

## CROP DIVERSITY

The potatoes and tomatoes introduced by Zahana's agricultural consultant are doing very well and the villagers hope for their first harvest in November. The lack of knowledge of alternative crops will be addressed by example. Zahana will integrate new crops in the curriculum with the children as farmers and explorers of what grows well and what might not.

## REFORESTATION

Growing more trees than are cut down is crucial for Madagascar's ecosystem. Zahana is working with botanists how best to proceed. Trees take time (and water) to grow. Fast growing firewood trees or bushes are being explored as are long-term trees that might be used as carbon credit, making them more valuable for the community than firewood.

## Expanding Zahana participatory development approach to other villages

With its track record of implementing projects with very little money Zahana has already been approached by 3 neighboring villages in the past few months. Two asked for help in building their own school and one their own water system. Currently Zahana is run by unpaid volunteers and expanding the program is challenging with limited resources and time. Zahana is concentrating on making its programs work well in Fiadanana first and then applying the lessons learned in other communities as soon as we and they are ready.

Please share this newsletter and Zahana's work with your friends and visit our website [www.zahana.org](http://www.zahana.org) for new pictures from our visit and more details.

Thank you very much and we look forward to hearing from you.

Jeannette and Markus



Contact:  
[markus@zahana.org](mailto:markus@zahana.org)  
[jeannette@zahana.org](mailto:jeannette@zahana.org)

Zahana Project  
POB 62223  
Honolulu HI 96839

To donate by check,  
please make it payable  
to: "Tides Foundation"  
and in the memo section:  
"Zahana Fund".





**Improved Cook Stove Model at School's Cooking Pavilion**

## IMPROVED COOK STOVES

Deforestation is only getting worse in Madagascar, also in Fiadanana. The men often need to walk 3-6 hours each way to collect their firewood!! Zahana has developed a much-improved cook stove requiring far less wood than open fires. Finding early adopters for this technology innovation is tricky, but the president of the Zahana Women's Club built hers together with Zahana President Ihanta. Currently she only needs twigs, grass or dry reeds to cook her rice. We hope others will learn from her example and switch as well.



**Preparing Mofo Gasy on the Improved Cook Stove**



## FOOD SECURITY

The second improved cook stove is in the schoolyard's cooking pavilion. Most people in Fiadanana, including the children, only eat twice a day and skip breakfast. Zahana decided to provide (and pay for) a meal at school, so the children are not distracted by hunger and can concentrate on learning. *Mofo Gasy*, a cake like staple made from soaked rice dough, will be prepared in the morning with active participation of the children. Adding solar cooking to the equation is the best way to preserve the precious few trees and our next steps need to be carefully planned and require the teacher's active involvement. Zahana plans to buy a variety of solar cooker models, integrating them in the curriculum, and with the student's help determine which technology is most suitable for this climate.

These children are lucky and get one plate of rice in the morning, saved for them from last night's dinner







**Classroom**



**Our two wonderful teachers**

## **WATER SUPPLY**

Seven communal water faucets provide clean and tasty drinking water straight from the source in the mountains. The water means that kids wash their hands, laundry is done more often, gardens are being watered - you can imagine the change continuously running, clean, convenient water means. We enjoyed the luxury of a bath from a bucket full of water after our hike up the mountain!



**Clean water has dramatically changed everyone's lives**

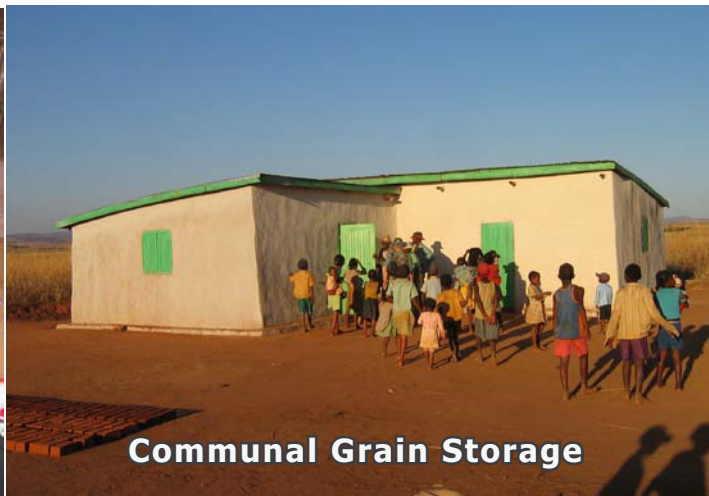
## **ONGOING PROJECTS:**

### **MICRO CREDIT LAUNCHED**

The micro credit program, run by the community, was launched in October by loaning small amounts of money to the Zahana Women's Club to purchase livestock to fatten for sale. Seeds and tools were purchased with help from the micro credit as well. Profits from the sale of goods will be divided between the members and used to buy the next round of animals and seeds. Crops and animals need time to grow. It may take months or years to evaluate, refine and solidify this new venture but the villagers are clear that with a small amount of money there are a number of entrepreneurial ventures for them to pursue.



**Zahana's Women's Group**



**Communal Grain Storage**



# ZAHANA PARTICIPATORY RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MADAGASCAR

## Newsletter December 2007

Dear Friends of Zahana: It's amazing what Zahana has achieved with your help. As many of you may know, Jeanette and Markus had the great privilege to travel to Madagascar in October 2007 and witness Zahana's wonderful achievements and lively participatory development in action. The village is looking like a different place and we can see that real progress is being made.

We'll give you some highlights of Zahana's activities and you can find more information and photos on the website. It is that time of year and we hope that you will consider Zahana while planning your holiday and end of the year giving. A little goes a long way in Madagascar and there is still a lot to do. You might consider donating to Zahana in lieu of gifts as an alternative, stress-free approach. We have created cards for this purpose and will gladly provide you with photos or other materials that might be of use. Just let us know what works for you.

To make giving easier we added a "donate now" button on our website for on-line donations. Zahana is also now part of the BoGo solar flashlight program, which gives Zahana a free flashlight for each you buy. (Details at [www.zahana.org](http://www.zahana.org))



### A NEW VILLAGE

At first glance it looked like we went to a different village. Following suggestions made by a medical specialist during a Zahana training in 2005, most of the houses were white, instead of the red dirt color. They are painted with white Adobe, inside and out, to keep bugs and insects at bay. The village is much cleaner, being swept regularly, and most animals are in pens or chicken coops.

Three of the development priorities set by the villagers - **school**, **water**, and **grain storage** - have been tackled successfully with our participatory approach.

### SCHOOL

The school now has two trained teachers and they are currently sharing 140 children in two classrooms. The children are so excited to be learning. They are learning to read, write and do arithmetic and have agriculture and art integrated in as well. We were also greeted with "Good Morning" as the kids are excited about their connections with people far away. Because of the huge interest in going to school, there is not enough space for all who want to learn. Building a second larger roofed structure, with a covered connecting walkway to the original school building, is needed.

