



Best Practice

in Madagascar

Introduction

Putting the SD Goals into practice requires action at all levels from government to the community and individual. Charities have a major role to play in delivering the Goals in Madagascar. This sheet presents some of the projects that have been conducted by Adsum Foundation, a Northern Ireland based charity which works to address poverty and disadvantage in Madagascar and elsewhere.

Conquering the issues requires an integrated approach, looking at the problems facing individuals and communities and offering help to them to allow them to sustainably address their issues; helping people address their issues with a bit of help, not just providing one-off aid which does not address the root problems.

CHILD TO COMMUNITY HYGIENE - Ambositra – Vondrozo Forest Corridor

The project by the Adsum Foundation and their partner Feedback Madagascar aims to address the problem of high rates of sickness and death suffered in rural communities in this area of South Central Madagascar, particularly amongst children under 5 years old, because of poor hygiene and sanitation, and a lack of access to clean water. Things that contribute to this terrible situation which are very common in this area, include not treating water to make it safe before drinking and poor personal hygiene (such as not hand-washing with soap, particularly after going to the toilet or before preparing a meal). This project also aims to address low levels of environmental education in primary schools and improve the overall school environment.

Over 2,500 pupils between 9 and 15 years old per year take part in the programme in 10 different schools. All of these are in an area of Madagascar that does not have good ways of communicating and passing on information. This project promotes communication within the community to help change what people do and how they do it in ways that improve hygiene. The project achieves this through children (pupils at primary schools) taking the message home to their families, and telling their mums, dads, brothers and sisters why washing their hands is very important and how looking after personal hygiene will help to make all the family members healthier.

Healthier children will not miss as much school. This will mean that they can keep up with the rest of their class and do better on their exams. It also means that fewer children will have to drop out of school, which happens sometimes when children get really sick. By teaching the pupils about hygiene, hand washing and how to look after themselves, they, their families and their communities will be healthier and happier.



These materials have been prepared with the help of the Adsum Foundation, a Belfast-based charity with the goal of investing money in people and communities in the developing world. In association with partners, it works primarily in Madagascar in four themes: Education, Health, Water and Sustainable Livelihoods. www.adsumfoundation.org

CLEAN AND SAFE WATER - Ambohijato

This project by the Adsum Foundation and their partner MDF brings clean and safe water to the village of Ambohijato by installing two taps and a water system.

Ambohijato lies 45km east of the capital Antananarivo. The village has never had proper sanitation or clean, safe drinking water. This is one of the poorest and most deprived areas in Madagascar, where the people make their living from agriculture and farming in tough countryside.

In the past, water came from a dirty pond which was shared by both people and their animals. For the village to get water to drink, clean themselves and wash with, they had to carry the heavy cans 30 minutes across unsafe paths and up and down hills. This vital job is done by the women and children and may have to be done several times a day. This means that children would have to take time out of school and mothers would have time away from their babies.

The Adsum Foundation and their supporters donated enough money for the village to realise their dream of having clean and safe water. The local men helped with the construction of the channels for the pipes and they provided materials like sand, blocks and gravel for the water standpipes. The project also meant that the community leaders came together to take responsibility for the maintenance of the standpipe and carry out necessary repairs should it get damaged.

When the project was completed the community came out in force to celebrate this life-changing addition to their village. By providing clean water to the village it has improved the health and well-being of the community, reduced life-threatening illness caused by water-borne diseases and relieved the women and children of the difficult and time consuming task of collecting water. Now the children can concentrate on going to school.

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NEW SCHOOL AND CLEAN WATER - Tsimialonjafy

The project by the Adsum Foundation and their partner MDF was the construction of a new school extension at Tsimialonjafy, in the district of Ambohidratrimo which is 32 km north of the capital Antananarivo.

Like most rural villages in Madagascar, Tsimialonjafy is very poor and has few community services. The former school was built in 1947 and was used by the Red Cross but the Ministry of Education declared it unfit and dangerous for use due to its run-down state. The number of pupils attending school in the area had fallen because of this, and although the local Head Teacher and Village Head looked for money to have a replacement school built, they were not successful.

