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MISONGA

Managing Information and Strengthening Organizations
for Networked Governance Approaches

FINAL REPORT

Submitted to USAID/Madagascar
Good Governance Program in Madagascar
Cooperative Agreement n° 687-A-00-04-00134-00

Submitted by Pact, Inc.
in joint partnership with Catholic Relief Services-Madagascar

November 22, 2006

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFEMM:	Association des Femmes Elues Maires de Madagascar
AFDE:	Association des Femmes pour le Développement et l'Environnement
AID:	Agro Initiative pour le Développement
ALT:	Andrew Lees Trust
AMI:	Appel à la Manifestation d'Intérêt
ARSIE:	Association Réseau Système d'Information Environnemental
ASOS:	Action Santé Organisation Secours
ATW:	Around the World Consultants
BAMEX:	Business And Market Expansion
BIANCO:	Bureau Indépendant Anti-Corruption
BIT:	Bureau International du Travail
CAMM:	Chambre d'Arbitrage et de Médiation de Madagascar
CCD:	Comité Communal de Développement
CDEG:	Cellule de Développement de l'E-Governance
CEDII:	Centre d'Echange et de Documentation Inter-Institutionnel
CITE:	Centre d'Information Technique et Economique
CMP:	Comité Multi-local de Planification
COP:	Chief Of Party
CORDAL:	Comité Régional de Développement Alaotra
CPAC:	Chaîne Pénale Anti-Corruption
CPI:	Corruption Perception Index
CRD:	Comité Régional de Développement
CRS:	Catholic Relief Services
CSLCC:	Conseil Supérieur de Lutte Contre la Corruption
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
DG:	Democracy and Governance
DBMS:	Data Base Management System (SGDB)
DSI:	Département de Système d'Information
EKA:	<i>Ezaka Kopia ho an' ny Ankiizy</i> – Projet de réhabilitation de l'enregistrement des naissances
ERI:	Eco-Regional Initiatives
EU:	European Union
FAMAK:	<i>Fanohitra Miady Amin'ny Kolikoly</i> - Coalition de la Société Civile de la Lutte Contre la Corruption
FES:	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FIANTSO:	Fikambanana Andrin'ny Tambazotra sy ny Olom-pirenena - Support to Citizen Networking
FM:	Frequency Modulation
FTM:	Foibe Taontsaranin' i Madagasikara
FY:	Fiscal Year
GDA:	Global Development Alliance
GIS:	Geographical Information System
GOM:	Government of Madagascar
GRET:	Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques
GTDR:	Groupement des Travailleurs pour le Développement Rural
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
IEC:	Information, Education et Communication
IP:	Internet Protocol

IR:	Intermediate Result
IRD:	Institut de Recherche pour le Développement
IRG:	International Resources Group
IT:	Information Technology
LARO:	Linking Players for Regional Opportunities
MATEZA:	<i>Malagasy Teknisiana mivondrona ho Aro sy teznan'I Zahamena Arin'ny Ala Atsinanana</i> – Association of technicians for the protection of Zahamena Corridor
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCA:	Millennium Challenge Account
MDAT:	Ministère de la décentralisation et de l'Aménagement du Territoire
MIARO:	Maintaining Biological Integrity Critical Biodiversity Habitats
MIS:	Multi-Sector Information Service
MISONGA:	Managing Information and Strengthening Organizations for Networked Governance Approaches
MIRA:	Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Réforme Administrative
MOT:	Ministry of Telecommunication
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NTIC:	New Technology of Information and Communication
ONE:	Office National de l'Environnement
ONN :	Office National de Nutrition
OPCI:	Organisme Public de Coopération Intercommunale
OSCM:	Organisation de la Société Civile de Madagascar
PCD:	Plan Communal de Développement
PLACAZ:	Plate forme Corridor Ankeniheny Zahamena
PMP:	Performance Monitoring Plan
PNNC :	Programme National de Nutrition Communautaire
PSN :	Prévention et Sécurisation Nutritionnelle
PNUD:	Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement
PRI:	Programme Régional d'Investissement
QIP:	Question d'Intérêt Public
QMM:	Qit Minerals Madagascar
RLIC:	Regional Learning Information Center
RFA:	Request For Application
SAHA:	<i>Sebatr'Asa Hampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra</i> – Swiss Cooperation
SAPM:	Système des Aires Protégées de Madagascar
SDR:	Schéma de Développement Régional
SNI:	Système National d'Intégrité
SO:	Strategic Objective
TI:	Transparency International
TVM:	Televisiona Malagasy
UGIR:	Unité de Gestion d'Information Régionale
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
USAID:	United States Agency for International Development
USFS:	United States Forest Service
WiFi:	Wireless Fidelity
WLRI:	Women Legal Rights Initiative

I. Executive Summary

Events surrounding the disputed 2001 presidential election in Madagascar awoke citizens to the need to become more engaged in the public affairs of their country. The dominance of the previous government, prior to the President Ravalomanana administration, in 2002 precluded, even discouraged, citizens from involvement in the design and implementation of public policy. The greatest challenge in building a more democratic society is how to increase participation and effectiveness of civil society in developing solutions to address social and economic issues, as well as, natural resource depletion.

The first step towards successful democratic development in Madagascar was the new government's commitment to decentralization. Along with decentralization has come recognition that a more responsive government depends on committed, capable civil society organizations, and the ability of both government and civil society to access information for decision-making.

Confidence in government is crucial to maintaining a stable democracy, functioning under the rule of law, respectful of procedures, and fearful of the consequences of wrongdoings. Confidence in government is earned, not casually given. In Madagascar, faith in the national government has been weakened by a complicated administrative structure characterized by decades of poor management. In this context, how does one begin to restore confidence in government?

MISONGA (Managing Information and Strengthening Organization for Networked Governance Approaches) was designed to restore faith in the government by strengthening identified democracy and governance in topics in targeted zones throughout Madagascar. In May 2004, Pact Inc. and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) initiated the four year project with the initial budget of \$8.2 million.

MISONGA had four main objectives:

- 1) ***To promote a deeper and stronger civil society*** by strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs). For this objective, MISONGA will work with a minimum of 50 CSOs throughout the course of the project, and will support these CSOs by providing technical support in the areas of institutional development, organizational development, advocacy, financial management, and strategic management.
- 2) ***To improve information flow*** between the citizenry and government and all stakeholders for development. This objective aims to promote a Multi-sectoral Information System (MIS), Regional Learning Information Centers (RLICS), and Rural Radios and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (e.g., the Internet, Wireless Fidelity Technology, etc).
- 3) ***To improve government responsiveness*** by addressing the needs and concerns of citizens. Using CSOs as arbitrators, this objective provides technical assistance to various government actors at the national, regional, and local levels, and will help bridge the gap between citizens and government.
- 4) ***To reduce the level of corruption*** by focusing efforts at the local and regional levels, in close coordination with national level organizations such as the Conseil Supérieur de Lutte Contre la Corruption (CSLCC), and Bureau Independant de Lutte Contre la Corruption (BIANCO) and Transparency International.

Originally planned for a four year implementation period, the USAID funded MISONGA ended two years premature in September 2006 due to a USAID lack of funding. MISONGA efforts had been focused on capacity building during the start up phase, regarding technical training, organizational and institutional reinforcement, and the provision of basic infrastructure. Civil society organizations and government ministries, whose skills or abilities were enhanced as a result of MISONGA trainings, led advocacy initiatives and are now better qualified to serve their citizens. Activities addressed various development themes related to health, natural resource management, agricultural trade, anti-corruption, women's legal rights, and ICT development. MISONGA has had major achievements during its two years of activities by strengthening civil society participation in governance, include the following successes:

Deeper and stronger civil society

MISONGA strengthened three regional development committees in Anosy, Fianarantsoa, and Toamasina. These committees are responsible for identifying regional issues in participation with local stakeholders and coordinating a response to these issues on a regional level. MISONGA has enhanced the capacity of these organizations to adapt the decentralized system and lead the development of their region.

MISONGA facilitated the establishment of Madagascar's first ever national coalition of civil society organizations « Plate-Forme Nationale de la Société Civile Malgache » (PFNSCM) on June 23, 2005. PFNSCM unifies Madagascar's 3000+ CSO's into a network that empowers them to voice the needs of the public on local and national issues.

46 organizations received grants for MISONGA advocacy training. These grants reinforced the development of advocacy in Madagascar. CSOs are enabled to advocate local issues on the regional and national levels due to the skills provided by MISONGA.

23 advocacy projects were undertaken by CSOs. After receiving MISONGA advocacy training, the 23 best organizations were funded to implement their campaigns. This funding mechanism was an important part in developing advocacy in Madagascar. With MISONGA financing, organizations were able to carry out their advocacy campaigns on current issues, and build capacity for future campaigns.

Improved information flow

Seven (7) Regional Information Management Units (UGIR) were set up in six target regions. UGIRs increase access to information in order to improve decision making at the local, regional and national levels. Citizens and government can access information to enable discussion, advocacy, and transparency in government actions.

The Centre d'Exchange et de Documentation Inter-institutionnel (CEDII), one of the Regional Learning Information Centers (RLIC), in Fianarantsoa developed its business plan. CEDII will continue providing access to information to the citizens of Fianarantsoa due to a sustainable financial and operational plan established through MISONGA support.

25 rural radio journalists in Fianarantsoa and 10 in Fort-Dauphin have strengthened their investigative journalism and program production skills. Radio is the most prevalent means of mass communication in Madagascar, especially in rural areas. By enhancing the skills of radio journalists, MISONGA increased the quality of information transmitted to rural populations.

MISONGA, in partnership with the Fianar Eco-regional Alliance, led a workshop to design a network of FM radio stations throughout the Radio Corridor project in Fianarantsoa corridor. It is especially difficult to work and communicate in the corridor, a USAID intervention zone, due to its mountainous geography. The network of radio stations has allowed for quick and efficient dissemination of information to even the most isolated locations.

USAID/Misonga assisted the Government of Madagascar (GOM) in finalizing the National E-governance Policy and implementing a \$90,000 MISONGA grant to develop an e-governance pilot site, and post the GOM's portal on-line. E-governance improves government services by making them quicker and more accessible to the citizens. This initiative is an important step in decentralization, providing regions with instant access to information.

Improved government responsiveness

MISONGA assisted 9 Regions to establish regional development plans. Each of Madagascar's 22 new regions developed regional development plans coordinating development initiatives within the local context. MISONGA empowered nine regions to create their own plans using a participative process. MISONGA facilitated stakeholder meetings and provided the technical support and information needed to formulate their plan. MISONGA's participative approach has increased citizen and CSO involvement in regional governance, ensured the regional development plan addresses the needs of local citizens, and increased government accountability for implementing the plan.

