



seed **madagascar**

sustainable environment, education & development

## Organisational Strategy 2017-2022

Mark Jacobs (Managing Director) and Lisa Bass (Director of Programmes and Operations)



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### **SEED Madagascar**

Suite 7, 1a Beethoven St, London, W10 4LG, United Kingdom  
Villa Rabemanda, Ambinanikely, B.P. 318, Tolagnaro, Madagascar

Tel: +44 (0)208 960 6629

Email: [mark@seedmadagascar.org](mailto:mark@seedmadagascar.org); [lisa@seedmadagascar.org](mailto:lisa@seedmadagascar.org)

Web: [madagascar.co.uk](http://madagascar.co.uk)

## Our Vision

Communities and ecosystems thriving across Madagascar.

## Our Mission

To enhance the capacity of individuals, communities, organisations and government in fulfilling sustainable environment, education and development goals in southeast Madagascar.

## Context of our Work

Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ought to be cause for global celebration: the proportion of people living in extreme poverty was halved five years early, net primary enrolment reached 91% in developing regions and ozone depleting substances are almost non-existent (MDGR, 2015). Yet this story belies the inequality and unevenness of progress between nations. To date, Madagascar has achieved only one SDG - Goal 13 (Climate Action) (SDG Report, 2021). Prior to this, the country had achieved only two of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), MDG 4 (Reduce Child Mortality Rate) and MDG 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases) (TAC MDGTrack, 2021). For decades, the uniquely beautiful island nation has performed poorly across a range of economic, environmental and human development indicators. Poverty rates (at \$1.90/day) in Madagascar are estimated to increase to 78% in 2021 (UNICEF, 2021) up from 74% in 2019 (World Bank [WB], 2020), forest cover fell by 22% between 2002 and 2020 (Global Forest Watch, 2021), and Malagasy mothers face mortality rates of 335/100,000 live births, in comparison to their UK counterparts, who face a mortality rate of 7/100,000 live births (WB, 2017).

Supporting a population growing at 2.6% per annum (WB, 2020) is essential for protecting Madagascar's unique biodiversity. However, while difficult to measure and consolidate data, at least 60% of the country's species can only be found in Madagascar (WWF, 2021) yet this biodiversity is highly fragile; for instance, 98% of the lemur species that charismatically inhabit the island are threatened, with 31% critically endangered (IUCN 2020).

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. Yet the international community's response to Madagascar's plight appears perverse. Madagascar saw a 70% drop in official direct assistance between 2004 and 2012; it now receives less aid per capita than in 1990 (WB, 2016). Rather than supporting a country in crisis, the international community responded to the 2009 political coup by cutting aid and imposing trade tariffs (Dewar et al., 2013). One particularly tragic result is that in 2020 it was thought that 42% of children under five were stunted in Madagascar (Global Hunger Index, 2020) and wasting has almost doubled from 9.2% in December 2020 to 16.5% in April 2021 (ECHO, 2021). 2021 has also seen the continuation of the worst drought in the Grand Sud of Madagascar since 1981 – prompting mass agricultural losses (up to 60% in the hardest hit areas) which have also been exacerbated by sandstorms and pest infestations (OCHA, 2021). The result of the Grand Sud's climate-induced famine is estimated to see 1.14 million people (one-third of the population) face severe food insecurity in the region (ECHO, 2021).

Poverty in the south-eastern Anosy Region is amongst the most severe (WB, 2015). Poor road networks combined with a highly centralised state result in the region's inability to retain local talent or attract potential drivers of development. These effects are apparent even in institutional development organisations, which all too often use top-down development approaches that fail to have sustainable or meaningful impacts. Fort Dauphin, the region's capital, has seen sharp infrastructure improvements through investment from QIT Madagascar Minerals (QMM); the town's roads are now paved, water and electricity supplies are relatively consistent, and the town has an international deep-water port. Yet state involvement from a ministerial to a local level is incapable of providing the most basic of human development needs in the Fort Dauphin District. Madagascar ranks 149/180 on the Corruption Perception Index (2020) falling from 123/180 in 2015. Without a vast improvement in state capacity, community-led intervention will remain essential in preventing ill-informed, short-term survival strategies that destroy both communities and the environment they rely on.

## 1. Our Values

SEED Madagascar has a strong set of core values that both direct and underpin all of our work.

