



Edition **Vakoka Vakiteny**
Publishing Company
B.P. 453
Toliara 601
MADAGASCAR

vakoka.vakiteny@gmail.com
www.vakiteny.org

Vakoka Vakiteny...

...is a young and professional publishing company producing literature for children and youth in Malagasy language.

...is owned and run by a team of young Malagasy.

...contributes to growth and development in Madagascar - culturally and materially.

...promotes the joy of reading and develops the understanding for literature and art in a modern Malagasy environment.

Layout and content: Sophie and Mparany Rakotondrainy

Vakoka Vakiteny News

Dear friends of Vakoka Vakiteny.

Happy new year!

Even if Sophie and I are still living in Ethiopia, we are continuing the work in Madagascar, and particularly thanks to Mrs. Hanta there is always some activity in Vakoka Vakiteny. While she is distributing books and cooperating with schools, we are working on two new manuscripts (see pages 4 and 5).

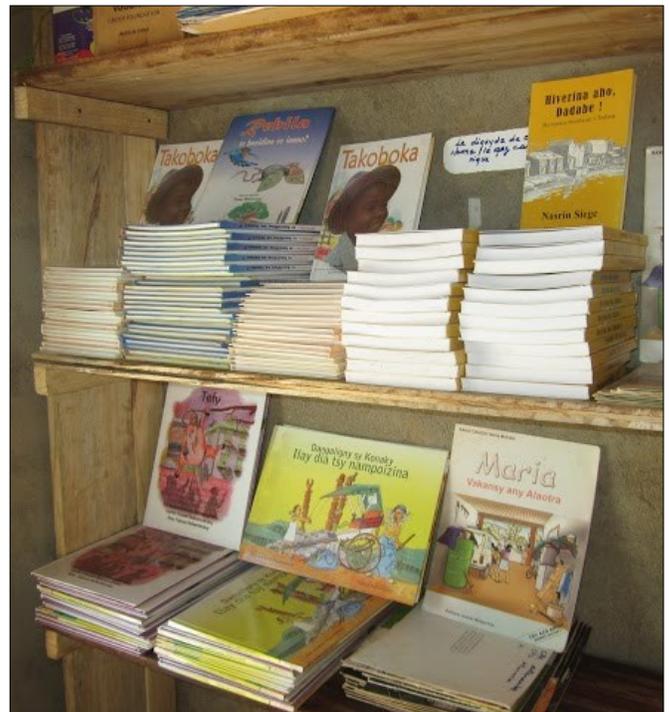
I was in Madagascar in November, both of private reasons and also to meet with Mrs. Hanta and other people involved in the work of Vakoka Vakiteny. Because of political reasons, the situation for people in Madagascar is currently getting worse. Poverty is increasing and educational quality is decreasing. That is just yet another reason to continue with our effort for the Malagasy children!

Mparany Rakotondrainy
Manager of **Vakoka Vakiteny**

Book Distribution

The distribution of the new books Tsingolanga (Bara fairytales) and Sedram-piainana (the autobiography of Voninirina Rakotoson) is going really well.

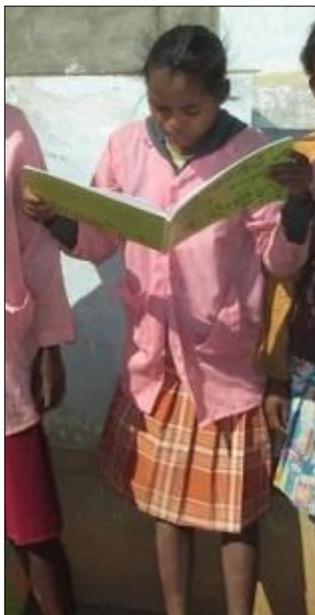
Mrs. Hanta has been around to many schools in cities and on the countryside to distribute the books, train teachers, talk with the children and read aloud.



Some schools are starting to make small libraries to make it easier for the teachers and students to use the books in lessons and in the breaks. The picture shows a "library" in Antsirabe where most of the books are donated by Vakoka Vakiteny.

Among many others, these are some of the schools that have received books:

- The orphanage Ankany Zazakely in Antsirabe received copies of 5 of our titles to have in their library. They also got class sets of the two new books.
- The secondary school in Antohobe on the countryside outside of Antsirabe and the secondary school in Ambilobe close to Antsirabe got class sets of each of the new books and some copies of other titles.
- The Leo club in Antananarivo, a youth club for students at the university (see last newsletter) received copies of the book *Sedram-piainana*. They also got 60 other books to distribute among primary and secondary schools working together with them.



It is important to involve the parents in the education of their children. Therefore, Mrs. Hanta prefers to invite parents to the trainings she is doing when she visits the schools.

On the right picture is a mother from Antohobe who was encouraged to read *Tsingolanga* for her children in primary school and to start early to read for the baby on her arm.



