



## Newsletter October 2025

Dear brothers, sisters and friends,

Are you curious to find out what's been happening with the Hofmann family on Madagascar? You're in luck, because here is the newsletter, hot off the press! For additional photos, you can go to our website:

<https://www.jurgenenkatja.nl/nieuws-oktober-2025/>

### Twiddling Thumbs or Working Overtime...

Work on Madagascar isn't always predictable. Sometimes it feels like everything is moving at a snail's pace, and you spend your time mostly waiting. Other times, it's a rush, and overtime seems unavoidable.

October was a typical busy month. The second group of Malagasy Bible students wanted to spend a week in Maroamboka. This had been planned since August but kept being postponed—now it was finally going to happen.

In the same month, a new trip was planned to the far southeast of Madagascar: Vangaindrano, Midongy, and Befotaka. This journey followed on from our earlier mission trip to these areas in June 2025.

Two trips in one month may sound manageable, but on Madagascar, it's quite a lot!

### Preparations for Arrival

Issa was scheduled to travel with me to the village. We filled the car with household items, vegetables, and various supplies to make the group feel welcome. We also brought a large amount of translation work, but more on that later.

Getting the group to Maroamboka was a logistical challenge. Most of them—seven men—were travelling from the far south, a journey of several days by bus. Two young women were coming from the capital and would meet our friend Jonoro halfway. Finally, Thaddee joined us; he had been to the village before and lives relatively nearby.

The two young ladies were mainly coming to see if mission work might be for them. I asked Endrin'i Lika beforehand if they could stay at her house. She didn't hesitate and immediately showed me the bed. Very luxurious, considering we men had to sleep on a simple mat. Well, some distinctions have to be made, right?

The first day was all about picking everyone up. I explained exactly where they should get out and had ask locals at the meeting point to help welcome the group, in case I wasn't there yet. Things didn't go exactly as planned. I arrived at the meeting point but there was no one there.

What happened? The first group had got out ten kilometres away, and the second group reported they wouldn't arrive until the afternoon. Only Thaddee got out at the designated location.

The drive from the meeting point to our village is 17 kilometres and takes about an hour and a half. All in all, I spent the whole morning on my new hobby: taxi driving!

Soon after arriving in Maroamboka, I got a message from the second group—they had arrived! So, back to the original meeting point and from there to the village, where they were waiting for me.

### A Mix of Dialects

Our house in Maroamboka was filled with a cheerful cacophony of dialects. The group came from all corners of Madagascar, each with their own dialect: Mahafaly, Vezo, Merina, Tsimihetsy, Anosy, Antemoro, etc. The rest of the afternoon was spent learning the local dialect, Antanala.

The group used our translation work, especially the Bible stories, to practice. They frequently asked me the meanings of words and phrases, as well as how to pronounce them correctly.



### **The Group Gets to Work**

The next morning, the group split into smaller teams to visit surrounding villages. Thaddee returned with his group to the villages he had visited in June. I drove the other two groups to more remote villages. This was possible because the road was dry and solid—otherwise, it would have taken 2–3 hours on foot. With the car, it only took about one hour.

It was also a good opportunity to teach Issa how to drive on such roads. He had wanted to learn for a long time, and now was the chance! He did very well. The extra 4x4 gears didn't confuse him, and after a couple of trips, I could sit back and enjoy the view for a change.

### **Local Christians Lend a Hand**

The groups were supported by local Christians in and around Maroamboka, which is crucial as villagers are often very suspicious of strangers. Endrin'i Lika, endrin'i Leva, Sarobidy, Cilarisy, iaban'i Mainty, and iaban'i Bosila guided the teams and introduced them to the people.

It was encouraging to see that they did not hesitate when asked to help! Encouraging for us, but also for the local churches. They now see that the work we have done for so many years can also be done by themselves—without a pastor or missionary.

### **Satan is Not Idle**

We have often shared the darker aspects of our area. Ancestor worship and spirit veneration are deeply ingrained in the culture. Witch-doctors aren't just figments of *Lord of the Rings* or *Harry Potter*—around Maroamboka, there are at least 15 of them, some known for cursing people to death.

