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sustainable environment, education & development

A proposal for

Project Sekoly: Establishing educational and sanitation infrastructure and improving WASH behaviours at Ranomafana Lycée, southeast Madagascar (Module 1)



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SEED Madagascar

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1. Summary

Project Title: Project Sekoly (Module 1): Establishing educational and gender-sensitive sanitation infrastructure and improving WASH behaviours at Ranomafana Lycée, southeast Madagascar

Project Objective: To provide Ranomafana Lycée (high school) with educational infrastructure, gender-sensitive sanitation facilities and WASH education, thereby increasing students' learning time and health outcomes.

Location: Ranomafana Rural Commune, Anosy Region, southeast Madagascar

Project Duration: 9-12 months (season dependent)

Budget: £70,935

Executive Summary:

With household education levels shown to be linked to poverty rates¹, education is crucial to allowing vulnerable children and the wider communities to escape the cycle of poverty. However, Madagascar's educational outcomes remain very poor, with primary school completion rates at just five out of ten². Insufficient educational infrastructure is a symptom of the country's severe underdevelopment; there are simply not enough classrooms in Madagascar to accommodate all children², particularly with the population growing at a rapid rate of 2.8%¹. Nearly a decade after the 2009 political instability, resulting drops in public education investment are still affecting school attendance rates¹, with southern regions like Anosy disproportionately affected: only 32% of children in Anosy attending secondary school³. Upper secondary schooling remains out of reach for many students due to the cost of transportation and accommodation associated with traveling long distances to the nearest Lycée (high school)⁴.

School sanitation infrastructure across Madagascar is also often non-existent or insufficient to meet basic sanitary needs⁵. With 52% of the rural population practicing open defecation, as many as 6,900 Malagasy children die each year of diarrheal diseases⁶.

Located in an isolated, rural commune, Ranomafana Lycée exemplifies all of these problems. Despite being the only upper secondary institution within an 80km radius, the Lycée has no designated building or sanitation facilities. Instead, teachers deliver lessons in a classroom of the local CEG (middle school) and an administrative building owned by the commune authority.

Project Sekoly will provide Ranomafana Lycée with three fully-furnished classrooms, an office and two three-cubicle latrine blocks, which will be separated by gender and will include Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) amenities. Additionally, the school grounds will be connected to a piped water connection with three taps, providing students and teachers access to running water. In order to promote long-term improvement of WASH practices, all teachers at both Ranomafana Lycée and CEG will be provided with WASH education training, enabling them to deliver five 30-minute interactive lessons on WASH principles to all of their students. The project will also support the establishment of a WASH Management and Maintenance Committee, as well as supporting the school to develop a long-term plan for the upkeep of the new facilities and encouragement of positive WASH practices.

2. Organisation and Programme Background

SEED Madagascar (SEED) is a British charity (1079121) registered with the Charity Commission since 2000 and works primarily in the south east of Madagascar. The acronym SEED (Sustainable Environment, Education and Development) reflects the organisation's holistic approach to projects; all of which are built around the most pressing and directly expressed needs of disadvantaged communities. Cross departmental collaboration between SEED's four programmes – Community Health, Sustainable Livelihoods, Environmental Conservation and Education infrastructure – maximises progress towards **SEED's central mission:**

To build local and international capacity to lead and support effective conservation and sustainable development initiatives.

SEED works on the ground to design, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate projects. Collaboration and skill sharing between international and Malagasy team members provides projects and programmes with the vital expertise and regional knowledge necessary to achieve conservation and development goals.

2.1 Programme Background

SEED's school-building programme, Project Sekoly (meaning *school*), has been addressing the need for improved school infrastructure in the Anosy region since 2005. So far, over 25 schools have been constructed, repaired or renovated, increasing access to education for thousands of Madagascar's poorest and most vulnerable children. Over this time, SEED has refined its approach, built lasting relationships with key stakeholders and acquired context-specific knowledge, making Project Sekoly a highly reliable and efficient initiative.

In line with SEED's beneficiary-centred ethos, all school construction projects respond to direct, written requests for assistance from communities or local educational authorities. Throughout the course of the project, from initial needs assessments to handing over the completed infrastructure, SEED works closely with community leaders, parent-teacher associations, school staff and regional educational authorities to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable are being identified and met.