135 mayors, 26 commune officials and 66 regional executives in the three USAID priority targeted zones received training on leadership, management, and conflict resolution. These skills enhanced community leaders' ability to serve their districts, improving the governance of communes within USAID intervention zones.

Facilitated development of a new statute and structure for the Regional Development Committee of Anosy (Comité Régional de Développement d'Anosy - CRD) adopted in August 2005. MISONGA guided the restructuring of the CRD to strengthen its involvement in the regional decision making process within the new decentralized region system.

24 Ministry Officials at the Ministry of the Interior have received MISONGA training. In order to adapt to the restructuring of the Ministry of the Interior, MISONGA provided project management, financial, and monitoring & evaluation training to the Ministry of the Interior. This training enabled the Ministry to create new guidelines for election procedures and develop 19 priority projects to strengthen government services.

Reduced levels of corruption

A baseline survey was conducted to assess the severity of national corruption and corruption within the specific sectors of tourism, handicrafts, commerce, and industry. The results of this study have been used to guide the national anti-corruption strategy and provide a basis to measure the effects of anti-corruption initiatives.

40 CSOs received training on combating corruption in partnership with BLANCO and MISONGA. The effectiveness of CSOs to mobilize the Malagasy citizens to fight corruption and utilize anti-corruption mechanisms has been strengthened.

Throughout the MISONGA program, USAID allocated more than \$3.7 million in grants to support institutions and organizations that have demonstrated the ability to strengthen democracy and governance in Madagascar. This includes 49 CSOs, 5 Ministries, 9 Regions, 7 information centers and 8 private independent radio stations.

MISONGA leveraged additional support and financial resources of \$57,016 from other organizations, such as the United Nations Development Program, the Swiss Embassy, the European Union (EU), the Ministry of Decentralization, and the French Cooperation. MISONGA's lead in building good governance attracted these organizations to the fight against corruption, and provided a proper structure on which to share best practices, and avoid duplication.

Pact's experience implementing the MISONGA program reinforced the idea that citizen participation improves decision making, increases transparency, and provides better access to information. By supporting government efforts to decentralize services, more control is in the hands of local people, increasing their involvement in government issues. Pact has seen MISONGA bring positive results during the past two years, however, it is only the beginning of real change. Madagascar needs Democracy and Governance programs, such as MISONGA, to engage citizens and government in dialogue and build government capacity to improve public services.

II. Background - Program Objectives

Since Madagascar's independence in 1960, the dominance of the state has precluded, even discouraged, citizen involvement in the design and implementation of public policy. The events surrounding the 2002 elections woke the people's voice in government. Madagascar is currently in the process of redefining the relationship between government and civil society. The greatest challenge for the new administration is involving Madagascar's 16 million citizens in developing solutions to alleviate poverty and prevent natural resource depletion. In its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Government of Madagascar (GoM) has set its goal to reduce the rate of poverty by 50% in ten years, through the promotion of rapid and sustainable development. Improved governance is essential to achieve this ambitious plan, and the GoM has identified "the restoration of law and a well-governed society" as one of the most important elements to reach this objective.

Pact and Catholic Relief Services - Madagascar responded to USAID/Madagascar's Request for Application (RFA) #687-04-A-003 *Good Governance Program in Madagascar* with the joint submission of this proposal, entitled the MISONGA. MISONGA, or *Managing Information and Strengthening Organizations for Networked Governance Approaches*, is also a Malagasy word meaning *scaling up* or *opening towards*. MISONGA's goal is to promote cooperation between civil society organizations and local, regional, and national government to promote decentralization and build on the current administration's commitment to transparency and efficiency. This goal aims to meet four objectives:

- Deepening and Strengthening Civil Society
- Increasing Information Flows
- Increasing Government Responsiveness
- Fighting Against Corruption

In order to meet these challenges, Pact and CRS have partnered to offer USAID their combined experiences and technical expertise to ensure the success of MISONGA. Both organizations have extensive experience in supporting civil society and government institutions through building local capacity, peace building, rights-based programming, information management, knowledge engineering, and community based approaches.

To achieve its objectives, MISONGA is designed to be innovative, efficient, sustainable and responsive to needs. The MISONGA team will work in partnership with a variety of organizations that each brings unique expertise and experience to the program. The MISONGA team will implement the program through a team of Malagasy organizations, including:

- Recognized farmers associations
- Village associations and women-led non-governmental organizations
- Communal and inter-communal government structures such as regional development committees (CRD)
- Human rights platforms composed of civil society members

- All levels of national government and government structures, such as the National Committee to fight HIV/AIDS.

II.1. Specific Objectives

II.1.1. IR1 - Deeper and Stronger Civil Society

While civil society in Madagascar is currently weak, a few strong local non-governmental organizations (NGO) and associations exist. MISONGA seeks to increase participation and effectiveness of civil society in public dialogue and decision-making at all governance levels, focusing on:

- Developing the institutional and organizational capacities of CSOs
- Providing a strong basis for their advocacy activities
- Strengthening CSO networks and linkages, with a special emphasis placed on gender

II.1.2. IR2 - Increased Information Flows

Increasing access to information and increasing the capacity of civil society and government institutions to use this information fosters greater accountability and better decision-making. In order to increase the flow of information and communication for development and governance, MISONGA proposes to:

- Improve access to information
- Increase information use
- Create an environment supportive of telecommunications
- Improve media and rural radio

II.1.3. IR3 - Improved Government Responsiveness

Increasing the government's willingness to be responsive in support of the decentralization process by concentrating on:

- Increasing government management and outreach capacities
- Expanding mechanisms for citizen participation in governance
- Increasing government capacity to respond to its constituency's needs

II.1.4. IR4 - Reduced level of Corruption

Supporting leadership initiatives in the fight against corruption by:

- Facilitating the establishment of Anti-Corruption structures
- Increasing capacity of NGOs to carry out anti-corruption advocacy
- Increasing public awareness on anti-corruption mechanisms

Table of Activities and Indicators

INTERVENTIONS	INDICATORS	Baseline Survey2004	RESULTS ANALYSIS from May 2004 until June 2006				RESULTS ANALYSIS from May 2004 to Sept 2008	
			Target 2006	Achievement as of June 2006	Difference 06	% Achievement / Target 2006	Target end project 2008	% Achievement / Target 2008
IR 1: DEEPER AND STRONGER CIVIL SOCIETY	# of targeted CSOs mounting effective advocacy campaigns	0	15	23	+8	153,33%	45	51,11%
	# of grants for effective Environmental advocacy campaigns	0	15	3	-12	20,00%	45	6,66%
	# of targeted civil society organizations integrating gender approaches in their development and advocacy activities	4	15	6	-9	40,00%	45	13,33%
IR 2: INCREASE INFORMATION FLOW	% of targeted government counterparts and civil society organizations using MIS for decision-making.	3,50%	20%	15%	-5%	150,00%	30%	50%
	# of squares kilometers covered by independent radio	44.934 (11.37%)	118.000 (30%)	67.600 (16.90%)	(11.400) - 13.1%	57,28%	200.000 (50%)	33,80%
IR 3 : INCREASED GOVERNMENT RESPONSIVENESS	# of major government decisions made per targeted region that incorporate input from participatory mechanisms	4	8	5	-3	62,50%	10	50,00%
	% of population with improved access to prioritized social services	60%	-	Process	-	-	70%	-
IR4: LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IS REDUCED	% of citizens with increased knowledge about anti-corruption mechanisms	14,60%	30%	17,14%	0	57,13%	50%	34,28%
	Number of cases reported by CSOs through anti-corruption mechanisms	0	100	52	0	52%	200	26%
	Number of cases addressed by anti-corruption mechanisms	39	70	91	0	130%	100	91%

III. Key Achievements by Component

III.1. IR1: Deeper and Stronger Civil Society

Based on a baseline survey conducted at the start of the program, civil society remains weak in Madagascar. Few civil society organizations exist, and those that do tend to have limited capacity to carry out advocacy. This intermediate result was to seek increased participation and effectiveness of civil society in public dialogue and decision-making at all governance levels. Throughout the life of the program, MISONGA focused on developing the institutional, organizational and technical capacities of CSOs, improving their advocacy skills, and reinforcing CSO networks and linkages.

III.1.1. Keys Achievements

III.1.1.1 CSO and coalition capacities

In order to undertake advocacy activities, individually or collectively, and dialogue effectively with government, CSOs must first have basic administrative, financial and strategic planning capabilities. MISONGA identified the needs of potential CSO partners, including:

- Administration and Finance
- Project Management (PROPACK)
- Grant Management
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Advocacy techniques
- Coalition building

46 small grants were awarded to support CSOs in their advocacy projects.

As advocacy is considered to be an important approach that allows CSOs to be active members of civil society, CSOs were trained by MISONGA in administration and finance, project management and advocacy techniques, as outlined in the MISONGA Advocacy Manual.

Once they received this basics training, selected CSOs received small grants to support their organizational and institutional development. Coaching and mentoring activities were led by MISONGA to increase their skills in building and implementing advocacy projects. Key public issues, advocacy subjects, advocacy strategies, and a plan for pursuing advocacy actions were identified by the CSOs through local community mobilization.



Advocacy training workshop in Fianarantsoa

MISONGA supported three CSOs and three regional dialogue structures in the environment sector to improve their capacity and project documents for advocacy.

AID, an NGO working in Soanierana Ivongo near the Ankeniheny-Zahamena Corridor, presented a public interest question relating to the implementation of legal measures for forest resource management. *Malagasy Teknisiana mivondrona ho Aro sy tezan'I Zahamena Arin'ny Ala Atsinanana* (MATEZA), an NGO based in Fénérive Est is addressing a public interest question related to the preservation of the Corridor Zahamena-Mantadia. In addition, the Koloharena Federation, a group of farmers associations, is working to promote environmentally favorable agricultural practices. The MISONGA team gave advocacy training to these three CSOs and supported them in finalizing their advocacy project proposals.

MISONGA also supported 3 regional dialogue structures: the Regional Development Committee (CRD) in the Anosy Region, the Multi-Local Planning Committee (CMP) in the province of Fianarantsoa, and the Platform for the Management of the Ankeniheny Zahamena Corridor (PLACAZ) in the province of Toamasina.

Two CSOs and one platform were funded to identify their QIP (Issues of Public Interest) in the health sector through development of strategy plans. This identification was done through consultation with local citizens and government authorities. Action Santé Organisation Secours (ASOS) in Fort-Dauphin and Association des Femmes pour le Développement et l'Environnement (AFDE) in the South East were funded for this activity.

