

# CRS Madagascar Newsletter



## December 2022 Edition



What I admire about CRS staff is the way they relate to the community program participants, working hand in hand..."

**Sean Callahan -**

**CEO Catholic Relief Services**

## Headlines:

- Event: 60 years of CRS Madagascar
- Gender and Inclusion: CRS Madagascar's participation in the «16 Days of Activism against GBV» international campaign
- Youth: Youth participation in sustainable development via the Maharo and SPICES projects
- Climate Change: Dune stabilization
- New projects
- Maharo: A recipe competition in the South
- WASH: FSAW certification in the SAVA region
- TSIRO: Biological inventory of the project



# Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been present and involved in Madagascar for 60 years.



CRS CEO Sean Callahan and Country Representative Carla Fajardo speak at the official celebration of CRS Madagascar's 60th anniversary, held in Antananarivo on November 4, 2022. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS

## In early November 2022, Catholic Relief Services celebrated 60 years of involvement in Madagascar.

To celebrate the occasion, a day of activities and festivities was held in Antananarivo and Tsihombe. Joined by CRS President and CEO Sean Callahan, the event in Antananarivo was an opportunity for the CRS Madagascar team to renew its commitment to the Catholic Church, strengthen its collaboration with the government of Madagascar, and celebrate its humanitarian assistance and development partners.



Cardinal Désiré Tsarahazana speaks at the official celebration. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS



Demonstration of water quality analysis kits at the WASH stand. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS  
Demonstration of water quality analysis kits at the WASH stand. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS



Using virtual reality to get an up-close look at some of CRS' environmental activities. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS

## Celebration of CRS Madagascar's 60th Anniversary



The official celebration was held in Antananarivo on November 4. In the presence of CRS CEO Sean Callahan, government representatives and technical and financial partners were invited to learn more about CRS' interventions – notably those in the Environment, WASH, Youth, Emergency, and Health and Nutrition sectors – via interactive exhibitions and hands-on demonstrations.



Nutrition education simulation at the nutrition booth. Photo by Miguel Rasolofo/CRS



Olfactory challenge with essential oils from the SPICES project. Photo by Miguel Rasolofo/CRS



Sean Callahan, CEO de CRS, et les staffs du bureau de Tsihombe, en tenue traditionnelle, lors de la célébration du 60ème anniversaire de CRS Madagascar, qui s'est tenue à Tsihombe le 02 novembre 2022. Photo de Jospha Ralainandrasana/CRS

After he visited intervention sites in the Androy region, Sean Callahan met the CRS team in Tsihombe. To mark the occasion, performances, which included animations and talent contests, were put on by the local staff.

Catholic Relief Services has been in Madagascar for 60 years, serving the most vulnerable households in all 23 regions of Madagascar. Today, more than 24 multisectoral projects are being implemented. CRS' priorities include: improving the quality of education; emergency response; developing resilient livelihoods; combating climate change; improving access to health care; promoting good nutrition; improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene; and promoting youth.

# Gender and Inclusion

Catholic Relief Services and its partners are hard at work in the fight against GBV in Madagascar



The «16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence» campaign was observed worldwide from November 25 to December 10.



Discussion session with staff as part of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence programming. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS

CRS Madagascar created a discussion space where the staff was invited to freely discuss their perceptions and daily difficulties regarding various gender-related issues. The topics discussed were safeguarding the integrity of individuals, the different types of gender-based violence, advocacy at different levels, and harassment in the workplace. Finally, a role-playing session took place so participants could better understand issues around disability and inclusion and reflect on transformative solutions.



Awareness and open discussion session at the Beloha Youth Center. Photo by To Filamatra/CRS

At the regional level, through the Maharo program implemented by CRS, all the communes in intervention districts in the Androy region contributed to behavioral change activities related to gender-based violence. To engage and involve local authorities in the fight against this type of violence against women, children, girls, and people with disabilities, sessions and safe and open discussions on human rights, gender-based violence laws, inclusion, complaints mechanisms, and the establishment and importance of Komity Miaro Zo were held in collaboration with the district services of the Ministry of Population, Social Protection and the Promotion of Women as well as the Komity Miaro Zo Sensitization.



Working with representatives of the Catholic Church's Diocese and the Regional Directorate of Youth and Sports, youth from the Beloha district of the Androy region were especially active in this event. Supported by the local team of Humanity and Inclusion, CRS's implementing partner in the Maharo program, these young people affirmed their understanding that violence is detrimental to the country's development. They also shared the difficulties they face in speaking and expressing their opinions freely in society; they want to contribute and have more space to be heard. CRS promotes youth participation in community decision-making through life skills and entrepreneurship training and encourages participation in the political arena by supporting young leaders to establish themselves as National Youth Parliamentarians.

