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**Progress report construction of a new school
building for the Sandrakely Primary School
(FF 689)**



September 2024

**Feedback Madagascar/Ny Tanintsika (FBM/NT) –
The Eagle Foundation**

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- a. Donor Name: Foundation Eagle
- b. Name of Charity and Project: Feedback Madagascar / Sandrakely Primary school Project
- c. Reference Number: FF 689
- d. Date of grant accepted: 6th December 2023
- e. Amount: 35,901 GBP
- f. Number of beneficiaries: Direct beneficiaries include 258 students, comprising 125 boys and 133 girls, along with 6 teachers (4 men and 2 women). Of these teachers, 4 are supported by the association of 66 parents, as only 2 have been officially recruited by the government as civil servants. Additionally, the 160 residents from 32 households in the village of Sandrakely are direct beneficiaries. Indirect beneficiaries extend to the entire population of the municipality of Tsaratanana, totaling 40,926 people.
- g. Name and exact location of the project: Sandrakely village, Tsaratanana rural municipality in Ifanadiana district, Vatovavy region, SE Madagascar, Africa.
- h. Expected period of the project: December 2023 – July 2024
- i. Conversion rate, date & amount in local currency: MGA 202,727,130.38 received on the 28/02/24 (conversion rate 5,646.84 MGA / £1)

An expenditure report will be included with the final report.



Figure 1 Earthworks at the site to flatten land in preparation of building.

Context

This project to construct new facilities for Sandrakely Primary School in Tsaratanana rural municipality, Southeast Madagascar, addresses the school's increasing challenges. Established in 1973, the school was damaged by Cyclone Geralda in 1994 and later rebuilt by Feedback Madagascar in 1996. However, with rising pupil numbers, classrooms are overcrowded, and many pupils lack desks.

In partnership with the Eagle Foundation, FBM is constructing three fully furnished classrooms, sanitation facilities, a rainwater harvesting system, and other essential infrastructure. This project aims to improve access to education, enhance learning conditions, and promote better hygiene, contributing to long-term development and poverty reduction in the area.

Expected results

The expected results of the construction project for Sandrakely Primary School are:

1. **Three fully furnished classrooms:** Providing sufficient space and seating for the increasing number of pupils, reducing overcrowding and enhancing the learning environment.
2. **The existing 3-classroom building previously built by FBM will be renovated** and structurally strengthened to ensure it meets safety requirements.
3. **Sanitation facilities:** The construction of latrines, urinals, and showers to improve hygiene and sanitation, addressing health risks associated with inadequate facilities.
4. **Rainwater harvesting system:** A system connected to a hand-washing unit, ensuring a sustainable water supply and promoting better hygiene practices among pupils.
5. **Two gazebos:** Offering additional sheltered spaces for outdoor activities or meetings.
6. **Tree nursery:** Supporting environmental education and contributing to local reforestation efforts.

These improvements will significantly enhance the school's infrastructure, creating a more supportive environment for education and improving health and well-being in the community.

Achievements to date

Preparations for the construction of the Sandrakely Primary School has made steady progress over the past few months. From February to August 2024, the project has progressed in several key areas, overcoming challenges along the way.

No.	Activities	Timing	Results
1	Planting of hedge around the school grounds	February	The planting of a hedge around the school site began to enhance the landscape with the aim of improving security for the school and pupils. However, many of the plants have not survived and replanting is planned.
2	Terracing works (levelling the land)	March - June	The terracing phase was fully completed in June, an important milestone that ensured the land was levelled and ready for the next stages of construction. This progress is critical as it lays the foundation for school building.
3	Recruiting storeroom staff	April	One storekeeper was recruited for Sandrakely.
4	Procurement of materials	March - July	The ordering and purchase of construction equipment and materials was carried out to ensure the availability of everything required for the completion of the project.
5	Transporting materials from Fianarantsoa to the site	July	The materials are transported in two stages: first by car from Fianarantsoa to Ifanadiana, and then by tractor to Sandrakely (involving unloading and re-loading at the broken bridge).