In addition, MISONGA provided institutional support for VOAHAARY SALAMA, a civil society platform dedicated to developing and implementing integrated health, population and the environmental projects.

The PLACAZ (Ankeniheny-Zahamena Forest Corridor Platform in the Tamatave Province) adopted a more functional structure and statute.

With the collaboration of members of the USAID Ecoregional Alliance, especially the Eco-Regional Initiatives (ERI) and MIARO (Maintaining Biological Integrity Critical Biodiversity Habitats), the mission statement of PLACAZ was redefined to better address the “Durban Vision” initiated by the President of Madagascar, the new *Système des Aires Protégées de Madagascar* (SAPM), as well as key regional and local issues expressed by civil society and the private sector. A new statute, internal regulations and operating manual are now defined and will be operational once validated by the General Assembly in November 2005. The new structure includes a permanent secretary, supported by MISONGA, to manage administrative tasks, mobilize platform members, and follow-up on decisions made by the platform. The PLACAZ allows local, regional, provincial and USAID Eco-Regional Alliance stakeholders to lead advocacy actions on environmental and general development issues around the Zahamena corridor.

The Multi-Local Planning Committee (CMP) is re-vitalized. The CMP is an essential element of the MISONGA strategy since it coordinates all activities related to the Forest Corridor in the province of Fianarantsoa. The goal of MISONGA is to build the capacity of the CMP to lead advocacy initiatives on environmental and development issues considered important by the Regions of Haute Matsiatra and Amoron'I Mania. In close collaboration with the USAID Ecoregional Alliance, MISONGA provided technical and financial support to the CMP, which was able to update Communal Development Plans (PCDs) and strengthen the capacities of Koloharena (environmental farmer's associations) in collaboration with communes

and inter-communal organizations (OPCIs), and with the mobilization of CSOs and other actors operating in the corridor.

The Common Charter for Civil Society Organizations was adopted.



Members of the Technical Commission presenting the institutional framework.

On June 25, 2005, in Antananarivo, the « Plate-Forme Nationale de la Société Civile Malgache », or PFNSCM, was created. MISONGA provided extensive support to the implementation process through regional meetings leading up to the National Convention. MISONGA’s financial and technical support ensured this success through a representative and non-partisan process with transparent elections. This Coalition will provide a national voice for civil society, supporting and representing over 3,000 CSOs at all levels and in all sectors. While assistance and charity groups are not new, a civil society standing up for its citizens is still relatively young in Madagascar. Coordination and leadership from within the platform will help it grow

and become a force for change, encouraging community participation, improving government services, and fighting corruption.

Above all, MISONGA supported this platform by mobilizing CSOs at a local, regional and national level. Along with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the European Union, MISONGA guided national and provincial committees to ensure an apolitical platform.

The National Convention assembled 400 representatives from 218 associations, representing the 22 regions of Madagascar to adopt the Common Charter of CSOs. This is an established legal and organizational framework for the OSCM. It was signed by the delegates of the various associations. A second partnership agreement was also signed with the development partners (funding organizations and government).

MISONGA’s goal for this platform is to have a strong structure that represents the regional and national interests of Malagasy civil society. The National Platform of Malagasy Civil Society is key to ensuring the effective participation of Malagasy citizens in the management of public affairs. The national platform will be a natural ally of a CSO coalition financed by MISONGA and should provide support to them as they implement their advocacy actions.

A new statute and new structure of the Regional Development Committee of Anosy (Comité Régional de Développement d’Anosy-CRD) were adopted in August, 2005.

For the Region of Anosy, the CRD is an essential structure that includes many local development actors. Financed by MISONGA, the CRD has contributed to the creation of a guide for Communal Development Plans (PCD) for the 64 communes in the Region, the coordination of meetings to promote the implementation of the Communal Development Committees (CCD) at the community level, the elaboration of the Regional Development Outline (Schéma de Développement Régional SDR), a Regional Investment Plan (Schéma Régional d’Investissement - SRI), and the implementation of an information system and database.

III.1.1.2 Advocacy capacity

23 targeted CSOs mounted effective advocacy campaigns.

MISONGA initially planned to support 5 civil society organizations in 2005. However, the decision was made to support 23 organizations to allow MISONGA the time necessary to support the CSOs in long-term advocacy processes. Technical support provided to these organizations allowed them to raise their advocacy score to 15 points as defined in the Performance Management Plan advocacy index.

From the 10 associations and coalitions with whom MISONGA intended to work in 2005, 48 CSOs were pre-selected to receive an organizational and institutional capacity evaluation. This evaluation is crucial for identifying important areas to strengthen in each organization, and is an essential step for successful advocacy.

The First Regional Investment Program was adopted in the Anosy region and included in the Government Budget

One of the most significant results of the participatory planning approach carried out by the CRD and the Region is the government’s adoption of the Regional Public Investment Program proposed by the Anosy region. This is the first time in Madagascar that a Regional Public Investment Program has been adopted and implemented. This was made possible due to the advocacy campaign carried out in close collaboration with LARO (Linking Players for Regional Opportunities) project that supported the Regional Development Committee petition for approval from the National Government.

III.1.1.3 Gender Mainstreaming

Since the marginalized place of women in Malagasy society restricts development, gender was incorporated into all capacity building activities. In order to strengthen gender as a cross cutting theme, it was highlighted as an expected result and separate activity under IR 1 to ensure the inclusion of gender awareness.

To provide expertise, MISONGA worked in close collaboration with USAID’s Woman’s Legal Rights Initiative (WLRI). WLRI was fully integrated into the MISONGA team to strengthen the goals of gender mainstreaming. These projects share the same building, resources, and trainings, and referred each other to CSOs.

Gender Index available. To measure gender indicators, three tools were used. One, a tool for evaluating the integration of the gender approach, is used in MISONGA monitoring & evaluation and is available to the MISONGA team and to CSOs financed by the program. These indexes allow the MISONGA program to have precise information on various gender indicators to support decision making.

Improved organizational, institutional and technical capacities of “Association des Femmes Maires de Madagascar” (AFEMM). MISONGAs’ coaching improved the organizational, institutional and technical capacity of AFEMM. Members of the AFEMM are now able to elaborate annual work plans and communal plans, and have a better understanding of democratic principles. This knowledge is important to manage communes in a participatory manner.

13 associations located in Fenerive-Est, Manakara, Fort-Dauphin and Ambovombe increased their knowledge in Women’s rights and



gender equity. In collaboration with WLRI, 4 workshops were led in 2005 to incite the integration of the gender perspective within CSOs and throughout the implementation of their advocacy projects. There were 120 participants (81 women and 39 men) including CSOs supported by MISONGA, such as CRADE, MATEZA, COOPADIA and ASOS Fve/Est for Toamasina, AJEFAM, VIF, TARIKA and FAF for Manakara, ASOS and Favehivavy in Fort-Dauphin and Groupe SAP, Magnary and TEHOSOA in Ambovombe.

Seven (7) CSOs have developed projects related to women’s involvement in development activities and the advocacy process.

MISONGA training and coaching on the gender approach have increased CSOs’ willingness and ability to integrate a gender into the management of their associations and in their activities. The integration of the gender perspective in advocacy activities is illustrated by the effective participation of women in the identification of QIPs, in the elaboration of advocacy strategies, and in the content of advocacy proposals. In the 23 advocacy proposals from CSOs, there is active participation of women in the majority and these seven target gender equity specifically. Gender projects funded by MISONGA are: Femme, promotrice de développement (TABITA), “Role de la femme en tant qu’acteur de développement” (DRV), “Abandon des coutumes sur les enfants jumeaux” in Vatovavy Fitovinany (CNPFDH), “Reglementation de la pratique des Jiromena” in Analanjirifo (CNPFDH).

III.1.2.Challenges

- ❑ **The majority of CSOs who responded to the call to advocate did not meet Tier 1 specifications.** A challenge that MISONGA faced during fiscal year (FY) 2005 was to find strong associations and coalitions that could conduct advocacy actions without extensive training (First Tier CSOs). As advocacy is a new technique for these CSOs, concerns were expressed from the start. The principle worry was centered on the political environment, which is not favorable to this type of action. CSOs were afraid of being seen as political opposition. Thanks to training and coaching from the MISONGA team, advocacy actions were clarified to CSOs. To support this progress, considerable efforts (technical and financial) need to be made to provide coaching and mentoring so as to ensure that the advocacy actions of these CSOs makes an impact.
- ❑ **National Platform of Malagasy Civil Society capacity and legitimacy.** Platform members unanimously agreed that the legitimacy of the platform is weakened by the many associations and coalitions that are not yet members to platform. Thus, an important step was taken to legitimize the legal and organizational framework of the charter by adopting the Common Charter for CSOs. The primary challenge for the new coalition is to solidify its base by reaching out to integrate more members.
- ❑ **PLACAZ legitimacy.** Initially, PLACAZ was created by the provincial government. The majority of its members only came from state services. Its constitution was not created in a participatory process and only the general coordinator had the decision making power. Members of the PLACAZ from the regions Alaotra-Mangoro, Analanjirifo and Atsinanana, redefined PLACAZ’s new mission and strategy plan.

III.2. IR2: Increased Information Flow

Access to information is central to a democratic system. Information promotes better decision making regarding economic and social development. During its implementation, MISONGA activities operated on the principle that knowledge and information are tightly intertwined with civil society development (IR 1) and improvements in government responsiveness (IR 3).

MISONGA promoted the improvement of the flow of information by increasing:

- **Information use** - the capacity to collect, manage and use information for decision making and advocacy
- **Access to information** - which is the ability to access public information – technical, legal, economic and institutional – easily and economically
- **ICT and Telecommunications access** - which relates to access to phone, fax, and the Internet, allowing users to enter into transactions, exchange information and ideas
- **Media capacity** - the ability of the institutions and mechanisms that inform and influence masses of citizens

III.2.1.Keys Achievements

III.2.1.1 Multi Sector Information Service

The main role of **Multi-Sector Information Services (MIS)** was to provide technical expertise for the better use of information and knowledge in planning and decision making at the local, regional and national levels. MIS supplied developmental and coordination assistance to different interventions, projects, and programs at all levels.

MIS supported the implementation and the operations of UGIRs at the regional level and the creation/implementation of regional information systems. All USAID strategic objectives benefit from the existence of the UGIRs in strategic Regions by:

- Accessing information from various sources
- Using information from different sectors to perform integrated analysis
- Accessing information that is relevant to the regional and local context
- Building capacity of local partners to manage and utilize the information for improved decision making
- Networking partners to share data, information and knowledge among regional actors.



