

Final Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF format**. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.

Complete the form in English. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	Sylviane Volampeno
Project Title	Stop the increase of lemurs' threats induced by COVID-19
Application ID	41148-D
Date of this Report	05 th of January 2026

1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
To reduce illegal activities and human pressure on the forest				<p>In order to control forest pressures, four (4) local rangers conducted regular forest patrols throughout the project period, working on a rotational schedule of 15 days per month. In total, the rangers carried out 360 patrols. No serious human activities, such as illegal logging, were detected inside the forest during this period. (Note: we had initially planned to recruit two additional local rangers for forest patrols; however, we decided to retain the four existing rangers for the following reasons: at the beginning of the project, we were unable to identify suitable candidates from the local community, as those available did not demonstrate sufficient commitment. In addition, the current local rangers requested a modest salary increase due to the rising cost of living. This adjustment did not affect the overall project budget.)</p> <p>However, at the beginning of December 2024, a fire was discovered near the northern boundary of the forest. According to the rangers, the fire originated from slash-and-burn agriculture (tavy) carried out by local villagers and unintentionally pread beyond the targeted area. Fortunately, with the rapid response of the rangers and the support of local community members, the fire was quickly brought under control and did not reach the forest. It is important to note that forest fires were particularly intense</p>

			<p>across Madagascar between October and December 2024, as the rainy season arrived late and December remained unusually dry.</p> <p>In June 2025, during another routine patrol, the rangers apprehended a man attempting to set a bird trap inside the forest. No animals had been caught at the time of the intervention. The rangers immediately dismantled and destroyed the trap and escorted the individual to the village head for further discussion and appropriate action. This intervention highlights the effectiveness of regular patrols in preventing illegal activities and demonstrates the strong collaboration between conservation teams and local authorities.</p>
To reduce community dependence on forest resources by supporting sustainable income-generating activities for vulnerable households.			<p>Existing livelihood activities, including the cultivation of fast-growing crops such as maize and rice, as well as poultry farming (chickens and ducks), were expanded to reach a larger number of households. These activities were well aligned with the needs and priorities of the local community. Over the project period, a total of 350 households benefited from this initiative, including vulnerable families such as single-parent households.</p> <p>The village chief facilitated the identification of beneficiaries and the distribution of seeds and poultry. Each household was able to choose between participating in fast-growing crop production or poultry farming. Households selecting crop production received 1 kg of maize seed and 1 kg of rice seed. Those opting for poultry farming received two female and 1 male chickens two female and one male duck.</p>
To improve access to basic healthcare			<p>A total of 12 free medical consultation sessions were carried out every two</p>

<p>services for remote communities and enhance overall community well-being.</p>			<p>months over the project period in the village of Mahitsihazo as part of a holistic conservation approach linking community well-being to biodiversity protection. In collaboration with the Basic Health Center (CSB I) of Maromandia, medical teams conducted one-day consultations from 8:30 a.m. to approximately 2:00 p.m., with villagers informed in advance to ensure preparedness. Mikajy Natiora coordinated logistics, procured and distributed medicines free of charge, and covered doctors' travel and allowances. Over the project period, an estimated 1,320 patients (averaging 110 patients per session) aged 1 to 78 years benefited from the consultations, with attendance increasing from 65 to 150 patients over time. Common health issues included malaria, fever, coughs, abdominal pain, fatigue, sexually transmitted infections, and high blood pressure, with no severe cases requiring hospitalization. In addition to medical treatment, consultations integrated health education on hygiene, malaria prevention, hydration, and nutrition.</p>
<p>To increase awareness and positive attitudes toward lemur conservation and forest protection within local communities.</p>			<p>Over the two-year project period, Mikajy Natiora actively implemented education, awareness-raising, and outreach activities at both local and regional levels to promote lemur and forest conservation. In Year 1, the organization participated in three major environmental events: Earth Day, World Environment Day and National Lemur Day. During the celebration of National Lemur Day, organized by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, which brought together approximately 30 environmental organizations. Mikajy Natiora contributed by involving local rangers and villagers to</p>

			<p>share field-based conservation experiences and by distributing educational materials, including 200 T-shirts, 90 sarongs (for authorities), 200 stickers, and 348 calendars.</p> <p>In Year 2, Mikajy Natiora continued its engagement during the two-day National Lemur Day celebration in Antsohihy, where it was invited by the Regional Directorate of Environment and Sustainable Development to lead a conservation radio program on Soafy FM (103 MHz), featuring a lemur quiz and awareness messages broadcast one week prior to the event. Additional outreach activities included a stand exhibition, environmental quizzes, and a presentation on conservation achievements during conference debates. Educational materials produced and distributed during Year 2 included 350 T-shirts, 200 calendars, and 100 stickers, benefiting authorities, quiz participants, and local communities, including Mahitsihazo. A dedicated radio program was also broadcast during World Environment Day, reaching a wide audience and engaging listeners through interactive games with prizes. Community outreach was further strengthened through public events such as carnivals, official speeches, and live performances. In addition, Mikajy Natiora supported education by rewarding 10 high-performing students with books, school supplies, and T-shirts during the 2024–2025 academic year.</p> <p>In total, six primary and secondary schools were involved over the project period, and approximately 1,080 students were sensitized. And 36 teachers were involved.</p>
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Photo 1 Rangers



Photo 2 Bird trap

2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

a) In April 2025, during a routine forest patrol, a fat-tailed dwarf lemur (*Cheirogaleus medius*), a species not previously recorded in the area, was observed for the first time. This unexpected finding highlights the critical importance of regular forest patrols, not only for detecting illegal activities but also for improving knowledge of local biodiversity.