*Passion:* We seek partnerships with individuals and organisations who share our passion, drive and integrity for development in Madagascar, and whose values reflect our own

*Partnerships:* We foster mutually respectful partnerships with individuals, communities and organisations, continually listening to their feedback and concerns, and supporting them to achieve their solutions

*Grassroots:* We champion the collective voices of the communities we serve in order to effect community-identified change at the regional and national levels

*Dynamic programming:* We develop an integrated and coherent range of programmes that are responsive to individual circumstances and emerging needs, and whilst maximising funding potential, we never let projects stray from their objectives in pursuit of finance

*Working at others' pace:* As a culturally literate, capacity building organisation, we will work with others to build long-term sustainability into all that we do, but we won't walk away from communities before they are ready

*Learning:* We will always be courageous and honest when assessing our work, seeking to disseminate both our informal learning and formal research to contribute to both local and international best practice

*Independence:* We will retain our independence, remaining impartial to changing situations, and ensuring our cultural sensitivity safeguards the voices and concerns of the people and communities we serve



## 2. Setting the Strategic Direction

This document outlines SEED's strategic development over the next five years; reinforcing organisational strengths, identifying and capitalising on opportunities for growth and addressing the gaps and potential risks in the organisation and environment as it moves forward in achieving its charitable objectives.

### 2.1. Our Current Strengths

SEED's excellent record of managing both innovative pilot projects and larger multiyear programmes has garnered a national and international reputation for project implementation, practical learning and formal research. Strengthening the organisation's underlying policies and procedures, as well as continued adherence to national law and international best practice, has ensured SEED's programmatic work is underpinned by the frameworks necessary to attract and manage grants from larger donors. SEED was granted its 6th Accord de Siege in 2020, allowing it to operate independently, and streamlining project implementation and visa processes.

Currently, SEED is in a position of relative financial stability, with a wide and varied donor base. The breadth of the funding base – including direct debit and individual donations, volunteer programmes and grant funding – has provided much-needed stability through the recent global financial downturn.

SEED's organisational culture is reflected by its passionate, committed and talented staff. The organisation's key longstanding individuals operate within an efficient and non-bureaucratic structure, which will enable the quick and effective implementation of a new strategy while responding to emerging programme needs. Utilising volunteers both in Madagascar and in London has maximised SEED's impact while keeping non-charitable expenditure below 10%. With the Project Development Department now established, quality and rigour are increasingly evident across project design, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation activities. Learning resulting from these activities is shared across the organisation, strengthening the quality of proposals and interventions, alongside more formal research shared through international networks.

SEED's in-depth knowledge of Anosy culture is continually enhanced through close working relationships between international and national staff, ensuring interventions are culturally sensitive and context appropriate. Over a number of years SEED has built and maintained the trust of stakeholders, overcoming suspicion or mistrust and developing a high degree of understanding of local experience and need. SEED's holistic approach enables the organisation's dynamic response to a wide range of emerging community needs in the absence of strong civil society, state and international actors. The integrated interventions recognise the interdependent challenges associated with health, livelihoods, education and environment, and maximise impact through cross-departmental response.

SEED balances impartiality with behind-the-scenes advocacy based on quantifiable research and trust. While SEED recognises that its advocacy agenda may conflict with the interests of stakeholders, in such instances SEED endeavours to keep lines of communication open thereby avoiding potentially harmful public dispute.

In 2016 SEED underwent a successful name change and rebranding. The marketing and communications across the website, social media, and donor and supporter networks ensured that the message regarding the name change was clear and well-received, and has enabled the organisation to be seen as a strong independent entity.

## **2.2. Our Vulnerabilities Today**

Historically SEED worked with only one implementing partner, but in 2014 this overreliance was identified as too great a risk and in early 2017 this relationship ended. SEED has responded by seeking other local partner organisations and whilst it continues to manage and implement projects under its Accord de Siege. This response has seen great success in implementation and team cohesion, yet the difficulty with identifying partners is symptomatic of the limited availability of local partners with sufficient integrity and reliability to warrant formal collaboration. Without progress in this area, SEED's mission of building the capacity of organisations will continue to be limited.

The legality of SEED's operations and status in Madagascar are dependent on its Accord de Siege (renewed bi-annually), work permits (renewed annually) and research permits (renewed every 6 months). SEED is therefore vulnerable to the ever-changing and challenging political and administrative environment, breeding uncertainty.

Entry level international posts are voluntary and offer limited opportunities for paid internal progression. As a result, staff retention is low, with negative implications for organisational knowledge retention, language capabilities and ultimately coherence of programmes and research. This drains capacity from already overstretched, long-term Directors as they recruit, orientate and train new staff while covering gaps left by departing personnel.

SEED's flat management structure has advantages, yet it has negative implications for succession planning. As the organisation grows, the structure will expose SEED to greater vulnerability. Overstretched Directors will be able to offer less support and direction to staff members, impacting on productivity.

Professional services, such as legal advice and accounting, are extremely limited and are often inconsistent and unreliable and SEED currently has no in-country audit function.

SEED's projects are largely dependent on restricted grant funding that must be spent within short time periods. This results in insufficient long-term programme impact assessment and detracts from programme coherence. SEED's holistic approach sees programmes suffer from a lack of clear strategy and specialisation, diluting programme quality.

In-country communications and transport infrastructure is poor. Low internet capacity limits SEED's ability to share and access information, use databases and quickly assess currency fluctuations. With the poor conditions of roads, staff use expensive 4x4 transport or unsafe and unreliable local transport, thus hampering communication across larger distances, and leaving staff and volunteers subject to an unreliable and expensive internal airline.