First meeting between UGIR technician and staff of Decentralized services, District and Region

At the start-up phase in 2004, MISONGA began identifying “focal point” partners in each region of the targeted zones to facilitate the future implementation. MIS made many contacts to share expertise and leverage resources, including:

- ERI/Fianarantsoa: Provided CMP with information related to the Fianarantsoa forest corridor
- Swiss Embassy: Supported the Fianarantsoa Geographical Information System (GIS) system by printing GIS maps and analyzing information
- Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD): Supplied information related to the population-environment linkages in the Fianarantsoa region
- Business And Market Expansion (BAMEX) : Provided market/Trade information in the Fianarantsoa region
- ERI/Tamatave: Provided information related to “Morazaka” forest corridor
- International Resources Group (IRG)/SEFEM: Supported the information unit of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forest
- AGETIPA: Provided information to support participatory planning in Fort-Dauphin.

During the fiscal year 2005, main activities were focused on:

- Setting up national and regional information units to improve the availability and access of information for decision-making by providing assistance for institutional and organizational capacity, equipment, data, and the recruitment of technical staff
- Strengthening the capacity of public services and civil society to produce, collect, manage, analyze and disseminate information
- Strengthening the capacity of regional and local stakeholders to use information as a tool for advocacy and decision-making in the participatory planning processes
- Facilitating the establishment of information and data sharing mechanisms between stakeholders at national and regional levels

During the transition phase in 2006, MISONGA lead competency transfer activities, such as technical training, coaching and guidance for decision-making tools produced in the four UGIRs, which were identified as the most pro-active and responsive to MISONGA support.

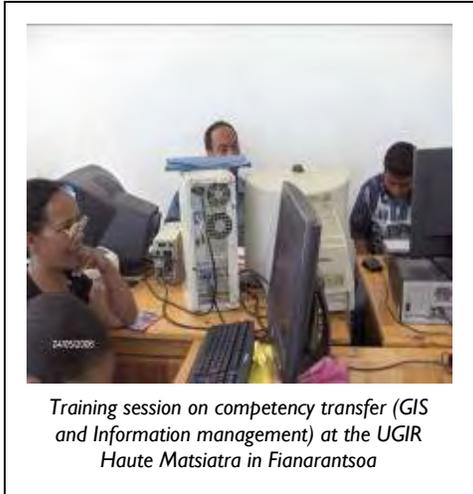
Seven (7) Multi-sector Information Services (MIS) have been set up in six targeted Regions during the fiscal year 2005.

Several decisions concerning critical regional issues have been made using information from the MIS units that MISONGA set up. Seven regions now have the capacity to support decision making with information available at the regional level. As a result, there is increased accessibility of reliable information and more relevant planning efforts due to wider participation by regional stakeholders. UGIRs are operational and PRDs have been produced in the following Regions: Anosy, Analanjirofo, Alaotra-Mangoro, Haute-Matsiatra, Boeny, Atsimo- Atsinanana and Vatovavy- Fitovinany.

UGIRs goal is to support key regional stakeholders, including decision makers and CSOs, in the management and use of information for decision making. The first products include databases, thematic maps, localization of regional actors and interventions and sectoral maps.

UGIRs played an important role in developing Regional Development Plans (PRDs) recognized by regional actors, the government, and the donor community as excellent tools to promote decentralization and regional development. Many important decisions in critical sectors such as rice production (Ambatondrazaka), natural resource management (Anosy) and economic activity (Fianarantsoa) were based on information provided by UGIRs.

Among these seven UGIRs, four regions, Anosy, Haute-Matsiatra, Amoron'I Mania and Alaotra Mangoro have become autonomous and have recruited permanent technicians in charge of the unit activities, equipment, data and software provided by MISONGA.



Four (4) regions have operational and autonomous technical units (UGIR)

Each UGIR in MISONGA targeted specific zones (Anosy, Haute-Matsiatra, Amoron'i Mania, Alaotra Mangoro, Atsinanana, Boeny, Analanjirofo) and set up the basic equipment including computers, databases, analytical software and a technical advisor to provide technical assistance, training and competencies transfer for six months.

The regions provided the UGIR's infrastructure (office, electricity, phone line, etc.) and permanent UGIR's staff.

Through the UGIR, the staff of the Region and the local development partners collect and use baseline

data, spatial and statistical information, thematic cartography, maps, and status of activities mainly in the areas of agricultural development, trade, health, biodiversity conservation, and education. During the transition period, assistance to the regions focused on competencies transfer to regional technicians to run the system independently and to update sectoral databases.

A Poverty Observatory was created in Fianarantsoa

In collaboration with Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques (GRET), a French NGO, a "Poverty Observatory" was set up for the Fianarantsoa Urban District.

The data on poverty from the pilot Fokontany: (Sakalava - Antsorokavo - Ambalapaiso - Tambohomandrovo) was analyzed and used in the community's decisions to prioritize the communal development plan. This information is currently available on a database and can be used by the town council for future planning. At present, the poverty observatory within the Fianarantsoa Urban District is established and operational: the database is available and maps were produced of the different pilot Fokontany, which have very little infrastructure. A presentation workshop was held with the participation of regional players, and the Fianarantsoa Urban District committed itself to setting up this poverty observatory.

The different regional players present during the presentation all agreed on the importance of this poverty observatory since it allows the town council to have instantaneous access to this performance tool for decision-making.

On-demand support to key partners.

Throughout the life of the program, MISONGA was contacted by several partners to provide GIS maps on deforestation status and data concerning bush fires in Madagascar. Such information significantly assisted the president's office in approaching potential donors, including the World Bank.

Many thematic maps were also produced by MISONGA's MIS team to assist others as needed, including: the USAID intervention in the priority zones, SO5 partners' spatial coverage, "Taux de prevalence de la Diarhée", "Communes partenaires de l'USAID en planning familiale", SanteNet intervention Communes, Title II intervention Communes, SO6 partners and interventions, "DGEF communes verts de Madagascar", ERI's Intervention Communes, and the localization of Kominina Mendrika in Fianarantsoa.

MISONGA supported different USAID programs based on specific requests, for example:

- The production of maps identifying Eco-regional Alliance target communes to identify priority communes for the Champion Communes initiative.
- Mapping of the spatial distribution of female Mayors «AFEMM» throughout Madagascar to support the coordination of the Female Mayors Association.
- Providing training, technical support, and the provision of equipment to OPTIQ, a regional association created to provide information to the Boeny region to support regional planning.

III.2.1.2 Rural Access to Information

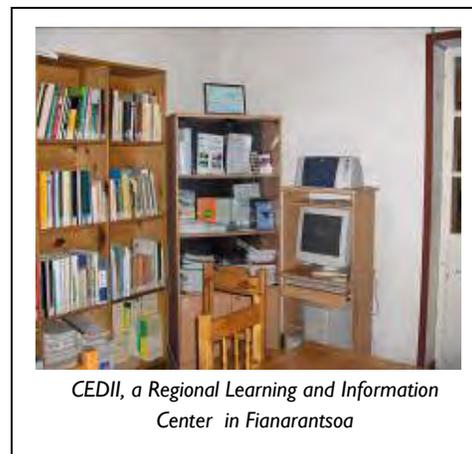
Regional Learning Information Centers

RLIC's goal is to organize documents (research, legislation, etc.), provide Internet access to the public, provide facilities for CSOs, and host human resources that can guide citizens to accessible information. In addition to setting up the center and providing management and maintenance training for staff, MISONGA has also worked to raise awareness about this valuable resource.

MISONGA provided assistance and “coaching” to expand services provided by RLICs. CSO partners received training in information research, analysis and integrating information into the decision making process. For example, CSOs received basic ICT and information research training on internet techniques in CEDII in Fianarantsoa.

The CEDII has established a business plan and is able to expand its services to meet needs identified by CSOs and development partners

MISONGA selected the CEDII of Fianarantsoa as the first RLIC to be supported. The CEDII opened in 2000 with support from USAID's ILO program. Meetings took place with the CEDII director and Board members to review the situation and perspectives. Positive aspects were related to the strong involvement of key board members, representing the commune of Fianarantsoa, the Region of Haute Matsiatra and the University of Fianarantsoa. The main issues identified were related to weak management and marketing capacity.



During the fiscal year 2005, MISONGA focused its activities on encouraging mass media (such as Regional Information Centers and rural radio) to ensure better access to objective information for citizens, especially in rural communities.

MISONGA focused on building the organizational, institutional and technical capacity of the CEDII (Centre d'Echange, de Documentation et d'Information Inter-institutionnel) based in Fianarantsoa. In collaboration with World Links (a US based PVO experienced in developing Telecenters in Africa), the business plan and the management strategy were established.

Feasibility studies were carried out in four regions

Based on lessons learned from CEDII, feasibility studies were carried out in collaboration with the CITE Centre d'Information Technique et Economique (CITE) in four regions: Alaotra-Mangoro, Anosy, Analanjirofo and Vatovavy-Fitovinany. These studies have prepared the development of resource centers, in alignment with the current initiatives being pursued by the European Union and the French Cooperation. These centers will allow for a permanent flow of information into the targeted zones.

Independent Radio Stations

Radio is one of the most powerful means of communication in Madagascar, prevalent in urban centers as well as rural villages. MISONGA worked with radio stations to incorporate political awareness into their programming. Journalists were trained to report government activity and be responsible for accurate and complete information. By learning about civic program production, Madagascar's independent radio has an enhanced ability to inform citizens about civil society.

35 journalists from independent rural radio stations are able to produce radio programs on the environment, health, gender, and good governance in the regions of Fianarantsoa and Anosy, reaching 118 communes.



Journalists training on Participatory Production Cycle by Media Support and ALT/Radio

Training on participatory radio production was provided by MISONGA/ALT (Andrew Lees Trust). As a result, 25 rural radio journalists have deepened their skills in investigative journalism and 10 additional journalists in program production. These programs were produced to increase and improve information to rural communities to promote behavior change among target groups. All trainees work for independent radio stations in Anosy, Haute Matsiatra, Vatovavy, Fitovinany, Atsimo Atsinanana and Ihorombe.

Radio programs on health and the environment were produced and aired by three stations in Fianarantsoa (Radio Soafia, Radio Mampita, Radio Tohivakana) and by independent radio stations in the Anosy region.

These radio programs now reach a total of 750,527 citizens in 118 communes or an increase of 15% since the beginning of MISONGA.

12 Koloharena and Kominina Mendrika correspondents in Fianarantsoa increased their skills in journalism techniques.

During the transition phase in 2006, a series of trainings led to improved journalism knowledge for regional and local journalists from independent radio stations (Radio Sava, Radio Tohivakana, Radio FY, Radio Katolika, Radio Sofia, Radio Mampita and Radio MBS), and correspondents from Kominina Mendrika and Koloharena. These trainings enabled them to utilize different methods (interviews, sketches, etc.) to inform the targeted audience.

