

# Six-monthly information note of the BIOCOM project: Second half of 2023

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## More than 400 children living around the Atsinanana Rainforests World Heritage property have access to education

For a decade, no school existed in the rural commune of Ambatoabo, the fokotany of Talakifeno which is located near the Andohahela National Park. To contribute to the improvement of this situation of education for the children of this community, a public primary school that will educate 425 children was built, furnished and equipped by UNESCO and inaugurated on October 7, 2023.



*Public Primary School built in the fokotany of Talakifeno that can accommodate 425 students from the community bordering the Andohahela ©National Park UNESCO*

### A school and education for sustainable development for children living near the Andohahela National Park

For the Anosy region, more precisely in the fokotany of Talakifeno which is located near the Andohahela National Park, no school existed to allow the local community to provide a decent education for their children for the last ten years.

To improve this situation, a Public Primary School (EPP) comprising 3 classrooms furnished with 75 benches, 3 storage cabinets, 3 desks for teachers and a latrine with two cubicles was built in this fokotany. UNESCO, through its BIOCOM project, funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), supported the construction of the entire building as well as the supply of all the furniture.

The inauguration ceremony of the EPP took place under the patronage of the Governor of the Anosy region and honored by the presence of representatives of the Regional Directorate

of National Education, the Commune of Ambatoabo, neighborhood chiefs and community leaders of the locality.

The establishment of this school will allow the acquisition of basic knowledge by students in reading, writing, elementary arithmetic and general knowledge but also the social development of their "being". Thus, the fundamental subjects that will be taught there will be Calculus, Natural Sciences, Malagasy, French, History and Geography and Physical Education. But it is also planned in the curriculum of this school to introduce education for sustainable development to instill in these children from an early age the importance of conserving and protecting biodiversity.

Thanks to this achievement, 425 students from the local community of Andohahela National Park will have access to quality education.

### The BIOCOM project

The BIOCOM project (Conservation of **Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for Integrated Community Development in Madagascar's National Parks**), **funded by the** Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), aims to conserve the Outstanding Universal Value of Marojejy National Park and Andohahela National Park in the [rainforests of Atsinanana](#) inscribed on the [List of World Heritage in Danger](#) since 2010 due to various anthropogenic pressures. The project also aims to safeguard the protected harmonious landscape of the Montagne des French.



## Hope for a better future: lifting the young people living around the Atsinanana Rainforests World Heritage property out of extreme poverty

In the vicinity of the Marojejy National Park, the young people who make up the majority of the local population are no longer able to complete their studies due to the precariousness of their economic situation. To overcome this difficulty for young people, a vocational training center has been set up near the protected area and inaugurated by UNESCO on September 18, 2023, where 140 young people will be able to follow vocational training on metal structures and masonry.



*Inauguration ceremony of the Vocational Training Center on September 18, 2023 with the Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training of Madagascar, Mrs. VAVITSARA Rahantanirina Gabriella © UNESCO*

### Developing the professional skills of young people for the benefit of biodiversity conservation

The population around the Marojejy National Park, largely vanilla and rice growers, is mostly made up of a young population. For the past three years, the population has been facing a fluctuation in the price of vanilla and is looking to diversify their source of income to be able to survive this situation. Thus, the park is under various pressures because of activities that serve as alternatives for the riverside communities in their survival. In addition, these young people from the community drop out of school without a diploma or qualification because they lack the means to continue their studies and especially to help their parents in subsistence activities. To alleviate this precarious situation and





help this community, a Vocational Training Center (VTC) has been set up there to support the development of young people's skills and give them hope for a better future through training that will allow them to work in decent jobs later on. The CFP is composed of 2 furnished and equipped buildings including 3 rooms for training, 3 offices for administrative staff and 2 rooms for practical work. This construction, with the furnishings and equipment of the various rooms, is a contribution to UNESCO's BIOCOM project, funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and in collaboration with the Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational Training, which has provided the land for the establishment of the centre and has ensured the recruitment of the administrative and technical staff of the centre.

The center was inaugurated by the Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training, VAVITSARA Rahantanirina Gabriella, the Deputies of Madagascar elected in Sambava, the Governor of the SAVA region, local authorities and representatives of development partners working in the environment of the region. Thanks to this initiative, 140 young people from the local community of the park will benefit from vocational training in steel work and masonry, two promising sectors for the region concerned. In the long term, the establishment of this center will reduce deforestation through the availability of local masons trained in the construction of permanent houses whose practices will focus on the use of hardwoods in the protected area, the reduction of the risks of the ravages of homes during the passage of cyclones that affect the region each year, the increase in agricultural production such as rice cultivation, through the improvement of locally manufactured agricultural equipment, the development of innovation namely the manufacture of improved stoves that will contribute to reducing deforestation and the increase in the rate of available and skilled labor in the community of Marojejy National Park.

