seed madagascar
sustainable environment, education & development

A Proposal for

SEKOLY PROGRAMME: BERAKETA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Improving Health and Education in Rural Madagascar

October 2022

Introduction

SEED Madagascar (SEED) is seeking *£61,578* for a *nine-month project that aims to improve the quality of health and education in a primary school in rural Madagascar*. SEED will *construct three classrooms, sanitation facilities, a 1,000 litre water tank with handwashing stations, and housing for a teacher and their family*. The provision of infrastructure will be complemented by sustainable *water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) education*, delivered by teachers through a train-the-trainer model. SEED will offset the carbon emissions produced during the project through *a community-managed plantation.*

Context

Education and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene in Madagascar

With over 1,300,000 primary-age children – 60% of this age group – not enrolled in school, and falling investment in school infrastructure, Madagascar's education system is facing a crisis.

Prevalent illnesses stemming from poor WASH conditions, which kill 6,900 Malagasy children annually, further prevent school attendance.[1] While school WASH services have been proven to improve education,[2] the lack of WASH infrastructure in Madagascar's schools contributes to disease transmission and deteriorating learning outcomes.[3] Moreover, the lack of menstrual health/hygiene management (MHM) facilities exacerbate absenteeism of post-pubescent female students.[4]

These challenges are amplified in Madagascar's southeast Anosy region, where half of the children aged six to 10 years olds have never attended school.[5] In this isolated and impoverished region, a staggering 97% of the population lack access to basic sanitation.[6] These conditions are compounded in the region's under-resourced schools, compromising children's access to high-quality education

A furnished classroom recently built by SEED.

Beraketa Primary School

Beraketa Primary School exemplifies the Anosy region's education and WASH challenges. The original isolated rural school was overcrowded, with only two small classrooms made from mud for 129 students and six teachers. In February 2022, Cyclones Batsirai and Emnati destroyed the existing classroom infrastructure, leaving the students of Beraketa Primary School without a school building. The school has instead been provided with a temporary tent by UNICEF. The tent cannot withstand the adverse weather that increasingly affects the region and is insufficient to accommodate the school's student population. This has impacted students' access to a safe learning environment.

Furthermore, students are unable to adopt healthy behaviours due to the school's lack of WASH facilities. While a water source is located 50 meters from the school site, SEED's needs assessment revealed that a lack of latrines has resulted in students openly defecating within 25 meters of the classroom building, increasing the spread of dangerous diseases. The lack of gender-segregated latrines and MHM facilities prevent students, particularly girls, from maintaining their health with privacy and dignity.

Vulnerable, impoverished communities, like Beraketa, are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change. SEED is committed to offsetting the carbon footprint of its operations, to move towards the long-term goal of net-zero carbon emissions.

The small classroom currently used for lessons.

Proposed Project

SEED aims to address these challenges by conducting a nine-month construction project at Beraketa Primary School. This project intends to improve the education and WASH environment in this school by achieving the following objectives:

Outcome One

Enable 129 students to attend school full-time through the construction of one school building with three fully furnished classrooms.

Outcome Two

Improve teacher absenteeism by constructing on-site housing for a teacher and their family.

Outcome Three

Improve gender-equitable sanitation for 129 students and six teachers through the construction of five gender-segregated, ventilated-improved latrines, and one MHM facility.

Outcome Four

Improve WASH access for 129 students and six teachers through the construction of one 1,000L water tank, two handwashing stations, and water access to one MHM facility.

Outcome Five

Increase WASH knowledge and behaviours amongst students and teachers through the delivery of WASH education sessions and the establishment of a school WASH committee.

Outcome Six

Offset project-related carbon emissions through the establishment of a community-managed plantation.

Classroom Infrastructure

SEED will construct a new school building with three fully furnished classrooms, providing an additional 150 classroom spaces. These spaces will enable all students to attend full-day lessons, and accommodate for the predicted growth of the school's population. In response to widespread cyclone damage to schools in southeast Madagascar in early 2022, SEED has recently updated the design of school roofs. All school builds will now have a protective concrete border near the bottom of the tin roof, increasing resistance to adverse weather conditions.

Teachers' Housing

SEED will construct a house for one of the teachers, providing themselves and their family with reliable housing. This on-site housing aims to enhance school management and security, minimize staff absenteeism, and support their livelihoods.

