



AKANY AVOKO FARAVOHITRA

Refuge for teenaged girls

News and Appeal



It is our great pleasure to share with you news of life at our refuge for vulnerable girls, known as 'Akany Avoko Faravohitra' or 'AAF' for short! It is our chance to say 'thank you' to our supporters, to share some of our successes and to invite you to get involved in the next step of the journey...

This year we have received 87 girls bringing the total of girls placed at the centre over the last 3 years to 220. Today, we have 50 resident at our Home. The increase in numbers is because AAF is becoming known as one of the best places in Madagascar to receive girls who are at risk and need urgent help.

Since we opened the centre 3 years ago we have been striving to give the best possible care. Every year we try to make the environment happier, safer, more nurturing and inspiring for the girls. This year we have focussed efforts on: strengthening our child protection; broadening the range of activities available to the girls; improving counselling to help girls address their emotional and psychological problems; and strengthening our income-generating activities. WE have also undertaken essential renovations like repairing the leaking roof.

The café – craft shop project is our biggest new development. It is an ambitious project to provide training, working experience and income-generating opportunities for our young women as they graduate from AAF and move towards independent living. This project is half-way there. But we still need more money. The major building work is now complete and the staff training is well under-way. But we still need to do the electrics, plumbing, interior décor and purchase equipment. If funds can be secured then we plan to open the café, restaurant, hair salon and craft workshop in July 2019, in time for the main tourist season. We'd be delighted if you feel able to get involved.

Our achievements this year at Akany Avoko Faravohitra

1. The girls

Education and Training

Our girls all come from very difficult backgrounds. This is a chance for our girls to make a fresh start. We now have twenty-seven girls attending school. For many it is their first chance to get a regular education. We have worked hard to provide an improved environment for the girls to focus on their studies, providing a dedicated study room and extra tuition. Local university students have been coming in to give homework support and extra tuition to our students. This has paid off with most girls improving their school result for the second year in a row. Eighteen girls moved into a higher grade and 3 passed their Primary School Certificate (CEPE). We even have one student in her first year of a law degree at university.

Two girls are working towards vocational diplomas; one attends a hairdressing course in preparation for helping to run our hair-dressing salon at the Manonga Project. Another girl studies to become a beautician (make-up, manicure and pedicure). All girls continue to take cookery, basketry, sewing and embroidery classes. The best of their craft work is very popular with visiting tourists. Four girls are looking to become professional craft makers. They will be able to make and sell crafts at the Manonga craft workshop, as well as finding additional outlets of their own.



Something for everyone: Time for school and time for making crafts

Spot-light on Success Stories

One of our girls, we can call Vao, had run away from home to follow her boyfriend. But things went wrong and she was placed at Akany by the Children's Court. She was considered at risk of suicide. She took a bit of time to adjust to living in a centre but the team supported her and she started to realise that she missed her family and wanted to be reunited with them. AAF talked to the family and facilitated the girl's home reintegration. She moved back home, went back to school and passed her A-levels (Bac). Now she comes back to visit us at AAF. She thanked us for helping her and she is now giving back by mentoring the girls who still live here at the centre.

Another girl, we can call Solo, is an orphan who used to live with her aunt until she got arrested for petty theft and sent to Akany to await her trial. During the four months she spent at Akany she learnt embroidery and became so good at it she decided to make a living out of it after her acquittal and return home. At AAF we always keep a large part of the craft sales in savings for the girl who made the crafts, so they have a little start up fund ready when they leave. So Solo reinvested her savings into buying her own craft materials to launch her business. She is now back at home with her aunt and earns a living as a full-time embroiderer, to her aunt's great surprise and delight.

These may seem like modest achievements. But to us it is a huge relief and joy every time a girl is rescued from living on the streets and finds the confidence and courage to start a new life with safety and dignity.

Helping with homework and music



2. Staff and Volunteers

Despite the higher number of girls, the number of staff has remained unchanged this year. However, thanks to more volunteers we are still able to give all the girls plenty of support and attention. For example, local trainers and students have given their time to support academic studies and artistic activities, like literacy, music or sport classes. Volunteers give moral support and encouragement to our girls, and help in practical tasks like accompanying them to the doctor.

Thanks to our friends at the Polish charity Ankizy Gasy, all our girls received a free medical check-up this Summer. We have many medical conditions to cope with which is very demanding on staff time and on money. From January 2019 we plan to have weekly visits from a qualified nurse, which should help us to keep on top of the girls' health issues and reduce the number of emergency admissions.

One of our Franco-Malagasy volunteers has been giving literacy classes for 9 months now, when she only intended to stay for 3 weeks!

We have received several international volunteers who have helped with English and French classes for the girls. Aside from developing the girls' language skills, the interaction with foreign students helps the girls with socialisation skills and confidence. It's also good practice for the girls who plan to work in our café project.

3. Our supporters

With the number of girls increasing, this is putting an extra strain on our existing resources, staff and financial. We therefore need to secure more funds to cover our growing running costs. Please let us know if you can help.



We are grateful to our friends and supporters both in Madagascar and abroad who have helped us this year. We hope you will support us again in 2019. We have enjoyed welcoming many visitors who give time and donations and who take away joy in their hearts!

We look forward to the launch of our café –craft shop project 'Manonga' which will be a big chance for us to raise money and raise awareness to a wider public about our vital work for vulnerable girls and young women.

4. The Manonga Café –Craft Shop Project



The Manonga café - craft workshop project, has been our big project this year. This project aims to provide training and employment to graduates of AAF. Ultimately, it aims to generate a surplus of income to support the running costs of the main AAF refuge as well. A grant from MfM last year has enabled major renovations to the historic mission building to restore it for use as a café and shop.

The next phase is to finish off the decorating of the first floor, purchase the required furniture and equipment for the café / restaurant and the craft workshop and open up. We would also like to renovate the second floor in order to offer accommodation to staff/volunteers. Another sponsor has helped us with the creation of a hair salon at Manonga. This is nearly complete and we hope the salon can open in January 2019. The next phase is dependent on getting additional funding to cover the remaining work. We are committed to doing whatever we can to launch this project. We would like to open the café & craft shop by 1st July 2019 in order to be ready for the busy tourist season next year.



2018 has been a good year thanks to the continued support from all our friends. We have achieved excellent school results, seen more volunteers taking on new activities, completed much renovation work whilst also focussing on our new café project. Funding the day to day running of the Centre remains challenging, with the number of girls on the increase, but we hope that over time the café – craft shop will bring increased financial security. We draw strength from our success stories and look forward to a successful 2019, filled with love and happiness for all our girls. Thank you for believing in our work.

With sincere thanks from Mme Hanta, (Director of AAF) and Irenée (Director of MfM)