



MCC Helps Malagasy Families Increase Rural Incomes One Family Uses Money to Improve Children's Education

Ampasimazava is a village situated on the east coast of Madagascar where due to poor soil quality and poor agricultural infrastructure, few options existed for revenue generation. In the past, the principal economic activities of the villagers consisted of collecting firewood and producing charcoal. The average weekly revenue for a charcoal producer was less than \$5.

In October 2006, MCA-Madagascar's Agricultural Business Investment Project began working with an association of 18 villagers from Ampasimazava in producing essential oil from niaouli leaves, commonly used in cosmetic and skin care products. MCA-Madagascar assisted the association in developing a business plan, acquiring financing of \$3,000 from a local micro-finance institution to set up a distilling plant, and linking the association to buyers in the capital.

As a result of the villagers' dynamism and MCA-Madagascar's assistance, the association and its members have become successful almost overnight.

Joseph, one member of the association, has managed to save \$500 within the first two months of production, and

is beginning to envision his family's future in a whole new way. He began construction of a larger, cyclone-resistant house and decided to send his children to a private school that offers a better education.

The association has generated over \$1,000 of profit within the first two months of operations from member fees, which the members plan to use to make improvements to the village, including building wells to supply drinking water. They have begun to pay off their loan with the micro-finance institution, and they have begun to create a tree nursery to begin production of eucalyptus essential oil.



*"Thanks to the revenue
I have acquired
through this activity,
I can assure a better
education for my
children."*

*—Joseph of
Ampasimazava*



*Joseph and his wife sending their
children to school.*