



Le Don du Chœur

Chœur d'Enfants des Écoles Privées Genevoises



HIGHLIGHTS

Geneva private schools

- The Great Dictation: keen response from pupils and teachers

Andohasatra-Betioky, Madagascar

- School built in six months – a record!
- Traditions and modernity at school inauguration

North Teso, Kenya

- Water tank and energy-saving clean cookers at St. Luke's
- A second water source protected

Ta Pen, Cambodia

- Our school to compete in "Clean School" contest

Don du Chœur Committee

Isabelle Chatel
President

Jean-Philippe Bernard
Multimedia communication

Jean-Claude Brès
Audio-visual specialist,
Project leader, Kenya

Catherine Firmenich
Schools liaison

Michel Firmenich
Project leader, Cambodia

Laurence Parent
Treasurer

Sue Power
Events

All systems go for the south of Madagascar! A new school offers 360 children the chance of a better life

Following the Don du Chœur concert on 28 April 2016, it took just six months – and the efficient involvement of our partner SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar – to build and equip the state primary school at Andohasatra-Betioky. The school opened for the start of the new school year in October – an amazing feat in such a remote location.

This was what the Don du Chœur committee had promised a year earlier when its members paid a privately-funded visit to the district. They met and spoke to the population of the village, seven hours down a dirt track from Tulear town, in one of the poorest areas of Madagascar. In this

semi-arid environment, hundreds of children without even a registered name suffer terribly from a lack of food and water.

On 17 October, two days after its official inauguration, this new state school opened its doors to 360 children from the village. They were taken in charge by six teachers, each with a well-equipped classroom. Who could have thought that these forgotten children would one day go to school to learn to read, to drink clean water and sit down to a daily rice meal at the school canteen?

And while, in spite of all this, these children cannot escape the difficulties inherent in southern Madagascar, being able to go to school

offers them hope of a better life. This is the incredible gift that each of our donors and volunteers have made possible. On behalf of the children, our heartfelt thanks.

www.don-du-choeur.ch



Procession by children and teacher at the inauguration

Inauguration festivities honoured by Education Minister



Children at Andohasatra start their first day at school

"The state primary school of Andohasatra-Betioky will receive special attention from the Ministry of Education and will become, we hope, a pilot school for the whole of southern Madagascar..."

With these words, the Minister of National Education, Mr. Paul Rabary, inaugurated the school on 15 October; he also thanked the children of Geneva's private schools for helping to bring it about. The Minister was accompanied by high-ranking officials from the regions

of Atsimo Andrefana and Betioky, as well as leaders of SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar.

Don du Chœur was represented by Claude-Alain Burky and his Malagasy wife, Dorette, who is from the region.

The festivities had started the day before, with villagers giving a Zebu (type of local cattle). As night fell, a film showing highlights of the 2016 Don du Chœur concert delighted the gathering and the evening ended with dancing to a local group.

The inauguration ceremony, which was shown later on national television, was a warm-hearted celebration, with the children taking a leading role, and carried out with due respect for local customs. It was a moment that will stay in the hearts and minds of local families for a long time to come!

Our colleague Claude-Alain Burky said later that, with the school and the visit of the dignitaries, the villagers felt that something extraordinarily positive had happened for them.



Mr. Paul Rabary, the minister of Education, cuts the ribbon with Claude-Alain Burky, representing Don du Chœur.

The Great Dictation: well done, you spelling fans!

Pupils from all levels at Geneva's private schools have been taking part in sponsored dictations to raise funds for Madagascar. They are very keen and have asked families and friends to sponsor them, with an amount of their choice to be paid for each word

spelt correctly. The money collected will allow each child in Andohasatra to receive a uniform, school supplies and a daily meal – all for CHF 10 per month.

Our thanks go to the pupils at the Institut Florimont, La Découverte,

l'Ecole en Musique and to everyone who helped them. So far, on 30 Novembre 2016, 250 children in Andohasatra have been sponsored! Your enthusiasm is helping to map out a great future for these kids!

Next results on our website
www.don-du-choeur.ch

Association Don du Chœur
2, rue Munier-Romilly
CH - 1206 Geneva

+41 79 652 90 93
info@don-du-choeur.ch
www.don-du-choeur.ch

THE KENYA PROJECT

St Luke's Special School, a fixture in the North Teso landscape

Financed by the children of Geneva from the takings at the 2013 Don du Choer concert, and built by our partner Community Outreach Centres, St Luke's is the only special school for handicapped children in North Teso District, near the Ugandan border.

The school has 70 pupils who previously were forced to stay at home; only 16 of them received lessons in a scruffy disused kitchen, unfit for the purpose. They are now taught and looked after by well-trained specialised tea-

chers. The children can learn at their own pace and gradually fulfil their potential.

The school is supported by the State and in three years has gained an excellent reputation in the region; Don du Choer will continue to follow its development.

Recent improvement include the purchase of cookers (called Jiko in Swahili) that burn less wood and produce less smoke (a great improvement for working conditions) and the

installation of a 3,000-litre tank to collect rain water, for kitchen use and to make it easier for the children, many of whom have mobility problems, to wash their hands.

Another important element is the dormitory, financed by the State, that can accommodate 40 children, making a major difference to their lives and those of their families. This was a heavy financial investment, which the authorities agreed to in order to make life a little easier for these children.



Before: cooking over an open wood fire, bad for both the back and the lungs



Now: The new cookers are less smoky and make it easier to produce 70 meals a day

Dormitory for 40 children whose homes are far away, who are very handicapped or whose families have difficulty looking after them

True, there are not enough teachers and some families cannot afford to buy a uniform or pay for their children's meals. Nevertheless, St Luke's has become one of the region's priority schools and its future is assured.

It is the second special school financed by Don du Choer, after Anbumalar (Chennai, India), opened in 2008.

THE CAMBODIA PROJECT

Ta Pen in "Clean School" competition

Congratulations to our school in Ta Pen, Cambodia, for having been selected to take part in the "Clean School" competition organised by the Siem Reap departments of Education and Tourism.

Inspectors from five departments made a surprise visit and evaluation of the school in September. They were satisfied with their findings.

Teachers and pupils then had to fill out a questionnaire covering 18 criteria, such as hygiene, environment, waste disposal and so on.

It's now out of their hands. Twenty schools are taking part in the contest, which Ta Pen naturally hopes to win. The verdict will fall in March 2017!

Your donation will help us help these communities

Don du Choer

Swiss non-profit association, tax-deductible since 2008

2, rue Munier-Romilly - 1206 Geneva

www.don-du-choeur.ch

info@don-du-choeur.ch

UBS SA. CP - CH 1211 Geneva 2

IBAN: CH 10 0024 0240 6036 14M1P

CCP: 17-540730-8

North Teso: work in progress to ensure clean water

In 2015, ConnexSwiss/Community Outreach oversaw the protection of a first water source, to help safeguard the health of some 6,000 villagers at Chamasiri and Kakemer, in North Teso.

This was also a first step towards protecting the population against malaria, spread by mosquitos breeding in the stagnant pools around the unprotected sources.

Work on a second source is due to be completed in December. Progress has been held up because of heavy rains but it's hoped that the objective, of protecting four sources, will be reached soon.



The protection of one water source has already changed the lives of countless women in the region



Work on the second source has begun and will soon be completed

PARTNERS

Geneva Association of Private Schools, Brolliet SA, ConnectSwiss, Community Outreach Centres, Fondation Coromandel, SOS Villages d'Enfants Madagascar, Vaovy La Fondation.