III.2.1.3 Use of ICT for Development

E-governance

The Malagasy Government created the institutional framework for e-governance in Madagascar by establishing "Cellule de Développement de l'E- Gouvernance (CDEG)" and the executive body "Agence National de Regulation et d'Exécution (ANRE)".

MISONGA signed a protocol of collaboration with the CDEG, the Office of the President, and the Ministry of Telecommunications to implement the e-governance program. MISONGA played a critical role in the creation and validation of the legal framework (Plan National de l'E-Gouvernance - PNEG) that provided the political will to adopt e-governance. This framework also created guidelines for information sharing to increase transparency and coordination amongst ministries, and provided technical guidance for the acquisition of ICT equipment.

The PNEG has been approved and validated by civil society, the private sector and the government, and serves as a point of reference for the implementation of e-governance in Madagascar. This document consists of the national strategy plan, the master plan for the State intranet, and guidelines for normalization and standardization. It guides modernization by providing guidelines for communication between ministries, information sharing, and ensures a rational and equitable distribution of resources.

Feasibility studies are available for the e-governance pilot project in three regional pilot sites (Anosy, Boeny Vakinakaratra). This allows access to many decentralized services at the regional level and facilitates relations with the central government. MISONGA's strategic investments have been in three pilot sites for e-governance, the Ministry of Interior, key civil society organizations, and for regional information systems.

CDEG and ANRE provided e-governance training to government agencies in 22 regions of Madagascar.

Once PNEG was validated in March 2006, MISONGA provided 17 computers to CDEG. These computers will equip the future e-governance training center where government agents will receive technical training related to improving social services through ICT and innovative means.

Government Internet Portal is accessible on-line. MISONGA provided technical assistance and a grant to the Malagasy Government, allowing them to establish an online the Government portal. The design



of the portal was designed by an external consultant, Cabinet INGENOSYA, and 46 technicians and managers from 23 State Institutions (Ministries, Parliament, and HCC).

The Ministry of the Interior has implemented a secure information and document management system at both the central and sub-administrative levels.

MISONGA supported the Ministry of Interior to modernize its documentation center and create an internal information management system for the Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Réforme Administrative (MIRA). Following a signed protocol agreement between the two parties on May 18, 2005, a number of concrete actions have been undertaken, including the training of 20 Ministry staff in project development and monitoring and evaluation, and the donation of computer materials to the Ministry and to three pilot districts (Fort- Dauphin, Ambalavao, Fénériver- Est).

MISONGA purchased computers and networking equipment needed to set up the intranet at three pilot sites (Fort-Dauphin, Ambalavao, Fénériver-Est), and for the central office and a portion of the project to update electoral district boundaries.

The Ministry of Interior (MIRA) has established an Information System based on sharing working documents through Internet connectivity. Server equipment and software has been installed in MIRA's headquarters in Antananarivo. The three districts, also received basic equipment, such as: personal computers, modems, scanners and printers.

Legal documents and forms are accessible via MIRA's documentation server, and will be connected to the e-governance program in order to be available directly to the public. Presently, only the three pilot districts are able to consult available documents and legal text.

On-line environmental database available through the ARSIE (Association de Réseaux de Système d'Informations Environnementales).

The ARSIE provides technical assistance to other organizations, produces data, and advocates the sharing of policy related information.

MISONGA supports ARSIE financially, allowing them to maintain the website. This website integrates metadata on Madagascar's environment with links to other international databases.

This website serves as a center for all available information on the environment; making it publicly available. This will give easy access to environmental information to members of the network, institutions, projects, private actors and researchers concerned with environmental issues in Madagascar and elsewhere in the world.

This website (www.arsie.mg), which is currently available online, is a significant step in information sharing. It allows members of the association, the public, and decision makers to access texts, laws and other environmental information. It is also a critical resource for USAID Ecoregional Alliance members.

In addition, MISONGA has been able to use funding from the French Cooperation - Fonds de Solidarité Prioritaire (FSPGDRN) to contribute to the implementation of a metadata database.

III.2.2. Challenges

- A lack of pro-activeness and initiative was noted among central ministries in terms of getting involved in the dynamic multi-sectoral information system. This may be due to a lack of resources, motivation or information.

- ❑ The regional and local personnel lack technical skills making it difficult to transfer competencies. This situation is aggravated by the lack of financial resources, especially regarding the Regional Information Management units (UGIRs).
- ❑ The creation of new RLIC centers requires significant financial resources. Feasibility studies conducted by CITE highlighted these findings. It is crucial to plan fundraising activities among members of the Alliance and other donors.
- ❑ Using “Increased FM coverage” as an indicator of success for MISONGA is problematic considering the investment needed to create new radio stations and update equipment in existing radio stations.
- ❑ For the implementation of the e-governance program, the political will of the Malagasy government remains the determining factor for its success. However, a lack of coordination between participating actors exists and represents a constraint for the implementation of the project.

III.3. IR3 Improved Government Responsiveness

In regards to the improvement of state capacity, MISONGA’s interventions supported the decentralization process initiated by the government. MISONGA provided trainings and coaching, as well as, the development of needed tools to implement communal and regional action plans.

III.3.1.Keys Achievements

III.3.1.1 Increased government management & outreach capacities

Community and regional leaders have the tools and skills to manage decentralization and development at their respective levels.

The current context of decentralization in Madagascar requires local governments to increase capacity to manage development activities. Decentralization of the administration is placing more resources and more decision-making power in the hands of local officials. Yet most have little, if any, training in or understanding of their new functions. MISONGA is helping them deepen their understanding of democracy and restoring faith in the administration. Key concepts in trainings include: relationships with the rest of the government and to the citizens they represent, strategies to make sure their communes receive the services they need, why citizens have a right to know how the budget is spent, using information to make decisions, and earning the trust of the people.

Built the capacity of 62 female mayors (out of 1558 mayors in Madagascar) and introduced them to government ministries and donors.

Through MISONGA support, the association of Femmes Elues Maires de Madagascar (FEMM), provided training for 62 female mayors on “democratic foundations and the planning process.” The training was delivered in six provinces of Madagascar and was co-financed by MISONGA, UNDP and the Swiss government. MISONGA allowed this association to be recognized, and to advocate for the interests of communes led by female mayors. The president of the association was invited by Interaction to represent the Malagasy civil society during an advocacy campaign in Washington DC aimed to improve civil society participation in MCA (Millennium Challenge Account) design and implementation.



Training for 62 female mayors on “democratic foundations and the planning process” in Antsirabe, Antananarivo

135 mayors and 26 other commune leaders received leadership and skills training to better manage their communes.

These leaders (mayors, members of communal councils and of Communal Development Committees) come from communities in the intervention zones and received training through the MISONGA program to improve their capacity to administer and manage commune level development projects. These trainings were provided for 13 communes in the region of

Amoron'i Mania, 12 communes in the region of Anosy, eight communes in the region of Androy, and 63 communes in the region of Analanjirofo.

Sixty six (66) members of regional executive offices were trained in “Management and Leadership”

The new movement of decentralization, good governance and Madagascar's vision for development require very highly effective, skillful, knowledgeable and informed leaders. Through permanent contacts and dialogue with MISONGA field staff, these regional executives expressed their needs and requested workshops and trainings.

This training was made possible through the collaboration of MISONGA, the “Ministère de la Décentralisation et de l'Aménagement du Territoire” (MDAT) and the UNDP. The training took place in Fianarantsoa and Toamasina in September 2005, and focused on strengthening the capacity of regional decision makers in the areas of project management, communication, negotiation and advocacy. The training was initiated in each of the regions where the training had been identified in the PRD.

Diagnosis tools were developed to provide decentralized institutions frameworks for assessing their capacities.

In collaboration with MDAT, MISONGA contributed to the development of a capacity assessment tool. The tool is made up of 40 questionnaires referring to state management capacity, citizens' participation, and Malagasy laws. It was piloted during the development of governance “white star” indicators under the Kaominina Mendrika initiative of the USAID Alliance.

Regions increased their capacity in monitoring and evaluation

MISONGA provided monitoring & evaluation training to the management team of the Anosy region and CRD Anosy members. This training taught the region's staff to use regional monitoring & evaluation systems to improve decision-making.

III.3.1.2 Improved structures and mechanisms for citizen participation

MISONGA supported initiatives for citizens' participatory mechanisms at national, regional and communal levels. These initiatives allow citizens and communities greater involvement in the decision-making process within their zones.

Regional frameworks were developed, such as PRD and PRI, to facilitate citizens and communities involvement in the regions decision-making process

Good regional development plans are an invaluable tool for the government to determine investment strategies over the next four years. Community ownership and reliable data are recognized as key to the success of these tools. MISONGA's mastery of data processing and the presentation of data for decision-making, combined with their expertise in community participation, has contributed to the success and adoption of regional development plans. By building the capacity of regions to prepare and manage such plans, MISONGA is bringing citizens and government closer together and improving decision making.

Integrated regional plans ensure greater efficiency and impact than sectoral programs. It guarantees more efficient resource allocation. Particularly, for USAID projects, this is the best way to ensure impact in the communities' daily lives and the endorsement and acceptance by the government of joint priorities. MISONGA's intervention focused on facilitating regional

stakeholders' involvement in the development of various regional frameworks, such as PRD and PRI. As result of MISONGA's support in the participatory planning processes, nine regions were able to create and pass their PRDs: Haute Matsiatra, Atsimo Atsinanana, Vatovavy Fitovinany, Anosy, Amoron'i Mania, Ihorombe, Analanjirofo, Alaotra Mangoro and Boeny. In addition, consultations at the commune and district level made it possible to make several major decisions, including:

- The creation of 14 conservation sites in Anosy
- The authorization of a site for the port construction in Fort Dauphin
- The adoption of development supporting activities in the region of Haute Matsiatra
- The improvement of community access to sanitation services and improved protection against transmittable illnesses in the region of Atsimo Atsinanana

MISONGA's planning process focused on a participatory approach and utilization of accurate information. The program assisted in the finalization of PRDs that had previously been developed with other donors (for example Atsimo Atsinanana and Vatovavy Fitovinany).

The Anosy region issued a decree that recognizes CRD Anosy as a consultative mechanism for the region.

MISONGA played an important role in the strengthening of the CRD Anosy. The program promoted the recognition of the CRD as the consultative body for the region, alongside the regional executive office (the region chief and his team) and the deliberative body (regional council) as laid out in the decree 2004-001. These actions are important to assure the functionality and the sustainability of the structure. Furthermore, these actions helped to accomplish goals, such as the elaboration and validation of the PRD and the Regional Plan for Investment for the Anosy Region, the elaboration of a thematic guide on the creation of PCDs, and the creation of a Coordination and Consultation Office in Betroka.

