



**COOPERATIVE 4  
FEMALE  
EMPOWERMENT  
IN MADAGASCAR**

**NEWS LETTER NR 2  
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The **COOPERATIVE 4 FEMALE EMPOWERMENT IN MADAGASCAR** project is proceeding in line with the objectives set despite some challenges encountered due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the climatic situation of the February-March period and an epidemic of avian flu in the region.

At the end of September 2022, 70% of the planned activities were carried out with a spending commitment equal to 68% of the planned budget.

## Description of the project

The **COOPERATIVE 4 FEMALE EMPOWERMENT IN MADAGASCAR** project takes place in the village of **Ambalanjanakomby**, north of the capital, and includes two independent phases, which will be carried out at later stages once future granted funds will be obtained.

The **first phase** of the project is currently underway and was approved and funded with 16,000 \$ in December 2021 by the **P&G Foundation**. The project aims at the strengthening of farmyard animals farming and creating a broiler farm by 2022 that will complement the existing laying hens' henshouse built in 2016/2017.

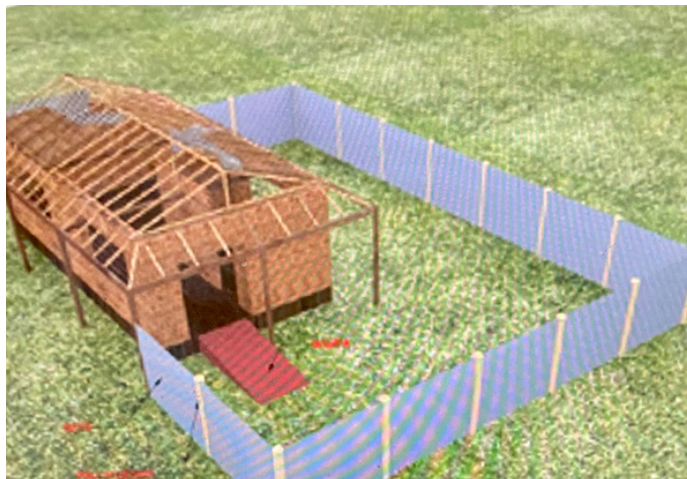
The project gains an essential role for the entire population of the village, given the worsening of the preexisting dramatic economic situation in these first 9 months of 2022 related to the **COVID** pandemic, and to the effects of a drought and of devastating adverse atmospheric conditions.

The project is being carried out in Madagascar in the rural village of Ambalanjanakomby (with a population of about 10,000 inhabitants), located in the north-west of the country and 320 km away from the capital on the national road RN4.

The project, actioned in partnership with the local Mendrika association, includes the following operational phases:

## OPERATIONAL PHASES

- Establishment of a cooperative (must include at least 60% of the total number of women);
- Acquisition on free loan for use of land (200 sqm.) for the construction of a chicken coop (February-June);
- Construction of a covered brick chicken coop measuring 50 square meters, with an adjoining outdoor space of 150 square meters which must be fenced;
- Purchase of building materials (timber, bricks, lime, cement, palm leaves, etc.);
- Purchase of feed (based on corn, oats, mineral supplements, etc.);
- Purchase of 100 chicks to be raised for 5 months and then resold;
- Construction of a well to meet the water needs of the farm;
- Implementation of training courses on breeding and animal health to the members of the cooperative;
- Purchasing of equipment and workwear for all the cooperative members;
- Chicken sale at the nearby Maevatanana market;
- Mission to Madagascar of two senior representatives who are part of the project team



chicken coop construction



chicken coop construction



chicken coop



well construction



well in operation

**Activities carried out Status September 2022**

Before starting the operational activities, the local Mendrika Association, in concert with the Seniores Italia Lazio Association, identified a collaborator, on the base of adequate professional skills, Madame Jeanne Elisabeth Damarawao, who has the task of coordinating the project on-site and maintaining constant communication with Seniores. Operational activities therefore began:

**February:** a cooperative called "Mendrika" was set up, a name which in the Malagasy language means "deserving". Subsequently, this cooperative acquired the 200 square meters on free loan for use, for 10 years, of land planned for the construction of the chicken coop.

**June:** construction of the 50 sqm. chicken coop was completed in addition to the 150 sqm. of fenced outdoor space to allow the roaming of chickens. Once the chicken coop was finished, both the feed and the planned 100 chicks were purchased. Immediately afterwards, the technicians of the local Ministry of Agriculture began training courses for the cooperative's employees, both on farming techniques and on health prophylaxis.

**June - July - August:** Following the avian epidemic that began in June, disinfection was carried out by the members of the cooperative under the direction of the technicians of the Ministry of Agriculture. Training: the courses were held in June, July and August; however, following the avian epidemic (which caused the death of about 30% of the chicks, which were then replaced), it was decided to intensify the presence of technicians who would provide technical assistance on-site on a weekly bases until the end of the first production cycle.

**September:** the construction of the well necessary for the water supply of the farm has been completed.

**October:** currently the growth of chickens proceeds well and their sale is expected in the second half of November. Furthermore, by the beginning of November, the purchase of additional 100 chicks is expected, which will be sold in the first months of 2023.

**The main challenges encountered** in the first half of 2022 were characterized by particularly adverse health (COVID pandemic and avian flu epidemic) and climatic events, which initially delayed the initial phases of the project.

In particular, there was a resurgence of the Covid pandemic and, in the months of February and March, the presence of violent storms that devastated entire areas of Madagascar, and made the transportation routes, already in poor conditions, almost impractical.

The Covid pandemic has considerably slowed down the production of building materials (cement and bricks), bird breeding (chickens and chicks) and feed, which for the first months of the year were difficult to source. The precarious conditions of the national road network was aggravated by the storms, resulted in unusable roads, and contributed to delaying the initial phase of the project.

Finally, the avian epidemic in the region led to the loss of part of the purchased chicks' flock and therefore determined further delays in the final stage of raising and selling the chickens.



Cooperative's members during classroom training



chicks



chickens of about 3 months

## The main challenges encountered

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members of the Cooperative with children

## Objectives achieved despite these critical issues

The project continued to be carried out regularly and the initial delays were almost completely resolved. Furthermore, one of the main objectives of the project was achieved: to stimulate a positive and proactive reaction in the members of the cooperative.

In fact, there was a constructive attitude by the members who actively engaged to solve the problems deriving from the adversities, working as a team and making suggestions or taking initiatives aimed at solving problems.

This result was enormously rewarding because it is the milestone to lay the foundations for a solid and lasting social and economic redemption of the village population. In fact, the example of similar cases teaches that a constructive and reactive attitude towards adversity has always been the prerequisite for avoiding the premature failure of projects in these disadvantaged areas of Africa.