# Youth's place in sustainable development



Group photo of the young participants during the celebration of the National Youth Summit held in Fort Dauphin, which brought together more than 100 young people from the Androy, Anosy, Atsimo Andreana, Vatovavy, and Fitovinany regions. Photo by Miguel Rasolofo/CRS

## Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has identified youth as a priority axis for development in Madagascar.

Catholic Relief Services Madagascar works to promote youth through Maharo and SPICES. As part of these projects, youths receive training in life skills and entrepreneurship, vocational training in sewing, auto mechanics, and cooking and benefit from a networking platform.

The celebration of International Youth Day 2022 focused on «Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages.» Two events were held during August around this international theme: the «National Youth Summit» held in Fort Dauphin and the «Youth International Day» held in Beforona, Moramanaga.

These two events brought together approximately 200 youths from different regions.



Young entrepreneur from the commune of Tranovaho, Beloha district, Androy region, exhibiting his products during the celebration of the National Youth Summit held in Fort Dauphin. Photo by Miguel Rasolofo/CRS



Visit to a sawmill in Antsirabe during the Regional Youth Summit in July 2022. Photo by Jerry Andrianaivoarivony



Carnival in Beforona, Moramanga for the World Youth Day on August 12, 2022. Photo by Jerry Andrianaivoarivony

## CRS' sustainable solution to the consequences of climate change in southern Madagascar.



Sand dune stabilized with sisal plants and lalandas at the Afondralambo site. Photo by Miguel Rasolofo/CRS

### Catholic Relief Services is implementing a dune stabilization system to combat wind erosion sustainably

**« We can now cultivate our crop fields with peace of mind because there is no longer any risk. »**

*Tolisoa Fihereha, surveillance police at the Afodralambo site*

The commune of Anjampaly, a coastal area, is subject to strong winds that can overwhelm homes and blanket crop beds with sand, causing considerable losses.

«We had to move because the sand buried our houses, our crop fields, even our tombs,» reports Tolisoa Fihereha, a member of the commune's management committee.

That is why CRS has incorporated dune stabilization in its projects for years, planting young sisal and

lalanda plants across vulnerable sand dunes. Recently though, CRS extended these activities to the neighboring fokontanies of Androngo and Andranofoty and introduced the planting of filao trees as well.

In all, 51 ha of dune have been stabilized.



Beyond its role as a windbreaker, sisal also can store rainwater in its reeds. **«The water points are far away. When we are thirsty, we collect water from the sisals»** says Suzanne, 54, an inhabitant of the village of Afodralambo.



## New CRS Madagascar projects

# RIMA

(2022- 2023)

“Providing mutual support”



Brachial perimeter measurement during the Monitoring and Promotion of Growth (MPG) and Management of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (PECMAM) activity at the Tamotoambarotelo Fokontany nutrition site. Photo by Miguel Rasolofo/CRS.

### **The Rima project is being implemented to provide continuity to CRS Madagascar’s emergency response in the southern regions of Madagascar.**

Rima’s activities are being undertaken in partnership with the Diocesan Development Council of Tulear (CDD-U). With funding of more than \$10 million from the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), the project aims to protect households from malnutrition and loss of productive assets and to strengthen protection services and access to them in communes in the Atsimo Andrefana and Androy regions. At least 385,000 people are participating in its activities.

The project focuses on four types of activities:

- Food distribution to prevent malnutrition and loss of productive assets in drought-affected households
- Nutritional promotion for mothers and children;
- Creation of SILC (Saving and Internal Lending Communities) groups that support households in saving and managing their savings
- Capacity building of actors on protection aspects..

## **MaMi - «Mavitrika Mianatra»**

(2022 - 2027)

As part of its Vision 2030, CRS Madagascar aims to increase school enrollment, attendance, and the quality of education and reduce dropout rates by providing school meals, creating «green schools» to mitigate the effects of climate change, and improving the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) systems in schools.

To this end, in 2022, CRS, in collaboration with the Government of Madagascar (GoM), Global Communities, FHI 360, and Sofiasive, began implementing the five-year, \$29.5 million «Mavitrika Mianatra» (MaMi) project.

## The Maharo Project: A cooking competition in the South



Ingredients offered to participants during the finals of the cooking competition in the commune of Beloha. Photo by Giscard Rabemananjara/CRS

### Catholic Relief Services promotes healthy, child-friendly dietary diversification for children ages 6 to 24 months.

On September 12, 2022, the Maharo project organized a cooking contest in the commune of Beloha. Participants included fathers with children between 6 and 24 months, mother leaders, and mothers who are members of the 1,000 Days group.

