

May 2009 from Madagascar

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*Dear friends!*



For the last few weeks we have finally been reunited as a family in Madagascar. It feels good to be back! But, we didn't return to the same Madagascar we left. The political crisis left its footprints: many more poor people, lots of unemployed, homeless people on the roads. More kids begging, more women living on the road since the husbands left them. Many foreigners left the island and therefore many of our friends and colleges are gone. So our coming home wasn't quite what we expected it to be. Our Malagasy friends are so happy we came back while most foreigners are leaving, and they show it on a daily basis - which helps us a lot. But it is still a challenge to live here: our house is in a cozy, beautiful dead end road but only 6 miles away people get killed on the roads in town.

During the last weeks we have been organizing our belongings. Some we took out of boxes, others back into boxes, gave away a lot and are now using the least and having everything organized well enough to be able to leave on a short notice if necessary – which we don't hope at all. Besides we were busy getting all kind of papers for our long term visa. Papers are crazy as always in Madagascar. Unbelievable. Since Gerd has been back here, which is almost 7 weeks, he was working on it and finally yesterday we got the confirmation paper that our files are accepted in the ministry and therefore sooner or later the visa will be stamped in our passports: we are legal on the island! And probably we get a 2 year visa! The most important job was to talk and read and find out, what the situation here is really like. So we planned our new work and project all over again!

Due to the political changes we had to adjust. A short explanation: The present government didn't get in place democratically and legally and therefore the international community asks everybody to not give them the idea of accepting them. There should be new elections before the end of this year, but the new government isn't in such a hurry and plans elections for October 2010. Whenever we finally get an elected, democratic president again, till then it will be unstable and unclear. Starting the new project like planned would require many papers and visits at ministries. Since they are all placed where most of the trouble is happening, it isn't recommended to go there at all. Many people already lost their life in those areas. And the same time, it would show we accept the new government and that isn't desired either. We are so glad to know God is planning better than we ever could, knowing everything. There is a solution!

Our friends started a project with a local christian NGO about 2 years ago. There are different steps in it, like a school, an orphanage, a cafeteria and a little doctor's office, family doctor. They are about to finish the "clinic" and are in need of a western medical person in addition to the Malagasy Doctor they already have. And since it is

a German project, and we have been working together quite a lot, we are planning for Tanja to work there half a day while Fanilo is in "school".

And even there she will have the chance to start her work with the pregnant women. In order to get in touch with the ladies we want to work with, we need to go and visit them, right where they live: on the roads. Therefore we are busy buying a mobile in Germany and organizing the transport here. It will be fully equipped for a midwife



service and basic medical treatments, so that we can serve those ladies completely and also use it for other medical outreaches. Together with a Malagasy doctor or/and midwife we can find the ladies who are living on the side of the roads, in the dirt, in hopeless situations. We can get to know them, build relationships and find out, which help is needed most and who are the most urgent cases. For later on, we can still build places and homes, where they can move in if they are really bad off. The major who promised us land, still keeps his promise and showed us different options. We will see later, if we build own houses or if we include or attach our ideas and plan to our friends' already running project. Step by step, we learned that in Madagascar. No need for that decision now.

The mobile is about \$ 13000, and we are trying to find sponsors for it. The medical equipment we get for free and the shipping is already paid for. There is a doctor in Germany who is in touch with hospitals that give away stuff for missions. So she gets a list from us and will organize it all.

In the mobile are places to sit and talk, to lay down for check-ups, toilet and little kitchen – everything we need for mobile medical care! If anybody would like to contribute towards the mobile, please get in touch with us! If everything

works out, it should be here by September. Till then, we are already visiting the ladies, just to talk, hear their needs and build relationships. And get them excited for the medical mobile!

The crises also affected Gerd's job. His boss told him, he couldn't start working right now. And there is no date fixed for when he could start. It is sad and especially bad for his flight licenses which need to be kept current and also for our financial situation. But we keep up our hope and trust in God! Till Gerd can go back flying, we will start the project together. There is much need for technical inputs and we love working together. So we just look at the good sides of it!

This newsletter is number 20! With our 2<sup>nd</sup> entry to Madagascar, our 2<sup>nd</sup> work we do here, we start with 20! How much have we seen since we started with our 1<sup>st</sup> newsletter back in April 2003? How many people got help, Good News, medical treatment, encouragement? How many lives got saved, medically as well as for eternity? How many tears and laughter have we seen? We are very confident, that also within the next 20 newsletters we will have good reports to give! Thank you for doing all of this with us! Thank you for being part of this ministry. We trust that you will continue, restart or start participating and contributing to changing lives here in Madagascar. And as Mother Theresa said: "If you can change the world, still help one child!" (Do you know her in the US ☺!?) We know, we will touch more than one child`s life here in Madagascar, by serving the homeless moms.

God bless you!

Your missionaries,

*Gerd, Tanja & Josia Fanilo*

<p><b>Phone in Madagascar</b> 011 261 32 41 941 00 skype us @ helistorch or heligerd !</p>	<p><b>Our Address:</b> B.P. 3900 Assistance Plus 101 Antananarivo Madagascar</p>	<p><b>Donations &amp; support through</b> River of God Church 4607 68th Street Byron Center, MI 49315 (616) 531-2582</p>
<p><a href="mailto:gerd@heli-news.com">gerd@heli-news.com</a></p>	<p><a href="http://www.heli-news.com">www.heli-news.com</a></p>	<p><a href="mailto:tanja@heli-news.com">tanja@heli-news.com</a></p>