Welcome to our annual newsletter News from Abroad (in its recently updated format), which brings you the latest news from Inter Aide’s programmes!

With the Covid-19 pandemic still affecting the world harshly, our field teams have shown resilience and adaptation to carry out Inter Aide’s 51 programmes. Both at headquarters and in the field, we have ramped up our efforts to innovate by promoting new ways capable of meeting the evolving needs of rural communities. In addition to this health crisis, there are other significant and simultaneous issues, both in terms of security and political, like for example in Haiti with the assassination of the President Jovenel Moïse and the resulting violent demonstrations in the streets of the capital Port-au-Prince, in northern Ethiopia as severe military confrontations and a state of emergency was declared in November 2021, or in Guinea with the “coup d’Etat” of September 2021. Climatic issues are also more and more present such as in Madagascar with long drought periods. Inter Aide’s actions have therefore been intensively challenged throughout the year, but with in mind the desire to find pragmatic solutions, our teams are continuing to work towards their goals to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable families.

In doing so, Inter Aide, in collaboration with its local partners, has also been able to scale up its most effective intervention models. In Ethiopia for example, our major socio-technical innovation of soil conservation and Iddirs-led fodder production has been extended. Similarly, in Malawi, water point maintenance services now cover 15 of the country's 28 districts. Our reforestation and agroforestry programmes are also proving to be successful with beneficiaries ever-so increasing in Madagascar, Malawi and Haiti, and gradually being extended to other intervention areas in order to extend the benefits to a larger number of families. Furthermore, in Guinea, 2021 also saw the launch of our mother and child health programme and the gradual start-up of the activities for our water, sanitation and hygiene development programme.

With this annual letter, we wish to send our heartfelt thank you to our teams as well as our technical and financial partners who help the fantastic story of Inter Aide’s programmes to continue. Let us, without further ado, wish you good reading, with many interesting technical keynotes to discover, and also a very happy new year 2022!
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE: 7 COUNTRIES

HIGHLIGHTS
Although 2021 was still an hectic year, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programmes were able to continue to develop steadily. With adapted health protocols, most activities continued without major obstacles, and even allowed the dissemination of specific Covid-19 prevention messages (hand washing with soap, clean water, etc.). The last quarter of the year also checks off the launch of our brand new WASH programme in Guinea!

In other news, succeeding to Mathieu Métois (after 8 years with Inter Aide), Tristan Salmon joined us at the beginning of 2021 and carried out two field missions of a few months in Sierra Leone and Malawi, in order to meet the teams, study the projects and gain a better understanding of the contexts. Tristan also supported the teams on technical aspects (mapping, database, etc.). He has returned to France at the end of 2021 to take up his position as our new WASH Knowledge and Studies Officer.

MALAWI
Due to the pandemic, specific support was provided to several health centres and awareness sessions were transformed into door-to-door visits. 20 new water points were built or rehabilitated and the water committees were trained on how to manage the maintenance costs of their works. In the Phalombe District, where droughts and floods are particularly severe, five new boreholes were built systematically involving the communities in fundraising. Satisfaction surveys conducted among users and a qualitative follow-up with partner craftsmen and merchants have confirmed the quality of the maintenance services offered, which cover now 15 districts and will soon be open to two new ones in early 2022.

The empowerment of the maintenance networks and their takeover by the public service is continuing, with traditional chiefs heavily involved in setting up community rules for pump maintenance. At the same time, the supply of partner shops is ensured by a private company that guarantees a preferential rate and easier access to resellers.

Xavier Rat, director of the maintenance programmes, ensures the smooth running of the activities, alongside Margherita Durso, who takes up more specifically the monitoring of the maintenance services in the southern region (Phalombe).

MOZAMBIQUE
The Monapo programme, launched in February 2020 by Sylvain Cottallorda (former Programme Manager in Malawi and Haiti), complements the programme of Memba. Door-to-door awareness-raising activities has enabled a significant number of families to be trained in the construction of improved latrines and the construction/rehabilitation of mechanical boreholes (18) and wells (5).

