WHOLE FOODS MARKET®
TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
MADAGASCAR 2016 SUMMARY & IMPACT REPORT
Whole Planet Foundation® (WPF) funds microlending programs in Madagascar through Premiere Agency de Microfinance where Madécasse sources ingredients for their body care products and baskets, which are sold in Whole Foods Market® (WFM) stores. WPF is a WFM non-profit whose mission is to alleviate poverty by funding microlending programs where WFM sources products to support our global communities.

Through the Whole Foods Market Team Member Volunteer Program, WFM gives Team Members the unique opportunity to travel abroad with WPF to learn about WPF, see where and how WFM products are grown, provide community service, experience and learn from other cultures, while challenging themselves by exploring exciting countries around the globe.
WFM TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
MADAGASCAR
10 WFM Team Member Volunteers traveled to Madagascar to volunteer near Ambanja in villages where Madécasse sources cacao. In Madagascar they learned about the production of chocolate from bean to bar. Madécasse grows, harvests, ferments and sorts cacao in Ambanja, and makes chocolate bars and packages them in Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar. In that way, they make sure that more of the profits stay in Madagascar, creating prosperity. This is a very unique approach to chocolate production as cacao is traditionally shipped to Europe or the U.S. to make the finished chocolate products.

WFM funded the building of three water wells giving villagers access to fresh water. The Team Members helped to refurbish a school by painting, building and repairing desks and chairs, and clearing land and planting a garden as well as building a fence to protect it from wandering Zebu. They met microcredit clients of WPF micro lending partner Première Agence de Microfinance (PAMF) and learned about the production of essential oils from ylang ylang and vetiver, and the harvesting of vanilla by Frontier Co-op.

Team Members visited Ankarana to see the tsingy (Malagasy for "where one cannot walk"), limestone geological formation where groundwater has carved fissures in the limestone creating a sharp needle-like texture in the rock, caves and canyons. They also visited Montagne D’Ambre for a hike in a tropical forest and snorkeled in a marine reserve at Nosy Tanikely.
2016 MADAGASCAR ITINERARY
AUGUST 17 - AUGUST 31

TRIP ITINERARY - 2 WEEKS

Day 1 Wednesday, August 17 - Arrive in Antananarivo.

Day 2 Thursday, August 18 - Fly from Antananarivo to Mahajanga.

Day 3 Friday, August 19 - Visit with microcredit clients whose loans were funded by Whole Planet Foundation through Première Agence de Microfinance in Marovoay. Depart for Ankarafantsika to stay at outdoor camp.

Day 4 Saturday, August 20 - Drive to Ambanja, stopping in Antsohihy for lunch. Check into Palma Nova.

Day 5 Sunday, August 21 - Cocoa orientation and harvesting.

Day 6 Monday, August 22 - Visit Biolandes, from whom Frontier sources essential oils for Aura Cacia products sold in Whole Foods Market stores. Lunch with Cokafa Cooperative members and then an afternoon of reforestation and visit in Antranokarany with a Peace Corps Volunteer stationed there.

Day 7 Tuesday, August 23 - Provide community service in Mangabe, building a bridge, refurbishing a school and meeting and working with the community.

Day 8 Wednesday, August 24 - Provide community service in Mangabe, building a bridge, refurbishing a school and meeting and working with the community.

Day 9 Thursday, August 25 - Provide community service in Mangabe, building a bridge, refurbishing a school and meeting and working with the community.

Day 10 Friday, August 26 - Provide community service in Mangabe, building a bridge, refurbishing a school and meeting and working with the community. Relaxing dinner at Ankify Lodge In Ankify.

Day 11 Saturday, August 27 - Leave Ankify for Ankarana, stopping for lunch in Ambilobe. Late afternoon hike through the Tsingy in Ankara Park.

Day 12 Sunday, August 28 - Journey from Ankara to Joffreville with a nocturnal visit of the private reserve of the Domaine de Fontenay Hotel.

Day 13 Monday, August 29 - Head to Montagne D’Ambre (Amber Mountain) to hike in the mountain forest.

Day 14 Tuesday, August 30 - Depart for Diego airport to fly back to Antananarivo.

Day 15 Wednesday, August 31 - Depart Madagascar for home.
The volunteers met microcredit clients whose loans were funded by Whole Planet Foundation through Première Agence de Microfinance (PAMF) and spoke with PAMF staff and Whole Planet Foundation’s Brian Doe, learning about the process and impact of microfinance in Madagascar.