These scenes are reminiscent of Biblical stories, but they are very real today on Madagascar.

On the first day of the group visits, a woman came to our house asking if anyone could help because several people were very sick. 'Sick' can mean many things, but in this case, it was demonic possession. Thaddee's group had just returned from a long day, yet they didn't hesitate.

A few went with the woman, including Issa and I. What we saw was shocking: a young woman in her twenties, who had been perfectly healthy three days earlier, now unable to do anything but growl. She was paralysed in the legs. During prayer, she started kicking, hitting, and contorting into gymnastic poses—even a trained gymnast could learn something!

But "*He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world*" (1 John 4:4). After much prayer, the demons left. Within an hour, she was calm. She was then placed under the supervision of endrin'i Lika, who will teach her about the Lord Jesus, so she can follow Him instead of returning to ancestor worship. This is important because the Bible teaches that expelled spirits may attempt to return—if the person isn't filled with God's Spirit, the evil spirit may soon come back with his friends.

The next day, the group continued ministering to the other "sick" people, all of whom were freed in the same way! Praise the Lord!

### **Why Share This?**

Why not just stick to lighter topics? Because it shows that we are witnessing a significant spiritual battle in and around Maroamboka. Each time we return, we hear stories of people turning from ancestor worship to follow Jesus. This brings great freedom—they no longer fear punishment from ancestors, need not give costly gifts to witch-doctors, and are no longer bound by restrictive taboos.

We see the liberating work of the Lord Jesus Christ! This is bad news for Satan and witch-doctors alike: the first sees people saved for eternity, and the second sees his lucrative business collapsing. There is no greater contrast than here: people are being freed from a life of fear and are learning that this freedom is found only in the Gospel.





Jesus' words become reality:

*"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* (Matthew 11:28-30)

Read more about the effects of breaking from ancestor worship:  
<https://www.jurgenenkatja.nl/en/waarom-zending-er-toe-doet/>

## Luke, Acts, and 41 Stories

Back to the car full of boxes. While driving to the village, Issa and I visited pastors. One, of who we had never met, lived in Irondro along the main road towards our village. People there know us because we have been passing this village for many years. Last time, I had already given out booklets and promised to bring more.

Upon arrival, people quickly gathered at the car—they hadn't forgotten the promise. Instead of distributing them myself, I asked to be taken to the local pastor, Olivier Haja of the Rhema church. He was amazed when I handed him the boxes: 220 copies of Luke, 220 of Acts, and 220 storybooks—nine boxes in total.

He gratefully accepted them. *"Free??"* he asked. Yes, on the condition that they would be used wisely. He regularly goes into the remote areas surrounding Irondro to share the Gospel, where people understand little official Malagasy. These booklets will help him immensely.

The second pastor, Oliva, also serves near the main road and often goes into the remote areas. We have known Oliva for a longer time already, he used to serve as a pastor in our area. He and his wife knew we would come. Last year, while we were in the Netherlands, they received a daughter, and they were eager to show her to us.

It was wonderful to meet each other again and to hand over the nine boxes as well. Several church members were gathered to make an official handover. Oliva expressed his desire for assistance in evangelising the remote areas; later in the week, I brought Jonoro to him so they could plan together, and find out what we can do for him.

It's wonderful to see the translation work gradually reaching people in unreached areas, with pastors like Oliva and Olivier Haja actively using it.

## Vangaindrano, Midongy & Befotaka

In our June newsletter, We mentioned that Wouter van Holst and Jurgen explored the remote valleys of Midongy and Befotaka. The local Antaisaka and Bara tribes speak different dialects, yet we managed to share the Gospel. Several villages requested more teaching, and Bible teachers have since spent a month teaching there.

Matthew 9:37-38 reminds us: *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest."*

In October, Wouter planned another mission: partly to check on previous visits, partly to reach new villages. This time, the Helimission helicopter had extra seats, allowing Simeon and Dani to join. While we visited the villages, they played with Wouter and Sanne's children.