The maintenance services covers now 4 districts with 1,500 hand pumps. The project’s two main lines of action have been further developed: the professionalisation of pump repairers and partner spare parts dealers (officially recognised by the Water Services) and the contractualization of a partnership with the company Skytech, which ensures the autonomous supply of spare parts.

Qualitative assessments of the networks are conducted using the Kobo Toolbox. Each project supervisor is equipped with a tablet to collect, compile and send in real time all the information collected in the field: training sessions carried out, follow-up visits, meetings reports, figures, etc. In addition, around 100 village committees are trained in the management and preventive maintenance of their pumps.

GUINEA
The WASH programme activities were progressively set up at the end of 2021. A new Programme Manager (PM), Emmanuel Castelee, was sent to the field in September, and started his first monitoring programme for Inter Aide. Meetings with local leaders, communities and water utilities took place between September and December 2021, with a first commune being targeted.
Inter Aide supports the construction of gravity-fed networks and provides awareness sessions on hygiene and sanitation, together with government health workers. In order to ensure the sustainability of the works, we also strengthen the professionalization of the users' federations. These federations supervise the management of water points by the communities and represent the interface between users and public water services. The transfer of technical and organisational skills to these actors has become the main focus of the project. A study on gender within the Federations led to giving women even more weight in the new strategies.

To ensure a solid basis for the establishment of action plans for our projects and for a global territorial consideration, the mapping of the districts covered was carried out jointly with the Water Offices (demographic data, inventory and state of the existing water points, maintenance, repair and rehabilitation needs). This enabled them to acquire a decision-making tool to prioritise needs, plan maintenance actions and monitor their implementation.

We favour two coexisting models: ❶ management-monitoring-maintenance services provided by communal-based associations bringing together users and members of the commune, and ❷ services directly entrusted to a local NGO such as Soakoja in the Analanjirofo region. The quality control of the service delivered is then ensured by associations of users' representatives financed by water-related revenues, including user charges.

In all the areas covered, about 450 water systems serving more than 29,000 families now benefit from monitoring, maintenance and repair services via communal services, local associations or partner NGOs. The experimentation of management models will continue in 2021, notably in the framework of a sectoral innovation facility financed by French Development Agency. This year, access to water and sanitation was improved with the construction of 31 new structures (standpipes and human powered pumps) and the construction or rehabilitation of 1,500 latrines. Three schools were equipped with new water points, benefiting 708 pupils. Read the latest evaluation of our programmes on Pratiques (available in French only).

In 2021, the exhaustive inventory of water points was completed. A map of the areas (see map photo) where the need for access to water is greatest allows local institutions to better prioritise the areas of intervention, by coordinating all the actors involved.
AGRICULTURE: 5 COUNTRIES

HIGHLIGHTS

Inter Aide’s support programmes to local agriculture combine:

- actions to improve the food security of families and to facilitate the transition through periods of food shortage, as it was the case this year with the lengthy drought in Madagascar;
- measures to preserve the environment and natural resources, with innovative solutions in Madagascar for the reforestation of hillsides, or in Malawi with the planting of trees at the edge of fields;
- solutions to enable families to increase their income from agricultural production, through the development of adapted agricultural sectors and services (agricultural advice, credit, access to seeds, etc.).

This is a major challenge given the specific nature of the environments in which we work, where access to training, information and farmers’ organisations capable of offering ad hoc services are rare.

ETHIOPIA

Since July 2020, Inter Aide has been implementing a scaling-up project to enable 40,000 farmer herder families over 4 years to reconcile erosion control and fodder production. These actions are implemented in 20 mountainous districts in the South, in collaboration with the local association RCBDIA, which is working on a similar approach in 3 districts. The challenge is both to extend our action while transferring know-how and skills to representatives of farming families, agents of the Ministry of Agriculture (MA) and local elected officials, in order to ensure the wide dissemination of practices beyond the project.

