



SCHOOLS FOR AFRICA NEWSETTE

Official Project of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

Issue 6 • Madagascar

Includes: FOCUS ON MADAGASCAR ...

information on this country and materials for a chapter newsletter article for your use

UNICEF/U.S. FUND FIELDNOTES: First day of school in Madagascar

This month's newsette focuses on a UNICEF/U.S. Fund resource that will interest members throughout the DKG Society, the **FIELDNOTES** postings at <http://fieldnotes.unicefusa.org>. Visit this blog often to discover the most up-to-date information on the work of UNICEF/U.S. Fund and, specifically, its work in countries associated with the Schools for Africa project. Special thanks to the UNICEF/U.S. Fund for granting permission for our use of this material/photo.

Nothing touches the human heart more than reading or viewing first-hand accounts of others meeting and then overcoming adversity. Especially poignant are the stories that involve children and their encounters with natural disasters. The world has been rocked in recent years with everything from earthquakes to hurricanes to tsunamis. In the process many young lives have been forever changed. Such has been the case for thousands of people on the African island nation of Madagascar since Cyclone Ivan struck in 2008. Yet, through the rebuilding process even the youngest victims have shown their resilient nature as evidenced by these excerpts taken from a **FIELDNOTES** posting in August 2010...

“Angita Emerentienne, age 9, lives in Marolondo, Madagascar. She had been studying in a tent since her classroom was destroyed by a cyclone in 2008. This is what Angita had to say (on the first day of school in 2009):



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“Some things change: I will be in the third grade this year. Some things stay the same: Last year **I studied in a tent**. This year **I will again study in a tent**. I used to study in a classroom. That was before the cyclone. I remember the cyclone. I remember that our house was blown down. Nobody died though. We weren't in the house when the cyclone came. We heard it was coming so we went to stay in my grandfather's house...

“When the wind stopped we went out and I saw that houses had been blown down and trees too. Mangoes had fallen off the trees. The first thing I did was run to collect all the mangoes and eat them!...My sister was crying. I wasn't happy with the cyclone for doing this to us, but I didn't cry. **I was brave**.

“My school was just like my house—a pile of rubble on the ground. There was only one classroom left—the one made of bricks. The teachers decided to divide that classroom with bamboo walls. That way we could squeeze more classes in. It was confusing because all the different grades shared that classroom and we had classes at different hours on different days.

“When **UNICEF put up the tent for us**, I was glad. We could have regular classes again and we had more space. That tent was good, but after some time it got damaged by the wind. The plastic ripped and when it rained water would come in. They put up another tent like that one. It is still there. My cousin Sylvie will study in that tent this year. I will study again in the canvas one. **It is not easy to study in there**. It's hot so I can't concentrate very well. Sometimes I fall asleep in class.

“I want to be a teacher when I grow up, so I have a lot to learn. I wish I had a school with lots of nice classrooms; and that they were all strong so that I would never have to miss school again because of a cyclone.”

Angita's story is just one of many such stories being lived out daily by children in countries throughout the African continent. DKG members build schools, equip classrooms, train teachers, and supply students with needed materials every time they make a contribution to the SCHOOLS FOR AFRICA project. Visit the DKG page on the UNICEF website to make a contribution today. A link on that page gives all DKG members worldwide an immediate route to donate to this project, no matter in which of the 18 member countries you reside. Go to: <http://www.unicefusa.org/partners/ngo/delta-kappa-gamma-society.html> for more information.

THE CORNER SWAP SHOP

There is strength in numbers! Have a multi-chapter meeting devoted to learning more about the Schools for Africa project. Ask a knowledgeable member in your state organization to share information or design a program using resource on the DKG Web site. Be sure to leave time for each chapter to share what that group has done to promote the project. Use music, food, and art to extend the experience.

FOCUS ON: **MADAGASCAR** ...Facts about this African Nation



Use these facts as you prepare an article on Madagascar for your chapter newsletter or for a SFA spotlight at a chapter meeting.

Location: Island nation in the Indian Ocean off the southeastern coast of Africa. It is the fourth-largest island in the world; slightly larger than France; twice the size of the state of Arizona

Area/Population: 587,041 sq. km.; population of 21,281,844 (est. July 2010); median age 18.1 years; life expectancy 63.26 (total), male 61.27, female 65.3 years

Terrain: Toward the east, a steep escarpment leads from the central highlands down into a ribbon of rain forest with a narrow coast further east. The descent from the central highlands on the west is more gradual, with remnants of deciduous forest and savannah-like plains. On the west coast are many protected harbors, but silting is a major problem caused by sediment from high levels of erosion inland.

Climate: There are two seasons: a hot, rainy season from November to April and a cooler, dry season from May to October. Southeastern trade winds predominate and the island occasionally experiences cyclones.

Natural Resources: Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, including fishing and forestry. Major exports are coffee, vanilla (world's largest producer/exporter), sugar cane, cloves, rice, tapioca, beans, bananas, peanuts, and livestock.

Capital: Antananarivo is the political and economic capital and is centrally located.

Languages: French and Malagasy are the official languages. English was official from 2007-2010.

Infant Mortality Rate: 37.9 births/1,000 population; 52.8 deaths/1,000 population

Literacy (2003 est.): Definition/age 15 and over can read and write ... 68.9% (total pop.); 75.5% (male); **62.5% (female)**

Infectious Diseases: Degree of risk: very high; food or water borne diseases include bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid fever; vector borne diseases include chikungunya, malaria, and plague; water contact disease includes schistosomiasis (2009).

General INFO: Madagascar was ruled by the local Merina Kingdom in the 19th century and was part of the French colonial empire from 1890-1960, at which time the Republic of Madagascar became independent. A significant portion of the population is illiterate. Public expenditure on primary education per pupil is about US \$57. Children can expect to attend school for 10 years.

Contrary to the Disney vision of Madagascar, there are no penguins on the island. Many varieties of lemur, however, do exist.



On 5 April, UNICEF supporter Katy Perry shows small children how to wash their hands properly, during a visit to a pre-school in the village of Sahavola in Analanjirifo Region.

RESOURCES:

- *Picture credit on this page* ©UNICEF/NYHQ2013-0167 Kate Holt
- *Information from* <http://www.infoplease.com/country/madagascar.html>
- *Flag image from* www.the-flagshop.co.uk
- *Map courtesy of* CIA World Factbook, 2007

FUND-RAISER IDEA

When chapter meetings recess for holiday breaks or summer vacations, members might consider giving up a seasonal indulgence and using that “saved” money as a contribution to the SFA project. Be prepared to share what one “treat” you gave up when you make your SFA contribution at the next chapter meeting. Will it be a manicure or an ice cream or a steamy, new novel that motivates your generosity?