



Tropentag, September 18-21, 2016, Vienna, Austria

“Solidarity in a competing world —  
fair use of resources”

## Why Absence of “fihavanana” Is Limiting Agricultural Innovation Process in the Highlands of Madagascar?

ONJAHERILANTO RAKOTOVAO RAZANAKOTO<sup>1</sup>, ROLLAND RAZAFINDRAIBE<sup>2</sup>, LILIA RABEHARISOA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*University of Antananarivo, School of Agronomy, Madagascar*

<sup>2</sup>*National Center Research Applied to Rural Development, Dept. of Research - Development, Madagascar*

<sup>3</sup>*Laboratory of Radioisotopes, Service of Agronomy, Madagascar*

### Abstract

Apart from institutional concern, human interaction between stakeholders merits to be considered in approaches related to development projects that provide innovations. Combining effort, pain, and gain are aspects of solidarity and cohesion concepts that Malagasy people consider in the term “fihavanana”. Paradoxically, founding principles of Malagasy “fihavanana” are opposed to innovation initiative. “Fihavanana” concept is nowadays affiliated to rural people as farmers, the beneficiaries of most development projects. In contrast, many developers who are supposed to provide positive changes to beneficiaries are from the cities and are less connected to rural culture. Nevertheless, more than a mutual understanding is required to make innovative process effective. Synergetic mobilisation of human resources is also expected. This paper aims to demonstrate that the absence of “fihavanana” between implicated agents of innovation process conducts to its failure. Outcomes from PhD dissertation based on a literature review, on multi-site trials related to the improvement of rice yield and performed as a simulation of a development project, and on a household survey in two contrasted localities in the highlands of Madagascar show that stakeholders’ objectives or activities inside innovation process do not converge. Developer and beneficiary diversely act relatively to their respective capacities and interests (effort and gain), even if participative approach is included. Moreover, each implicated agent is not able to overcome alone obstacles (pain) that constrain its own achievement. This paper suggests more consideration of cultural issues when designing development projects. The current strategy of development programme largely focuses on economical issues to cope with concerns such as reducing poverty or securing food in agrarian society. Combination of “fihavanana” with the innovation process conducted in Madagascar may be helpful to improve welfare and wellbeing of local population. These concepts may be compatible if we consider that both, “fihavanana” and innovation, cover almost the same social, cultural, environmental, technical, and economical dimensions.

**Keywords:** Agricultural research and development, behaviour, cultural concern, human resources, rice cropping systems