



Newsletter November 2024

Dear brothers, sisters and friends,

November has arrived! Our furlough in the Netherlands came to an end in the second week of October. We were taken by David Pavlotzky and Susanna Geertsma in two cars to Schiphol airport and from where we flew back to Madagascar via Nairobi, Kenya.

Two Different Worlds

After more than six months in the Netherlands, it took some getting used to the Malagasy world again. It felt strange to suddenly be back. At the same time, it was also like coming home again. The Malagasy's incorrigible social behaviour can be very overwhelming. For us, it feels like our own.

It was amusing that the customs officials treated all foreigners as French speakers, but when they saw us, there was recognition—at least in one of them, and so the staff started speaking happily in the national language. Well, where do you find that? That after such a long period, you are recognised as those foreigners who speak *our* language.

Staff from the hotel next door picked us up. They too, are good acquaintances because we always stayed there when we left the village for a few weeks. All the luggage was loaded into the van and the drive home could begin. That's only 1.5 kilometres, but on Madagascar we don't count in distance, but in time ... That was a bit different in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands, everyone seems to know the rules. Actually quite boring, because in the Netherlands you never once have an oncoming car, a truck in our case, suddenly turning into your side of the road because it wants to overtake its predecessor 😊

Putting Everything Back in Order

Even though we are now no longer living in a wooden house in a remote village, we had to do some work nonetheless. The Stropkap family from the Netherlands used our house for the months we were enjoying our furlough. Two weeks before we returned, they moved to the southeast, where they will spend two years helping with a childcare project. Two weeks on Madagascar is just enough to get everything nice and dusty again. October is one of the driest months, and that translates into dust, and more dust, and in the other corner of the house some more dust.

Katja was also busy arranging all our personal belongings that we had put away for so long. All got its place again. Nice photos, school books, beautiful wood carvings. So Katja made our house into a home again!

I found myself back in the old-fashioned position of fixing everything. Fortunately not as much as we were used to in our house in the village, but still. Electricity cables that needed replacing, a water pipe that had snapped, a car that would not start despite a solar panel on the battery and so on. I often tell new missionaries that they had better learn how to fix all kinds of things as soon as possible. If you don't know how to work with a screwdriver, duct-tape, and epoxy glue, things get complicated quickly.

Vanya

In the previous newsletter, we already told you that Vanya wanted to go back to Madagascar with us for little less than a year. That is, of course, very nice! She has now started volunteering in a maternity hospital—set up and run by a German lady, Tanja Hock. We have always got on very well with Tanja, so she didn't find it a problem at all to get Vanya involved.

Vanya also hopes to join a project in the central part of the city. There, children are helped with all kinds of diseases and problems. While the doctors are busy, the children are kept busy with games and taught about the Gospel. A man who regularly leads a similar project, said Vanya was like a fish in water. She plays with the children and shares a hug here and there. Many of these children know little affection and then when you get a pat on the head, or someone puts one's arms around you ... Yes, that works wonders. It was not for nothing that the Lord Jesus said, "*Let the children come to Me.*"



Translation Work

We are anxiously awaiting the arrival of the translation work printed in the Netherlands. It goes by container ship so it will take some time, but if all goes well it will arrive sometime at the end of November. There are still some extra costs involved, but I'll write about that later in this letter.

My main concern now is to figure out how to distribute the work effectively. Just travelling somewhere and giving away the booklets doesn't work. We want the material to reach hungry (eager to learn) people. That is quite a challenge!

One of the problems lies in the fact that many pastors of the established churches are quite traditionally trained. By traditional, I mean that they often received their education in the capital and were taught that only the official national language should be used in preaching. In addition, many of them are convinced that all Malagasy are perfectly capable of understanding the official language. This is not surprising either because when you preach and ask people whether they understand the preaching, they will all answer in the affirmative. This makes that many leaders have little interest in for example the translated Bible stories.

So it is a matter of finding the right people who recognise the added value in reaching people in their own heart language.

Furthermore, we are still working on the Book of Genesis. The first six chapters have already been digitised and can be checked. Actually, I had wanted to continue working on this during our furlough, but it didn't happen. This is not only because we were too busy. No, somehow the contact with our translator, Menja, doesn't seem to work out. I have sent him several messages and tried calling him, but I am afraid the details have changed. So far, then, we are having the most success when we see and speak to him in person.

Upcoming Trip to the Village

Hopefully, I'll see Menja soon again. Lord willing, I will travel to our village on the 16th of December. I had actually wanted to do it earlier, but that would have given some little time to organise it. After all, this time I am not going alone.

Tanja Hock—you know, the lady of the aforementioned hospital—had asked in the past if I could not bring one of her employees, Tiavina. Then he too could experience what it's like to live in such an area. At the same time, he could then provide some medical care and be an encouragement to Sambivelo.

I did manage to reach Sambivelo by phone. Because of discord in the family, he now lives further down the road. Having run out of medicine and other medical supplies, he has gone back to working in the rice fields. Hopefully, Tiavina can encourage him and help him get back to some of the medical care he was trained for in the clinic.

