

## Project Update: November 2008

I love to brag and CPALI team has given me a lot to brag about! We have had a stellar 6 months since our report sent out last April. Our most important advance will be the signing of contracts with 5 farmers who have agreed to participate in silk production! The Malagasy are quite risk averse but they also have great entrepreneurial spirit.

Just in time we have finished our second demonstration site (thanks to generous funding from the Rufford Foundation) and will hold our first training course at the new site this month. Denis Ramasy, our first farmer to sign on and a current CPALI employee, now has a nursery of host plants in all stages of development. He will spend a day teaching our first farmers how to prepare seed germination beds, transplant germinated seeds and seedlings, intercrop host plants on their farms, care for plants until they are ready to receive larvae and cut the trees back to maintain their small size.

The farmers will incorporate 1000 trees each on their farms and on community lands.



Figure 1. "CPALI 5" The first five farmers in the COBA of Ambodivoagny who have committed to raise trees to support larval rearing. CPALI will provide plastic pots and germinated seeds.



Figure 2. The host plants intercropped on Denis farm that are almost ready for rearing larvae. Denis will teach CPALI 5 how to care for larval host plants.

Our demonstration garden in Maroantsetra also continues to operate. It has greatly enhanced our presence in the area and has successfully attracted farmers who have expressed interest in working with us. It was described by one visitor as "an oasis" – exactly the effect we were hoping for.

At the Maroantsetra site and we are focussing on raising larvae. We can illustrate all stages of the larval life cycle and will use that site for training farmers in larval production once the host plants they have cultivated are large enough to support larvae. Mamy Ratsimbazafy, CPALI's Maroantsetra director, has made tremendous strides in the past year developing our demonstration sites as well as determining how to delay the hatching of the eggs. Delayed hatching is a critical advance since it will

allow CPALI to build up population of disease-free, larvae “seed” that we will be able to sell to farmers.



Figure 3. Fat, healthy larvae in the Maroantsetra training garden almost ready to spin cocoons.

### ***New silk products***

Additional achievements that have made 2008 a stellar year have been the development of 3 unique products. They are silk jewellery, silk paper and a non-woven silk textile made directly from cocoons. Our larvae produce silk that looks like gold filigree. We have designed jewellery that combines the silk with ethically mined gems. Mamy, with help from his family and the CPALI team, designed a new type of textile made from unprocessed cocoons and hence obviating the special equipment and training required for traditional spinning and weaving. These beautiful “cocoon fabrics” can be used for window shades, decorative arts and many other purposes. The simplified technology needed to make the cocoon fabrics will allow more villagers to participate in our project. Returns for cocoon fabrics will be higher than those for raw materials land, allowing farmers to earn more than if they only produced cocoons. Finally, our third product is paper made from wild silk and local plant fibres, the paper has a unique texture and requires only small pieces of silk so we can even make use of left-over bits of silk from our other two products. In the coming year we are seeking funds for training workshops to teach village women how to make these new, wild silk products.

### ***World Bank Development Marketplace***

CPALI’S project was selected as a finalist in the 2008 Development Marketplace competition hosted by the World Bank. We competed against 100 other projects for \$200,000 in funding.

Unfortunately, we were not selected for an award. However, our selection as a finalist positioned us as a very credible organization to the World Bank and the other sponsors (e.g., MacArthur Foundation, Gates Foundation) and observers (e.g., USAID). More importantly, the World Bank funded the trip to the US for Mamy Ratsimbazafy, which gave him great exposure and practice in presenting CPALI’s work. That practice was very timely since 1 month after he returned to Madagascar, he was called on to present CPALI to a delegation that included the US Ambassador, high level Malagasy ministers as well as regional government leaders, CI, WCS and the Peace Corp, at the Maroantsetra site. The team did an excellent job presenting project and the Ambassadors visit continues to position CPALI well with the Malagasy government as well as other conservation and development groups in Madagascar.

### ***The future***

Our long-term goal in Maroantsetra is to phase out CPALI’s direct role in running the demonstration sites in and around Maroantsetra. We are building a local team that will provide technical assistance to the communities, as well as host plants and eggs, on a fee basis. In the future, CPALI plans to replicate this work throughout Madagascar and develop the capacity to produce enough silk to tap into profitable, international markets. Maminarina Randrianandrasana, a graduate student with May

Berenbaum at the University of Illinois, is starting her doctoral research to determine why *A. suraka*, our target species, is able to live in so many ecological environments. Her research will go a long way in assisting CPALI in extending our work to farmers living in border forest that surround other protected areas.

We have been fortunate in obtaining funds from private foundations and private donors to support the initial phases of our program. We are now seeding enterprise partners to invest in the development and marketing of our products. CPALI is at a turning point and ready to “take off”. We appreciate your support in the past and would greatly appreciate your support in 2009. CPALI is a 501(c3) organization and hence any donations that you make will be tax deductible. If you would like to donate to our program, please visit our web site, [www.cpali.org](http://www.cpali.org), to donate on line and find out how your donation could be used. If you prefer to send a check, please make it payable to CPALI and sending to the address on our site.



Bertrand, a proud member of the CPALI home team says thanks.