The former water system was built in 2007 but the source was so far away there was only enough water to last for two hours a day – at weekends the tap ran dry. Collecting water with cans from ponds or streams is the only other option but this exposes the adults and children to life-threatening illnesses such as cholera, dysentery and bilharzia.

At first it was hoped to build a more reliable water system that would satisfy the village's needs, however it was discovered that the land the community and school sit on is poisoned. Any water taken from the ground here would make people sick. Instead, a rainwater catchment system has been installed, which will permit the school children to finally have access to clean water.

The Adsum Foundation teamed up with their supporters to help the local community build their school. A new cyclone-proof school with three classrooms was built that provides room for 350 pupils. Children who had stopped going to school because the building looked dangerous have now been able to come back. Funding was also provided to construct toilets for the students to use.

This village wanted to help its children by providing education and clean running water, and they have achieved their goal as the project was completed last year much to the delight of everyone involved. The whole school, local Mayor and Member of Parliament came out with the rest of the village to express their thanks for what had been achieved.

SOLAR PANELS– Itasy, Moramanga and Antsirabe regions

In Madagascar, most people do not have electricity. This can lead to poor health and difficulties in education. Kerosene lamps and candles are expensive and produce poor light, and the fumes from kerosene lamps are bad for people's health. Most families in Madagascar are trying to survive on less than \$2 a day. When the choice is between food and light there is little wonder that children are not able to complete their homework. This project aims to install solar power for 34 isolated Madagascar schools to increase the learning opportunities of thousands of students.

In 24 of the schools which were most in need and farthest from electricity, we were able to upgrade the solar package to include a more powerful panel and a radio & CD player. This more advanced equipment helps teachers to improve their lessons. Many teachers struggle to teach accurate French and English when they don't know it very well themselves. Now they can use language CDs and educational radio programmes to support the students' learning. These more advanced solar panels also can be used to power devices like a laptop or a TV and DVD player, which will help teachers even more.

The parents of Manamanjaka Primary School were over-joyed with the arrival of solar energy for their school. Before, there was no electricity at all in their village. Now the students have lights to support their studies. Before the arrival of the solar panel the parents would walk 25km every Saturday to the nearest town with electricity to charge their phones. Now they can charge their phones at the school. This means they can use their phone all week and save themselves a lot of time and sore legs.

The parents are happy, but the teachers and students are even happier. The electricity brings light to the classrooms. The small amount of money paid for charging phones brings important income to the school. This means the teachers hope that at last their salaries will be paid!

Having light in school is greatly supporting the students' learning, for example a special home-work club was set up in June to help the exam students. In addition, the arrival of solar energy is bringing new enthusiasm as well as improved quality to the students' education. Students' and teacher's motivation is greatly increased now they have exciting new audio-visual educational resources like language CDs and educational radio programmes. With better equipment and new-found enthusiasm and motivation, the school results will improve.

NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS— Ambohitrangano

The village of Ambohitrangano is 31 kilometres north east of Antananarivo – the capital of Madagascar. The journey starts with 26 kms of tarmac road followed by 5 kms of unpaved road to the village. The existing run-down school had 98 pupils, plus about 50 children of school age who could not attend due to the shortage of space and another 40 nearly of school age.

The school was created in 1974 by the villagers who could only afford to build one classroom, a very simple structure of mud bricks with a thatched roof. The school was completely destroyed by a cyclone in 1992 and rebuilt by the government, this time with two classrooms. To accommodate all five primary school levels each classroom was divided in two. But this made it very difficult to learn and many children left school or got poor exam results.

Thanks to support from a generous donation, last year the Adsum Foundation and its partner The Madagascar Development Fund built a four-classroom extension for the children at Ambohitrangano, along with new toilets and furniture for each classroom. Thanks to contributions from the parents, teachers at the school are paid with a mix of money and food, in this case sacks of rice, and there are now teachers for all the new classrooms.

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