

## Newsletter May 2023

Dear friends,

It is a privilege to update you again on our adventures in Madagascar.

### Busy busy busy...

But nice to do! As I (Jurgen) write this newsletter, I can hear Abbey playing basketball in the garden. We are blessed with some spacious garden around the house so every now the children can go outside. And that is good because they are working hard as far as schoolwork is concerned. Vanya is busy preparing for her exams that she hopes to take next year in the Netherlands. Issa is also going to take one exam in advance so that he does not have to do all of them at the same time at the end.

This also means a lot of work for Katja. Figuring out exactly what they have to learn for the exams is quite a job. Besides the usual Dutch curriculum, the children also learn subjects that are common in England and America. It is great to see that the children enjoy learning new things.

In the last newsletter, we also mentioned that Issa had started taking karate lessons. Well, that was soon noticed by Abbey, Dani and Simeon. They too, are now regularly swinging and kicking their legs high in the air! It is impressive to see them like that in their special karate suits.

### Maroamboka

Last March, together with Simeon and Abbey, I travelled to our village again. Simeon had wanted to come along for a long time already, and now the time had come! He was lucky because we received a chicken as a gift from our good friends Fanja and Sylvestre. The chicken was already plucked and ready to be prepared! After being away for more than a year, Simeon thought it was time for an old-fashioned muddy hike. We've made a small video which you can see on one of our video channels:

### Ieka! Tegna tanbanivohitra izahay ô!

By the way, did you know that we regularly post videos on our channels? You can choose where to watch them:

[YouTube](#) | [Odysee](#) | [Bitchute](#)

Of course, the visit to Maroamboka has also been used for other things. We visited Menja, our translator, to see whether he had already reviewed the final chapters of the book of Acts. He had not yet managed to do so. But not to worry because we live in a special time when technology is also available in rural Madagascar. But more on that later in this letter.

The road to our village is not getting any better. When we still lived there, we maintained the last part of the road ourselves. This usually allowed us to (at least) get out of the village. Our village is at the bottom of a mountain, which means the road starts right away with a steep slope. Unlike many of the other slopes in our area, in our village we cannot take a run-up. So, it's like the test we (in the Netherlands) had to learn during our driving lessons. That test gets a lot trickier when you have to start on a slope, so slippery that the car just slides down, even when you are on the handbrake. Just to give an indication: The distance from our village to the paved road is only 18 kilometres. Last time, this took us over two hours. With the help of our local friends and a lot of shovelling and digging, we eventually got away. Then the route to the capital is only 522 kilometres, which then takes us another 15 hours... The main road is also a 'bit' bumpy and bad so to speak.

### Our Car

That brings us to the next topic: The car! We are extremely blessed with our car, but even though our 'tank' suffers and needs regular visits to the garage. There are usually not major problems, but slowly the bills do add up. Right now, we have a deficit in our car fund.

We are not worried about that yet because we know that the Lord has always blessed us in terms of finances. Still, we thought it would be good to mention because sometimes we get questions in what ways we can be helped. Well, besides your prayers and other ways of encouragement, a special donation for car maintenance is a very practical form of help. At the bottom of this letter you can see what the possibilities are.

### **Translating**

It is there!!! The book of Acts is ready to be printed. We are in talks with a publisher to see what it will cost and how much we want him to print. Our ideas are to have 200 copies of the Gospel of Luke (second edition, after several corrections and a reformatted layout). And we want to have 100 copies of the book of Acts. The publisher asked if we didn't want more because then the price would go down. Still, we'd rather not do that because you always find various errors in the first printing. Errors, which you want to correct for the second edition.

But we would return to technology for a while. Last time, Menja had not finished the chapters. We then asked him if he could manage to take photos of the chapters that had been checked and then send them to us via Facebook Messenger. His phone does not have that kind of programme, but in the village lives a young man who could help him with that. And so a few weeks ago, we were sent 13 photos. Admittedly, it is difficult to read from the photos what needs to be improved because of the low quality. But thanks to the experience we now have in grammar, words and Menja's handwriting, we succeeded.

We are extremely happy about finishing Acts, and we hope and pray that the booklets may greatly bless the Antanala (and the other tribes in the south-east) of Madagascar. May they come to understand and accept the saving work of our Lord Jesus!

Both translations can be viewed via our website:

**The Book of Acts**

**The Gospel of Luke**

### **Preparations**

Meanwhile, we are already preparing to travel to the village again at the end of May. Issa is going with me which means that Katja has to see how best to combine that with his school work.

We also need new gutters and some metal sheets to protect the back of the house against rising water and termites.

Today the car was taken to the garage for a while. The starter was complaining and one of the glow plugs preferred to leave the work to his colleagues. Little things that can be very annoying when they play up in the middle of nowhere.