The visits were awesome! I can now follow conversations in Bara and Antaisaka dialects more easily. Together with a young Bible student, Braco, I discussed the Gospel with adults while Wouter and his assistant Willy engaged the children.

We revisited a village where I had jokingly taught people how to greet in Antanala—they hadn't forgotten! Young girls called out: *"Akory lahaly iaban'i Vanya!"* (Good morning, father of Vanya). We stayed overnight, and Nick, the pilot, brought a projector to show the *Jesus Film*—the reactions were incredible, and the Bible stories became clear to many.

Please pray for our new brothers and sisters in these valleys. Following Jesus is not easy when families fear ancestral punishment, and sorcerers are not happy about more Christians.

# Jurgen & Katja

*Serving God on Madagascar*



## Other Matters

As we approach the new year, exams for Issa are fast approaching. We hope to travel to the Netherlands in April for him to take them. Abbey will also take two exams in English and Maths next year, keeping Katja busy helping them study. Your prayers are greatly appreciated!

We are also still translating Genesis. The language is very different from the New Testament, making it slow work. Chapters 1–6 are digitised and ready for a second review. We hope to make more progress in the next village visit.

Finally, we are considering a trip to Ikongo, the heart of the Antanala region, 90 km from the main road. Reports suggest this journey would take 8 hours by 4x4—just over 11 km/h! Local contacts have expressed interest in receiving the booklets.

## Dear friends,

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 is that *“what the Lord intends, happens.”* (Proverbs 19:21)

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

Together with you, we want to keep trusting in the Lord! For God is good, always! And always God is good!

We sincerely wish you God's blessing!

Katja & Jurgen

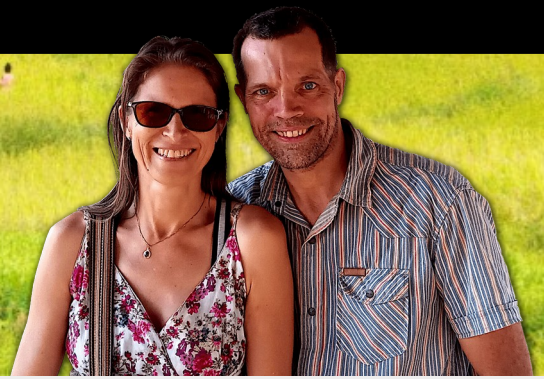
Issa, Abbey, Dani, and Simeon Hofmann  
(and Vanya from the Netherlands)





# Jurgen & Katja

Serving God on Madagascar



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Go to our website to find more ways to contact us:  
[www.jurgenenkatja.nl/en/](http://www.jurgenenkatja.nl/en/)

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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 we serve a great and mighty God;
- 2) local Christians enthusiastically helping with evangelism in and around Maroamboka;
- 3) we are reaching villages in Midongy and Befotaka;
- 4) pastors Oliva and Olivier Haja using the translation work for their ministry.

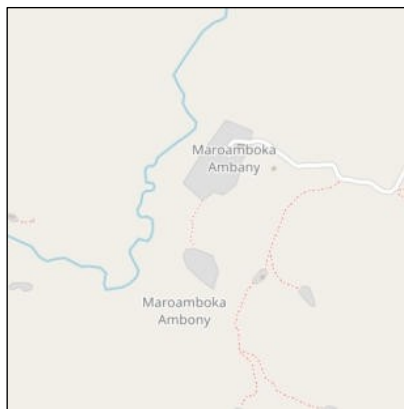
### Pray that/for:

- 5) our financial standing will return to normal;
- 6) the translation work and distribution;
- 7) the Genesis translation;
- 8) plans to possibly visit Ikongo;
- 9) Issa and Abbey's exam preparations;
- 10) that Katja finds rest amidst her teaching responsibilities.

## Where do we serve?

Location Openstreet Maps:  
Maroamboka, Madagaskar-[21.595 06/47.87529](tel:+31654203683)

Location Google Maps:  
Maroamboka, Madagaskar-[21.595 055,47.875621](tel:+31654203683)



## 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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