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### COVID-19 information about Madagascar

*Date: 24th July*

- 8381 confirmed cases
- 70 deaths
- 5160 recovered
- New cases the last 24 hours: 614
- Regions with cases: Antananarivo, Antsirabe, Toamasina, Fianarantsoa

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# Vakoka Vakiteny News

## COVID-19 Special Issue, no. 5

The COVID-19 response of Vakoka Vakiteny was so successful that we asked for some additional support after sending out our last newsletter in the end of May. The Antsirabe municipality and the district administrator ("chef de district") and the regional office of education were very pleased with the help the community and schools received from Vakoka Vakiteny.

Vakoka Vakiteny was the first association to react quickly to the crisis. Great thanks for the association and people supporting our work!



Ms Hanta distributed the last water containers for the 'prefecture' of a quarter in Antsirabe



Ms Hanta has also distributed materials to an orphanage in Antsirabe

The fight against corona is far from over yet, and it is not until now that there are cases in Antsirabe - increasing every day. With the new additionally received support, Hanta has produced 1000 new face masks and 50 water containers. The restrictions from the government have been tightened, and she is now waiting for clearance for distributing it.

Antsirabe and Antananarivo are in lockdown now and the regions are isolated. All schools here are closed. There will be national exams in September for grade 5 and October for Grade 9 and 12 if the restrictions are lifted. In May and June, the teachers were preparing lessons and exercises for the students. At that time, the students were still allowed to go to school to collect the materials, which is now prohibited. One mobile network company, Telma, is working on establishing possibilities for online study for students, but by far not everybody can afford it. Many children in remote areas will not have access to it because of lack of electricity and phones.



**Before the total lockdown, Ms Hanta distributed the last water containers, masks and posters, along with the newly reprinted *Mihisa*.**

Teachers in governmental schools still receive their salaries, but teachers in private schools and schools supported by parent associations are not receiving salaries anymore. Private factories have had to dismiss many people and unemployment is increasing. The government is planning on distributing food (rice, oil, sugar) for the parent-teacher associations and poor people, both because of loss of income for many people and because the prices are increasing due to the crisis. However, not everyone who needs it will be able to access the support they need.

Vakoka Vakiteny, and especially Ms Hanta, is continuing working throughout the crisis. Ms Hanta and her family, who live in Antsirabe, are currently facing the hardship of the lockdown and the loss of income. However, among the most difficult issues is the lack of support from family and the community due to restricted face to face contact, and the uncertainty of the situation. She is therefore especially grateful for the supporters of Vakoka Vakiteny, not only for financial support, but for not forgetting about Madagascar and the difficulties of people there. We are confident that we will be able to work as normally again as soon as the crisis is over.



At the moment, Ms Hanta cannot continue doing book distributions as planned. The book *Bonenitra*, which has been printed in 1000 copies, is finished and is waiting to be picked up at the printing house in Antananarivo.

However, the print house is closed and Ms Hanta cannot travel to pick it up. 75 % of the printed *Fano* books have been distributed, and some copies of *Mihisa*, the teacher guide with games, were distributed before the complete lockdown was enforced.

We are planning new projects now, which will be printed after the crisis is over. The first book to be printed is a new book by Beth Dickens and Tahiry Rajaonarison who made the successful book about the turtle *Fano* and the trash in the ocean. The new book is called *Fa nankaiza daholo ny tany?* meaning 'Where has all the soil gone?' It is about erosion in Madagascar, and is again richly illustrated with Beth's beautiful aquarels.



Ms Hanta (left) distributed Mihisa in May. She worked non-stop until the government enforced a total lock-down.



The finished *Bonenitra* is waiting for distribution



New book:

*Fa nankaiza daholo ny tany?*

Where has all the soil gone?