Project Sekoly adopts a holistic approach to educational needs in the region through simultaneously addressing the demand for improved water and sanitation infrastructure. The provision of improved latrine blocks is therefore a key element of the initiative, with all new WASH infrastructure accompanied by WASH education for all staff and students, promoting a lasting positive change in hygiene behaviours and supporting improved health outcomes at the schools.

“Education is the best inheritance”, Malagasy proverb

3. Project Rationale

3.1. Education in Madagascar

Since a 2009 political coup, there has been an **86% fall in spending** on educational infrastructure, with already-neglected rural communities affected the most³. The Anosy region has the highest rate of children between 6 and 10 years, **52%**, who have **never been to school**, compared with a 20% national average⁷. With many children not receiving any form of education, even fewer reach secondary school level. One of the biggest barriers to secondary education is a lack of household funds to cover transportation and local accommodation costs for students having to **travel long distances** to reach their nearest Lycée³.

Education is crucial to allowing young people and their families to escape a vicious cycle of poverty¹. Poor, uneducated parents are more likely to have uneducated children⁴, resulting in a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break.



The crumbling state of schools in the Anosy region

3.2. Hygiene and Sanitation in Schools

An estimated **35%** of people have **access to water** in rural areas of Madagascar, compared to 82% in urban areas; this lack of access has a disproportionate effect on women and girls⁸. Only **19% of public schools** have access to a **water** point, which is likely lower in rural areas⁸. The differences between urban and rural provision can be attributed to insufficient capacity at national, local and community levels, as well as inadequate financial resource allocation⁸.

With roughly **half** of Madagascar's rural population regularly practicing **open defecation**⁹, the provision of adequate latrines is crucial for preventing the spread of disease. SEED's experience in the rural southeast suggests that few, if any, schools meet the international standard latrine-to-student ratio of 1:25 for girls and 1:40 for boys.



New latrine blocks being built in a previous phase of Project Sekoly, next to the school's existing aging infrastructure

3.3. Ranomafana Lycée

Ranomafana Lycée was established in **2013**, when it was allocated five government-paid teachers but **not provided any infrastructure**. In response, Ranomafana CEG (middle school) lent one of its classrooms for use by the Lycée, while the Commune Authority provided an administrative building as another classroom. Currently there are **245 students enrolled** at the Lycée, an increase from 197 the previous year (+24%) and an upward trend that is likely to continue.

The absence of infrastructure for Ranomafana Lycée has had a detrimental effect on the neighbouring CEG, since – having rented out a classroom to the Lycée – Ranomafana CEG has only **three available classrooms** to educate **402 students**. To compensate, the Head Teacher of Ranomafana CEG starts the school day at 6am to accommodate this number of students, none of whom receive a full day of education.

Ranomafana Lycée's students also only attend **half days** due to limitations of classroom capacity. While this is not optimal, the only alternative for these students is to travel **80km** to the next nearest Lycée, although for many families in the area the price of relocating and remotely supporting students is simply beyond their reach. Thus, for many students, Ranomafana Lycée offers the **only opportunity** to achieve a **higher-level education** and access skilled professions.

Despite these obstacles, the teachers, parents and students at Ranomafana Lycée remain highly motivated. Within the first two years of opening, the schools' **exam pass rate increased** from 25% to 40%. Additionally, a site for the Lycée has been agreed by the community, with the **land donated** by a parent of one of the Lycée students.

4. Project Detail

Module 1 of Project Sekoly: Ranomafana Lycée will provide the school with its own designated building, latrines, a piped water connection, and WASH education sessions.



The designated site for Ranomafana Lycée's school building

A three-classroom building will be constructed and will include a furnished administrative office for staff. Each classroom will be furnished with 25 desk-benches for students, as well as a teacher's desk and chair, a blackboard, and a lockable cupboard.

The school building will provide classroom space for approximately 150 students, enabling final-year students to attend full days of school starting from November 2019, and providing the rest of the students with a safer and more comfortable learning space. Moreover, Ranomafana Lycée will no longer rent a classroom from Ranomafana CEG, easing pressures on space at the CEG.

Two three-cubicle, gender-separated, Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrine blocks with Menstrual Health Management amenities will be constructed. As a result, the school will achieve a latrine-to-student ratio of 1:40, meeting international recommendations¹⁰ and helping to minimise the prevalence of open defecation at Ranomafana Lycée.

