



## Internet - A Window of Opportunity for Madagascar



Photo: USAID/Madagascar

Fontaine Rafamatanantsoa providing computer training to other professors.

“No one at the university can do their job properly without the Internet connection. It is a part of our day-to-day life.”

- Professor Fontaine Rafamatanantsoa

Prior to 2001, one slow, undependable, and expensive dial-up connection was the only Internet link for 6 faculty members, 65 professors, and 2,000 students at the National Technology University in Fianarantsoa, Madagascar. Students did not have hands-on Internet experience and professors were unable to carry out research and communicate with international counterparts. Fontaine Rafamatanantsoa, a professor and the campus computer specialist, spent hour after hour printing out e-mail messages for staff.

USAID worked with the university to create a modern campus computer network which includes a permanent Internet connection to four campus centers, and provides both teachers and students with an essential tool for daily use at the university. The Internet has also proven to be an invaluable link for other international educational opportunities. Mr. Rafamatanantsoa, one of the professors actively involved in the installation and maintenance of the network, received a scholarship to a distance learning doctorate degree in computer science from the University of Clermont-Ferrand in France. He is currently in his first year of a three-year program studying computer networking. Mr. Rafamatanantsoa is using his studies to take the University of Fianarantsoa from a one-computer school to the cutting edge of network technology.

First Person

