



Charitable Trust

Newsletter

JUNE 2022

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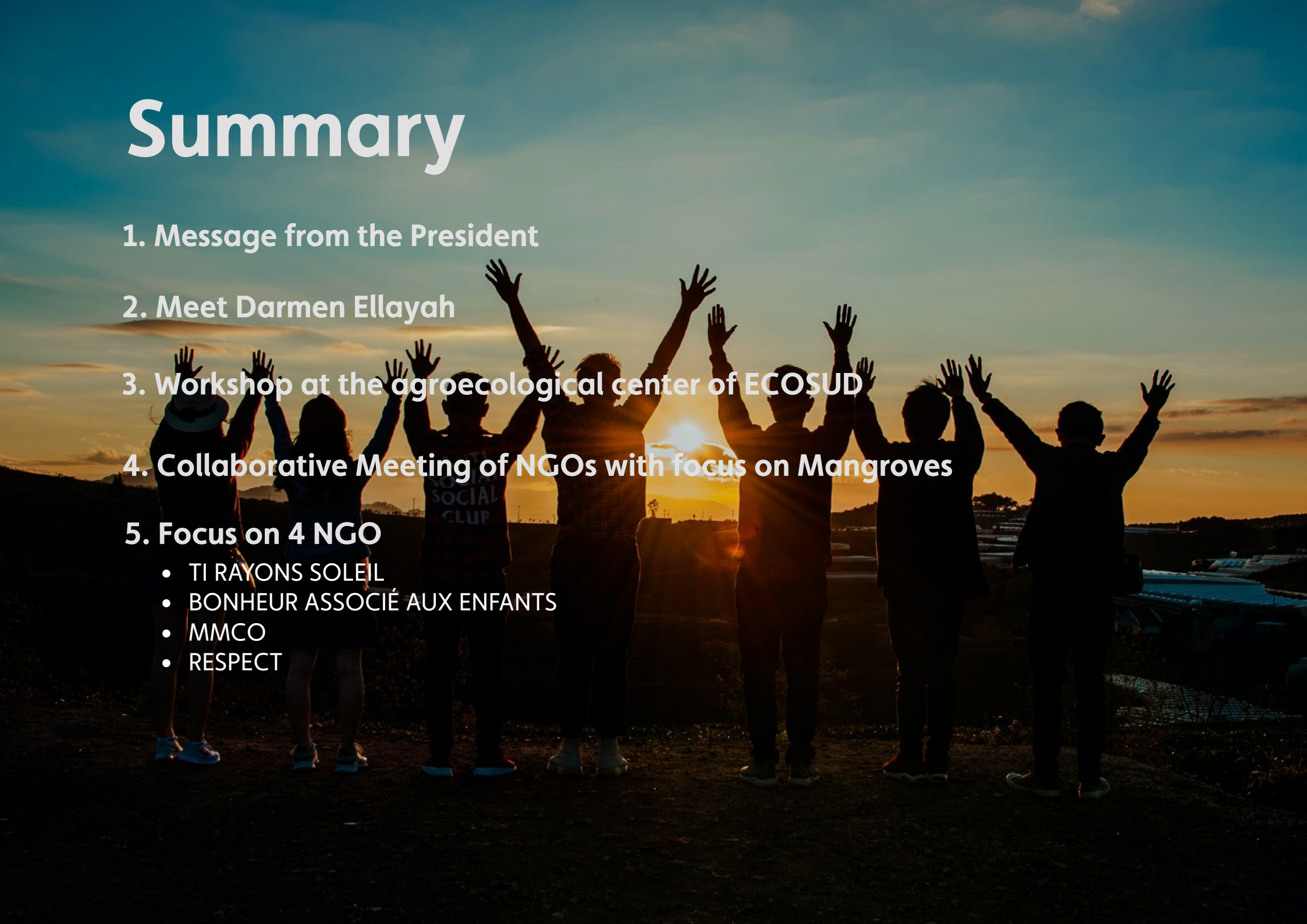
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Message from the President

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Goro Yamashita

Dear friends,

It is with great pleasure that I am writing this for our second edition of our newsletter. A lot has happened since I first addressed you through our new communication tool, the MOL Charitable Trust Newsletter scheduled to come out quarterly. After the selection of the 26 projects funded last year by the MOL Charitable Trust, several of the selected NGOs have started work, while some others are waiting for the necessary authorisation and/or tools to launch their projects.

For our part, we have been constantly present with the NGO's. Indeed, as we have stated several times since the beginning of our adventure in Mauritius, the Trust is not only a funding agency. We are also here to help, to facilitate the work of NGOs who are on the front line. In my opinion, giving money as if you were handing over a responsibility and then washing your hands of it is not a real commitment.