Whilst in Maroamboka I would like to talk with Menja about translating the first book of the Bible, Genesis. I also hope to make arrangements with the elders of the village about Sambivelo's return.

### **Sambivelo**

Yes, Sambivelo is nearing the end of his training at the hospital here in Tana. We hope he will be able to return to the village somewhere in July. The idea is that he will be able to provide general medical care to the people. Basically that, what we have also been doing... But than a bit more professional.

The period in Tana wasn't always easy for Sambivelo. As a boy from the countryside, he had to get used immensely to the customs of the city. In the city, for instance, you really have to apologise (in words) to your superior if you do something wrong. In the countryside, people prefer not to talk about it. One day, his supervisor, Tinasoa, called me to say she didn't know how to deal with Sambivelo. She had pointed out some mistakes to him, but he showed no signs of understanding or remorse. She didn't understand it at all.



What was wrong with him! I went to the hospital to have a talk with both of them, separately and together. I was able to explain what was going on, and that it was a cultural difference. Tinasoa understood that it was no malicious intent, and Sambivelo learnt that saying 'sorry' is very much appreciated and takes away the anger and frustration of the other (or at least, it should be like that). It is a learning process for all of us, isn't it?

### Other Pursuits

Finally, a word about other pursuits. In the previous newsletter, we mentioned that we are going to help the Desborough family, from England, with the inbound programme. This is a one-year programme in which new missionaries are going to learn about the culture and the things involved in living in another country, Madagascar in our case. It is a lot of fun to do. Above all, it is very practical. For instance, we went to the local market to buy and bargain, and the Desboroughs will soon be taking a look at different field-projects.

Last month, I also got to teach two Saturdays about missionary work. This took place at school of **Real Mission Movement** of pst. Mamy. The teaching had to be done in Malagasy. No worries! There would be translation. Only, the translator (Manoa, our Unit Leader of AIM-Madagascar), was a bit busy discussing other projects. I managed to bring across my lessons anyway. I was very tired at the end of the day, though. Meanwhile, all students passed their exams, and a new class has already started. The Lord is preparing the Malagasy to reach their own people with the wonderful news of salvation! We have included a short video-report of this too:

**Teaching Malagasy Missionary Students (Dutch & English)**

### Thank you!

We hope that after reading this letter, you, like us, are also looking forward to what the future holds. We can make plans but one thing we know for sure: *"whatever the Lord has planned, will come to pass."* (Proverbs 19:21)

We feel privileged to have so much support in our work. Thank you for your prayers, compassion, support, and encouragements!

Together with you, we want to continue to trust in the Lord!

**For God is good, all the time! And all the time, God is good!**

We sincerely wish you God's rich blessing!

Katja & Jurgen

Vanya, Issa, Abbey, Dani and Simeon Hofmann



# Jurgen & Katja

God dienen op Madagaskar



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Go to our website to find more ways to contact us:

[www.jurgenenkatja.nl/en/](http://www.jurgenenkatja.nl/en/)

## Support us!

### Mandate form (UK donors)

Donors from other countries can contact the following offices:

**US:** [receipting.us@aimint.org](mailto:receipting.us@aimint.org)

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Please go to our website for more details about how you can support us.

## Things to pray for:

### **We are thankful because:**

- 1) we serve a great God;
- 2) we are doing fine as a family;
- 3) we've finished the translation of Acts;
- 4) we see that there is a lot of interest in translation work;
- 5) it might be possible to start the translation of Genesis.

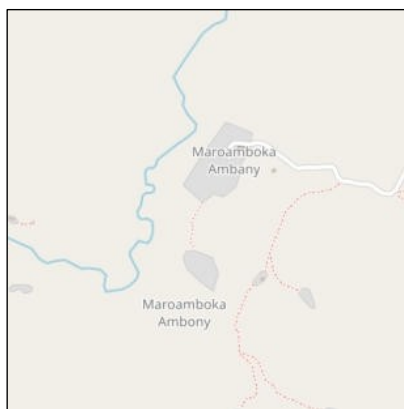
### **Pray that/for:**

- 6) Vanya & Issa can prepare themselves well for their exams;
- 7) the cooperation with local Christians;
- 8) Sambivelo is going to be received well;
- 9) many may be blessed through the translations;
- 10) Katja will have enough energy to educate our children.

## Where do we serve?

Location Openstreet Maps:  
Maroamboka, Madagaskar-  
[21.59506/47.87529](#)

Location Google Maps:  
Maroamboka, Madagaskar-  
[21.595055,47.875621](#)



## Disclaimer

Thank you so much for your interest in our ministry to the Antanala people on Madagascar. We greatly appreciate the love and support of the wonderful people that God has put around us. This ministry is much larger than our family, and we cannot do it alone.

You have either signed up to receive this newsletter or you have been an important part of our lives and we thought you would like to know about our journey. If at any point you no longer want to receive this newsletter, please unsubscribe:

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