These events allow the sharing of recipes that use local products and the opportunity to measure the knowledge and adoption levels of food diversification, which helps prevent chronic malnutrition.



Les gagnants de la finale du concours de recettes innovantes et adaptées aux enfants de 6 à 24 mois à partir des produits locaux, dans la commune de Beloha. Photo de Giscard Rabemananjara/CRS



# WASH

Catholic Relief Services renforce l'accès à l'eau, l'hygiène et l'assainissement

CSB labélisé FSAW, à travers le programme de santé USAID ACCESS, dans la région Sava. Photo USAID ACCESS

## Catholic Relief Services strengthens access to water, hygiene, and sanitation WASH-Friendly Health Facilities Certification Improves Quality of Service in Health Centers in the Sava Region

Through the USAID ACCESS health program led by Management Sciences for Health and with the Health and Environment Department of the Ministry of Public Health, CRS is implementing the «WASH Friendly Health Facilities» approach to provide quality health services that will ensure user and staff satisfaction.

A WASHF is a health center:

- with improved, developed, and accessible infrastructure with available WASH materials, focusing on water treatment and water quality monitoring materials
- that practices the 6 key behaviors (preserving the potability of water from the point of draw to consumption; effective use of hygienic latrines; handwashing with soap; menstrual hygiene; medical waste management; cleaning and disinfection) and has trained health and community workers that pass these behaviors on to the community
- with a mechanism for sustainability of activities (e.g., a hygiene committee, a water management committee in partnership with the private sector, the involvement of local authorities)

USAID ACCESS has been implemented in 14 regions, 7 of which benefit from WASH activities at the clinical level: Analanjirofo, Boeny, Sava, Diana, Sofia, Menabe, and Melaky.

Since 2019, 418 health workers from 310 health centers have received WASH training. 165 health facilities have been supported with WASH infrastructure, including 154 with handwashing facilities and 70 with water points.

SAVA was the first region to benefit. In addition to health facility staff, the Ministry's regional and district teams have also been supported in appointing and orienting WASH managers for each district. They also received training in the use of water treatment and testing kits. CRS has ensured the reinforcement of follow-up training for these FSAWs following these appointments. To ensure the maintenance of these infrastructures, a qualified maintenance agent attached to the regional level is recruited.



Présentation du projet de construction de Sand dam initié par CRS, dans le Sud de Madagascar, à travers une maquette. Photo de Jerry Andrianaivoarivony/CRS

CRS Madagascar participated in the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Fair on December 1, 2, and 3. This was an opportunity to demonstrate to all stakeholders in the WASH sector in Madagascar CRS' commitment to the populations dealing with problems related to these issues, especially in the southern part of Madagascar. This includes our Maharo, RANOWASH, Zara-Rano, MAMI, and Mianatra projects. Recently, the Minister of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Mr. Fidiniavo Ravokatra, visited one of our sites, where he was presented with a model of the first sand dam built by CRS in the south of the island.

# Biological inventory of the Tsiro project



*Microcebus rufus*, the world's smallest primate. Recorded during TSIRO's biological survey in September 2022. Photo by Jerry Andrianaivoarivony/CRS

## To assist in the conservation of Madagascar's biodiversity, Catholic Relief Services' TSIRO project is conducting a biological inventory in Ambodivoangy.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and its partners, the Fine Chocolate Industry Association (FCIA), Madecasse- Beyond Good (M-BG) Chocolate, Guittard Chocolate, Akesson Organics, and the Heirloom Cacao Preservation Fund (HCP), are implementing a 5-year joint investment with USAID to carry out the TSIRO Alliance project. One of its main objectives is to conserve biodiversity ecosystems.

To this end, a biological inventory was conducted in September 2022 in two sites located in Ambodivoangy, and a team of experts and scientists have begun expeditions to identify the variety of vegetation, reptiles, amphibians, birds, primates, and mammals. The results will be used as a baseline for understanding biodiversity in the region and serve as baseline indicators for conservation, resilience building (in the face of climate change), and biodiversity protection.

A total of 7 species of lemurs were found in the fragmented forest of Ambodivoangy, of which three are classified as vulnerable by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature); 54 species of birds; 34 species of frogs; and 10 species of reptiles were identified.