That is why we have launched some new initiatives to help all the NGOs participating in our programme to find ways to move forward together, to help each other. We are trying to create platforms, bridges, in order to promote dialogue, debate, transmission of knowledge and advice. Our first workshop took place in Pointe-d'Esny, at the headquarters of Ecosud, one of the NGOs we support. It brought together associations involved in sustainable and community-based agriculture projects in the South-East region.

It was a very insightful meeting for everyone present. There was

a lot of discussion about farming techniques, permaculture, the use of compost, different agricultural models, etc. The participants even suggested exchanging seeds to contribute to each other's success. Based on this first experience, we organised a second workshop, this time for NGOs with mangrove projects. We invited Professor Toho-yiko Miyagi, a Japanese scientist with over 40 years of experience in the study and conservation of mangrove forests around the world. We will be continuing this momentum soon with new initiatives to support our beneficiaries and their projects, and thus make the most of our chances to make a better and sustainable impact on Mauritius and its people.

Thank you all and see you soon for more great news!

Goro Yamashita,
President of the MOL Charitable Trust.

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Meet Darmen Ellayah

Meet Darmen Ellayah

Can you tell us more about your role as a Local Enforcer of the MOL Charitable Trust?

Within the MOL Charitable Trust Fund, we are 7 Enforcers, of which 4 are Japanese and 3 are Mauritian. Our role is to help identify projects that are closest to the Trust's vision, assess the potential impact of the projects and the capacity of the NGOs to manage them. We then work directly with these NGOs by offering technical advice, administrative follow-up and also assisting them in managing the projects within good governance, especially with young NGOs that do not have solid structures, just to help them to start in the right direction. Thanks to our experience, we are able to not only assist them in setting up an optimal system, but also to smooth out certain difficulties by facilitating dialogue and acting as intermediaries between the NGOs and their various stakeholders.

It is important to know that we collaborate with the I61 Foundation, an organisation whose role is to coordinate the different projects on the ground, working closely with the NGOs. We also hold regular Enforcers' meetings where the I61 Foundation reports on the problems they have seen in the field and we work together to find a solution.

How do you feel the projects of the beneficiary NGOs are progressing?

The majority of projects are progressing well. Some have small problems, for example with registration, administrative paperwork or obtaining authorisations. By the way, the selected NGOs must also meet certain criteria for the disbursement of the funds. For example, they must have a bank account and have certain procedures in place to receive and manage these funds.

Some of the NGOs we work with are working on these issues, but for others the projects are 20, 30, 50 or even 90% complete. I would say that the implementation of the projects is generally progressing well, and all the projects are being implemented. We are trying to smooth out the bumps for the projects that are having difficulties so that they can move forward.



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How involved is the Trust with the NGOs on the different projects?

We have divided the projects into four categories:



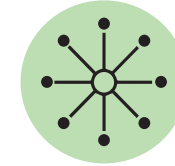
Agri-environment and biodiversity



Social



Education



Other

Each of the 27 NGOs involved falls into one of these categories. We conduct Focus Meetings with each of the categories to facilitate dialogue between them, enabling them to collaborate as much as possible. For example, a nursery project may provide plants to an agricultural project. There is indeed a real convergence between many of

the projects we fund. We are trying to bring about a synergy so that everyone can work together and multiply their chances of success.



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Workshop at the agroecological center of ECOSUD

Workshop at the agroecological center of ECOSUD

Encouraging food self-sufficiency is one of the main objectives of the MOL Charitable Trust during its mission in Mauritius. In order to achieve this goal, the Trust is funding several sustainable agricultural projects in the South East region of the island this year. On Friday 18th March, a meeting between representatives of the different NGOs involved took place in Ville-Noire, at the Ecosud agroecological centre, which is also one of the beneficiaries. The other organisations present were Falcon Citizen League, the Association for Sustainable Development, FORENA and RESPECT.

In a spirit of sharing and solidarity, the participants were able to share their different experiences on sustainable agriculture, talk about their projects and exchange on sustainable farming techniques and methods. Discussions focused on different cultivation techniques, soils, composting, plants to grow, seasons, etc. By linking partners in a collaborative way, the Trust hopes to increase the chances of success for each project and contribute to building a vibrant and healthy farming community in the South East.



