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During 2014/15 MfM's total income was £223,000 which is £8,000 more than the previous year's total of £215,000. Within this overall total, restricted income for Akany Avoko Children's Home was £65,000, a small reduction from the £69,000 donated in 2013/14. This is a concern for the home as this downward trend is continuing.

Our main sources of funding continue to be a very large number of individual donors, churches, Quaker meetings, schools and trust funds and we are now securing an increasing level of funds from trusts and foundations. We are very grateful for all the support of our committed individual donors and for the support we are getting from grant making Trusts, particularly for the Education for Life programme.

Total expenditure in the year was £213,000 which was some £60,000 less than 2013/14. The main reason for this reduction was that the new Education for Life programme took longer to secure funds for and develop than anticipated. We are delighted that this new programme has now started, with modest initial grants of £6,000 in 2014/15, but these have increased significantly in the new year. Restricted grants to Akany Avoko reduced from £87,000 to £41,000, largely as reserves for this home have been used up.

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# Twenty-ninth Annual Report

concerning the financial year 1st Oct. 2014—30th Sept. 2015



*Education should be a right not a privilege.*

## FOREWORD

Each year the need in Madagascar becomes more compelling. In turn we need to redouble our efforts to help Madagascar's most vulnerable people and fragile environment.

**MfM** focusses on 3 programme areas: Protecting and Enabling Vulnerable Children; Regenerating Forests and Livelihoods and Inspiring Education in Remote Rural Schools. Thanks to a growing team both in the UK and in Madagascar we have started to extend our work in all 3 programme areas. The biggest new activity for **MfM** in 2014/15 was the launch of our 'Education for Life' Programme which aims to improve the prospects of children in remote rural schools. By addressing the children's interconnected needs for Water, Health, Education, Environment, Livelihoods and Sanitation (W H E E L S) we hope to prove that life can really be transformed.



### MAKING LIFE BETTER IN PRISON

Life in prison in Toamasina is very hard if you are a woman. There are minimal facilities, you sleep on a concrete "shelf" in a crowded dormitory, there is no opportunity for exercise and very little to do to fill the weary hours except play with the babies, of whom eight are currently in prison with their mothers. Our partner organisation SAF/FATOAM, with funding from **MfM**, is tackling these problems in a number of creative ways.

One of these has been to teach the women to make attractive rolled-paper bead necklaces which they will be able to sell when they leave prison. The women have learned to co-operate and have developed a production line which speeds the process and will help them to set up mini-enterprises in the future. A pair of scissors, some old magazines, home-made glue and some thread is all that is needed.

The best news of all is that the prison governor is so impressed that he is talking of setting up a monthly stall outside the prison gates to sell the necklaces so that the women have a little money to take with them when they leave.

## EDUCATION FOR LIFE

There are many basic obstacles preventing children in Madagascar from succeeding at school: hunger, sickness, poorly qualified teachers, lack of books and insufficient parental income to pay the school fees. With our Malagasy partners we have designed an integrated programme which aims to improve the attainment and prospects of children in remote rural schools.



*Students learn vital hand-washing habits using a simple 'Tippy Tap' system that can be replicated at home.*

Rural communities need investment. They need a skilled population to help them to thrive. A big problem facing Madagascar is the migration of young people to the cities. Many of these hopeful migrants find a very hard life awaiting them and many end up virtually destitute.

It is our hope that if the quality of life and prospect of the young rural population can be improved then more children may feel able to stay and invest in their home villages. If they do choose to migrate to a city, then at least a good education and qualifications should improve their chances of finding decent employment.

34 schools have now joined the **MfM** Education

for Life Programme, whereby they receive a package of support including: toilets, water, books, teacher training, kitchen gardens and solar power. In return the teachers, parents and local authorities contribute their time, skills and commitment.



If after 3 years we can prove a successful impact in these 34 schools then we will be seeking ways to roll-out this programme to benefit many more communities.



## MICROCREDIT & MINI-ENTERPRISE IN MAINTIRANO

This year forty needy women in Maintirano have formed themselves into a group for mutual support. Many of them are single parents and on average each of these women is responsible for five children and some also care for elderly parents. It is a constant struggle to feed, clothe and educate their families.

Our partner organisation SAF Melaky, with funding from **MfM**, has set up a microcredit scheme to help these women set up a wide variety of mini-

enterprises: dressmaking; selling charcoal, sugarcane, plants, biscuits and roadside snacks. The maximum initial loan is about £13 and they must pay it back plus around 65p interest within two months. So far the scheme is working well and has helped the women to survive with dignity.



