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PRESS RELEASE

*The ICT Village of Sambaina ideated by the Infopoverty Programme was proclaimed Millennium Village by Jeffrey Sachs, head of the UN Millennium Project*



*H.E. Marc Ravalomanana together  
with Pierpaolo Saporito*

Sambaina, the ICT Village started in November 2005 in Madagascar has become a leading international project in the field of poverty eradication through the ICTs. The initiative is based on the project OCCAM has developed in the framework of the Infopoverty Programme as follow up to the Tunis Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), and is fully supported by H.E. Marc Ravalomanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar.

Jeffery Sachs, head of the Millennium Project of the United Nations and Special Advisor to Kofi Annan, has visited the village together with Pierpaolo Saporito, President of OCCAM, Zina Andrianarivelo Rafazy, Permanent Representative of Madagascar to the UN in New York and the Malagasy authorities and has complimented all for the success of the model of intervention implemented in Sambaina, which exploits the ICTs as instruments to fight poverty and promote development also through the deployment of services such as e-learning, telemedicine, e-governance, etc. The great interest expressed by the local population and the immediate intervention made by the Government has made possible the inauguration a digital classroom that will serve the more than 600 students of the community and accessible to the inhabitants of neighbouring areas, in order to accelerate the digital alphabetization of the community and create new jobs.



*Jeffrey Sachs, Pierpaolo Saporito and  
Zina Andrianarivelo-Rafazy at the  
inauguration of the digital classroom  
in Sambaina*

This important initiative is part of the wider project aiming at the application of the ICT Village model, approved in the WSIS 2005, in Madagascar and in the Dominican Republic, pilot Countries of the UN Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development (<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/Alliance/home>).

The proclamation by Jeffrey Sachs of Sambaina as "Millennium Village", making it an integrated project of the UN policies toward development in emerging countries opens new perspectives to the project, as it links the ICTs with innovative technological solutions in fields such as clean and renewable energy, safe water, increase and safeguard of traditional agriculture and handicrafts. Moreover it confirms the value of the proposals launched in the recent VI Infopoverty World Conference, held at the UN Headquarters in New York on April 20 and 21, at the presence of hundreds of representatives from all main institutions, public and private, involved in fighting poverty through new technologies.

Replicating this success model, already requested by many other countries, means also opening new opportunities for the most innovative companies that, accepting the challenges posed by the special conditions and needs of emerging countries, can really facilitate local development and the global market.