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Collaborative Meeting of NGOs with focus on Mangroves

Collaborative Meeting of NGOs with focus on Mangroves

Several representatives of NGOs from the Trust's funding programme involved in safeguarding mangrove forests were invited to a conversation with Professor Toyohiko Miyagi, a leading Japanese scientist with over forty years of experience in this field. The meeting was hosted by La Valley de Ferney Conservation Trust at Falaise Rouge restaurant.

The NGOs present at the meeting were the Vallée de Ferney Conservation Trust, Fondation Ressource et Nature (FORENA), Reef Conservation Society, Ocean Connect, Pointe d'Esny Sanctuary Foundation and Association pour le Développement Durable. Each of the representatives had the opportunity to present their project to Professor Miyagi. The latter took the opportunity to share his vast knowledge of the different types of mangroves and their importance for the planet.

Mangroves remain an essential element in the preservation of the lagoon and its biodiversity, but also in the protection of the coastline against erosion and rising sea levels. As a reminder, the mangrove is a natural maritime environment forming swamps along the coast or waterways. These forests are mainly made up of mangroves, trees with aerial roots that are able to develop in a saline environment. These unique environments form real breeding grounds for many aquatic, marine, coastal and/or maritime species.



“ Through the hosting of such meetings, we hope not only to help our partner organisations directly, but also to encourage discussion and exchange between their representatives. By promoting teamwork, and with the support of distinguished scientists such as Prof. Miyagi, we are convinced that each of the projects we support will have a greater chance of success, said Goro Yamashita, following the event. ”

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Could you briefly summarise your work on mangroves?

*From a geomorphological and geological point of view, my work on mangroves started in 1976 with a study on mangrove forests and *Barringtonia racemosa* (another coastal tree species) in the Nakama River area on Iriomote Island, Japan. This was followed by work in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, the Pacific Islands, Australia, Central and South America. I have also been involved in reforestation projects on the island of Sulawesi, in Banda Aceh in Sumatra, in the Persian Gulf, on the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico and on the island of Tuvalu in the Pacific. Some of the projects I am involved in are to study the changes in mangrove forests due to rapid sea level rise, mangrove ecosystems and the accumulation of organic matter in their soils, the mechanisms of mangrove forest regeneration, the changes in Japanese mangrove forests and their distribution, and the creation of a universal database on the distribution of mangrove forests around the world.*

How can you help Mauritian NGOs whose projects involve mangrove conservation?

You have microtidal mangrove ecosystems in Mauritius, most of which are in the lagoon. These are small ecosystems, but they are very valuable. Understanding how and by what mechanisms these small forests are formed is important if you want to conserve them. A study is also needed to understand the future evolution of these essential ecosystems. These projects need to be promoted through a comprehensive perspective and strategy to highlight the importance of mangroves and ways to conserve them.

What did you think of the workshop organised by the MOL Charitable Trust and your discussions with the NGO representatives present?

I was impressed by the fact that there are so many important organisations in Mauritius and that each one has its own motivation to act. I would love to be able to work with them and exchange ideas, so that together we can achieve unique results on your island.

** With a PhD from Tohoku University School of Science, Prof. Miyagi is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Regional Design at the same institution. He is also a representative of Geo Customize Mapping, Chief Engineer of Advantechology, Technical Advisor of Nittoc Construction, Research Associate of the Japan Institute for Environmental Studies, and a member of the Japanese Expert Support Team sent to Mauritius in 2020 as a mangrove specialist.*



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Meeting with the 4 NGO

Ti rayons soleil

Bérengère

Bonheur
Associé
aux Enfants

Cindy

MMCO

Hugues Vitry

Respect

Arvin

Ti Rayons Soleil - Bérengère

Where are you with your project?

Our project "Les Ti Serins nursery school" is coming along very well! The building renovations are almost complete. We will soon be embarking on the recruitment and registration phase. We are delighted to be able to work in this beautiful region that we have already embraced. We will open two classes to begin with.

What do you think of the MOL Charitable Trust's involvement with local NGOs?

It is a real privilege for a region when a sponsor decides to come and work there. The opportunity to have MOL Charitable Trust in the South East of the island is a great chance for this region, which of course needs the support and guidance of professionals, be it in the field of project management, education or coastal conservation. Moreover, we are delighted to be able to participate in such an impetus for Mahébourg and its surroundings. These calls for proposals have allowed us to consolidate the existing social work and to refine it in certain areas. The long-term partnership with a sponsor is a good thing to really build community development, and it is in this spirit that Ti Rayons Soleil is involved.

What do you hope to bring to Mauritius through votre projet ?