*This woman sells biscuits in the market. She cooks them in the home-made oven seen in the foreground.*



*Three productive fishponds—all dug by hand. Fish make a valuable addition both to family diet and to family income.*

enable us to share the lessons learned with our other partners and other NGOs doing similar work. It might even have an influence on national policy as regards management of National Parks and the populations who live in and around them.

## BETAMPONA

**MfM** has been funding development work in Betampona for over 20 years. A recent three-year evaluation showed very positive results both in improved living conditions for the population and in conservation of the environment. We plan to commission a long-term impact assessment in 2016–17 that would cover the whole period of our work, and would

## DEVASTATING FLOODS

In 2014/15 Madagascar faced the worst floods in living memory. Many of the communities that we work with were devastated. Months of relentless rain brought misery and fatalities to urban and rural communities alike. On hillsides roads crumbled and houses collapsed or were buried by landslides. In the valleys farmers watched with sinking hearts as their rice crops disappeared under tons of sand brought down by the flood-waters. Rivers in the capital overflowed their banks and tens of thousands of people had to be evacuated from their flooded homes.



*The stadium in the capital, Antananarivo, under water.*

MfM is fortunate to work with local Malagasy organisations who are in an ideal position to respond quickly to the needs of their communities. MfM keeps a reserve fund ready to respond quickly to natural disasters. Because the need was so great this year MfM ran a special appeal to raise extra funds. Response from our donors was so generous that we were able to give grants to 5 stricken communities. Here is just one example:

*Our partner Pastor Helivao took a team of volunteers to rescue families trapped by the rising floods. Fear was palpable as water encircled the weak and vulnerable who could not swim. Once Helivao had to pass a baby out through the roof of a dwelling to her colleagues in a boat, as the flood waters poured in through the upstairs windows.*

This year's flooding is a salutary reminder that climate change and extreme weather are growing forces to be reckoned with, and it is often the poorest people who are the most vulnerable. Each of the communities that MfM works with has its own vulnerabilities. It is hard to achieve development if your community is repeatedly brought to its knees. In future MfM will put a new emphasis on prevention – helping communities to protect themselves from future natural disasters.

## RESTORING THE RAINFOREST



Those of you who read last year's report will remember that we agreed to give a portion of Pat Knowles's legacy to an organisation called Mitsinjo that is replanting corridors of native trees to link patches of remaining rainforest. We are happy to report that a very good start has been made. An **MfM** tree nursery has been established and 5 hectares have already been replanted with native trees in a careful proportion of quick and slow-growing varieties.

The long-term aim is to restore the whole ecosystem so they have started by planting trees that are attractive to lemurs as these animals will eat the fruit and help to spread the seeds.

When Mitsinjo started this work some time ago the survival rate for the saplings that they planted was only about

50% but now they are achieving an impressive 95%. They make their own special compost which includes mycorrhizal fungi. These fungi work in a mutually beneficial relationship with the roots of the tree saplings and greatly improve their capacity to absorb essential minerals and phosphates.

Now that the tree nursery is well established the planting will be scaled up to cover at least 10 hectares per year. Special thanks must go to MfM supporters who have been inspired by the importance of this project and pledged their support for this work. Thanks to your generous donations we will be able to increase our grant to this project which means more trees planted faster. The importance of the work the reforestation work of Mitsinjo was recently acknowledged in a documentary by David Attenborough, who praised this vital, community-led initiative to try to save the unique flora and fauna of Madagascar.



*Two patches of primary forest can be seen to the top right and left of the picture. The bare patch in between contains thousands of newly-planted saplings. The rough patch in the foreground has been left to provide food for the lemurs while the trees are growing.*

## AKANY AVOKO CHILDREN'S HOME

Akany Avoko is working hard towards its goal of self-sufficiency. All available land is given over to growing vegetables and they have plans to build another big water cistern to collect rainwater that should see them right through the dry season and save the cost of expensive piped water. They also have plans (and the possibility of some funding) that will allow them to install an array of solar panels to provide the home with free electricity.

**MfM** continues to transfer funds raised independently but caring for 150+ children is costly and any additional support would be welcome.

*Vegetables growing in a sack—a useful skill for youngsters to learn for when they leave Akany Avoko and have no land on which to grow food.*



## THE SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



Another piece of work that **MfM** has been funding for many years is the pre-school classes run by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to prepare street children to enter mainstream education. However, children who are hungry or unwell are unlikely to benefit so midday meals and medical check-ups are part of the deal.

*Children queueing for their midday meal.*

Many children have shockingly bad teeth and so a visit to the dentist is also included. The Sisters have recently taken delivery of a brand new dentist's chair so treatment can now take place at the Centre itself and escorting lines of nervous children along the crowded and dangerous streets to the dentist is, happily, a thing of the past.

