

The MissionHouse

providing help & hope at home and abroad

NEWS FROM THE MISSION HOUSE

Early Spring 2017

YOUR help

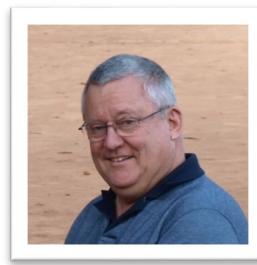


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BRINGS hope

'WITHOUT HELP, WHERE IS THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD'S POOREST?'



Nigel Kiernander,
Director, The Mission House

Let me tell you about Haja. Haja lives in Madagascar (average income just over US \$1 per day) and like many young people in poor countries he is intelligent, wants a better life for himself and his community plus he really knows the value of education.

He did well at school passing all his exams, but his mother (he has no father in his life) couldn't possibly afford to fund him for further education. With high unemployment and limited opportunities open to him, his future seemed bleak indeed and so he chose to go down the path of drink, drugs and all the destructive 'stuff' that goes with that lifestyle. By the way, Haja is not his real name.



Faith Exploration Camp - rural location

And this is where *you* come in to Haja's story – yes, I really do mean *you*. You see, if you are on our team of regular monthly givers or you are an occasional giver, *your* donations have helped to transform Haja's life. But more about that in a moment.

Haja asked to attend our Life Skills course at The Mission House Academy in southern Madagascar. The goal of this course is deliberately broad, it is "to equip people for a better life through a sense of personal responsibility for their own lives and the lives of others." Each module (see below) creates opportunities for course attendees to explore their inner world, where they are in life and where they want to go. Like many students during the courses Haja felt the need for one-to-one advice and came to see that his life did have meaning and that he could have a future.

Life Skills Course - Core Modules

Introduction, Self Esteem & Motivation, Vision & Goal Setting, Worldview, Relationships (physical & spiritual), Communications, Healing of the Past

Life Skills Course - Variable Modules

Volunteering/Community Involvement, Leadership, Finances, Job Preparation Skills, Entrepreneurship, African Renaissance, HIV/AIDS, Conflict Resolution, Personal Development/Self Leadership.

I'd love to tell you all Haja's story but I must be brief. After Life Skills he was invited to attend our 12 week residential Leadership course, then he worked with us as a volunteer, went on to other training and development opportunities some of which were outside Madagascar. He returned home about 18 months ago and now serves as a part time teacher on our Life Skills course and at our Faith Exploration Camps. When not working with us he evangelises in rural villages and although working separately what he does is complementary to our provision of help and hope to the community.

There is one more thing about Haja I want to share with you.

When he came to us he could only speak a few words of English and you cannot progress very far in any career, in any profession, without it. We were running TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) courses when he was with us and there he learned the essential skill of communication in English, and that together with the other courses he did with us were the springboard for his further development and what he is doing now.



Faith Exploration Camp - 'classroom'

Directly and indirectly Haja will continue to have a positive impact on a great many lives, and as I said above it's because of *you*.

We, The Mission House are a team of volunteers and together we strive to provide all that is necessary to bring help and hope into the lives of others. We have no UK payroll, minimal overhead costs and most of each donated penny is used to deliver our frontline services. They cannot be delivered without *your* support

Front page photos:

- top* - Life Skills class in progress
- centre* - Life Skills recent graduation
- bottom* - refurbished water supply & storage plus solar oven



Clothes ready for distribution to the poorest in the community

whatever form it takes, financial or otherwise, and *your* support cannot be converted into changed lives without those who deliver on the front line.

For example, our TEFL courses were run by Cherilee Namee, a Volunteer from Manchester who spent eight months in Madagascar setting up, teaching and administering the courses with only very basic facilities available to her. Haja's ability to impact the lives of others now is a direct result of her service.



Cherilee Namee

Well Haja is one and then there are the other 871 students who have graduated from our courses, all with their own stories. I wonder how many people they have helped?

But there is more, much more to do.

During my last visit to Madagascar plans for the Life Skills Course to be run in Antananarivo, the capital, were discussed and first steps towards this objective are already in process. I should mention that the course isn't a 'one size fits all' but must be adjusted to suit the local environment which is why we have core and variable modules. The variable modules can be adapted to the local environment, e.g. urban, rural and the prevailing local culture. The course, when run in the capital will need to be appropriate to those local conditions as well. However, the core modules remain the same wherever the course is run.

The Mission House Academy, which is in Fort Dauphin - the far south of the country – has an excellent reputation locally and we do serve local communities in other ways as well. For example, we gave sufficient rice and soap as Christmas gifts for all the inmates of the local prison and working through seven local pastors we have distributed good quality second hand clothes to the poorest of the poor.



Donated goods from The Mission House logged in the official prison receipts book.

In the Central Region (in and around the capital) we continue to support Le Triomphe Orphanage and we provide teacher sponsorship at what is now a 200+ pupil Christian school. We have recently completed a water supply refurbishment with the provision of a generator and water barrels and starting last November we are engaged in a Care of the Elderly program providing blankets and mattresses to very needy individuals.

In April we plan to install another water supply in a rural village and I'll update you about that next time.



Rice & soap ready to deliver to the prison in Fort Dauphin

We are also continuing to serve in Sri Lanka, where we have recently provided a permanent dwelling and latrine to a very poor Christian family who were living in dire circumstances.

Let's not lose sight of the reality that behind all these 'facts' lie the deep emotional responses of very, very grateful people.

You see, while we respond to disasters with emergency help when we can, the everyday help we give meets people's basic physical and inner needs – and that is 'love in action'. These acts really do change people's lives and give them hope.

Thank you for being on the team because together we are fulfilling a special mission. If you're not with us yet I invite you to please join us today as one of our givers (financial volunteers) and I promise you, *you will make a difference* to those who so need what we have to offer.

Over to you.

Nigel

Caring for the Elderly in Madagascar

Many people in Madagascar have urgent needs, particularly the elderly. The Mission House seeks to express Christian love in the form of practical help to meet those needs. The photographs and testimonies below come from a recent project to distribute blankets and mattresses to the elderly in Antananarivo.

Bako and Naly (volunteer staff) with some of the mattresses ready for distribution.



This is Madame Flor-entine. She says, "My blanket was so thin that I wasn't able to sleep properly at night because I was always shivering. I needed a new blanket but I couldn't afford to buy one. Thank you so much for giving me this lovely thick blanket – I am cosy warm at night now."



"Hello, my name is Grandma Pauline. I am 69 years old. I want to thank you so much for this wonderful mattress you gave my husband and me. It is the first time ever for us to sleep on a sponge mattress and we are so grateful. God bless you."



Grandma Ravololona explains, "This is my sister Marie. She has mental difficulties and is incontinent. Up until now she has been sleeping on a straw mat at night because it is easy to clean but it has totally dis-integrated and we were worried about how to replace it. This new mattress with a plastic cover is an answer to our prayers. May God show his goodness to you too."



Grandpa Jean writes, "I make a living pushing a cart but it has never been enough for me to afford a real mattress. May God bless you for giving me this great gift."



Grandpa Emile says, "I am 75 years old and I have been struggling with terrible back pain. It has been hard for me to sleep at night on my straw mattress. I thank you for this gift. It will help me so much."