Citizen participation increased as a result of regional government structures.

Citizen participation is a key element to good government. It guarantees government programs address the needs of citizens and empowers citizens to hold officials to greater accountability. Regional consultation platforms were created at the local level (CRD and CCD) to facilitate greater citizen participation. However, after the regional development plans (PRD) were established, many of these platforms ended.

MISONGA revitalized these structures to renew the government/citizen dialogue. These structures (CMP in Fianarantsoa, the CRD in Anosy, the CRD of Alaotra, and the CRD of Mangoro) now play an important role in implementing those regional development plans by strengthening the capacity of organizations and financing projects.

In 2005, more than 500 people participated in the CRD Anosy General Assembly and more than 100 people in the CMP in Fianarantsoa.

During MISONGA there has been an increased amount of inter-communal initiatives in MISONGA's intervention zones. Particularly in the Anosy region, these initiatives included complimenting the activities of the ACORDS program (a European Union governance program in Southern Madagascar), and conducting capacity building activities for OPCI Voitse to establish the conservation site Ambatotsirongorongo, initiated during the LARO program.

Provided technical support for twelve (12) communes to update their Communal Development Plans (PCD)

The PCD implementation process benefits from the integration of a wide range of dimensions and multiple sectors (environment, education, gender, Health/HIV AIDS, etc.) while working to synthesize the communal plan with regional and national plans. MISONGA facilitated and contributed to the development of 12 PCDs in its targeted zones and the integration of environmental, health, agricultural, and rural development aspects into these updated PCDs. MISONGA also supported the communes’ management staff during the proposal design phase and the negotiations with potential donors.

The National Council for Citizen Participation was established

MISONGA contributed to the creation and administration of the National Council for Citizens’ Participation under the Good Governance department at Madagascar’s executive level.

III.3.1.3 Improved government responsiveness to social services

Birth certificates and civil status documentation among communes were updated and made available.

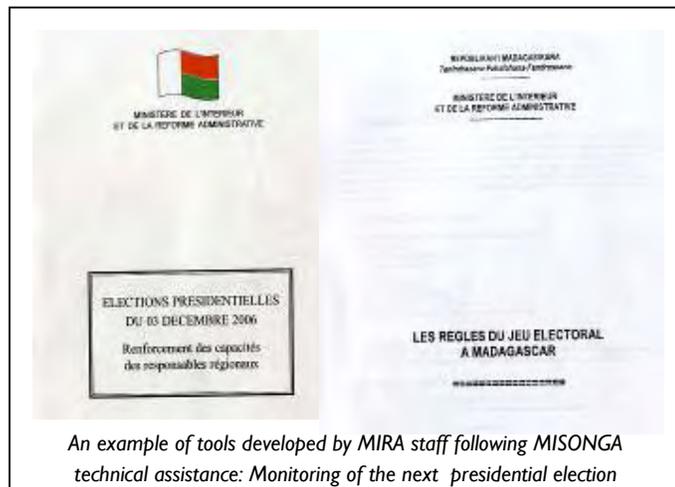
Currently, accurate data does not exist regarding births in Madagascar. Yet it is estimated that 2.5 million Malagasy (18%) are not registered and are unable to obtain birth certificates that are necessary to obtain a national identity card, a voter registration card, a marriage certificate and many other official documents. Vaccination campaigns and physician attended births present a valuable opportunity to update the information.

Finally, up to date, accurate birth registries will improve census data and health information tracking (i.e. vaccination coverage tracking).

This activity fits into the framework of the national plan to improve birth registry and manage civil status documentation *Ezaka Kopia ho an’ ny Ankizy* (EKA) project in collaboration with UNICEF, SantéNet and the inter-ministerial committee. Training of trainers for the implementation of the EKA project was delivered by MISONGA and its partners in Fianarantsoa, Fénérive Est and Fort-Dauphin. This action specifically targeted communities involved in the “Kôminina Mendrika” initiative.

24 department managers at the Ministry of Interior have gained skills that will help them deliver improved services.

The Ministry of Interior’s activities (national identity cards, elections, passports, visa, police, and disaster response) touch the lives of every Malagasy citizen, but have yet to benefit from the very little investment in reform. The Interior Minister sought MISONGA’s help in generating support and cultivating partnerships for transforming the



An example of tools developed by MIRA staff following MISONGA technical assistance: Monitoring of the next presidential election

ministry. In addition to project management training, MISONGA helped the Ministry reorganize staff into results oriented teams and convert the strategic plan into manageable priority projects. This new approach is increasing efficiency and creating a structure that provides much needed financial support and technical assistance to the Ministry.

With the objective of improving Ministry services, the program provided support to develop the Ministry's business plan into a summary document containing 19 sub-projects, and in the negotiation of these projects with technical and financial partners during a round table meeting in December 2004. This activity allowed the Interior Minister to mobilize resources and translate them into concrete actions.

III.3.2. Challenges

- During training for communal and regional leaders, the main challenge was the different range of participant abilities. It was difficult to conduct training to such a multi-level audience. Some with very advanced skills and others that needed to be introduced to basic concepts.
- As for the implementation of the regional planning process, the pressure for regional leaders to show results led to a rushed elaboration of the PRD in several Regions. As a result, the PRD did not effectively represent the aspirations of the citizens.

III.4. IR4 Reduced level of corruption

At program start-up in 2004, Madagascar's levels of corruption still remained high according to the TI perception index 2004 (3.1 with a ranking 82 out of 146 countries). It was noted that development actors, such as public decision-makers, CSOs, and the private sector, still lacked commitment and participation in the fight against corruption at all levels. The judiciary system also seems to be weak at the regional and national levels. Hence, "Corruptors" have been rarely tried or penalized for their acts. This intermediate result then seeks to support public, as well as, private initiatives to fight corruption. Throughout the program life, MISONGA aimed to raise public awareness on anti-corruption mechanisms, increasing CSO engagement and involvement, and improving government responsiveness to corruption cases.

III.4.1.Keys Achievements

III.4.1.1 Increased citizen awareness on anti-corruption mechanisms in targeted regions

In order to raise the public's knowledge in the fight against corruption, public and private anti-corruption institutions underwent different stages. First, measures were taken to build their capacity of these institutions in order to empower them. Second, they were given appropriate tools to develop and facilitate their work, and help them during the decision-making process. Finally, anti-corruption measures were launched at all levels to reach a wide range of actors. MISONGA's initiatives were then directed to improve government and non-government organizations' abilities to conduct effective anti-corruption campaigns. These were done with MISONGA's financial and technical support for trainings that targeted anti-corruption issues, contributions to the development of strategic and

operational anti-corruption tools, and the launching of anti-corruption communication campaigns.

Increased the capacity of TI and Chambre d'Arbitrage et de Médiation de Madagascar (CAMM). After receiving advocacy trainings from MISONGA, TI conducted advocacy campaigns and communication activities in three urban communes: Toamasina, Anosy and Fianarantsoa. These were initiated to increase citizens' awareness of transparency and accountability from decentralized government on the use of public funds. Capacity reinforcement activities additionally addressed justice, arbitration, and mediation, and had been delivered to the Malagasy non-government arbitration body "Centre d'Arbitrage et de Médiations de Madagascar" (CAMM). The latter mainly provided alternative justice solutions for business disputes.

BIANCO's regional office in Fianarantsoa has been operational since February 2006. To ensure better impact at the grassroots' level and to better serve regional actors, BIANCO established a field office in Fianarantsoa, which has been operational since February 2006. This office decentralizes the fight against corruption in the country by extending BIANCO's presence outside of the capital. MISONGA has contributed approximately \$200,000 of its funding to provide staff training, equipment, and building maintenance.



Inauguration of BIANCO's regional office in Fianarantsoa

This increasing coverage and capacity of BIANCO in Fianarantsoa, is strategic for USAID as Fianarantsoa is considered a "black area" of corruption in many sectors (health, environment, businesses, etc). Addressing corruption in this area will produce a significant impact on the performance of all USAID implemented programs.



Results of anti-corruption national and regional baseline

The 2004 National strategy to fight corruption was updated and validated in July 2005. Results of in-depth corruption studies in the tourism industry and crafts sectors helped to refine the 2004 national anti-corruption strategy by CSLCC and its partners. These sectoral studies were funded under MISONGA. They also helped decision-makers in their respective domains address the appropriate actions by knowing the nature of corruption in each sector, the involved person or institutions, its consequences, and to some extent, the reasons for its existence.

National and regional anti-corruption tools are operational. MISONGA invested \$150,000 in the establishment of a national and regional anti-corruption baseline study, representing 50% of the total costs that was shared with the World Bank and the UNDP. This survey is a key element to conducting the anti-corruption program, as it gives anti-corruption institutions, such as CSLCC, BIANCO, anti-corruption CSO platforms and the private sector, updated information on the status of corruption in the country. By using it with the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) measurement, a clear portrayal of corruption at Madagascar's local and national levels is possible to help design and update anti-corruption strategies.

In addition, MISONGA has also supported the establishment of a national corruption observatory. This complements the corruption baseline survey as it provides more qualitative information related to sectoral corruption and their causes in a short period of time (daily, weekly, monthly). MISONGA collaborated with other donors (Embassy of Switzerland and GTZ) and contributed \$15,000, approximately 60% of the total study costs.

96,139 people have an increased knowledge of anti-corruption mechanisms in MISONGA targeted zones. In 2005, statistics from the Bureau Indépendant Anti-Corruption (BIANCO) showed that 1,124 visitors were registered during their "Open House Workshop" in Fianarantsoa province. In addition, 95,015 people are estimated to be reached in others MISONGA targeted communes through awareness campaigns:

BIANCO - Four communes of Anosy, including the urban commune of Fort Dauphin and three rural communes of Mandromondromotra, Manambaro and Ankaramena

Fanohitra Miady Amin'ny Kolikoly (FAMAK) - Five communes of Haute-Matsiatra, including Fianarantsoa I, Fianarantsoa II, Ambalavao, Ambohimahasoana and Ikalamavony

TANTSOROKA - Three communes of Alaotra Mangoro, including Ambohibary, Morarano Gara, and Amboasary

III.4.1.2 Reports of corruption increased

Government and non-governmental institutions improved their capacities and have acquired tools to effectively report corruption cases to the public. MISONGA's interventions focused on building governmental and non-governmental organizations' capacities to better address corruption cases through anti-corruption mechanisms.

Magistrates better handle corruption cases. 52 magistrates throughout Madagascar received training on "how to handle complicated corruption cases" in early 2005. This was done with MISONGA through the technical support from European experts, such as Eva Jolly.