THE EXPERIENCE

Team Member Volunteers immersed themselves in the community, sharing their lives and learning about daily life, cuisine and dress in Madagascar.

The volunteers learned about the sourcing of cacao, helped refurbish a school and built a bridge with the community.
Team Members enjoyed meals eaten with the community while sitting on the ground and spent time in the kitchen learning to prepare food over an open fire. They ate and helped cook Malagasy foods including rice, zebu (beef) goat, greens and lemon and mango pickles called achard.

**FOOD**

**HISTORY**

One cannot visit Madagascar without sighting lemurs in the trees and walking amongst the tsingy - limestone formations particular to Madagascar that are not only interesting geological formations but also bear a significance in the history of Madagascar. The word tsingy is a Malagasy word translated “where one cannot walk barefoot.”

**CULTURE**

Lambas are a traditional form of dress in the Malagasy culture and consist of a piece of material wrapped and tied at the waist or upper chest and another piece of the same material that can be draped over the head or shoulders for added sun protection. Women in the countryside will often wear beauty masks which they shared with the Team Members as well.
History:
Founded by His Highness the Aga Khan, the Aga Khan Development Network is a group of private, international, non-denominational development agencies. The agencies work to improve the welfare and prospects of people in the developing world, particularly in Asia and Africa. While each agency pursues its own mandate, all of them work together within the overarching framework of the Network so that their different pursuits interact and reinforce one another. The Aga Khan Microfinance Agency in Geneva started the Première Agence de Microfinance (PAMF) program in Madagascar in 2006 as a development microfinance initiative in response to the lack of best practices of MFIs in the country.

WPF Partnership:
Whole Planet Foundation began funding PAMF – Madagascar in October 2012 with a 0% interest loan of $500,000 to reach 2160 new clients.
- Total WPF Authorized funds: $500,000
- Total WPF Funds Disbursed to PAMF - Madagascar: $500,000

Whole Planet Foundation support for the guarantee-free group loan product has been extended to 7 branches of the Diana and Sofia Regions of Northern Madagascar.

PAMF - Madagascar’s Approach:
PAMF operates in both urban and rural areas. Most of PAMF’s group lending methodology occurs in the rural branches where approximately half of the portfolio is for agricultural activities. Credit agents explain PAMF loan products to prospective communities. Interested clients work with credit agents to develop a cash flow and profit analysis of their business and their growth potential with credit. Borrowers are limited to borrowing not more than half of the net worth of their businesses.

Solidarity loan groups are made up of between 3-15 members. Each member will receive a typical first loan of about $100, repayable over 6 months at a monthly interest rate of 2.5% declining plus a 1% up front administrative fee. Clients receive the disbursement and make monthly repayments at the branch, where they can also make voluntary savings deposits or withdrawals and other transactions. Credit Agents meet each solidarity loan group once a month in the field. If one member misses a repayment, the other members of the defaulting member’s solidarity loan group are expected to cover the payment on their behalf.
Team Members learned about Première Agence de Microfinance's (PAMF) methodology and how they support their clientele. They met and learned from Brian Doe, WPF's Director in Africa and the Middle East, microentrepreneurs and PAMF staff. Meeting microcredit clients at their businesses gave the team a unique opportunity to hear firsthand how access to microcredit has helped these women entrepreneurs.

Team Member volunteers met several clients with various businesses in order to better understand the diversity of microentrepreneurial activities. They visited clients like Cecile who was proud of the rice that she has grown and was able to amass and conserve until rice is more in demand and can fetch a higher price. "Meeting Cecile, a microcredit client, touched me in a deep and meaningful way. She said before her loan that she was just having babies and had no other purpose but since the loan she started family planning and in addition to her 2 1/2 hectares of rice paddy she is now raising pigs to sell. She also is helping 2 other women in her village by joining in a group loan with them. When asked what else she has been able to accomplish she pointed to her house and said she was able to build her house." Kat
Information from Frontier Co-op:

Frontier began as a two-person operation in 1976 in a cabin along the Cedar River in Eastern Iowa. We have grown steadily since then to become a major supplier in the booming natural products industry. This outstanding performance throughout the years reflects our close harmony with both industry trends and the values of natural products consumers.

The business was originally structured as a cooperative that supplied herbs and spices to its members, all of whom were cooperatives engaged in retailing natural foods or cooperative buying clubs. Being a co-op itself helped propel Frontier into national distribution in rapidly expanding natural foods “co-op movement.”