Jonoro is the second person to come along. Jonoro, also known as Pastor Jonoro, is a little older than I and does have experience of rural life. Hopefully, he can build a bridge for the distribution of the booklets. In any case, the idea is to put him in touch with the new (young) pastor of the church in our area. This pastor, called Oliva, clearly does have an interest in translation work. I hope to link him with Jonoro so that he can encourage him and maybe even give some wisdom, as an older brother can.

Then the third person to come along. Neto is a young Brazilian aged 23. He is on Madagascar for a year. AIM sent him as a short-termer, mainly to learn what mission means. So Neto is going with me to see what I am up to.

In short, it will be a trip like nothing I have done before. We look forward to seeing how the Lord will work it out.

Financially

During our leave, we talked about finances as little as possible. We didn't want people to get the idea that we only came to raise sponsorship. Our sincere intention was, and still is, to encourage people with the stories of God's work on Madagascar.

Nevertheless, we cannot avoid mentioning our financial situation in this newsletter. Since our last furlough from 2020, several sponsors have had to withdraw.



We are very grateful to them for all the years of support! Unfortunately, we did not get any new sponsors to fill these 'gaps'. As a result, we have an average shortfall of 500 to 1,000 Euros per month. Of course, this is not only because some sponsors have stopped. We also have to deal with increasingly expensive things like food, travel, and housing. In other words, three years ago we could do a lot more with 25 Euros than we do now.

We would like to ask you to join us in looking for new sponsors. But also to look into yourself. Ask the Lord to see if you can give a little more. After all, your donation is also subject to inflation. As we described above, three years ago your donation allowed us to buy more than we do now. It is good to bring this to the Lord in prayer.

You can find out more about support on our website:

<https://www.jurgenkatja.nl/geven/>

We are very grateful for every donation!

Shipping of Translation Work

As mentioned earlier in the letter, the translated booklets are on their way. The Gospel of Luke, the book of Acts, and the booklets with 41 stories from the Bible—all in the Malagasy-Antanala dialect. As is often the case with these kinds of projects, there are unforeseen costs. To get the material to the capital, we still need an additional 576 Euros.

That sounds like a hefty sum, but allow me to calculate it for you. If we have the booklets printed here, it will cost between 5,000 -100,000 Ariary per booklet. So that's about €1.50 per booklet. There are 7500 booklets on the way. Multiply that by €1.50, and you'll see that we're talking about a value of about € 11250. You understand that this makes us look at the €576 quite differently.

Why are we mentioning this now? We wanted to share this with you because we understand that not everyone can support us monthly, but most people are able to make a one-off donation. Now if this is a project you want to be a part of then you can transfer your donation through one of the options on our website:

<https://www.jurgenkatja.nl/geven/>

Subject to '*additional donation shipping booklets.*'

This was it for now

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!

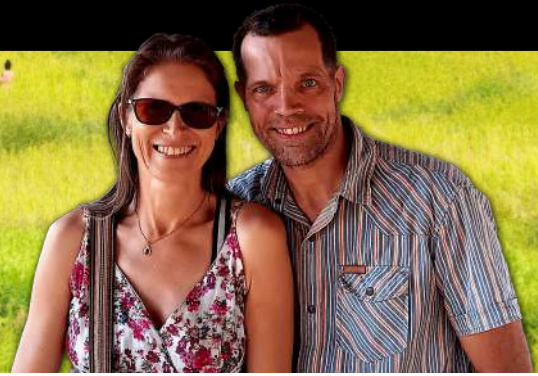
Katja & Jurgen

Vanya, Issa, Abbey, Dani and Simeon Hofmann



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/

Support us!

Mandate form (UK donors)

Donors from other countries can contact the following offices:

US: receipting.us@aimint.org

EU: supporterfinance.eu@aimint.org
Tel: +44 (0)115 9838 133

NL: finance.nl@aimint.org
Tel: +31 (0)317 7124 67

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 have enjoyed our furlough;
- 3) the people make us feel welcome;
- 4) the booklets are on their way.

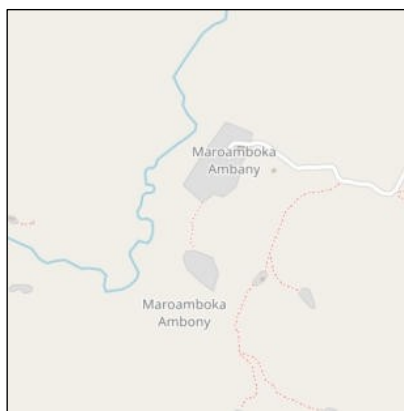
Pray that/for:

- 5) we are able to fill the gap in our support,
- 6) a fruitful trip to our village;
- 7) the young pastor, Oliva, and his wife. They have a very difficult task;
- 8) We are able to get the booklets to the right people.

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:

unsubscribe@jurgenenkatja.nl