*"Vocational training will allow the development of the SAVA region through job creation and the availability of local skills. The preservation of our natural resources such as the Marojejy National Park is one of our priorities in the Region which has as its slogan: Developed Sava Region. »*

***Teddy Gervais Seramila, Governor of the SAVA Region***



*The Vocational Training Centre located in the city of Sambava, comprising 6 training rooms, 3 offices for administrative staff and 2 practical work rooms furnished and equipped by UNESCO © UNESCO*

## The BIOCOM project

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## 30 young men and women trained and certified in metalwork and basketry in northern Madagascar

Certificate and installation kit ceremony for 30 young men and women from the riverside community of the protected harmonious landscape of the Montagne des French after 4 months of professional training in metal work and basketry art, on November 21, 2023 in the city of Diego-Suarez.



*22 women and 8 young men from the community bordering the protected harmonious landscape of the Montagne des French who received their certificate of completion of training in the art of basketry and metal © work UTR SAGE DIANA*

### Vocational training in promising professions: hope for the economic empowerment of young people and women

22 women from the community bordering the protected harmonious landscape of the Montagne des French benefited from 4 months of training in the art of basketry while 8 young men from the same community received training on metal work. A training that allowed these young people and women to develop their skills and learn two promising trades in the region concerned. Indeed, on the one hand, Madagascar is well known for its crafts, especially in the field of basketry, it is a promising sector for the northern region of the country, especially since it has the raw materials necessary for the exercise of this profession while developing natural resources, and on the other hand, the field of



metal work is a very popular sector in the city of Diego-Suarez because according to a study conducted by UNESCO, The demand for labour for this sector is considerable. During this ceremony, all participants were also provided with installation kits to support them in the start of their future professional activity.

This ceremony, which was held on November 21, 2023 in the city of Diego-Suarez, was honored by the presence of the Director of Development of the DIANA Region, the Secretary General of the Prefecture of the city of Diego and the Regional Directors at the level of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, National Education, Technical Education and Vocational Training, Handicrafts and Trades, Communication and Culture as well as Tourism.

*" It is thanks to the existence of the protected harmonious landscape of the Montagne des French that the beneficiaries have received this support and that they are expected to make a firm commitment to protect the protected area from all forms of pressure."* underlined the National Coordinator of the UNESCO Antananarivo Branch in her speech.

## The BIOCOM project

The BIOCOM project (Conservation of **Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for Integrated Community Development in the National Parks of Madagascar**), funded by the **Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)**, which aims to conserve the outstanding universal value of the **Marojejy National Park and the Andohahela National Park** in [the Atsinanana rainforests](#) inscribed on the [The World Heritage Initiative, which has been in danger](#) since 2010 due to various anthropogenic pressures and to safeguard the protected harmonious landscape of the Montagne des French, has supported the entire implementation of this training as well as the provision of installation kits for the learners.





# Preparing for the introduction of Education for Sustainable Development in the school curriculum in Madagascar

Training materials are available and teachers are ready for the introduction of Education for Sustainable Development for students attending the new public primary school located in the vicinity of Andohahela National Park, a World Heritage property of the Atsinanana Rainforests.



*The teachers of the recently inaugurated public primary school of the fokotany of Talakifeno during their immersion in the didactic and pedagogical materials on Education for Sustainable Development. ©UNESCO*

## Teacher training, a crucial step in the introduction of Education for Sustainable Development in the school curriculum

According to a study conducted by UNESCO entitled "Learning for our Planet", it is highlighted that school curricula do not provide sufficient knowledge to act, adapt and respond to climate change. UNESCO has therefore set a new goal: to make environmental education an essential component of school curricula in all countries by 2025.

As part of its implementation, the UNESCO project entitled BIOCOM (Conservation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for Integrated Community Development in the National Parks of Madagascar), funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA),



includes as activities the integration of Education for Sustainable Development into school curricula, particularly in the areas of intervention of the project, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education (MEN) and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD).