Frontier also embraced many of the positive ideals underlying the popularity of co-ops. The early management envisioned a workplace where employees would enjoy their work, families would come first, the quality of products would be unsurpassed, organics would play a key role in the business and social responsibility would be inseparable from their actions. These values have been sustained—and have contributed significantly to Frontier’s success throughout its entire history.

In 1978 Frontier bought and converted a grocery store building in Fairfax, Iowa, into a 5,200 square foot operations facility.

During 1988 Frontier introduced a line of packaged spices. This was followed in 1991 with the introduction of a line of gourmet, 100% certified organic whole bean coffees. Frontier responded to this accelerating trend, capitalizing on its early success and bolstering its product line with the 1994 acquisition of Aura Cacia, a leading aromatherapy and natural personal care products company. Aura Cacia products include a full line of aromatherapy items such as essential oils, massage and body oils, mineral baths, and lotions. Frontier has grown the line into the clear aromatherapy market leader in natural health outlets nationwide, adding many innovative new products. Aura Cacia sells a wide variety of certified organic products and has created the Aura Cacia Organic 1% Fund to give back 1% of organic sales to supplier communities.

The Simply Organic brand, established in 2001, quickly established the same kind of leadership in packaged seasonings as Aura Cacia has in aromatherapy. Simply Organic became the fastest growing brand in natural seasonings and the leading brand of the explosively growing category of organic seasonings. The Simply Organic 1% Fund was established in 2002 giving back 1% of all Simply Organic sales in support of organic agriculture and education.

Beyond the fact that Frontier has listened attentively to its customers and responded wisely to trends and changes in the natural products industry, we have the advantage of sharing some basic values with the people buying our products.

Frontier led the industry in recognizing the value of organic agriculture and promoting organically grown products. The market for organics continues to grow, and Frontier is the established leader in organic selection and quality.

Frontier’s stated mission is to “Nourish people and planet. Always be Fair.” This statement helps guide the company in making decisions about how we interact with our employees, customers and suppliers. It serves as a driving force toward our passion to improve the lives of the farmers and their communities around the world that supply us with high quality herbs, spices and essential oils.

Frontier was also a trendsetter in employee relations, building a loyal, efficient workforce from the beginning with sincere communication and respect for employees at all levels of the organization. Innovative programs such as subsidized on-site childcare and meal programs, established over two decades ago, led to national recognition for workplace accomplishments at the same time Frontier was cited as one of the country’s fastest-growing companies.

The adherence to the company’s ideals regarding customer service, product quality, social and environmental responsibility and employee relations are intrinsic elements in Frontier’s impressive success over the years.
Information from Madécasse founders:

We were Peace Corps volunteers in Madagascar. We fell in love with the people and the country and wanted to do more. So we started making chocolate there. Even though 70% of the world’s cocoa comes from Africa, few had ever done this before. We were convinced that making finished products in Africa was the key to real change. Our experience making chocolate in Madagascar confirmed it. So we started making vanilla, too. And the next chapter began.

We are a social enterprise. We measure success by the quality of our product and our social impact in Africa. Our story would not be possible without you. You are helping to write the next chapter for Africa.

These are eye-opening statistics which helps explain how a continent so rich in raw materials, can remain so poor. Madécasse exists to change this by making chocolate entirely in Africa.

How? We start by empowering Madagascar’s cocoa farmers with skills, training and higher wages. We source other ingredients locally in Madagascar, too. Then we actually make our chocolate on the island. So far, we’ve created meaningful income for over 200 people in Madagascar - from chocolate making, to packaging production, to the farming of the cocoa, spices, and fruits.

We stand in proud contrast to the established practices of the chocolate industry, which has remained virtually unchanged for centuries.

Isolated from mainland Africa, 85% of Madagascar’s plants and animals exist nowhere else on earth. The island’s naturally organic forests are home to at least 80 species of lemurs, over 1,000 orchids, and innumerable other plants and animals.

For more information: Madécasse
IMMERSION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Madagascar is a place that many people only dream about visiting. From natural wonders like the Tsingy and the presence of lemurs to the resourcefulness, grace and beauty of the Malagasy people, Madagascar is a wonderland of new experiences. Traveling with the Madecasse team, Whole Foods Market Team Members got to experience Madagascar in a way they might not otherwise, immersing themselves in the communities where they learned and provided community service.

LEARN AND CONTRIBUTE

Team Members visited Biolandes, the company that produces essential oils sourced by Frontier Coop to create products for Aura Cacia, which is sold in Whole Foods Market stores. They picked slang flowers and learned about the social programs that Frontier fostered in Madagascar. The Team Members spent time in the cacao groves and at the Cokafa cooperative where Madécasse sources cocoa beans to make their delicious chocolates and worked on refurbishing a local school with Madécasse and the community.