SEED's experience working with schools in the region has shown that simple provision of WASH infrastructure is not enough to ensure a long-term improvement in WASH practices. A sense of ownership and responsibility is key to ensuring real behaviour change and adequate maintenance of the new buildings. SEED's WASH team will provide all teachers at both the Lycée and CEG with training to provide WASH education sessions to their students. As a result of this training programme, each teacher will be able to provide five 30-minute interactive lessons covering WASH principles of the school to their students.

A Management and Maintenance Committee will also be established and tasked with ensuring that the WASH principles of the school are abided-by in the long term and that the new infrastructure is maintained.

Upon completion of Module 1, SEED will perform another needs assessment to inform future modules of Project Sekoly with Ranomafana Lycée. Activities may include additional classroom space, teacher housing and the provision of electricity for the school. As needs of schools can change quickly and with limited notice, SEED believes that a responsive, modular approach is the most cost effective and sustainable in the long-term.

4.1. *Expected Outcomes*

- Outcome 1.** Students in the final year attend full days of school from November 2019
- Outcome 2.** Lycée grounds are open-defecation free (ODF) at project close
- Outcome 3.** Ranomafana Lycée have access to running water by project close
- Outcome 4.** More than 80% students and staff know the hygiene and sanitation principles tailored to the school by project close



LEFT: Lomba, SEED's Head of Construction, (middle) with key stakeholders at Manambaro High School; RIGHT: SEED's construction team hard at work at Manambaro Primary School on a previous phase of Sekoly

4.2. *Preparations*

Pre-project meetings will be held with key relevant stakeholders, including the Head Teacher of Ranomafana Lycée, the parent-teacher association (FRAM), the district educational authority, and the local community leader to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each party. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be signed by all parties in the culmination of these discussions.

Where possible, all materials will be sourced locally. In preparation for the construction activities, a local community agent will organise members of the Ranomafana community to assist with clearing the designated construction site of debris. This process will ensure construction is not delayed and skilled construction workers do not waste valuable time before building activities

commence, whilst also promoting community engagement. Community participation will also be necessary during the ground-leveling stage of preparations.

4.3 Construction Activity Detail

4.3.1 School building

Following two months of preparations and ground levelling work, SEED’s construction team will construct a school building with three classrooms and an administrative office for staff.

Category	Sub-category	Activity	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
School building	Preparations	Site clearing	■								
		Ground-breaking ceremony	■								
		Levelling the site		■							
	Foundations and Floors	Digging and laying foundations			■						
		Rock-weaving of foundations and floors				■					
		Rendering the floor						■			
	Walls	Making breezeblocks on-site			■	■	■	■	■	■	
		Erecting the walls			■	■	■	■	■	■	
		Installing concrete posts			■	■	■	■	■	■	
		Setting up scaffolding			■	■	■	■	■	■	
	Roof	Rendering the walls (inside and outside)			■	■	■	■	■	■	
		Building wooden beam roof support					■				
		Installing the tin roof						■			
	Veranda	Concreting the side of the roof (anti-cyclone)						■			
		Digging veranda foundations					■				
		Rock-weaving and rendering the floor						■			
	Windows and Doors	Laying the steps						■			
		Windows and doors made on-site						■			
	Paint Work	Installing doors and windows						■			
		Painting the walls (inside and outside)							■		
Painting doors and windows									■		
		Painting the roof								■	

4.3.2 Water and Sanitation facilities

The school grounds will be connected to a piped water source in Month 1. Construction activities on the latrine blocks will begin in Month 5, with each block containing three cubicles and the girls’ latrines incorporating MHM amenities, including a changing and washing room.

Category	Sub-category	Activity	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
Latrine blocks	Preparations	Digging and concreting the latrine pit					■	■			
	Foundations and Floors	Making wooden frame for floor						■			
		Making concrete posts and slab						■	■		
		Laying the steps							■	■	
	Walls	Erecting the walls							■	■	
		Rendering the walls (inside and outside)								■	■
	Roof	Building wooden beam roof support								■	
		Installing the tin roof								■	
	Doors and Paint Work	Making doors on-site								■	
		Installing doors								■	
Painting walls and doors										■	

4.3.3 Furniture

All parts for the 75 desks-benches will be constructed in town, before being transported to Ranomafana for varnishing and installation. The rest of the furniture will be built on-site.