After the inauguration of the new public primary school in the fokotany of Talakifeno which is located around the Andohahela National Park, the teachers were trained on the use of the didactic and pedagogical materials that will serve as a course support for this specific Education for Sustainable Development program during the second half of 2023. At the end of these preparations, students in the preparatory course and the first year intermediate course enrolled in this new school will be able to benefit from the Education for Sustainable Development program from the beginning of 2024.

To make this initiative a reality, the BIOCOM project financed the construction and equipment of the school, the design and production of teaching and teaching materials and the training of teachers on this new component.

# Education for Sustainable Development for students in the vicinity of the Atsinanana Rainforests, World Heritage property

Since the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, 7600 students from schools and colleges located around the Marojejy National Park have benefited from Education for Sustainable Development.



*The Education for Sustainable Development course in a 5th grade class of a middle school located near the Marojejy National Park. ©UNESCO*

## Educating children about Sustainable Development from an early age to prepare young people who are responsible and committed to the management of natural resources

In the vicinity of Marojejy National Park, the local communities living there have limited knowledge of the importance of protecting biodiversity and a low level of participation, especially of women and youth, in the governance of natural resources.

This situation demonstrates a gap in environmental education for the population. To address this, the BIOCOM project supported the initiative to introduce Education for Sustainable Development into the curriculum of schools and colleges in 10 municipalities around the Marojejy National Park. For the implementation of this initiative, 135 teachers were trained on the use of the Education for Sustainable Development kit in September 2023. Currently, 7600 students in the preparatory course, the first year intermediate course and the 5th grade have been benefiting from this Education for Sustainable Development program as part of their Life and Earth Sciences course since the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

The acquisition of knowledge in terms of Education for Sustainable Development for these students will allow them to better understand the importance of preserving the environment from an early age and will contribute to preparing responsible young people committed to the management of natural resources and the reduction of pressures in the Marojejy National Park.

The BIOCOM project has provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of National Education in all the stages necessary for the implementation of this initiative, from the design of teaching materials, their production to support for teacher training.

### The BIOCOM project

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# The UNESCO Antananarivo Branch at COP 28 through the BIOCOM project

The UNESCO Antananarivo Branch took part in the 28th UN Climate Conference of the Parties (COP 28) held from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Dubai.



UNESCO and representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development during the sharing session on the BIOCOM project at COP 28 ©UNESCO

## Better visibility of Madagascar's initiatives at COP 28

This year, Madagascar had the privilege of having its own pavilion for the first time since its participation in the COP thanks to the support of the United Nations System in Madagascar, including the UNESCO Antananarivo Branch through the BIOCOM project (Conservation of **Biodiversity and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for Integrated Community Development in Madagascar's National Parks**). **funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)**. This pavilion, as a showcase for Madagascar, gave significant visibility to the country's efforts and initiatives in the fight against climate change at this international conference which brought together the signatory countries of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as well as world leaders, political decision-makers, scientists and stakeholders from all over the world, climate actors.

The Malagasy delegation was led by the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Mrs. Vina Marie-Orléa, the Minister of Transport and Meteorology, Mr. Ramonjavelo Valérie, the Minister of Public Health, Mr. Zely Arivelo Randriamanantany and the Minister of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Mr. Ravokatra Fidiniavo.



*"Faced with the glaring reality of climate change, the Malagasy people are calling for an even fiercer fight. The scientific findings of the IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, warn us that it is imperative that we intensify our collective efforts,"* said Vina Marie-Orléa, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development

## Participation in the thematic day of December 9, 2023, dedicated to nature, land use and oceans at COP 28

Apart from the various official COP negotiations, thematic days were organized, notably in the National Pavilion of Madagascar from December 3 to 10, 2023. The UNESCO Antananarivo Antenna, alongside six other organizations, namely the World Wild Fund Madagascar, Transparency International Initiative Madagascar, MIHARI network, a network of locally managed marine areas in Madagascar, the International Organization for Migration, the NGO Tany Ifandovana and the Centre for Research in Environmental Education in Madagascar, was represented by the National Coordinator of the Antenna, Mrs. Julie Rakotoson, as part of the thematic day dedicated to nature, land and oceans on December 9. This thematic day was honored by the presence of the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Mr. Mamitiana Andriamanjato who gave the opening speech of the thematic day, a day rich in exchanges and sharing on Madagascar's progress and achievements in the fight against climate change. In addition, the intervention of the UNESCO Antananarivo Branch was marked by the sharing of information on the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme and the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention as well as on the role of World Heritage in the fight against climate change, particularly through the good practices of the BIOCOM project.