“A beautiful and challenging experience that I won’t ever forget. It was an incredible combination of volunteer work for people who were appreciative and kind mixed with unusual situations that pushed the boundaries of my comfort zone. I loved and loathed it and every minute of it was interesting and unforgettable. Being uncomfortable is the most mind expanding thing you can do for yourself. I am forever grateful for this opportunity to gain all of these experiences at one time. And, icing on the cake, I made some wonderful friends who I will treasure and love for the rest of my life!” Marci.
LEARNING ABOUT CACAO
Cacao pods grow on the sides of cacao trees. The volunteers learned about growing, harvesting, opening the fruit, separating the seeds, fermenting, drying and sorting cacao, preparing it to be made into delicious chocolate. They also planted xxxxx cacao saplings.
BUILDING A BRIDGE

On every volunteer program Team Members provide community service, volunteering to help a community with a project chosen by the community. In Madagascar one of the projects that the team worked on was building a bridge in Maganbe that has been needed since
The volunteers helped to refurbish a school, cleaning and painting the interior, creating murals, assembling desks and chairs and painting them with the help of the schoolchildren and members of the community.
Team Members visited the school Aura Cacia built in Madagascar and Biolandes where they learned how to harvest vetiver root and ylang ylang flowers for making essential oils with Biolandes, who supplies those essential oils to Aura Cacia to use in products sold in Whole Foods Market.

Team Member Volunteers harvested ylang ylang and vetiver along with Biolandes staff. They watched it being weighed and hauled to the distillery, then observed the process by which the oils are extracted from the flowers to be sourced by Frontier for Aura Cacia and later made into the essential oils sold in Whole Foods Market stores.
RISH
“As many would say, this was a trip of a lifetime. However, I think that is an understatement for me. The breadth of the activities was wide and all-encompassing.”

EMILY
“This experience further strengthened my belief in what we can do as a company. I came to work for Whole Foods Market with the desire to work for a company that I believe in, this proved that I am doing just that. It gave me the perfect opportunity to take a step farther into our missions and make it even more personal than I regularly do.”

DAVE
“It was rewarding to work side by side with the Malagasy to build something that was going to have such a high impact on the entire village for many years to come.”

CRIS
“To me, working in the community with the school and the bridge was such a life changing experience. It was by far one of the most physical demanding tasks I have ever taken part of but at the end of the day, being able to see all the work and sweat transform into something so meaningful was one of the most inspiring moments of my life. I wouldn’t trade any of those memories for anything!”

KAT
“I have always participated in the WPF Paycheck deduction program but now it is so much more meaningful.”

JUSTIN
“The people receiving the loans were so nice and friendly. You could really see how about $100 us provides them with job opportunities for an entire year. One women employed a whole field of workers growing rice and only needed $150 to pay them for the season. When you see the numbers broken down like that, it makes you want to donate even more. I’ll never forget my experience.”

EMERY
“It was like some place you go where you feel leery about where you going, because you do not know anyone. Well being in Madagascar I felt like I surrounded by friends and family. The experience was breathtaking. It matters to me that the people working at the microfinance institution had a good relationship with the microcredit clients. That made it more personal and they did a great job.”

MICHELLE
“I learned that quality can only come from a product that is produced with caring for the land and the people who are responsible for growing the raw materials. I was so touched by the warm hospitality and pride the cocoa farmers showed us. My favorite part of the whole trip. I loved being able to spend some one on one time with the village women. They even showed me how to pick rice.”

KAT
“It was really eyeopening to learn that companies like Madecasse and Frontier are really in the villages supporting the communities in more ways than just jobs. They are constantly helping with community projects to improve the lives of the villagers and making real human connections, not just providing jobs.”

ROBERT
“Two words! LIFE CHANGING!! You learn so much, you gain new perspectives and a new outlook on what really matters.”
2016 MADAGASCAR WFM TMVP IMPACT

- 10 WFM TEAM MEMBERS PROVIDED SERVICE IN MADAGASCAR
- 8 MICROCREDIT CLIENTS MET
- 1 BRIDGE BUILT TO CONNECT A COMMUNITY SERVING 5,000 PEOPLE
- 1 SCHOOL REFURBISHED
- 30 SCHOOL DESKS BUILT
- 150 NOTEBOOKS AND 250 PENCILS DONATED
- 2 MURALS PAINTED
- 300 SAPLINGS PLANTED