143 corruption complaints were recorded in MISONGA targeted zones in 2005. This increase in complaints is attributed to BIANCO and FAMAK interventions. 91 cases were registered by BIANCO in the Fianarantsoa, Toliara and Toamasina provinces. FAMAK received 52 cases from the Toamasina, Fianarantsoa, and Anosy regions.

Cases reported were facilitated by “complaint boxes” in the 22 regions of Madagascar. 40 CSOs receiving grants from MISONGA also received “training of trainers” on anti-corruption mechanisms in September 2005, which enabled them to deal with corruption cases in their respective domains.

III.4.2. Challenges

Although significant progress has been made for the fight against corruption in Madagascar, challenges still remain. These include:

- ❑ The non-functionality of effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to accurately report corruption cases in its targeted zones.
- ❑ The lack of linkages and synergy between USAID anti-corruption programs and other USAID-implemented programs, such as SO5 (health) and SO6 (environment).
- ❑ The lack of focus on raising public awareness of mechanisms for filing corruption complaints.
- ❑ The non-sustainability of anti-corruption initiatives, due to the lack of interest, participation and funding of some stakeholders.
- ❑ Members of national legislature do not seem to consider survey findings.
- ❑ The contributions and investments made by CSOs, the private sector, and citizens for the fight against corruption are still very low, estimated at less than \$1/per habitant. Madagascar is over-dependent on donor funding for national anti-corruption initiatives.

IV. Success Stories



Authorities during the inauguration of the National Convention at Hilton, on June 20, 2005

The Common Charter for Civil Society Organizations was adopted on June 25, 2005, in Antananarivo, the « Plate-Forme Nationale de la Société Civile Malgache » (PFNSCM). In June 2005, 438 individuals representing CSOs from all of Madagascar’s 22 regions attended a national conference. The debates were lively and heated, as they should be in a true democratic process, and in the end the charter was approved and coalition officials were elected in transparent elections.

Over the past fifteen years, civil society organizations had tried twice before to establish a national coalition. During the first attempt, political interests divided the participants and it failed. In the second, members of the opposition diverted the agenda in an attempt to destabilize the regime in power, causing it to be unsuccessful as well. With a renewed spirit of democracy, MISONGA brought together the over 3,000 existing organizations throughout Madagascar and unified these groups to make a difference in their communities.

Given MISONGA’s expertise with civil society development and their deep understanding of the culture, MISONGA staff recognized the first step of establishing a CSO coalition was inviting all national CSOs to a conference to establish a charter. MISONGA ensured that all of the regions of Madagascar were represented, and all interested associations, regardless of size or sector, were allowed to participate. MISONGA also ensured that the ideas developed during regional workshops were addressed at the conference and included in the final charter.

PFNSCM represents a strengthened forum for Malagasy CSOs to work together to voice local needs at the national level.

“We see our words and ideas in the charter. We chose the leaders and they are people that have the interests of civil society at heart, not a political agenda”

*Mrs Maria Zafitsara,
Member of a Women’s Association*

“Civil society organizations are in the best position to really know the realities and aspirations of the Malagasy people in all sectors – health, environment, education, agriculture – at all levels. CSO’s do not have a political agenda, they do not exist to make money and they are not part of the government. They are insiders in their communities and exist to improve their community’s quality of life.”

Mrs Lalao Randriamampionona, The President of the National Association of Women’s Organizations (DRV)

Association of Elected Female Mayors of Madagascar (AFEMM).



Recognizing the potential impact Female Mayors have on their communities and leadership they provide to females throughout Madagascar, MISONGA partnered with them to establish AFEMM. Together MISONGA and AFEMM created a constitution, democratically elected officers, and designed a strategy plan. During their last meeting in June 2006, they establish a shared vision for the priority themes needed for the development of their communities:

1. The future of the children
2. Evolution of gender equality
3. Increased political expression and ambition by women
4. Freedom of expression

To assist AFEMM in accomplishing their goals, MISONGA has provided further training to enhance their ability to serve their communities. Topics included: urban planning, the roles and responsibilities of mayors, good governance, community participation, and women's rights.

MISONGA has also publicized the group's success, connecting the association to potential donors. Due to the efforts of group leaders, AFEMM has obtained \$30,000 in funding from UNDP and the Swiss Embassy, in addition to the \$46,000 they received from MISONGA. Furthermore, thanks to their advocacy efforts each of their communes received special funding from the Malagasy government to improve one road in each commune totaling \$150,000. They have also successfully advocated for special consideration for nutritional rehabilitation and for AIDS prevention education. President Ravolamanana recognized their initiative and pledged his support to the efforts of those who are ready working for their communities.

Through organization, training, and partner building, MISONGA has played a key role in empowering female mayors to implement these skills in the governance of their communes.

One example is Madame Rivoarisona Myriame, Mayor of the Rural Commune of Ranotsara North in the Ihorombe region of the Fianarantsoa province. She has accomplished extraordinary things in her first three years as mayor.

Mayor Myriame addressed her commune's lack of electricity and safe drinking water. Through MISONGA/AFEMM training, she increased her capacity to design and manage project finances. Applying her new skills, she was able to leverage 216 million Ariary in funding from the ACORDS program for the development of her commune to access a new water supply, to improve hygiene and reduce illnesses, and install electricity that provide the population with a more secure environment to live.

She also established two associations of women farmers to broaden the social and economic activities of women in her commune, who were predominately employed in the agricultural and livestock raising sector. She increased formal employment through social projects, such as rehabilitation of roads, and established a tree nursery project.

Another example of a female mayor that has applied MISONGA training to bring tangible change to her community is Madame Ralalasoia Bernadette, mayor of the Commune d'Ambohitsilaozana in the Toamasina province.

Commune d’Ambohitsilaozana suffers from extremely high rates of malnutrition, reaching 51.90% in December 2005. Previously, the commune relied on state intervention for the needs of the population. After undergoing capacity building training for project planning and management with MISONGA, Madame Bernadette lead an initiative to fight against malnutrition within her commune. She coordinated the efforts of many organizations (Programme National de Nutrition Communautaire (PNNC), Prévention et Sécurisation Nutritionnelle (PSN), and the Office National de Nutrition (ONN)) to a produce 10% reduction in malnutrition rates in six months.

She was also able to leverage funding due to her program planning, monitoring and evaluation, and financial training. Mayor Bernadette has lead programs on road repairs, public laundry areas, schools, health centers (CSBII), and irrigation canals. Her ability to manage projects has lead to concrete improvements in her commune’s livelihoods.



Certificate awards with « femmes maires » at the end of training

“Only now do I really understand what my role as mayor is and the benefits of involving the community in decision-making.”

An AFEMM Mayor

ICT for Good Governance:

MISONGA plays a critical role in the creation and adoption of the legal framework that provides the political will to adopt e-governance, outlines guidelines for information sharing to increase transparency and coordination amongst ministries, and provides technical guidance for the acquisition of ICT equipment.



23 Ministries contribute to build up Government Internet Portal

Laying the foundation for effective e-governance. MISONGA played a strategic role in helping the Malagasy Government establish a comprehensive information technology system that will improve the efficiency and transparency of government services. MISONGA provided guidance and assistance to the Presidency in developing a national e-governance strategy that seeks to establish a network for rural, regional, and national administrative offices, as well as, government ministries to make information available throughout the country. This involved purchasing the hardware and software, training the staff to use it, setting up regional databases, and providing guidelines for sharing information. This national strategy solidifies the political will and legal framework that are critical if e-governance in Madagascar is to create a gateway of transparent, expedient and accessible governance for the public.

E-governance will make a concrete impact on the development of governance and life in Madagascar by increasing the speed and availability of government services.

Take the example Jeannette Soloary shared with MISONGA of government services before e-governance. Jeannette Soloary worked as a housekeeper for 50 years and earned the right to retire. In order to complete her retirement paperwork, she needed to renew her national identify card. This required her to travel one full day to return to her family’s village, then wait in line for two days, and then spend a fourth day looking through ceiling high stacks of files at the commune office for her file. She was fortunate to have the time and financial resources to allow her to locate her file. An identity card is one of the most basic government services. Forest permits, deeds and titles for land, vaccination records, and voter registration are more complicated. The MISONGA e-governance initiative has set the ground work for making these services available on an electronic database throughout Madagascar.

“MISONGA’s expertise in information systems and communications strategies is helping us put things in order.” *Dr Olivier Robinson, General Director of Technology, Information and Communications, Ministry of Telecommunications*

Local knowledge and reliable information shape solid regional plan



Madame Hanta Rabetaliana,
Chief of Region, Haute
Matsiatra

Madame Hanta Rabetaliana, the Chief of the Haute Matsiatra Region (pop. 1.2 million) arrived at her post in September 2004, responsible for developing a three-year regional development plan (PDR) integrating health, economic development, education, environment, and governance. Many other regions choose to hire outside consultants to advise the development plan, however, her experience in the field of rural development taught her that plans formed with the participation of the local stakeholders are more likely to be effective than those that are prepared by outsiders.

MISONGA recognized the potential for the PDR to bring regional government and citizens closer together. The PDR presented an opportunity for civil society, private sector and government to work together for the improvement of the region. MISONGA, in partnership with Madame Hanta, organized working sessions with local stakeholders from all sectors – agriculture, fisheries, wineries, education, tourism, and forestry - and challenged them to think of how to move their region forward. To make sure these partners and government decision-makers had reliable information on which to base their decisions, MISONGA created an information-sharing network that provided direct access to environmental, health, socio-demographic, and other data.

A particularly memorable moment occurred when the slides of several maps, illustrating the areas of economic activity of a different sector, were overlaid. It became clear where investment was most needed to stimulate growth. Some communes had access to roads, livestock raising, and agriculture, while other communes had few if any economic activities. Not only did this process provide rich, accurate information to guide decision-making, it also strengthened the sense of community and served as a catalyst for ongoing collaboration. Thanks in large part to MISONGA’s support for the participatory approach, the region claims ownership for their plan and the stakeholders are positioned to hold the government accountable.

Recognizing the success of this integrated approach, at least 8 other regions have requested MISONGA’s assistance in their planning processes. In Madame Hanta Rabetaliana’s words, “Before, we were flying blind... now we have easily understandable information at our fingertips to anticipate problems instead of just reacting”. The process also makes governance transparent and increases accountability. MISONGA has shown that given organized, accurate, objective, and well-presented information communities can make sound policy decisions about their futures.

“Before, we were flying blind... now we have easily understandable information at our fingertips.”

Hanta RABETALLANA, Chief of Region

Restoring faith in Government



Protocol signature with MIRA

Faith in government is critical to having a stable democracy ruled by law and respected by citizens. Faith in government must be earned, and not given easily by citizens. Free, open, fair elections are one of the pillars of establishing a trusted democracy.