1. The planting of fodder species, on mounds that follow the contour lines, helps to slow down run-off water and promotes its infiltration into the soil, which is subjected to heavy tropical rains. They are also a source of food for the animals, on which the families are dependent, being in majority breeders, by improving the production of milk and manure. The fodder plants are first multiplied by MA agents in communal nurseries and then distributed to families who receive technical assistance from peer farmers trained by project technicians and MA agents. In 2021, the plants produced were distributed to 22,900 families. To get an idea of the challenge, we were also able to estimate that in these territories, more than 5,700 km of fodder plants will have to be developed to effectively maintain the soil.

2. In the Wolayta area, Inter Aide is supporting RCBDIA to revive coffee production within diversified orchards (shade trees, low-stemmed fruit trees, hedges, fodder legumes, etc.). With the support of the consultancy firm Tero, a study of the coffee sector has highlighted the need to support local cooperatives to increase the income of small producers.

MALAWI

1. Since 2020, Inter Aide has been running a project focused on agroforestry in the Lilongwe district, to sustainably produce firewood and generate additional income through the sale of wood on local markets. Inter Aide promotes pruning or re-pruning practices of adapted species, allowing, generally after 4 to 5 years, to cut tree branches every 2 years without having to cut them all down. In 2021, 1,319 producer families have planted 158,520 trees. In the Phalombe district, the poorest area of Malawi, Inter Aide is also promoting other tree species, especially fruit trees. Direct seeding trials (*no tillage) seem to be a promising avenue for planting near houses. The teams’ ambition is to reach at least 120 trees per family, a threshold that can be expected to have a significant impact on the household economy, but which requires a significant investment of time for the families over 2 or 3 years. The challenge for 2022 will therefore be to keep up the dynamic in the targeted villages in order to achieve this planting objective, while taking into account the various constraints of vulnerable families. Check out our full study on Pratiques.

2. Inter Aide is also continuing its project to set up vaccination networks against chickens’ Newcastle disease in 4 districts. We are collaborating with several local associations of vaccinators, now autonomous, in the supply and distribution of vaccines. The teams are also studying the conditions for a potential scale up of activities, with a possible financial support from the French Development Agency. To do so, we have to face three major challenges: 1) finding solutions to compensate for the weaknesses of the vaccine production unit, which has not been able to meet the growing demand generated by the project, 2) ensuring that the vaccines are made available at the district level, 3) expanding the scope of intervention to new districts to reach even more families for whom chickens are the only way to save money.

At the end of January 2022, we will welcome Clélia Moroni, who will join the team as PR in Mitundu!
Under the leadership of 2 Malagasy coordinators, Eric and Tsiry, the actions are carried out on the south-east coast, in the districts of Farafangana, Manakara and the southern part of Mananjary. Support is provided by Samuel Rousseau and two new French civic service volunteers who will arrive in February 2022. The project is thus oriented around 5 main activities:

1. **Strengthening food security**, by developing tuber crops (especially yams), leguminous plants and market gardening, as a complement to rice. These activities are now being disseminated in new communes with women as a priority target, and also incorporate cooking advice.

2. **Reforesting**: these activities are growing successfully as 750 ha of collective land have been reforested since 2016, representing more than 1.2 million trees planted! This planting dynamic is also extending to individual lands. To find out more, read one of our studies on **Pratiques**.

3. **Supporting very precarious households**: a very innovative experiment called "Taninendry" (known as "mother’s land"), was initiated in the Farafangana district, and consists of making communal plots of land available exclusively to women from the Tranobe (lineages) in order to create multipurpose gardens. These plots are purchased via the regional association Taninendry in order to secure tenure and use for the women. They will be the object of an agro-ecological and agro-forestry development: fencing, planting of sustainable species (moringa, papaya, etc.) and fertilizers, compost (thanks to a grinder provided by Inter Aide), digging of market gardening drawing points, etc.

4. **Developing the vanilla sector** for 400 families in the remote commune of Ambalatana. Inter Aide, supported by the consultancy firm **Tero**, facilitates the collaboration between families and an organic and fair trade market service.