Category	Sub-category	Activity	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
Furniture	75 student benches	Benches are constructed, sanded and flat-packed in town									
		Benches are varnished on-site and installed in the classrooms									
	Teachers' and classroom furniture	Teachers' furniture is built, sanded and varnished on-site									
		Making concrete cupboards									
		Making, installing and painting blackboards									

4.4 WASH Education

Project staff will provide teachers at the Lycée with content, training and teaching strategies on safe WASH practices, enabling them to deliver a programme of five interactive, 30-minute WASH lessons to their students, with support from project staff provided where necessary. SEED will provide self-guided lesson plans with detailed WASH content and step-by-step instructions for participatory learning activities. This will assist teachers when first delivering the sessions and also serve as a reusable resource for future lessons and new teachers, enabling sustained WASH education at the school.

4.5 Sustainability

A key element of Project Sekoly is to provide participating schools with the knowledge and tools essential to maintaining their new infrastructure, as well as sustaining positive WASH practices. Project staff will work with the Head Teacher, teachers and the parent-teacher association (FRAM) to establish a motivated WASH Management and Maintenance Committee. This group will oversee management of WASH infrastructure and practices and will be encouraged to allocate budget for WASH-related expenditures including water bills, latrine maintenance costs, and soap.



SEED's WASH team has delivered WASH education to many schools across the Anosy region

4.6 Possible Project Delays

Although Module 1 is designed to be completed in 9 months, there are a number of seasonal and contextual situations that may delay planned construction schedules in Ranomafana. These include the rainy season, which can make the road to the site unpassable for weeks at a time; local security issues; and regional shortages of construction materials. Occurrence of these situations may delay project delivery; however, SEED can extend project delivery to 12 months without additional costs being incurred.

5. Project Structure, Monitoring and Evaluation

SEED will monitor progress of activities and identify areas in need of alteration through regular monitoring visits to the school and departmental reviews. SEED uses a RAG-rating system (red-amber-green) to track activities and progress towards the achievement of project outputs. These are regularly reviewed and updated by project staff with oversight from the in-country Head of Project Development and SEED's management team. This enables SEED to adapt to any emerging project needs quickly and effectively, while keeping donors informed of key developments. Close tracking of tasks is essential in ensuring mitigation to external risks, such as poor weather or regional shortages of key materials.

In order to measure progress towards the project's stated outcomes, student attendance records will be ascertained at baseline and followed-up every semester once the building is completed. WASH activities will be monitored through on-site observations for open defecation on school grounds, lesson logs of WASH sessions provided by the teachers, as well as baseline and endline surveys to gauge knowledge of the different topics taught during the WASH lessons. Indicators will be developed in line with the IRC Indicators for WASH in Schools (2006).

Budget compliance will be monitored regularly by project staff and the Director of Administration and Finance, with oversight from the in-country Director of Programmes and Operations and SEED's Managing Director in London.



SEED staff conducting needs assessments and gathering information from students

6. Case Studies from Lycée Staff and the Community

Dodinne, Head Teacher of Ranomafana Lycée



Dodinne has held the position of Head Teacher at the Lycée since it opened in 2013. She is very passionate about education and has been advocating for the Lycée to have its own building for a long time. She sees this construction project as an important mark in the history of the Ranomafana community.

Dodinne has spoken with many parents who are concerned about the future of their children's education, should the classrooms currently used by the Lycée be requested back from the middle school and the Commune.

"I worry about what will happen if the Lycée has to close down" she says. "Families would be separated when the children have to move to Fort Dauphin." By having their own classroom buildings on a dedicated school site for the Lycée, the future education of students will be secured.

Dadah, Community Liaison Officer at SEED Madagascar

Dadah was a passionate activist for education, evidenced by his hard work delivering lessons on sexual and reproductive health rights to students at Lycées across the Anosy and Androy regions as part of SEED's Project Safidy. Inspired by SEED's school-building programme, towards the end of 2017 Dadah began to conduct a needs assessment for the Lycée in his hometown of Ranomafana, in order to advocate for the school to be the next phase of Project Sekoly. Tragically however, in December 2017, Dadah and his wife died in a road accident while travelling to Ranomafana to collect additional data, alongside one of the Lycée teachers. They leave behind a young daughter, who SEED continue to support through payment of her school fees from funds raised by SEED staff and supporters.



This phase of Project Sekoly will be dedicated to Dadah and the Lycée teacher in memoriam.

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