Latrines, Handwashing, and MHM

SEED will build five ventilated-improved pit latrines for students, allowing facilities to be gender-segregated. This will reduce the student-to-latrine ratio to 25:1, and in accordance with national guidelines (50:1). SEED will also construct two handwashing stations, equipped with behavioural nudges to enable students to adopt positive hygiene practices, and an MHM facility to provide female students with a safe space to manage their menstruation with privacy and dignity. SEED will also provide a 1,000L water tank, providing access to clean water on site for teachers and students.

WASH Education

To support this infrastructure provision, SEED will deliver WASH education sessions to all six teachers using a train-the-trainer approach. This WASH education will include information on water treatment, handwashing, latrine use and maintenance, as well as using the MHM facility.

Students participating in a WASH education session delivered by SEED.

Green Schools

To offset the impact of the project's carbon footprint, a plantation will be established on land provided by the community. There will be an equal number of trees grown for carbon offsetting and for sustainable community harvest. Fruit trees – including papaya, mango, and soursop – will be planted. These fruit trees will provide a sustainable source of nutrition for the school students as well as the wider community. The establishment, monitoring, and management of the plantation will be conducted in partnership with Beraketa Primary School to foster local ownership of the plantation and build capacity for its sustainable management past project end.

Sustainability

Following project completion, the school will be responsible for managing all infrastructure, which has been designed to minimise maintenance costs. Committees will be established in the school and they will receive training in infrastructure management, enabling staff to make repairs if necessary.

The integrated train-the-trainer approach will enable the school to sustainably and autonomously use new infrastructure and deliver WASH education sessions.

SEED Madagascar's Capacity to Deliver

SEED is an award-winning, holistic international development charity who envisages communities and ecosystems thriving across Madagascar. SEED has over 15 years of experience responding to the need for improved education infrastructure and access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in the southeast of Madagascar.

The Sekoly Programme has a history of improving design approach in response to localised needs. In 2011, SEED moved from building wooden schools to durable concrete buildings providing more sustainable weather-resistant learning environments. Responding to the challenge of teacher absenteeism and progressively addressing the impacts of gender and sanitation on students' education, each school build includes teacher's housing, gender-segregated latrines, MHM facilities, and handwashing stations.

WASH education sessions and 'nudges'[7] have progressed to reinforce healthy WASH behaviours. Since 2021, SEED has pledged that going forward, all school projects will be carbon neutral with community-managed tree plantations offsetting construction emissions.

Effective Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) is a priority for SEED. An MEL Framework informs design of MEL approaches tailored to each project, supported by a dedicated MEL Committee. SEED uses industry-standard methodologies to monitor and analyse impact, and responds to emerging needs as they arise, whilst keeping donors regularly informed of progress.

Summary

Programme Sekoly: Beraketa Primary School aims to tackle two serious barriers to development: access to quality education and clean water and sanitation, highlighted as a priority by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 6 respectively. This project also contributes to SEED's long-term goal of achieving a net-zero contribution to climate change by seeking to offset its carbon footprint.

To achieve these goals, SEED will construct two classrooms, five latrines, a menstrual hygiene management facility, and a teachers' house. This will be complemented with WASH education, delivered through a train-the-trainer model to sustainably improve students' knowledge and behaviours. SEED will offset the carbon footprint of the project by establishing a community-managed tree plantation.

The project will ultimately enable children to gain an education in a safe environment with dignity.

References

[1] UNICEF, (2019). *Press release: 1,3000,000 children in Madagascar are not enrolled in pre-primary education.* https://www.unicef.org/madagascar/en/press-releases/1300000-children-madagascar-are-not-enrolled-pre-primary-education Accessed 14/11/2019

[2] UNICEF Data, (2018). *Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools: Global baseline report 2018.* [online] Available at: <https://data.unicef.org/resources/wash-in-schools/>

[3] WHO and UNICEF, (2015). *25 years progress on sanitation and drinking water*. [online] Available at: <http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/JMP-Update-report-2015_English.pdf>

[4] Miiro, George, et al. "Menstrual Health and School Absenteeism among Adolescent Girls in Uganda (MENISCUS): A Feasibility Study." *BMC Women's Health*, vol. 18, no. 1, 3 Jan. 2018, p. 4, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29298699, 10.1186/s12905-017-0502-z.

[5]INSTAT and UNICEF, (2018). Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Madagascar 2018: Eau de boisson, assainissement et hygiène. Antananarivo, Madagascar : UNICEF and INSTAT.

[6] Ibid.

[7]Nudges are features created to 'nudge' a person's decision-making. In this case, a concrete path with footprints leading from the latrines to handwashing stations will be constructed to encourage students to wash their hands.