5. **Supporting the Fagnimbogna Federation**, structured around the rice sector. This mainly concerns services linked to shops (credit-storage, grouped sales, purchase of inputs) and the training of young farmers, in collaboration with **Fifata**, Inter Aide supports a technical team whose funding should progressively be transferred to the Federation itself. The conditions would then be right for Inter Aide to withdraw.

Support to male and female onion producers and other vegetable crops (cucumber, aubergine, watermelon, etc.) is concentrated in the Karene district. **115 new groups have been created, with a high representation of women (60% of the membership)**. The in situ training system is based on the mobilisation of former trained and experienced people who intervene occasionally in the villages to support the preparation of compost, the setting up of nurseries and market gardening beds, transplanting and monitoring of crops. To emphasise the transmission of knowledge between women, the project provides them with a small compensation so that they can entrust their children during their absence.

The second important step was the establishment of three shops selling seeds and tools. One shop is privately managed and the other two are run by farmers’ associations, including “Good Heart Farmers” (GHF), Inter Aide's local partner since the beginning of the project. The main challenge is to provide local access to quality vegetable seeds, a necessary condition for the sustainability of an activity that currently involves nearly 2,000 women producers.

Complementary activities involving the cultivation of yams, plantains and groundnuts are also carried out during the rainy season, in order to increase the economic impact of the intervention. For groundnuts, a study has been conducted in collaboration with **SLARI (Sierra Leone Agricultural Research Centre)** to compare the productivity of the variety. These activities are managed by a local team, whose PM is Usman Koroma.

Inter Aide targets families in isolated communes located in the Black Mountain range. Several activities are proposed to help families increase and diversify their agricultural production, the main ones being:

1. **The loan of bean seeds**, which is the main crop for most families in the area. Inter Aide supports the start of planting campaigns. This activity is very appreciated and allows families to avoid loans at exorbitant rates. The question of seed storage remains an issue to be solved.

2. Since 2019 in the Juana area, the planting of fruit and forest trees coupled with the support of private nursery for the production of seedlings, is experiencing positive results. In 2020-2021, 35,134 trees were planted by 378 families. Planting and environmental awareness campaigns are also organised with schools. Activities are gradually being extended to the communes of Thomonde and Boucan Carré.

3. **The promotion of rapid yam multiplication techniques**;

4. **The promotion of the creation of market gardens** allowing the diversification of crops and the provision of additional income;

5. **Activities focused on livestock** with the training on **fodder production**, whose adoption rates on families are encouraging. Inter Aide supports the vaccination of chickens against the Newcastle disease.

These activities are still carried out on a fairly small scale, with the exception of tree planting, which has taken off. The challenge is to refine our model so that we can offer these activities to more families while keeping the most vulnerable families as our entry point.
HIGHLIGHTS

After 2020 being severely marked by the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to adapt our essential activities to improve access to healthcare for families, we continued in 2021 the development of our health projects thanks to a normalisation of the context (linked to the progressive lifting of government restrictions).

The community health programme in Guinea began this year with a preliminary study phase and the implementation of the first activities.

Karen Van der Veken, has joined us in September 2021, as the new Head of Sector for the Malawi and Mozambique health programmes! As so, Julie Pontarollo has taken a new role, in becoming our Health Knowledge and Studies Coordinator, while continuing g her work in parallel as the Head of Sector for our health programmes in Guinea and Madagascar.

HEALTH: 4 COUNTRIES

Activities now cover 3 districts in the South-East (Manakara, Farafangana and Vohipeno), representing a rural population of more than 800,000 people, including 170,000 children under the age of five. In the Vohipeno district, all the VHAs (village health agents) were trained between 2018 and 2019, and the facilitators are in the process of finishing raising awareness of the most common diseases (malaria, respiratory infection, diarrhoea) in the last communes. The completion of this phase opens the door to further expansion: survey visits have been made in recent months to four neighbouring districts.

The most important criteria for us are obviously first and foremost the needs (the state of health of the children and access to care), but also the motivation of the district health services to take part in the actions to ensure their sustainability. Population density and accessibility are also essential elements: the teams have sometimes visited extremely isolated areas, which complicates a large-scale intervention such as ours. Méloé Vincent will join the team in February 2022 for a one-year assignment as a Support Officer.