Ambilobe secondary school is a big governmental school with very few resources. Now they have at least got many books from Vakoka Vakiteny.

Mrs. Hanta and the director are on the right in the picture.

An Adventurous Trip

On a cold winter day in June, Mrs. Hanta went on a long trip to a public school far on the countryside between Antsirabe and Antananarivo. They had to walk for many hours on foot and all books were carried on their heads.



Students and teachers volunteered to help carrying the books from the main road to the school. When they finally arrived, they were received with much enthusiasm from the pupils waiting! This school is very poor and four teachers have more than 400 students; in grade 1 there are 112 students and one teacher!

Since they are so far away from any car road they rarely receive visitors or any school materials from the government. They were particularly grateful that Mrs. Hanta spent quite some time with them and that finally someone is appreciating their school and the heavy work load of the teachers.

Feedback from Students and Teachers

We have made a small survey among the schools who have received books from us to find out what students and teachers think about them, how they use the books and which ideas they have for further improvement. The feedback we got was mainly very positive both from the students as well as from the teachers.

The students appreciated the books very much - they like the books, they understand them and they talk with their friends, siblings, parents and grandparents about what they read. One girl writes that she had a good discussion with her mother about punishment of children after having read the book about the boy Takoboka. One 13 year old boy wrote that he used to read aloud for his family from Hiverina aho, Dadabe by Nasrin Siege and that it made him very sad that they had to live on the street. Most children don't have any other books at home.

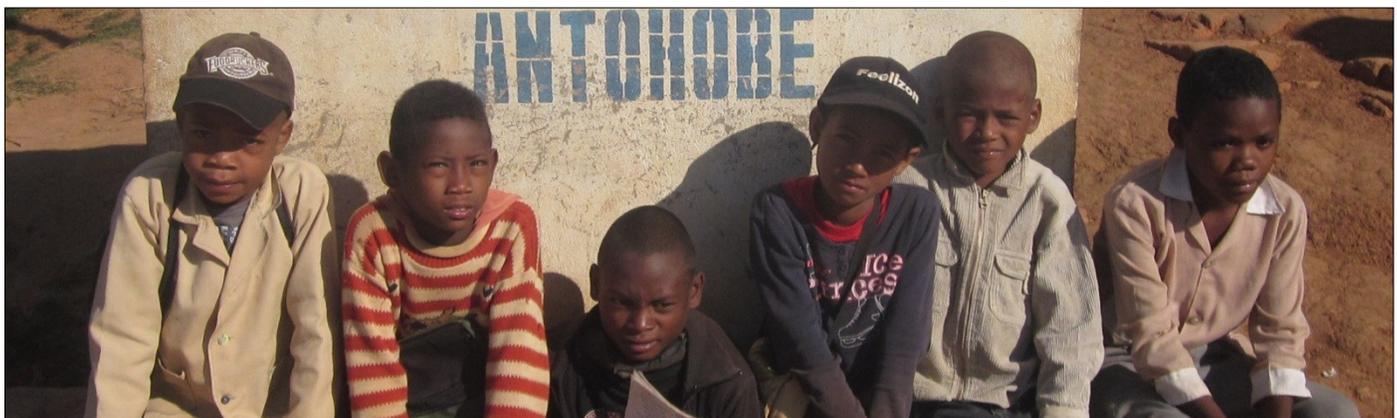


Some students write that they read the books together in groups. One boy writes that he read Takoboka with his friend and laughed a lot. The book about the rat Rebila who wants to fly made one girl talk with her mother and younger sister about being brave and daring to try things together. The book about the oxen Dadanaivo Tefy made the students reflect on destruction of the environment and how the people treat the animals.

One 10 year old girl writes that the books have inspired her to become a writer herself. Many other write that reading helps in learning to spell correctly.

