

Reforestation 2.0 in Madagascar by Zahana 2024-26



Overview: Renewal of reforestation activities in our villages

The reforestation component has always been at the heart of the efforts of the ZAHANA Association since its involvement in environmental issues. We currently have four gardeners to grow seedlings and provide training to the people from all four villages where Zahana is collaborating. Relying on the students of its two schools (in Fiadanana and Fiarenana) and on the voluntary associations of parents, the reforestation strategy adopted so far has certainly made an impact. Trees were planted not only around our schools, but also in many different locations in the area. In the hope to achieve results meeting the objective for “Green Villages”, set in 2024, there is still more that can be done.



Implementation:

This is why we started meeting with the newly established Committee of Leaders since December 2023 regularly. In addition to the ongoing tree seedling nursery efforts by our gardeners at the level of each household and the regular planting of young tree seedlings by students and their parents, two major decisions have been taken, that now are called: **Project Reforestation 2.0**

1. The first major decision is the establishment of a COMMITTEE OF LOCAL LEADERS (Committee of Leaders) responsible for raising awareness, mobilizing, leading and supervising all development activities undertaken locally including, the ZAHANA REFORESTATION ZONE as well as those reforestation efforts around each village that will lead to Green Villages.
2. The second is addressing an official letter to the Mayor of Bevato to which our four villages are attached, requesting the granting of a substantial area of land, which will be called ZAHANA REFORESTATION ZONE; a reforestation area which will be maintained mainly by the residents with the supervision of Zahana and the Committee of Leaders.

Conceptually a long-term project, transmitted from person to person as well as from generation to generation, this approach is considered as a new culture or lifestyle project. It therefore requires a framework and structure for implementation, quantified objectives, periodic training and regular capacity building. In tandem with the training for members of the Committee of Leaders of each village. Awareness-raising activities, especially focusing on the fight against brush fires that pose one of the biggest dangers for young trees, as our experience has taught us. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the mobilization of teachers, parents and community members that are part of Reforestation 2.0. The committee of leaders is in charge of keeping records of all reforestation efforts and constant evaluation. They are also deciding, based on the lessons learned, if the outlined approach works or needs to be refocused as we embark into **Reforestation 2.0**.

Reforestation 2.0 in our villages in Madagascar

Summary: Extension of existing reforestation activities

The result of workshop gatherings with the Committee of Leaders from each village, we determined the following scope: Zahana association will plant 20,000 trees for the 2024-2026 season in its intervention areas. This approach allows to educate villagers to understand the opportunities offered by the forests to get out from poverty, such as producing and marketing honey and dried fruits and providing access to building materials grown locally.

Zahana, with the villagers, will restore the forest which previously existed composed of native trees sheltering wild animals (wild boars, lemurs), native birds (guinea fowl, giant bats, etc.), reptiles and different endemic insects, and at the same time protect the land against erosion.

Note: During this last rainy season in 2023, erosion had buried agricultural land especially rice paddies, thus leading to a reduction in crucial food production in our communities. Trees need to be planted in strategic locations to mitigate against landslides.

Goals: Plant 5,000 trees per village

- Goals: Plant 5,000 trees per village
- 300 by the Committee of Leaders
- 500 by Zahana's school students and teachers
- 200 by the parents' associations of our schools (FRAM)
- 2000 by associations of women, football/soccer players, and other community clubs
- 2000 by community volunteers, people who have benefited from the FVS, manufacturers of improved stoves, local authorities or dignitaries on site visits in the 4 villages, providing them with hands-on reforestation experiences



What kind of trees?

- Planting native woods: Ramy (*Canarium madagascariense*), Rotrafotsy (*Syzygium* sp. 4), Harungana (*Harungana madagascariensis*), Voara (*Ficus tiliifolia*), Raphia palms (*Raphia farinifera*), endemic Bamboos, Aviavy (*Ficus carica*), and other endemic trees recommended by experts for our geographic and climatic area.
- Planting of fruit trees: mango, orange, ampalibe (jackfruit), avocado, moringa, citrus and bananas that provide food and possible income from the edible forest section.
- Planting of fast-growing foreign wood for domestic use, such as cooking and construction materials (eucalyptus, acacia).

Why Reforestation?

- Restoration of the fauna and flora that previously existed.
- Re-establishing the natural system that can once again accommodate the animals and insects that lived in these forests.
- Income-generating activities: fruit drying, woodworking, honey harvesting and marketing.
- Protection against the formation of wide-open cracks (lavakization). This phenomenon is a determining factor in erosion.
- Protection of water sources against drought.
- Attraction of tourists who love wild nature.
- Heritage for children and subsequent generations.
- Update of the well-known proverb "Tanora mamboly hazo, tsara fialofana rehefa antitra" *"Young people planting trees will be well sheltered in old age"*.

Note: **Lavaka**, the holes made in the landscape by erosion is a typical Madagascar phenomenon. In case you need to learn more about the scarred landscape, please google it.



Where are these trees planted?

- Reserved land in the Zahana Reforestation Zone's future forest
- At the edge of the rice fields
- Steep terrain
- Schoolyards
- Borders of trails or roads leading to the villages
- On the mountain to mitigate erosion
- Edges of cracks in the landscape that can foster erosion
- In the lavaka (big holes left by erosion)
- Bottom of valleys or next to steams

Timeframe?

- The season 2024-2026
- Community mobilization: visiting each village to share the objectives of the Reforestation 2.0 project will take place before the next rainy season

What is needed to make reforestation successful?

- training for: organic fertilizers, solar drying and preservation of fruits, carpentry, seed preservation, building bee's nests
- capacity building in tree nurseries and increasing its tree nursery area
- training of the committee of leaders on basic marketing
- monitoring and formal supervision
- ongoing awareness campaigns to involve the community
- measuring community impact

Material resources needed in each village

- watering cans
- wheelbarrows
- hoses
- pump
- sprayers
- grains/seeds
- secateurs (pruners)
- spades
- shovels
- rakes
- buckets
- 1 bicycle/village
- 1 secure storage house for all tools in each village



Let's plant a forest!