The community health programme was launched in Guinea in 2021 thanks to the recruitment of Fabien Olivier. Following the prospecting missions carried out by the sector between 2017 and 2019, an in-depth diagnosis of the situation in the country and in ten or so targeted communes was carried out. This work enabled a project strategy to be drafted and an intervention area to be chosen. The action will focus on raising awareness among families and strengthening health posts (particularly poor but highly valued by village families) and community health workers (newly formalised by a national policy but not yet active in the field). Two rural communes in the Prefecture of Kankan (Kankan region in Upper Guinea) were chosen: Tinti-Oulen and Mamouroudou.

The diagnosis was presented to the health authorities in October 2021, and the new PM Agathe Rébena arrived at that time to launch the activities. An initial survey phase is underway and the complete programme’s team will be recruited in early 2022.

MADAGASCAR

Guinea

Difficult passing to access the intervention areas

Focus group with women during diagnosis
The child health programmes in the Lilongwe and Phalombe districts expanded to new areas in 2020, and with the activities running out normally in 2021.

First, the community-based component aims to improve family practices in the areas most important for child and women’s health (malaria, diarrhoea, care-seeking, family planning, pregnancy monitoring and childbirth). The members of the village health committees who sensitize families are followed and supported in their activities by Inter Aide facilitators. It was recently decided that this component would be extended to the new areas. Indeed, as the activities have been slowed down because of the Covid-19 pandemic (door to door awareness raising instead of mass animations), it is important to continue the work to ensure a sustainable improvement of the practices in the targeted families.

The health system strengthening component continued to provide organisational and material support to health structures and workers. The teams worked on installing or rehabilitating electricity and running water in all the facilities, in order to guarantee decent care conditions for children and women (particularly during night births). The brand new maternity ward in Kalinde, the largest building ever built by the health programme to date, was completed in the first half of 2021. The inauguration, which is part of the responsibility of the Phalombe District Health Services, is planned for early January 2022.

In the summer of 2021, Hellen Ekisa arrived on the programme for her first mission with Inter Aide.

Nampula province is characterised by a high population density compared to the rest of the country and long distances for people to reach a health centre. The total population targeted is 90,000 people.

This year, activities continued to be deployed in the Memba district and the Chipene health area, a large and particularly isolated rural centre, which will be fully covered by the first half of 2022. The next area of intervention was selected, the smaller but even more isolated centre of Pavala. Fortunately, two bridges that were destroyed by a cyclone in 2019 were repaired this year, making access to this area of the district easier (it used to take an 8-hour detour to reach Chipene from Memba in the rainy season, whereas the journey is only 3 hours with the bridges).

In Monapo, Nolwenn Gueguen, the new PR, arrived in August 2021 and initiated a transition phase. Outreach work will be completed in the Itoculo and Ramiane health areas, and initiated in the more northerly Murruto area. Several strategic developments are being discussed, including work with traditional matrons, who are particularly sought after by women (they perform between 40 and 50% of deliveries). They will be called upon to disseminate specific messages on women’s health, such as family planning and pregnancy monitoring, themes that remain difficult to advance in this area of Mozambique.
The 2020-2021 school year was impacted by numerous anti-government demonstrations, the assassination of the former President Jovenel Moïse, and the general rise in insecurity in several areas of the capital and its surroundings. However, this difficult context has not had a major impact on our programmes, as our partner schools are located in remote and relatively stable rural areas. However, recruitment and evaluation missions were slowed down or postponed.

During the temporary closure of the schools, the teams concentrated on the monitoring of the schools evolution, the trainings the teachers and work with the parents. A major effort to train local staff has resulted in the recruitment of Haitian Programme Managers in charge of the strategy and monitoring of the programmes. They are supervised by Franck Clottes, who is the only expatriate in Haiti.