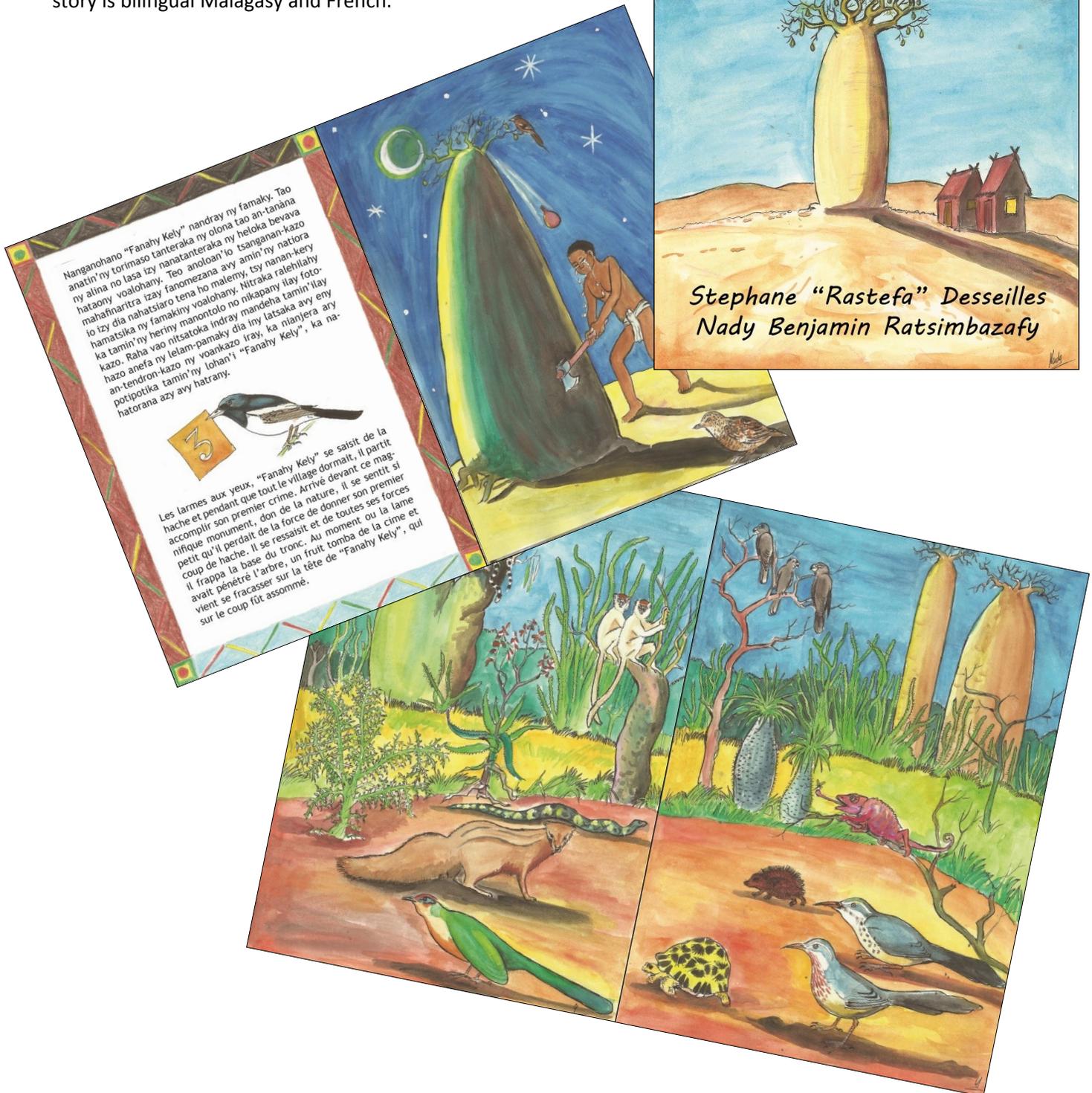
The fairytales are particularly popular among the younger students, whereas the older like the concept of autobiography. It really fascinates them that the story really happened and how much the author Voninirina suffered. Many students ask for more books, and if they could choose, they would like even more colourful books and also poems to read.

We were also happy for some critical feedback from the teachers, for example on the length of the stories; some of them reported that they were too long for use in school. However, the question where 100 % of the teachers answered "very good" was on the teaching by Mrs. Hanta! This confirms again that she is not only handing out the books, but also making sure they are used in a good way.



The Last Big Tree—New Children's Book

The children's book *Hazo be farany* (meaning "The last big tree") written by Stephane "Rastefa" Desseilles and illustrated by Nady Benjamin Ratsimbazafy is now ready to be printed. It is a colourful book for smaller children telling the story of a very poor village in a time of famine. In order to survive, they consider cutting down the last baobab. But is it right to do that? And if they do that, what will happen? The story is bilingual Malagasy and French.



Annual Meeting of the Association

On 26th July 2015 the Association for School and Children's Books in Madagascar had its annual meeting. As the previous years, it was held at Christel Schelshorn's house in Baden-Baden, Germany, which as always was lovely.

Also this year, Mparany and Sophie from Vakoka Vakiteny were invited, and we discussed some of our work during the last year, Mrs. Hanta's activities and our plans for the next school year. The biggest challenge for this year 2016 will obviously be to collect enough money for the printing of the "Environment Book" - probably Vakoka Vakiteny's biggest project so long.



Upper picture: The association + Vakoka Vakiteny in Christel Schelshorn's garden.

Behind from left to right: Christel Schelshorn, Mparany Rakotondrainy, Hansjörg Willig, Hubert Kienzler, Marion Kienzler, Clemens Däschle and Klaus-Christian Küspert

Front from left to right: Sonja Küspert and Sophie Küspert-Rakotondrainy



The members of the association really encouraged us to continue the work of Vakoka Vakiteny. It is very good to know that we have such faithful supporters who understand that our work at the moment progresses somewhat slower as we are both working 100% in Ethiopia.

On the picture on the right Sophie and Mparany are presenting the progress on the bilingual Environment Book in Malagasy and English.

