



## We're still busy in Madagascar...

We are continuing our work with remote communities to improve education, health and environment.

In the last few months we have seen quite a few successes, as well as the occasional setback! We're becoming experts in the set-up and launch of sustainable cottage industries - you can read about our honey and wickerwork businesses here. Innovative, fun health education projects, ranging from safe birthing and family planning to adult literacy are saving many lives and improve the quality of life for hundreds more. And in this issue we have a bit of feedback and ideas from our volunteers and fundraisers.

### Tourist on the Silk Trails



Tourism is key to the success of the Malagasy silk market and we are working hard to bring the silk projects and tourists together. An important part of this is establishing "tourist trails" that pass through the tapia forest, and allow visitors to see things like orchids, natural dyes, medicinal plants, and, of course, the homes of the wild silk worms.

Photo: Silk Moth

Feedback supports a cooperative in the village of Soatanana which provides a base for 65 female silk weavers and puts money raised into equipment for the local school. Here, visitors can see every stage of the transformation of leaves into silk into material. Antananarivo-based *Ecotour Ltd* ([ecotour@wanadoo.mg](mailto:ecotour@wanadoo.mg)) has worked with us to develop the trail and already sent three groups in 2006, all of whom stayed with the villagers. Now we are looking for more tourism partners and, of course, if any of you want to visit you will be warmly welcomed!

### Adult Literacy Takes off



Feedback was able to continue its adult literacy programme in rainforest communities thanks to the generous support of the Chiswell family. Launched in September 2006, with over 900 villagers signed up, the project is nearing the end of its first phase. Adult literacy has been shown to be an effective means to promote community development, a more sustainable lifestyle and greater participation in local governance, through its integration with more practical advice and learning on a wide range of other important subjects.



Photo : TBAs parading at the Champion Commune festival in Miarinarivo

### We Are the Champions



In October 2006, festivals were held in Vohitsaoka, Miarinarivo and Sendrisoa to celebrate the end of the first "Champion Community" competition. A year previously, communities had set themselves targets in health, environment, good governance and agriculture.

Many of their targets had been exceeded, especially in family and reproductive health. All three communities made great progress this year, two of them even getting maximum scores in reaching their targets, but there is still a lot of work to do, particularly in areas like fire prevention. We hope to build on these successes in the next phase of the programme which started in 2007 and expands into 4 new rural communities, 3 of which are very remote.

### Room for Improvement



Photo: left: damaged classroom, centre & right: students with new classrooms.

Two classrooms funded by the Small Grants Scheme of the ex-British Embassy in Madagascar were opened in December 2006 in the rural community of Ambolomadinika. The new classrooms were greatly welcomed by both the staff and pupils at the school who had been holding lessons in old dilapidated buildings, one of which was recently destroyed by bad weather. The inauguration of the new classrooms was attended by the local authorities, and celebrations included the kings' traditional sacrifice of a zebu to bless the new building.

### Project Ends with a "Bang!"



In December our community audio-visual health training project came to a spectacular end at a project-completion festival in Ambolomadinika ... when the equipment exploded! This was the third and final phase of the project funded by The Sir Halley Stewart Trust, one which has proved a great success - both educationally and as entertainment for the communities. This audio-visual approach is a fun way to educate whole communities about topics that affect their everyday lives. Fortunately there is a happy ending as we found generous extra funding to replace this valuable equipment.

## Money Honey



The first harvest has just finished for our 50 beekeepers in Ambohimahamasina; marketing has now begun of their products and it is hoped that the honey will soon be on sale in shops in Fianarantsoa.

## Wicker Women go to Market



The wicker baskets, placemats, hats and other products made by the women of Ambohimahamasina continue to improve and have already attracted the interest of two companies. Their products are on sale in a craft boutique in Fianarantsoa town. They have also started to work with a fair trade company, which sells to outlets in Madagascar and abroad

## Ways to Give Online



More and more people are choosing to donate to Feedback online, it's so quick and easy. Perhaps you'd find it easier too? If you are a UK tax payer all your donations will have the tax reclaimed through *Gift Aid* making it even bigger. Want to give regularly? Why not look into Payroll Giving, It is hassle free and gives immediate tax relief so every £10.00 donation costs you just £7.80! Just visit us and click "donate online" - [www.feedbackmadagascar.org](http://www.feedbackmadagascar.org)