During the highly contested presidential election of 2001 and the local elections of 2003, it was clear that Madagascar still had a long way to go to conduct such elections. Election lists were maintained on paper, outdated, incomplete, and inaccurate. Some voters arrived and were turned away, told their names did not appear on the lists. Others were listed in multiple communities. The Ministry of the

Interior, responsible for producing the electoral lists of the 7 million registered voters and managing a transparent election process, needed outside help. In addition to elections, the Ministry of Interior is also responsible for issuing passports and identity cards for citizens, visas to foreigners, overseeing the police service, and responding to natural disasters. Considering that the Ministry of the Interior regulates so many basic government services, reforming the Ministry of the Interior is a crucial first step to restoring faith in government.

The Ministry had already completed a strategic plan identifying key fundamental reforms. Knowing the MISONGA team's experience in strengthening government services, the Interior Minister requested their assistance in making these reforms a reality. MISONGA helped the Ministry translate its strategic plan into 19 projects, each supported by a team from the Ministry of Interior. MISONGA trained the teams to develop a strategy plan, clearly defining the results, indicators and budgets.

These projects were then presented at a donor's roundtable, where donors/partners were offered the opportunity to participate in transforming this central ministry. The European Union, USAID, UNDP, Cooperation Swiss, and others, all agreed to support selected projects, in particular those contributing to improving the electoral lists.

Beyond the valuable support they received implementing reforms; the staff expressed enthusiasm adopting a results-oriented work environment. Much remains to be done, but the Ministry of the Interior's willingness to restructure with support from USAID/MISONGA indicates their efforts to restore faith in the government.

“The cooperation of MISONGA has allowed us to better identify the problems we face, develop projects to address them, ... and better channel the interventions of partners and funders.”

Minister of the Interior

Decentralization of the fight against corruption at the local level in Fianarantsoa increased citizen's trust in the state. Madagascar's anti-corruption campaign was launched in 2002, setting up national anti-corruption institutions, such as BIANCO. However, they were allocated limited resources to operate throughout the entire country. By 2004, BIANCO only had one office, with staff and equipment based in Antananarivo. Without a presence in their region, citizens outside of Antananarivo felt less engaged in the anti-corruption fight as BIANCO's services are far from where they live.

In order to bring the fight against corruption closer to regional citizens, MISONGA assisted the establishment of the first BIANCO regional branch in Fianarantsoa in March 2006. The establishment of this local branch of BIANCO has decentralized anti-corruption activities, increasing the amount of complaints by citizens, CSOs, local government structures, and national and international projects/programs in the region.

“Since the arrival of BIANCO Fianar, there has been a noticeable change in corruption. Peasants are not afraid to denounce corruption occurring within decentralized government structures, such as police and courts to BIANCO's regional office in Fianarantsoa”.

*Mr. Delphin RANDRIAMAROFARA
Vanona CSOs representative in Fianarantsoa*

“Citizens are starting to have increased confidence in BIANCO, as they feel the presence of BIANCO in urban as well as in rural areas of Fianarantsoa”

*Mr Abel
AGED/FIVOARANA/FAMAK CSO representative in Fianarantsoa*

V. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for the Future

V.1. Lessons Learned

Deeper and stronger civil society

- ❑ Madagascar's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are able to work together in a national network to voice local needs at the regional and national level.
- ❑ CSOs lack technical and financial resources to maximize advocacy initiatives. CSOs spend considerable time and resources on activities not related to their mission to find alternative income.
- ❑ Advocacy is a new concept in Malagasy culture. CSOs hesitate to initiate advocacy projects because it is seen as threatening to political power, not as a right for citizens to question their government.
- ❑ Regional Development Committees with clearly defined legal statute are influential in guiding integrated development in their regions, such as CRD Anosy, CRD Mangoro, and the Comité Régional de Développement Alaotra (CORDAL).
- ❑ Increased training to female mayors increased their pro-activeness in community affairs and amongst donors, as a result of skills and confidence gained during the MISONGA training.

Improved information flow

- ❑ Utilization of information management tools has improved the decision making ability of citizens and government, especially at the regional level.
- ❑ The UGIR have become knowledge centers within the regions. They have been essential to program development by regional governments as seen during the MCA proposal and the development of the PRDs.
- ❑ Local, regional and national government information can be integrated into the National Plan for E-Governance with the proper training (PNEG).

Improved government responsiveness

- ❑ Decentralization requires regional training in administrative actions, program design, evaluation, financial planning and project management.
- ❑ Community participation is raised in government by facilitating discussion between elected officials and the citizens, especially in local and regional development planning.
- ❑ Communities become more involved in public affairs when they have more access to information. For example, communities where the communal budget and action plan were posted at the town hall showed high levels of citizen participation.

- Mayors have more credibility from donors when they have received program management and financial training.

Reduced levels of corruption

- The fight against corruption has been established and is making an impact.
- There is a need for improvement in the monitoring and tracking corruption cases mechanisms. BIANCO's current system does not properly track reported cases of corruption through the system.
- CSOs, journalists, BIANCO, and the courts need reinforcements to continue to combat corruption.

V.2. Recommendations

In order to enhance the accomplishments of the MISONGA program and support the USAID Alliance objective, Pact proposes the following recommendations for future Governance and Democracy programs in Madagascar.

Support the CSOs to identify QIPs to increase the impact of their advocacy

USAID partners should receive future reinforcements for advocacy activities to integrate lessons learned during the MISONGA program. Advocacy is an evolving practice in Madagascar and civil society organizations will need training in capacity building to enhance and refine advocacy skills. Priority is recommended for USAID partners working in the environmental, health, and economic development sectors to support the overall effectiveness of USAID programs.

Strengthen the CSO platforms to gain legitimacy and representation

For CSOs to have a stronger voice in regional and national governance, they need to build the credibility of their platforms by strengthening the representation of associations and coalitions at their roots. USAID can take the lead by working at the regional level to support the emergence of regional CSO platforms based on the success of established platforms in Amoron'i mania and Haute-Matsiatra. Then USAID can build the capacity of the regional platforms to voice their concerns on both the regional and national level.

Provide additional training on advocacy and organizational abilities to key CSO's and regional institutions.

Institutions require increased advocacy training to develop skills to bring public and political attention to local issues. These institutions then require further training to implement advocacy activities efficiently. Key institutions and their needs are:

- Forest Sector Observatory (OSF) and the "Syndicat National des Exploitants Forestiers de Madagascar" (SNEFM) - strengthen and develop institutional capabilities.
- PlaCAZ, - USAID partners should receive capacity building to achieve their missions' activities.
- CRDs - develop organizational and technical capacity so that they will be able to coordinate the integrated development in their regions.

Build the Capacity of Voahary Salama

Voahary Salama (VS) will need support to develop organizational, institutional and technical capacity building to continue integrated environment, health, and population initiatives. Specific support should be given to the implementation of the VS business plan, the restructuring of the VS platform, integrating new associations, fundraising, and the development and implementation of advocacy proposals.

Strengthen Support for Regional Information Management Units (UGIR)

USAID programs should work closely with the UGIR and the government to increase access to UGIR information and to periodically update data. UGIR organizes and makes information available so that it can be integrated into decision making by local governments.

Pilot Regional Learning Information Centers (RLICs)

RLICs should be established to disseminate the information from the UGIR into rural areas. The feasibility studies conducted by the ADCITE in Anosy, Alaotra-Mangoro, Analanjirofo, and Vatovavy Fitovinany should be implemented, as well as World Links recommendations in Fianarantsoa.

Increase Information Dissemination in Rural Areas

USAID programs should continue capacity building of regional Independent Radio and radio journalists, especially in the production and diffusion of the environment, health and anti-corruption themes identified by Ecoregional Alliance. The creation of community listening groups should be expanded as it has proven to increase access to information in isolated intervention zones. These initiatives can be further enhanced by increasing FM radio signal coverage in isolated areas (especially the Forest Corridors Fianarantsoa, MoraZaka).

Support the Malagasy Government E-governance Program

E-governance is a new initiative in Madagascar that would benefit greatly from further capacity building as the program enters the next phase. Initial phases have shown that the initiative works and improves the efficiency, speed, and transparency of governance by providing citizens and decision-makers with access to information to guide their decisions. As the program is expanded there are many areas for support: 1) Training for government officials, technicians, and citizens on how to use the information. 2) Publicity of new services. 3) Providing access to e-governance in isolated locations.

Supporting Regional Development and Decentralization

Madagascar's new regional system has accelerated regional development and decentralization, while creating a need for capacity building of regional authorities and CSOs to assume the new responsibilities of decentralized power. Continuing capacity building activities in the regions that have received MISONGA training will enable regions to successfully implement the PRDs and coordinate the integrated development activities of regional actors. Specific areas of training should include project planning, project management, financial management, monitoring & evaluation, and fundraising.

Raising Awareness of Anti-Corruption Campaigns

Anti-corruption is still a new initiative in Madagascar and citizens are not aware of their options for combating corruption. USAID programming should focus on raising awareness about corruption and mechanisms for reporting corruption within USAID intervention regions and communes.

Support Activities to Promote the Emergence of Strong Anti-Corruption Networks

The fight against corruption can be strengthened by diversifying the organizations incorporating anti-corruption into their programs. NGO's and government ministries working in health, education, the environment, private sector, and the media need to be networked to engage in the fight against corruption. Anti-corruption monitoring, education and reporting will increase by involving more actors in the fight.

Support the Operations of the Regional and National Corruption Observatories.

To support the expansion of anti-corruption efforts throughout Madagascar, regional observatories need to be developed and supported through a national office. This requires establishing new regional observatories, training the staff, and conducting awareness raising campaigns in the new regions. Assistance for the national observatories to develop the communication and monitoring mechanisms is needed in order to support the regional offices. These steps will unify the anti-corruption fight at the grassroots, regional, and national levels.

Support ongoing capacity strengthening for BIANCO and CSLCC/CSI staff

Human resources require ongoing anti-corruption training as the scale of Madagascar's anti-corruption fight continues to evolve. Regional and national staff require conferences to share best practices, develop new strategies, and learn new techniques.

Reinforcement of synergy between USAID Strategic objectives and programs, such as implementing partners SO5 "SanteNet" and SO6 "ERI", "JARIALA".

SO5 and SO6 would benefit from capacity building to enhance the anti-corruption and advocacy practices of local NGO's operating in their intervention zones. Lessons learned from MISONGA's advocacy and anti-corruption training can be transferred to and applied by local NGOs. Increasing advocacy and decreasing corruption in USAID intervention zones will support USAID initiatives undertaken in the health and environment sectors.