



Witness 6.7

“The word of God continued to spread” - Acts 6.7a

The Evangelism & Church Growth Initiative Newsletter

February 2013 Volume 4 Issue 1

Unengaged Peoples



REACHING THE SOUTH OF MADAGASCAR

ONLY 21% of the 21 million people in Madagascar are Christians. The southern part has the most dialects spoken in Madagascar and also the highest concentration of unreached and unengaged peoples. The evangelism office focuses on outreach and planting new churches in the south of Madagascar.

One of these target groups is the Mahafaly in Betioky. As the name suggests, *faly* literally means forbidden and *Mahafaly* would mean a place or people of which many things are forbidden. In other words they are deeply rooted in traditional religion and many things are forbidden. We planted a church in Betioky town; a large district inhabited by the Mahafaly and we are working to relate the gospel to their culture; we are using their tradition as a stepping stone to evangelism. Traditionally they fear the wrath of the gods and are ready to sacrifice whenever there has been a fault. Slowly by slowly, we share with them the love of God and explain that the sacrifice of His son, Jesus, was a once and for all sacrifice. We explain that repentance is required and He will forgive us of all our sin without us paying anything else. Currently, word is going round and the church is growing and has started another two new fellowships of new believers in the region.

The other people that we are working with are the cattle raiders, commonly known as the *Malaso* in the Ankilliarivio region. Most people are afraid of them and would not even want to associate with them, mostly because of their brutality. And so, there is hardly a visitor or a stranger going to their village. Anyone who is a stranger is spotted from a distance and is marked out as an enemy.

In that region friendship evangelism is the approach that we have used. They have been watching us closely to know what we are up to. The moment that they realized that we are not spies nor attackers they then embraced us.

We have now established a new fellowship of new believers in that area. One ringleader stood up recently and owned up and said that he has given it all up to God. That is very interesting because, as he is a ringleader, all the others automatically will follow suit. Now the song is we really need a church here... and it did not stop there but the community actually donated land so that a church can be constructed.

We praise God for the lives that He is changing here.

Rév. Victor Osoro, The Evangelism Director, Antananarivo Diocese - Toliara Missionary Area