No.	Activities	Timing	Results
6	Transport and preparation (sieving) of sand	July	Sand is being sourced from a borrowed site located 5 kilometres from the school. By July 2024, 24 m ³ of coarse sand had been prepared, of which 21.5 m ³ had already been transported to the site. While the transport of medium and fine sand is still pending, quantities are now ready for delivery on foot.
7	Stone breaking & transport	July	Stone crushing work began in July, with a focus on producing stone blocks, macadam and gravel for the school's construction. By the end of July, all 5,870 planned stone blocks had been produced, with 1,001 blocks already delivered to the site. The macadam and gravel have also been prepared and are ready for transport on foot.
8	Cement breezeblock production	August	Of the 3,945 concrete blocks planned, 2,744 were successfully produced and delivered to the site. In addition, the production of claustra blocks exceeded initial projections, with 60 blocks completed instead of the planned 54. The remainder are currently underway.

Overall, the project is about 30% complete. Key milestones such as the completion of terracing and the production of stone and concrete blocks have been achieved. However, challenges remain, particularly in transporting the remaining sand and establishing the tree nursery. Despite these hurdles, the local community's commitment has been visibly growing over time and the ongoing support of other stakeholders continue to drive progress.



Figure 2 Beneficiaries level the land for construction at Sandrakely Primary School



Figure 3 Transport of sand to the school



Figure 4 Beneficiary community meeting to organise work



Figure 5 Stone & gravel crushing phase



Figure 6 Sand transport by truck



Figure 7 Cement breezeblock production

Challenges and delays

This project encountered several difficulties that caused delays to its start.

One of the major difficulties encountered was poor local leadership, leading to lower beneficiary engagement and participation. This caused multiple delays and failure to meet the scheduled deadlines. A key reason for this is that recent projects in the area, particularly post-cyclone response work by other organisations, have involved cash distribution and so communities are now used to getting paid for all work they undertake, making voluntary contributions to projects now more challenging.

The weather conditions and the rainy season did not help either. The preparatory works began during the rainy season, which presented significant challenges to the project's advancement. After prolonged periods of rain, the ground requires additional preparation to ensure suitable working conditions. The transportation of sand was also been delayed due to the higher river levels caused by the rainy season. Flooding prevented collection of sand from riverbeds, impacting the timely delivery of materials.

The poor condition of roads has been another contributing factor to delays, particularly in the delivery of materials from Fianarantsoa. The deteriorated state of these roads has not only slowed down transportation but has also complicated logistics, making it increasingly difficult to adhere to our construction schedule. As a result, the overall timeline of the project has been extended.



Figure 8 Road to Tsaratanana rural municipality

One particularly critical issue was that a large bridge between Ifanadiana and Tsaratanana broke since we submitted our proposal, and has remained in disrepair, creating a major bottleneck for transportation. All materials that need to be delivered to this area must now undergo a complex process: they must be offloaded, carried across the river or across the broken bridge manually and then transported using a different vehicle or tractor to continue their journey.

Changes

In response to the logistical challenges faced during construction, we have made improvements to the transportation of materials. Instead of relying on manual labour to carry sand, we have now arranged for it to be transported by tractor, increasing efficiency and reducing the physical strain on local people. Additionally, we have successfully identified new sand sourcing areas, ensuring a steady supply of materials for the project.

Considering the vulnerability of the beneficiaries involved in the construction work, we have also taken the initiative to provide meals for those working on-site. We have decided to purchase leftover food supplies from our school feeding programme at the end of the previous school year (2023-2024) to provide nutritious meals for our beneficiaries. This addresses people's immediate needs and promotes their well-being. This support aims to ease the burden on the local community and ensure they have the energy and strength needed to complete their tasks effectively.

Furthermore, we have revitalized the local Work Monitoring Committee and strengthened collaboration with local authorities. These efforts are aimed at ensuring smoother oversight and coordination as the project progresses.

Next steps

The next steps are:

- The laying of building foundations is scheduled for the end of September.
- Major construction work will begin soon after with building work completion planned for December 2024.
- Installation of the tree nursery.

Conclusion

Despite obstacles encountered along the road, the building of Sandrakely Primary School's new facilities is now advancing well. Whilst the project is significantly behind schedule, now new strategies have been adopted to accelerate progress, including the adoption of more effective transportation techniques, the use of newly-discovered alternative sand sources, and food assistance given to local workers who are most in need of it. The project's local coordination and oversight have also improved as a result of the reactivation of the local monitoring committee and improved cooperation with authorities. We are optimistic that the project will effectively achieve its intended impact, enhancing access to education and the learning environment for Sandrakely pupils whilst fostering long-term development in the area.