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## Recycle and fund a project



Recycle your used ink cartridges and help fund a Feedback project. Feedback has formed a partnership with the recycling firm 'LaserXchange'. If you send your used Laser and Inkjet printer cartridges to them much needed funds will be generated for our charity. This initiative also makes an important environmental contribution as the cartridges are re-used and will not be thrown in landfill site. For full details please click on the link on our website: [www.feedbackmadagascar.org](http://www.feedbackmadagascar.org)

## Malagasy Fundraising Feast

Why not host a dinner party in aid of Feedback Madagascar? Each guest pays a £5 donation to Feedback Madagascar (suggested amount) to enjoy a delicious meal and evening in the company of friends. Better still make it a Malagasy Feast! Check out our website for recipe ideas including: *Chicken Romazava* and *Mango Punch*. To generate even more funds and welcome more people to join the fun, why not set up an invitation chain and see the fun and the funds grow...

## Loss of a team member.



February 2007 saw the sad loss of "Dina", Fiheridina Rasoamanantena, one of Ny Tanintsika - Feedback Madagascar's field agents, who died shortly after giving birth. She had been with us since 2003, working on our safe motherhood programme. Her death brings home the real risks still associated with childbirth in Madagascar. She will be missed by all at Ny Tanintsika - Feedback Madagascar. Her baby daughter, "Dinasoa Ismail", is well and being cared for by her family.

## Volunteer Views



In September, Katherine Emery, a volunteer from the UK, joined our team in Fianarantsoa. 'Kat' has been helping with report writing & updating our new bilingual website, as well as spending time out in the field visiting the projects and assisting with the project evaluations and festivals.



Kazuko Horiuchi, our water and sanitation volunteer, has now been working with us for over a year and has become an invaluable member of the team. Kazuko has designed 6 gravitational water supply systems and has actually implemented 2 of them, benefiting 949 villagers, 2 schools, 1 health centre and 1 dispensary. Other projects are in the pipeline.

*"Working with Feedback has given me a great insight into the world of development and it's great to be volunteering with an NGO which is making real sustainable improvements to people's lives."*

*"Before I worked with Feedback, I hardly had any practical experience in the field. I learned a lot and this experience will continue to inspire my future. It is sometimes challenging but I can promise it is rewarding as well as useful for your future career if you want to be in development work"*

## Water Wedding Gift



During October and November 2006, Kazuko constructed a water supply system in Miarinarivo. This project was the "alternative wedding present" for Tara and Alex Nairn, a British couple, who, with the help of their wedding guests, raised a staggering £12,344.. Tara and Alex came out to Madagascar in October to assist with the water project, living in the village while the work was being carried out. This was an extremely generous donation and our thanks go out to Tara, Alex and all their friends whose fundraising efforts and generosity made this project possible.

## Position Available

*We are currently looking for a Part-time Fundraising Coordinator. If you are interested or know someone who might be suitable for this position please get in contact with us at our address below.*

Feedback Madagascar is a Scottish charity (no. SC023568) which has worked in Madagascar since 1993, in the field of development, healthcare, the environment and conservation. Feedback aims to alleviate poverty through an integrated approach which recognises the relationships between poverty, environmental degradation and poor health, and which encourages local people to identify their needs and their own solutions. Projects focus on promoting primary healthcare, particularly safe motherhood and reproductive health; improving the local stewardship of natural resources (especially the rainforest); improving education and promoting income-generating schemes.

Feedback's work in Madagascar is carried out through Ny Tanintsika, a Malagasy non-governmental organisation (NGO) created with the assistance of Feedback staff and friends. Ny Tanintsika manages all our fieldwork and is run by our project staff.

## We need your email power - We want your feedback and fundraising!

Help us keep costs down so that more money goes to projects. Send us your email so that next time you can receive news by email, this also helps save paper and the environment. All correspondence, cheques etc. should go to our UK administrator Alison Cameron..

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**Want to know more? Go to: [www.feedbackmadagascar.org](http://www.feedbackmadagascar.org) -our website will keep you up to date with all our latest news /info.**