

# 2 / 2020



# BULLETIN

## EDITORIAL

### *Dear friends of ADES*

*While this bulletin focuses on the progress and challenges in Madagascar, corona infections in Switzerland are reaching and in many other European countries new record levels.*

*Resilience is the ability to overcome crises, to gain positive results in difficult situations and to grow from them. Rarely has the resilience of entire population groups been tested more than this year. New measures and further restrictions are on their way and an end is not yet in sight.*

*Positive thinking helps us through this difficult time, in which we have to do without so many things we have always taken for granted. The challenge of these months is to stay alert and healthy, to keep social distance and not to lose humour and hope.*

*Our commitment in Madagascar reminds us time and again how privileged we Swiss are. Knowledge of the problems and hardship in Madagascar helps us to remain humble when faced with challenges in Switzerland. As a society, we will overcome these difficult times. And thanks to your help, we will continue to make new progress in Madagascar during this time.*

*I wish you all the best and stay healthy!*

*Rita Bachmann*

## SUSTAINABLE IMPACT FOR MADAGASCAR

### PANDEMIC HITS MADAGASCAR'S INFORMAL SECTOR HARD

The great poverty, the rapid loss of forests, political instability and dilapidated infrastructures are only some of the challenges ADES is facing in Madagascar. The pandemic is now leading to many more problems which ADES must solve. The health system in Madagascar has striking weaknesses, testing capacities are limited and measures to contain the virus vary widely from place to place and are not always comprehensible. In this environment it is like walking a tightrope to keep our centres running and to guarantee the health of our employees.

The pandemic will further complicate the conditions for ADES in Madagascar. Around 75 percent of Malagasy workers are employed in the informal sector. These people, who were already living in poverty before the pandemic, are suffering greatly under the current circumstances. Those who work daily by hand into the mouth, whose existence is quickly threatened in a crisis situation. Millions of people in Madagascar are threatened by hunger and misery. The already minimal purchasing power of people in the informal sector is further reduced by the pandemic. This makes it even more difficult for ADES to reach these people. Apart from the introduction of a flexible pricing model, ADES is increasingly looking for ways to give away cookers to low-income families in return for work, for example in reforestation projects.



Protecting themselves with masks: the population of Sahavondronina

## PROJECT: ADES-EXPANSION

Despite the pandemic and adverse circumstances, ADES is continuing its projects. In 2019, ADES launched the expansion project with the support of the International Energy Access Programme (EnDev). It includes a new blast furnace for firing clay cores in Fianarantsoa and the realisation of two new mobile centres. With the second blast furnace, ADES will ensure the production of cookers even if demand increases in the coming years. With the new mobile centres ADES reaches people outside the urban areas and sensitizes them to environmental problems and to advanced cooking solutions.



The new blast furnace nearing completion

ADES reached several milestones in the expansion project this year. In cooperation with the partner organisation Bio-ner, the construction of the second blast furnace was completed. The blast furnace took shape during one and a half months of continuous production in our centre in Fianarantsoa. At the same time the two new mobile centres are ready for operation. The acquisition of suitable vehicles in Madagascar was already a challenge that had to be mastered. ADES rebuilt the new vehicles after the purchase and adapted them to the specific needs of the teams. The mobile

centres have arrived in their new domiciles in Toliara and Mahajanga and are on their first test missions. The Mobile Centre North is the first to set off from Mahajanga to the Sava region and has already sold several thousand cookers. Thanks to the great progress made in this central project, ADES is well prepared for the time after the pandemic.

## ADES REACHES SAVA REGION

At the eastern northern tip of Madagascar lies the Sava region with a population of around 1.3 million. The name „SAVA“ is derived from the four district capitals Sambava, Andapa, Vohimarina and Antalaha. The area is the world centre for the cultivation of vanilla and cloves and is home to the Marojejy National Park and a large part of the famous Masoala National Park. The forests of Masoala National Park are home to thousands of tree species – in total about two percent of the world's known plant and animal species. However, these forests are also under great pressure due to their excessive use for the production of rice, charcoal and firewood. The forest area is declining at an alarming rate. ADES has hardly been present in Sava so far, but is well known due to its long-standing cooperation with the Lemur Conservation Foundation, which is very active there.



The ADES Mahajanga team on its way to the north-east

## SUSTAINABLE CHRISTMAS: GIVE HOPE!

Are you looking for a sustainable Christmas gift? Give your loved ones a piece of hope and future: a gift certificate from ADES!

With 50 Swiss francs you can finance an energy-saving cooker for a Malagasy family.

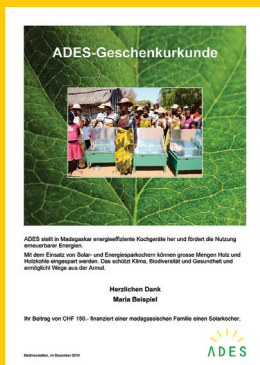
With 90 francs, ADES will plant 30 trees for you and look after them for three years.

The gift includes a personal gift certificate and a bag of Madagascan pepper.

Required information:

- Donation amount
- Private address for shipping
- Name of the beneficiary

Please send orders to:  
[info@ades-solaire.org](mailto:info@ades-solaire.org)



It is an aim of ADES to cooperate with other organisations wherever possible and useful, to use synergies and to maximise the effect for the population. Already in 2014 ADES started an intervention in Ambilobe in cooperation with the WWF. From this small town, bumpy roads lead in about eight hours to Vohimarina, the gateway to the Sava region. During a awareness campaign, the ADES team distributed about a thousand cookers in only three days. Due to the great demand and success, the campaign was repeated in 2015 and 2016. Rising prices for fuel and the consequences of forest destruction further increase the demand for ADES cooking solutions.

