

EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAMME



Each year upwards of thirteen communes in the **Androy Region** of southern Madagascar suffer drought and severe food shortages (EC SAP). Villagers survive on a limited diet of *raketa mena* (prickly pear), and forage in the forests for food for up to three months during an annual hunger gap. Children suffer malnutrition and villagers are often forced to sell their kitchen utensils to buy food or, as a last resort, trade their cattle – a main capital asset - to survive the hardship.

'MONEY FOR FOOD FOR WORK'

Thanks to funding from Balcombe Trust ALT has been able to implement a relief programme which offers communities **money for food for work** to engage in natural resource management.



Villagers are paid a daily rate to participate in work that addresses some of their most pressing environmental issues: dune formation, deforestation, and water shortages

Wages help them economically at a time they need it most, whilst the activities bring long term environmental benefits

2009 RELIEF PROGRAMME RESULTS

In 2009 **4,867 villagers** in **130 local communities** directly participated in project activities:



- stabilised **25 dunes** and planted wind breaks on 6 coastal dunes
- created **43 water capture basins**
- Re-forested **68 hectares** at **61 sites** of Spiny Forest with as many communities.
- Planted **86,018 tree seedlings/** cuttings
- planted **300,000 sisal plants** and bermuda grass on inland dunes
- planted **15,000 ipomoia (lalanda)** cuttings on coastal dunes

4,867villagers received *money for food*, which enabled them to help their families (approximately 30,000 indirect beneficiaries) and their activities have positive impacts on environmental management, agriculture, and animal husbandry

2010-2012 RELIEF PROGRAMME RESULTS

Due to the success of the 2009 Emergency relief Programme, the Balcombe Trust funded the work for a further two years.



In the first year the project grew filao tree seedlings in the ALT nursery in Tsiombe for planting on dunes and more than 15,000 were grown and planted out on dunes, protected with sisal, branches and with creeping bean and lalanda plants. (see left the creeping succulents spreading and below right the filao trees seedlings growing amongst them – the filao

send down roots first and growth above ground is slower.

In year two the tree nursery suffered the loss of thousands of trees due to unseasonal rains and flooding, unusually timed drought with resultant ant infestations, and a freak hailstone storm. The project consequently had to order up and purchase seedlings from two other nurseries in Anosy – a seven hour drive from Tsiombe and further still from the dunes sites. The new trees were finally delivered and planted on dunes in Marovato in April/May 2012.



In total, the project planted **58 dunes with creeping bean and lalanda** and of these, **47 dunes were planted with 32,178 Filao trees.**



Working with local communities the project also created **water catchment basins and dams in 62 sites, 47 more than projected.** (see left)

It also planted tree cuttings to reforest areas of unique spiny forest, in all **replanting 118 hectares, 37 more than the 80 hectares projected.** (see right)



The project anticipated it would engage 3-5000 workers per year , max 10,000, but in reality **engaged 17,278 villagers**, helping them to address the annual hunger gap and **benefitting approximately 107,985 family members** in total, 60,000 more than projected.



The local ALT Mg team gained a great deal of experience in managing the project locally and have strengthened their position as a leading NGO in the south. This is the first partnership project between ALT UK and ALT Mg, and benefits from the technical direction of ALT's local consultant, Steven Lellelid (Tshiombe).

Results taking hold for the long term: - monitoring in 2012



The pond pictured left is called Ankarembola, one of the 14 excavated in year 1 of the project. It has never gone dry since the rains filled it just after construction. In June 2012 people from 15km south in Motombosy came here for water, having passed dozens of seasonal ponds that were dry. Forty-three people worked to excavate this pond in six days, but it serves the thousands of beneficiaries from the villages within an area of about 50 sq Km.

The picture, right, shows the new growth on what was once a bare parcel of land in northern Nikoly. Tree cuttings were planted by the project in 2010 and there are already 15 viable trees in this small area, being Mozotse, Rohondrohoñe, and Sengatse. The Mozotse are the bright green in the background with heavy heads on top of branchless stems. These have already produced the shade and ambience required to begin greening the grass in their vicinity, the rohondrohoñe in the foreground will take longer, but eventually these trees will fully revitalise the area.



HISTORICAL



ALT began to tackle the problem of dunes in 2002 with funding from the British Embassy and assistance from the World Food Programme 'food for work' programme. It mobilised communities and 90% of the 3500 metres of dunes were stabilised with sisal, creeping vines and 1000 causerina trees. *Monitoring of the dunes some years later demonstrated positive results. See left.*