

## Welcome, or "Tonga Soa !", to the latest *Friends of Feedback Madagascar* newsletter!

It's been a while since we last updated all our friends and partners on our work in Madagascar, and there has been a lot happening! Ny Tanintsika, the Feedback team in Madagascar, has made phenomenal progress, building its capacity to raise funds, develop and manage projects, while the Feedback Trust in the UK has continued to give international technical and funding support. The result is a range of sustainable projects all driven from Madagascar which are improving lives and the environment in this unique and beautiful land.

Please take a few minutes to read about our latest achievements and plans:



Madagascar is one of the **poorest countries** in the world

## New Online Giving

If you received this newsletter by email perhaps you'd find it easier to make a donation to the work Feedback does online. Ever eager to make giving easy, we have set up an online donations page – and if you are a UK tax payer all your donations will have the tax reclaimed through Gift Aid making it even bigger. Just visit <http://www.justgiving.com/feedbacktrust/donate/>



Give online today

## Silk Project a Worldwide Development Winner!

Ny Tanintsika took part in a global competition for the Development Marketplace run by the World Bank, and we were selected as one of 78 finalists out of more than 2600 entrants worldwide. And then we won!!! Coordinator Eugénie Raharisoa, who went to Washington DC for the final at the end of May, was overwhelmed by the news, which means that we are one of 31 winners, and a grant for over USD110,000 will be made available to develop the project. "The Development Marketplace gives us a chance to meet a lot of people who are on the front lines of bringing ideas and understanding that would never be thought of in Washington, D.C., London, or Paris. We are tremendously grateful to the finalists," said James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank. "This grant will mean a huge amount to all of our silk workers and their families, helping 14,000 villagers and 150 silk weavers," said Eugénie. "And for me it was truly the trip of a lifetime."



**Global Customer:** World Bank Vice President James Wolfensohn asks Eugénie where he can get more Malagasy silk ties!

## Birth Assistants Save Lives

Fianarantsoa in South West Madagascar has the highest mortality rate in the country for children under five. Healthcare for mothers is managed by Traditional Birth Attendants [TBAs], who attend 60% of all births, and with government resources dwindling while the population increases they will continue to provide a lifeline for mothers and babies for the foreseeable future. Many are very experienced, but at the same time they often do not recognise the circumstances under which pregnant woman should be sent to hospital, and some of their traditional practices can be very dangerous. This Feedback programme, the first of its kind in Madagascar, began in 1999 and has now extended to provided training, support and supplies for over 600 TBAs from 22 different communes covering an area of over 11,000 square kilometres. A total of over 12,000 women have been referred to local health centres via the programme, for everything from childbirth, prenatal and postnatal consultation, to vaccination and family planning services.



Feedback is helping women like Bao, who has lost six of her nine children.

## New and improved schools and hospitals

Feedback - Ny Tanintsika's collaboration with the British Embassy in Madagascar continues to flourish with the granting of more funds to repair/ build and equip schools and health centres in remote rural areas. A total of 14 primary schools and 5 health centres have benefited, and another 3 villages are in the process of being supplied with gravitational water supplies. One isolated commune has had a radio system installed to improve communication, whilst another has begun a commune community rice store project to improve food security and lower malnutrition rates.



A new tapstand provided by your donations costs from **just £100**

## Britain Gives...

In a remarkable reward for her exceptional dedication to Feedback / Ny Tanintsika's work in Madagascar, our very own Samantha Cameron was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June, for "services to healthcare and community development in Madagascar." "I'm in shock. I'm sure there are a lot of other more deserving people," said Sam. "But of course I'm delighted too. Despite the colonial references - hopefully they'll change the name soon – it is a really great honour. Most importantly it should really be seen as a team award. We are doing a fantastic job. It is a reflection of everyone's relentless commitment and effort, the shared passion to improve people's lives and ensure a better future for Madagascar."



**Sam Cameron**, awarded an MBE, in the office with Lala and Nathalie.

## ...and Takes Away

However, ironically at the same time as the UK government made this individual award, it became clear that the FCO plans to close its Embassy in Antananarivo at the end of this year. Shoals of letters of protest appear to have had no effect, and the latest news was that the date of closure has been brought forward to the end of August! Please take a minute to write about the closure to your MP or perhaps better to Jack Straw with copies to Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, Hilary Benn and the Chairmen of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee and the Africa All Party Parliamentary Group. The Embassy provides a vital business and cultural link to Madagascar and has helped Feedback and Ny Tanintsika in more ways than we can count; closure would be a disaster!