The new project started on August 8th in close cooperation with the environmental organisations Lemur Conservation Foundation (LCF), Duke Lemur Conservation (DLC) and Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). With this project ADES significantly expands its presence in the Sava region. The mobile centre North has already sold several thousand cookers and reaches many thousands of people through information and awareness campaigns. The team found various interested resellers and trained the first committed people to raise environmental awareness locally. As the region is difficult to reach by land, ADES cookers are now transported on a large



## DONOR PORTRAIT: BEATRICE FISCHLI

In 1990, at the age of twenty, I travelled to Madagascar for the first time as part of an internship to train as a teacher for half a year, where I taught at a small village school in Befandriana Atsimo, north of Toliara. The school, together with a small dispensary, was supported by the Missionsprokura Wertheimstein in terms of personnel and finances.

I fondly remember unforgettable excursions with Father Schnellmann, who had been working there for over thirty years at that time. He introduced me to the impressive local flora and fauna, living traditions and beliefs. But I also learned a lot about the variety of upcoming challenges in connection with economic and social problems. Of course, we also talked about the disastrous consequences of illegal deforestation, the overexploitation of resources and the loss of habitat, because one could not, even at that time, fail to notice the huge «Lavaka» («hole» in Malagasy) that exist particularly in this region as a result of man-made soil erosion.

I was very impressed by the people and their ability to cope with crises. Their joy of life and their songs, feelings and moods expressed in dances are still vivid in my memory.

A few years later I was able to lead a bike tour in Madagascar for «Bike Adventure Tours». On one of the trips I met Regula Ochsner in Toliara at the end of the 90s. I was impressed by her ideas and visions regarding a sustainable, environmentally friendly use of energy in cooking. From then on I visited Regula's solar cooker centre in Toliara every year with my Swiss biker travel groups.

As a tour guide I became more and more aware that tourism (not only in Madagascar ...) is a double-edged sword and increasingly requires a reflected and careful travel behaviour. In the respective country of destination, benevolent openness can be brought to the fore through encounters and conversation. The visit of the factory in Fianarantsoa and the related projects of ADES always offered a good opportunity for this.

ADES offers me a real opportunity to give back to the people of Madagascar some of what I have received from this fascinating country and to support the people who work with great energy.



scale by sea from Tamatave to Antalaha and Vohimarina and temporarily stored in fixed depots.



Cooker demonstration with parabolic solar cooker

A highlight was the presence of ADES at the Duke Lemur Foundation's Lemur Festival on 30 October. Many interested people could be sensitized and interviews with local and state radio and TV stations took place.

We are particularly pleased about the cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), which represents Zurich Zoo in the region. WCS operates the Makira Nature Park on behalf of the Malagasy government and, together with Zurich Zoo, supports the Malagasy national park authorities in the protection and operation of the Masoala National Park. Zurich Zoo supports ADES financially, so that 500 additional energy-saving cookers will be used in the Sava region. Thanks to the Masoala rainforest in Zurich, Zurich Zoo is

closely linked to the region and was awarded the «WAZA Conservation Award» for its commitment to the Masoala Peninsula in 2019.

## VISIT FROM THE EMBASSY

Distinguished visit to ADES: The Swiss Embassy supported ADES in the realisation of a new boarding school kitchen for the school «Les Saphires» in Antsohamadiro. Ambassador Chasper Sarrot was delighted to personally inaugurate the new kitchen for the school children.

But this was not all. Mr. Sarrot also visited the production site of our cookers in Fianarantsoa, the centre in Toliara and the school «Les Salines» of our partner organisation Bel Avenir. During lunch together from the solar cooker, Ambassador



The Swiss ambassador in the school «les Salines»



Sarott got to know the ADES staff and immortalized himself in the «golden book» of ADES visitors. We thank the Swiss Embassy for the fruitful cooperation and Ambassador Chasper Sarott for his interest.



Chasper Sarott in the ADES metal workshop in Toliara

## EVERYDAY CHALLENGES

In one of the poorest countries in the world, ADES is facing fundamental challenges during a pandemic of the century. However, there are also everyday problems, such as those that occur in Switzerland. ADES uses pellets made of plant residues from the production of Artemisia products when firing the clay cores in the blast furnace of Fianarantsoa. This allows a significant reduction in wood consumption. Unfortunately, these Artemisia pellets give off an acrid smell when burnt.

Several residents of our production site in Fianarantsoa complained about the emissions from our blast furnace when burning the clay cores. ADES takes the complaints of the local population seriously. After discussions with the people concerned, we built the chimney of the new blast furnace higher than originally planned in order to minimise the emissions. In addition, ADES is examining the possibility of replacing the Artemisia pellets with wood as a fuel.



Artemisia pellets

## AGENDA

Saturday, 8.5.2021

ADES General Assembly, Zollikon

Friday and Saturday 21 and 22.5.2021

Afro-Pfingsten, Winterthur

Saturday, 12.6.2021

ADES anniversary celebration, Zurich region

Further dates and information: [www.ades-solaire.org](http://www.ades-solaire.org)

## LOCATION IN DIEGO SUAREZ

In July 2019, ADES opened a mini-antenna in Diego Suarez. Our partner organisation GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) is already running a project with small-scale handmade cookers. Thanks to the many years of fruitful cooperation with ADES on various other projects, the two organisations are working closely together in this region.

Despite the health crisis and the restrictions due to the measures against the pandemic, the first sales results are satisfactory. The rising cost of charcoal in the city has motivated the population to buy energy-efficient stoves in order to reduce fuel costs as much as possible.



Revendeuses à Diego Suarez

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