Our NGO has existed since 2007 in Mauritius. We have learned a lot over the years. Our expertise today is based on three main areas: the fight against poverty through quality education, the empowerment of women, and of course community development. These last two areas lead obviously to the development of strong and equitable communities, which are founded on more social justice... and at Ti Rayons this is our spearhead! Thank you to MOL Charitable Trust for allowing us to accompany communities in their development.



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Bonheur Associé aux Enfants - Cindy

How are you doing with your project?

We were able to finish our first school term without too much trouble. Despite price increases for basic foodstuffs, as well as fruit and dairy products, we were able to ensure the distribution of lunch packs every school day. However, we anticipate that there will be more difficulties in the second and third term for the following reasons:

- Constant increase in basic foodstuffs.
- Rising gas and petrol prices.
- Less donations from individuals.
- Discontinued donations from one of our partners who was assisting us for the first quarter only.

But nevertheless we are happy because our little *protégés* are delighted to go to school every morning with their school materials and, most importantly, food in their bags.

What do you think of the MOL Charitable Trust's involvement with local NGOs?

MOL Charitable Trust is a great help to local NGOs, especially for our NGO which was launched less than two years ago. It was very difficult when we started. We had to rely on ourselves, as we do not receive any financial support from the government and CSR from private firms.

With MOL Charitable Trust, several NGOs and ourselves manage to keep our heads above water, as the expression goes, to complete our projects. There has been a lot of improvement in our region thanks to actions carried out by NGOs through the help provided by MOL Charitable Trust. Without this, I think that many NGOs would have had to stop their activities due to lack of financial support and

accompaniment. For this, on behalf of all these NGOs, I want to say a big thank you to the MOL Charitable Trust.

What do you hope to bring to Mauritius through your project?

Basically, additional support and assistance to needy families and children.

Our dream and our motto is that every child in the island should have the same facilities and the same rights in school. For we believe that a happy child, who does not lack anything financially or emotionally, will grow up to be the best he or she can be.

Once this is done, we hope to achieve the following results:

- Reduce poverty on the island.
- Reduce the rate of absenteeism in school due to lack of food and school materials.
- Reduce the rate of vagrancy and delinquency among children.
- To have a better man for a better Mauritius.



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MMCO - Hugues Vitry

How far along are you with the project?

The MMCO has already launched a call for proposals via social networks - Facebook and Instagram and we had to find 50 candidates,

To date, we have received 198 applications.

We have made a first pre-selection of candidates according to their medical (contraindication) and technical (swimming) abilities and according to their place of residence, giving priority to the vulnerable category....

We plan to start the operational phase by mid-May for the first group of 20 participants.

What do you think of the MOL Charitable Trust's involvement with local NGOs?

After the shipwreck and the subsequent events and restrictions, the local population felt (perhaps wrongly) that they were being neglected by the authorities, who may themselves be bound by procedures and have a broader view of the problems. The support given to NGOs is aimed specifically at the community's underlying the problems. This is an excellent initiative on the part of MOL Charitable Trust. We think that as the island is small, the support could have been extended to the whole island because everyone is concerned.

What do you hope to bring to Mauritius through your project?

Through our project, we are trying to sensitise the community about their environment and the marine world. You can only protect effectively what you know and love.



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RESPECT - Arvin

How far along are you with your project?

Our project has two phases: training and the setting up of a greenhouse. The training started in December/January and is still going on. We are currently training 81 beneficiaries in sustainable agriculture in Mahébourg. When we received the funding, we immediately started building our greenhouse in Mare-Tabac. As we are looking for local workers on this construction, we have had some minor labour concerns, and we also have additional expenses due to the increase in the price of materials. We have readjusted our budget, and the greenhouse should be ready by the end of May or beginning of June. This is good timing as we will start the practical training (for the moment we are focusing on the theory) in the greenhouse in mid-June.

What do you think of the MOL Charitable Trust's involvement with local NGOs?

I think we are now seeing the results of MOL CT's work. There has been a lot of work done to help the people affected by the grounding, and I met many of the NGOs involved at the handover last year. MOL CT has done a great job in getting so many people on board. From our side, we are really happy to have such a financial support to help us implement our project.

What do you hope to bring to Mauritius through your project?

With the training project, we hope that the people we are training will turn more and more towards the production of fruit and vegetables in greenhouses, and that this will encourage the younger people to be more engaged in the land. It is important to know that the inhabitants of the South-East are, by tradition, more dependent on the sea than on the land. There is a real lack of agricultural production in this region. Our priority is to help people become self-sufficient in terms of food, and then to help them market their surplus, because there will be some. In the future, we hope to launch an aquaponics training project, again in the same spirit.



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