



Moving into Madagascar

In February 2005 the BGS, in partnership with the United States Geological Survey, began work on a major three-year geological and geochemical mapping and mineral assessment project in northern and central Madagascar. The contract is part of a \$30 million programme funded by the World Bank with the aim of reforming Madagascar's mining industry and attracting new mineral investment. The main objective of the BGS-led consortium is to provide the Malagasy Government with a modernised database describing the geological framework and mineral potential of the region. The consortium will survey an area of approximately 126,000 km² of predominantly mountainous jungle and marginal savannah at a scale of 1:100 000, while an additional area of 115,000 km² will be studied and sampled at 1: 500 000 scale. The region is underlain for the most part by rocks of Precambrian age which are prospective for precious and base metals, chromium, nickel and gemstones. Complimentary studies of the petrology, geomorphology, hydrogeology and vegetation for land use and environmental planning are also being undertaken. This is the first time that the BGS has worked in Madagascar. *July 2005; revised August 2006*

(Project title and duration: *Geological and geochemical mapping and mineral assessment project, northern and central Madagascar, 2005–08*)



Madagascan student collecting a stream sediment sample for the geochemical sampling programme.

Photo: Chris Johnson (BGS), May 2005



Recent and extensive landslipping, known as *lavaka*, is a major cause for concern in central Madagascar.

Photo: Doug Tragheim (BGS), July 2005



Rose quartz from Andilamena prospect in the northern part of the country. Madagascar is a major source of this semi-precious stone.

Photo: Bob Thomas (BGS), October 2005



Artisanal gold mining. Photo: Roger Key (BGS), Sept 2006