exceed the following dimensions:
 - (L)(21.5”) x (W)(13.75”) x (H)(10”) – including pockets, wheels, and handles (**see diagram-over**)
 - *If you have any questions regarding the size of your carry-on you can bring it to your second team meeting to confirm it will be Air France approved.*
 - You may have ONE accessory bag (handbag, notebook computer, camera, etc.)
Please DO NOT bring a full backpack. Air France will consider it as your carry-on.
- Remember, you only need 3 changes of clothes. Your laundry will be washed for you at the LINK Outreach Center on a regular basis.
- THINK COMPACT! The smaller the item, the less space it will take up and the lighter your carry-on will be.
- Pack a dose of “Airborne” or similar product to be taken before or at the beginning of each flight (four doses total for the mission).
- Coordinate clothing items so you can make several outfits out of fewer pieces.
- There are blow dryers in each bathroom at the LINK Outreach Center available for your use. If you bring your own, it MUST be dual voltage.
- If you are bringing any other electrical hair appliances – please make sure it has 110-220v capabilities. Remember, an adapter is a device used to make one plug fit another type of terminal while a converter changes the energy to make it usable at the destination.
- Ziploc bags are good for packing items which could leak or items you want to keep separate.
- Do not use luggage locks; they will be broken off in customs.
- Make sure each piece of luggage has a LINK luggage tag with your name, address, and phone number. You will receive your luggage tags at the 3rd meeting.

PLEASE NOTE:

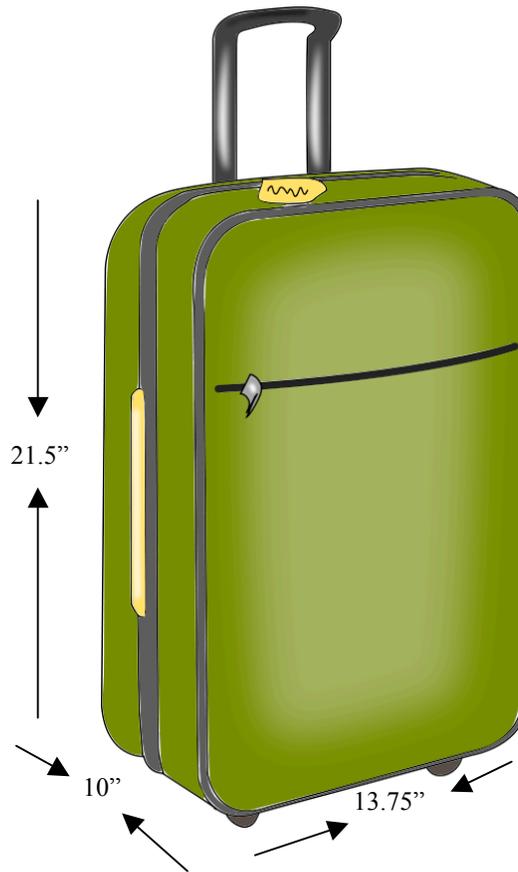
Because we are asking you to pack in a carry-on suitcase, each team member will be allowed to bring any extra items that will not fit in your carry-on to be packed into a tub. **These items must be brought to your 3rd team meeting or if you have these items available earlier you may bring them to the LINK Office.** These items may include liquids, toiletries, snacks, extra clothes, etc. None of these items will be accepted on the day of your departure.

**When our travelers pack only a carry-on, it allows us to take two-50 lb. tubs of supplies to Niger per person on the team. Depending on the mission, this could be 100 lbs. of medical supplies, orphanage supplies, craft supplies, etc. Please understand how much this potentially means to the people of Niger! Thank you!

Air France Carry On Baggage

Your baggage allowance in the Economy cabin where the team will be seated.

- 1 standard baggage item that respects the following maximum dimensions: 21.5" Tall x 13.75" Wide x 10" deep – including pockets, wheels, and handles
- Please note: (1 suit bag is considered a standard bag)
- 1 accessory (handbag, notebook computer, camera, etc.)
- **Maximum total weight (standard baggage + accessory): 12 kg/26.4 lb**



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...