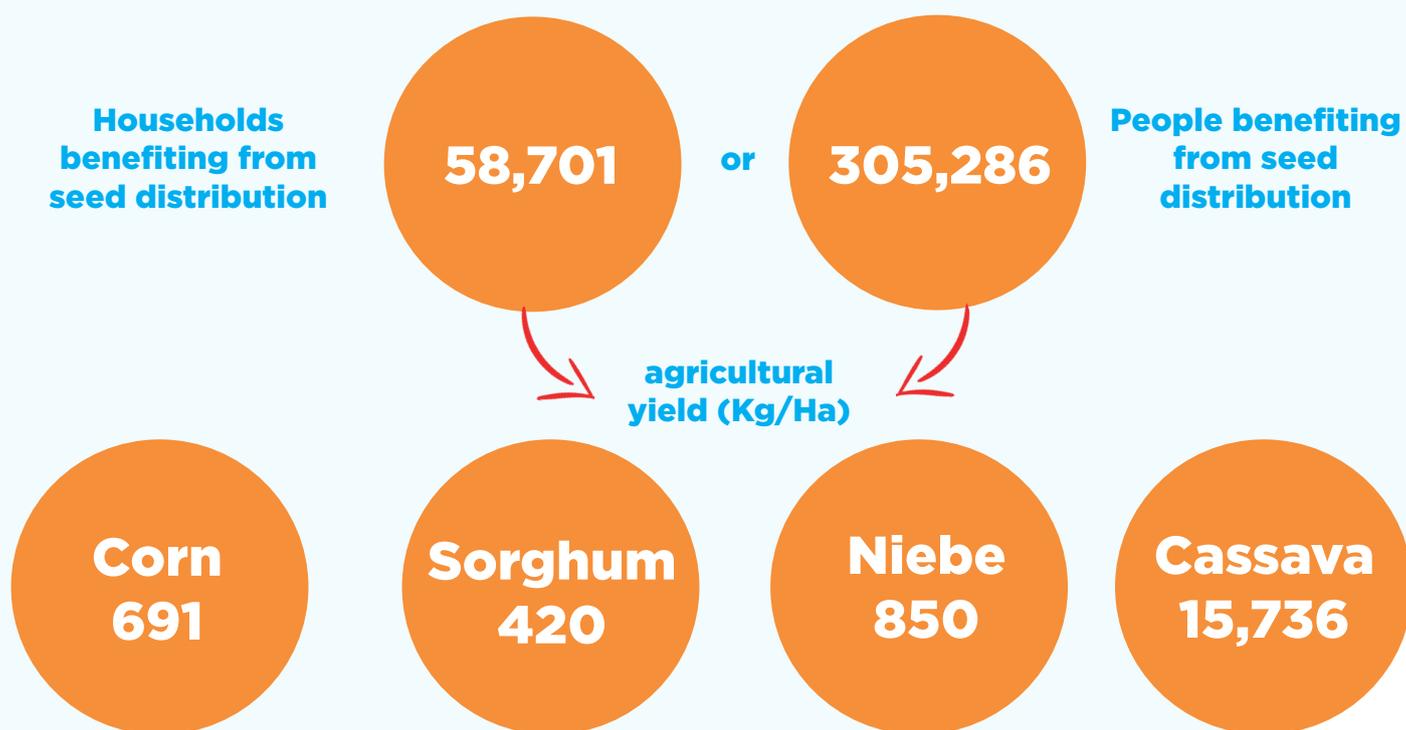


Because human disturbances such as destructive agriculture, timber collection, and logging are increasing, the TSIRO Alliance project also promotes agroforestry to enable farmers to have diversified and sustainable livelihoods. It works with local people to limit forest destruction and conserve biodiversity; for example, by creating Vondron'Olona Ifotony (VOI), an association composed of voluntary members of a community that manages natural resource management transfer contracts (TGRN) from the forestry and/or fisheries administration.



# KEY FACTS

During 2021 and 2022, through the Tabiry project, Catholic Relief Services Madagascar supported vulnerable households in the Androy and Atsimo Andrefana regions to increase their yields. Adapted seeds and farming techniques were provided to participating households in the project.



**THE SPICES PROGRAM: SUPPORTING FARMERS IN MADAGASCAR**

The Securing and Protecting Investments and Capacities for Environmental Sustainability (SPICES) program brings together local communities, national and international NGOs, and government agencies in a multi-sectoral agroforestry program that aims to engage and empower community stakeholders, establish a long-term and responsive approach, initiate inclusive cash crop value chain developments, and promote sustainable land use.

Follow the program's activities on its website:

<https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/program-areas/agriculture/spices-program-supporting-farmers-madagascar>