

Introduction course in Waldorf education for young teachers in Madagascar

Anne Beauché

On the 8th of February I arrived in the middle of the night at Antananarivo airport where Kathy Lucking, the coordinator of the Tenaquip School, was waiting for me. It was her initiative to organize an introduction courses on Waldorf education for the teachers of this school. The IASWECE financed the training and the [stART International \(Emergency Aid for Children\)](#) sent me to do the training. I am a stART member and pre-school teacher with experience teaching children who have experienced trauma through war or natural disasters.

We slept in a small hotel in town before we reached the Tenaquip School the next morning. Just 20 km outside of Antananarivo lies the village of Ambohiborosy. And I should say one hour and a half or two hours by car, on a nice bumping road. The landscape is amazing! We are surrounded by rice fields, red soil, mud brick houses, ox carts, smiling people riding bicycles or walking slowly down and up the hills. My impression is that everything seems so peaceful.



There is no noise except the people's voices, the work in the fields, the chickens, the barking dogs and the cows. It is the rainy season, and the temperature is about 25 degrees. The school was built about 6-8 years ago. There are already 6 buildings, which shelter 600 children from 3 to 18 years old, and about 48 teachers.

Inside the classrooms the material is simple and colorful. There are some flowers on the tables, nice big blackboards and the daylight floods the classrooms through the many windows.



During the afternoon I work with all the teachers and Kindergarten teachers. We start with our warm-up and repeat the main ideas of early childhood development before we go on from 5 to 7 years old. And since we have time, I reflect with them about how to welcome a child in a classroom, and how to behave as a teacher. In the second unit, we do some free form drawings with three groups of 12-15 people. They enjoy it very much.

My global impression is that the children love school, work hard and are concentrated. Some teachers are involved and happy to teach. All of them are very young, I would say between 21 and 35 years old. They need more examples and self-confidence. They need more training but they are willing and ready to improve themselves.

During the following days, we started with the kindergarten teachers by working on circle games they had to invent or enrich, and then we did a lot of finger games examples and spoke about the importance of those two activities in the child's development.



The last day of my journey I had the chance to attend the big school festival, where all the parents could come to see the school's birthday's ceremony. There was a stage where I was invited to sit down with Kathy Lucking and all the important people of the area. The priest, the mayor, the village chief and so on...

Then we were invited to visit the school's exhibition with children's work: baskets, handwork, vegetables and seeds of the school's garden, and then we had a very nice special meal with all the teachers. During the whole morning and until we left at two o'clock, the children were doing a performance in front of their parents.



At the end of the day I was invited to visit a very nice little orphanage that shelters 48 children from one to 19 years old. This was also such a nice experience, to have dinner with them and then to play some games with all the children!

I am very happy about this experience, because there is a lot to do there. People are very nice and the teachers are attentive and they are willing. My impression about the area is very positive and I would love to continue this project.

Anne Beauché is a former Waldorf kindergarten teacher, art therapist and is working for stART – an association specialized in emergency pedagogy. The project in Madagascar will continue next year and will be co-sponsored by stART, ["Freunde der Erziehungskunst"](#) and IASWECE.