Ambassador Brian Donaldson visiting the silk project. **Protest the Embassy Closure** by writing to your MP

## Audio-visual education for all

Ever since the BESOM Foundation donated audio-visual equipment and a 4x4 to Feedback, the Cinemobile project has been operating in remote villages around the Fianarantsoa region. With support from the Sir Halley Stewart Trust, a new programme is being launched which combines previous project success with the proven effectiveness of educational video showings at attracting huge crowds. Working with community-based health providers already trained by the project, paramedical staff will be alternating village-based trainings with animated participatory audio-visual sessions. The project aims are to improve reproductive health, to reduce the incidence of common diseases and to lower malnutrition rates.



**Village entertainment:** learning about health and nutrition at the **cinemobile**

## The Heart of the Matter...

Health and the environment are interdependent in the developing world, and Ny Tanintsika has been pioneering new ways to improve standards of living whilst preserving the biodiversity-rich environment of Madagascar, particularly the threatened rainforest corridor on the east of the island. Teacher-training courses, support for school-based environmental actions, rural wind-up/solar-powered radio programmes based around listening groups, community-based farmer-to-farmer and pupil-to-family teaching techniques, "champion village" contests and adult literacy programmes...these are just some of the new approaches adopted by Ny Tanintsika. Key to all these projects is motivation and self-help.



**Radios in the Hood!**

## ...and Getting Results

The results have been significant; the reforestation of 10 hectares with over 25,000 trees; the adoption of improved rice-farming techniques covering 300km<sup>2</sup> - with an average ten-fold increase in yields; assistance in building over 50 latrines; provision of clean water supplies to 5 villages; a 19% increase in the adoption of family planning methods; new or improved income-generating activities for over 500 households; the opening of 6 nutritional surveillance centres aimed at improving the health of women and children. But most important of all is the ownership of the project by the communities themselves; villages identifying their own targets for the year and forming committees to drive activities and report on actions. Monthly reports are sent by these committees to the centralised commune committee, made up of local authorities and representatives from local public services like education and health, and they ensure the continued monitoring of programme results. This capacity-building is essential to ensuring the sustainability and continuation of the good work.



Community family planning provider Francoise has over 75 clients! It costs just **£25** to train and equip someone like her.

## Silk Production, Forest Protection

Feedback's passion for silk production continues, with a silk industry revitalisation project in Manandriana. The project is reintroducing wild silkworms to their traditional diet of tapia at the same time as growing and protecting the tapia forest and training communities in woodland management and silkworm breeding. Ny Tanintsika now works with 12 groups of village silk producers. 95% of the members are women, and about 200 families will benefit from this new source of income. Similar projects have struggled elsewhere but we have got the mix just right and the project is a serious commercial proposition. Four of the groups made 99 million Malagasy francs (around £6,000) between January and September 2004, proving the economic sustainability of this new cottage industry. Funding was provided by generous donations from the JJ Charitable Trust, the British Embassy in Madagascar, and the Association for Cultural Exchange / ACE Study Tours.



Building the silk industry will help **hundreds** of women and their families.

## About Feedback

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 tries 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.

## Organisation

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 is run by our project staff, who are led by Eugénie Raharisoa, and manages all our fieldwork. The work of Ny Tanintsika is supervised by an advisory board with the following members: President - Monsieur Razafindramanana Raphaël Richard; Advisor - Rajaonarison Elie; Advisor - Zafimanjaka Maurice Gérald; Secretary - Rajaona Wilkinson Tsiry.

**We need your email power!** To help us keep costs down so that more money goes to projects, please send us your email address so that next time you can receive news by email!

*Please bear with us while our website is being revamped : the new updated one will be out soon.*

## Give us your Feedback

All correspondence, cheques etc. should go to Alison Cameron, our new administrator in the UK:

**Feedback Madagascar**  
5 Lyndale Avenue  
London NW2 2QD

tel/ fax  
+44 (0)20 7431 7853

email  
[info@feedbackmadagascar.org](mailto:info@feedbackmadagascar.org)

[www.feedbackmadagascar.org](http://www.feedbackmadagascar.org)