In the South-East and West regions

In Grand-Goâve, we renewed our partnership with 20 schools. For this fourth year of support, the training sessions focus on strengthening the academic skills of teachers (reading and writing lessons, use of school textbooks, etc.) and on the use of the Creole Learning Progression Guide. This tool was created with the support of the programme's partner trainers. It enables teachers with little experience to organise their working time over the school year in order to achieve the objectives of the official school programme. Desks have also been distributed.

The programme in Côtes de Fer has been run by our Haitian partner Concert-Action since 2014, with the support of Inter Aide's sector manager. Due to the state of health emergency, the programme has been extended until July 2021. The Concert-Action team has continued its support by training the committees of the 23 partner schools and their directors on how to monitor the functioning of the school (monitoring the attendance rate of teachers and pupils, monitoring the preparation of lessons, organising working hours, etc.). Evaluations are also underway to measure the enrolment rate of the 2,100 pupils and the improvement in the quality of lessons and the level of pupils. This evaluation will provide valuable lessons for improving our approach with future partners.

Initial surveys were also conducted in the nearby commune of Bainet, identifying 20 new potential partner schools and 2,500 pupils with high needs.
CALL FOR PARTNERS

THE 1% MECHANISM: SEEKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH FRENCH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND WATER AGENCIES

Inter Aide’s WASH and water point maintenance programmes are partly financed by the French Water Agencies and local authorities (water syndicates, municipalities, etc.). The Oudin-Santini law allows them to devote up to 1% of their water and sanitation budget to financing international solidarity actions in these sectors.

This law has an interesting leverage effect. Indeed, the contribution of a local authority makes it possible to obtain a co-financing from a Water Agency. Some Agencies require that 5% of the total budget of the project be provided by local authorities located in the same territory/catchment area. By combining the contributions of one or more local authorities for a total of 5,000 euros, without impacting their general budget, we can hope to obtain annual funding of 50,000 euros from a Water Agency. Even with a modest financial contribution, a local authority can therefore help set up a significant project for Inter Aide, so that the construction/rehabilitation of wells, boreholes or the training of repair technicians can be financed!

If you are in touch with mayors or local authorities, please let us know so that we can be supported in our prospecting efforts. You can contact us directly at interaide@interaide.org.

TAX REDUCTIONS

Inter Aide does not raise funds from the general public. However, as a non-profit organization, recognized by the French law of 1901 related to associations, Inter Aide is authorised to receive donations and legacies and to issue receipts entitled to tax reductions.

You can contact us by e-mail at interaide@interaide.org for more information.

HUMAN RESOURCES

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAMMATES!

The current job offers:
⇒ Support officer for an agroforestry pilot programme - Malawi
⇒ Agricultural development Programme Manager (scaling up and sustaining a community poultry vaccination service) - Malawi
⇒ WASH Programme Manager - Madagascar
⇒ WASH Programme Manager - Mozambique
⇒ French Service Civic Volunteers (WASH) - Madagascar

Do not hesitate to contact our recruitment manger by e-mail recrutement@interaide.org if you are interested!

Internships: we welcome interns throughout the year at our headquarters and in the field. Do not hesitate to send us your applications.

Inter Aide is a member of the following networks:

PRATIQUES NETWORK

Our website Réseau Pratiques website is being revamped! Inter Aide is keen to share its concrete field experiences, tools and technical studies related to its sectors of intervention. Since its creation in 2010, the website has published around 870 articles and thematic studies and more than 120 evaluations. Today, we are aiming at a better interaction with readers and NGO members, thanks to an interface that facilitates access to content. We hope you will enjoy this new version, which should be launched in early 2022.

Do not hesitate to give us your opinion, we will take all your remarks into account, by sending an e-mail to pratiques@interaide.org.

Check out our latest headline articles:
• Keynote on integrating Pigeon pea (Cajanus cajan) in different parts of the farm - southern Region Ethiopia
• Study case: Support the development of agroforestry solutions in Malawi
• Study case: Analysis of an agrarian system in the mid-mountain regions of Wolayita in southwestern Ethiopia

Des ressources pour l’évaluation
Des repères pour l’action

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