Photo 3 Fat tailed dwarf lemur (Photo Frank Pichardo)

b) Overall, the alternative livelihoods initiative was successfully implemented. Monitoring results showed that approximately 80% of participating households achieved good maize and rice harvests. Part of the harvest was used both as poultry feed and as seed stock for the following cropping season. Among households engaged in poultry farming, the number of chickens and ducks raised on their farms tripled during the project period. Income generated from the sale of poultry enabled families to purchase school supplies for their children, contributing directly to improved household livelihoods and well-being.



Photo 4 Some of the production resulting from poultry rearing and crop farming

c) We were invited by the King of Maromandia, located close to our project area, to attend a ceremony honoring and promoting traditional values. During this event, an awareness-raising initiative integrating traditional practices was discussed in collaboration with local traditional leaders. This activity aims to strengthen conservation efforts by drawing on ancestral knowledge, local taboos (fady), sacred species, and cultural practices that play a vital role in the long-term protection of forests and lemurs.



Photo 5 Traditional leaders and a team member (middle)

3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

During the monitoring of maize fields, we observed that insect pests were damaging the crops. Instead of using chemical pesticides, we applied a biological pesticide made from a mixture of zebu manure and chili. This biological pest control method proved to be effective in reducing crop damage.

The project proposal initially planned for monthly medical consultations. However, due to the heavy workload of the medical team from the Maromandia commune health center, particularly during vaccination campaigns it was not possible to maintain a monthly schedule. As a result, medical consultations were implemented on a bimonthly basis, allowing the activity to continue while accommodating the availability of health personnel.

4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.

Local communities were actively involved in all stages of the project, from planning to implementation and monitoring. Community members were recruited as local rangers and played a central role in forest patrols, fire response, and the prevention of illegal activities. Village authorities supported beneficiary identification for livelihood activities and facilitated transparent distribution of seeds and poultry. Households directly benefited through improved food security, increased income, and reduced dependence on forest resources. Communities also benefited from free access to healthcare services, health education and conservation awareness activities. The integration of traditional leaders and cultural practices further strengthened local ownership, ensuring that conservation actions were socially accepted, culturally relevant, and sustainable beyond the project period.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. Mikajy Natiora plans to continue and strengthen all project activities to ensure the long-term sustainability of conservation efforts in the Andilambologno Forest. Community-based forest patrols will be maintained, and camera traps will be installed to improve wildlife monitoring and track key animal species, supporting evidence-based conservation management.

In addition, Mikajy Natiora is committed to continuing the medical consultation initiative, which has proven to be critically important for community health and well-being. Healthy community members are more active, productive, and better able to engage in conservation and livelihood activities. Notably, Mikajy Natiora is the first non-governmental organization to provide free medical consultations in this remote area, addressing a major gap in access to basic healthcare services. This integrated approach strengthens community resilience and reinforces the strong link between human well-being and long-term forest conservation.



Photo 6 Traditional leaders with sarongs and calendars

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

We regularly update our Facebook page to share the progress and results of the project with the broader public. Due to technical issues, the website could not be updated regularly during the project period. This issue has now been resolved. Facebook was used as the primary platform for sharing project results, as it allows for faster dissemination and more effective outreach to our target audiences, and Malagasy people are more familiar with FB than website. Moving forward, both platforms will be updated regularly to ensure broader visibility of project outcomes.

In addition, we presented our work during the International Primatological Society Congress held in Madagascar in July 2025, reaching researchers, conservation practitioners and stakeholders. We are also preparing a scientific publication based on the project, in which The Rufford Foundation will be fully acknowledged for its financial support.

7. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Looking ahead, key next steps include equipping the conservation center in Mahitsihazo village with essential infrastructure (e.g., solar power, and lodging) and launching ecotourism and volunteering programs. With donor support, we successfully built this vital hub, which now serves students for field-based learning, researchers on scientific missions, tourists exploring the forest, community meetings/trainings, and environmental education for local schools. Developing ecotourism will generate sustainable income to maintain the center and reduce deforestation pressures by creating alternative livelihoods, while volunteering programs will attract international expertise to enhance lemur monitoring and capacity building, ensuring long-term biodiversity protection and community

empowerment. Both of ecotourism and volunteer's program will develop the networking and may spread the program around.

8. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes. The Rufford Foundation logo was included on all educational and outreach materials produced through the project, including T-shirts, sarongs, stickers, and calendars. The Foundation also received public acknowledgment during the implementation of project activities.

9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

- Sylviane Volampeno (Principal Investigator): Responsible for overall project leadership, donor relations, project reporting, budgeting, and dissemination of project results.
- Guy Randritahina (Project Coordinator) : Oversaw the implementation of all project activities in the field, coordinated day-to-day operations, and maintained relationships with local stakeholders and partners.
- Tsiory Rakotomalalala (Field Officer) : Actively participated in all field-based activities, including monitoring, data collection, and support for community and conservation actions.
- Ranto & Nicole (Volunteers): Supported the project team in education and outreach activities, including awareness-raising events and community engagement.
- Local Community Rangers – Forest Patrollers and Biodiversity Monitors:
- Theodile Ibrahim, Jao Robert, Mevalaza and Thouda. These rangers conducted regular forest patrols, collected lemur monitoring data, and played a key role in preventing illegal activities and protecting forest habitats.

10. Any other comments?

The support from The Rufford Foundation was crucial in enabling us to advance lemur conservation through the successful implementation of a wide range of project activities. We are deeply grateful for The Rufford Foundation's support and guidance, and we intend to apply for a Rufford Completion Grant to build on these achievements and further strengthen conservation efforts in the project area.

ANNEX – Financial Report
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