### **2.3. Opportunities for SEED in the future**

By implementing projects independently under the Accord de Siege, SEED has the autonomy to execute programmes that directly support its vision and mission without reliance on other organisations. This includes both pilot projects and longer-term programmes, enabling SEED to support beneficiaries until they are capable of independently managing such initiatives themselves, or SEED can develop the skills and capacity of local organisations for future support.

Within its programmes, SEED will assess the benefit of covering funding gaps between grant funded phases, if costs can be justified to sustain intervention gains, optimise project development and maintain momentum. With the type of sustainable support towards independence that SEED is committed to providing, this ability to mitigate the risks inherent in stop-start funding, and detrimental to project development, can be alleviated to some extent. By instigating a programmatic approach SEED can mitigate the damage caused by organisations that provide short-term funding irrespective of the need for longer term engagement.

SEED has begun to place greater emphasis on monitoring, evaluation and learning activities; this requires resourcing in order to further national and international dissemination of both research and learning documents. SEED's commitment to, and improving reputation for, research and learning dissemination will make it possible to identify collaboration opportunities with national and internationally based universities. Consequently, programme implementation will be strengthened as it is further informed by international expertise and best practice.

Opportunities exist for SEED to increase its range of partners through capacity building initiatives or funding support, using SEED's knowledge and expertise to contribute to improved regional and national programming from both local and international development actors. Although a lack of organisations currently meet SEED's criteria for becoming full independent partners, SEED is in a strong position to foster growth in organisations it partners, implement elements of projects and support appropriate governance structures. SEED could extend its geographical reach through partnerships into other areas of Madagascar by establishing relationships with implementing partners or building the capacity of other organisations.

Levels of endemism in Sainte Luce, identified through SEED's research programme, have the potential to drastically change land use policy in the area if opportunities for high-quality research, university collaborations and timely dissemination are taken.

SEED has the ability to implement high-value programmes with research potential across its non-conservation programmes. With a strong communications strategy, good local and national representation, and resources to underpin this work, SEED can quickly cement its growing reputation. This would increase security by both increasing Ministry support and improving opportunities for funding from larger donors.

As political fears subside, the country is attracting new funding. By increasing its standing and presence SEED could position itself to network more effectively in securing grants aligned with its mission. Furthermore, capitalising on an enhanced reputation, SEED's impact on policy could increase through disseminating research and learning.

SEED has the ability to adapt its organisational structure to support the strategy quickly and flexibly. Building such capacity across the organisation will add strength and stability in the years ahead.

## **2.4. Threats to SEED in the future**

For the strategy to be implemented effectively it is vital that SEED review and resource its long-term volunteer and staffing structures to ensure that staff remain in post for longer, key staff members are effectively resourced and organisational knowledge is retained.

Although finding reliable and trustworthy partners is known to be difficult and fraught with risk, continuing this move will be key to ensuring that SEED fulfils its vision of building the capacity of local partners and does not become a purely international-based charity. These risks will be heightened when partner organisations are geographically removed from the SEED base of operations. By adopting a slow transition, new partnership agreements will be supported by risk mitigation strategies and ongoing evaluation.

Provision of funding to underpin the strategy will also need to be secured and unrestricted funding set aside for this purpose. This will include effective communications across all areas, not only in country but continuing to build our social media presence – an inherently risky communication outlet due to the immediacy and reach of negative feedback.

Nationally, the political environment will continue to be unpredictable, with the political situation remaining in a precarious balance. The regular rotation of Ministry personnel will continue to impact on communication and relationship building, while corruption is on the increase.

More locally, with mining operations decreasing for Rio Tinto but increasing in the area, new companies' plans could lead to conflict and compromise. With large funding bodies continuing to provide backing to poorly planned projects, threats from NGOs with contrasting values and goals are also likely to become more problematic in the future.



### **3. Strategic objectives 2017 – 2022**

#### **3.1. People and Organisational Capacity**

SEED strongly recognises that people and culture are at the core of what we do and are the main drivers of our success. The strategy enables our people to continue to thrive and ensures long-term stability throughout the organisation

- Ensure robust HR support to the SEED leadership, both organisationally and individually
- Ensure strong trustee support and guidance for all staff and volunteers
- Embrace an expanded workforce in Madagascar
- Ensure robust succession plans for key positions
- Enhance organisational capacity
- Resource the International team in Madagascar to enable and encourage long-term volunteers to transition into the second year, thus increasing institutional knowledge and skills, and reducing staff turn-over
- Review and assess the staff and volunteer structure and financial package in the London office to maximise support and staff retention
- Build SEED's own distinct finance, HR and administrative team in Fort Dauphin, enabling better support for projects by allowing the functional teams be responsive to SEED's direction and values

#### **3.2. Programmes and Projects**

SEED is committed to ensuring all projects and programme delivery fulfils SEED's mission and vision

- Working to clear, measurable, evolving Organisational Theory Of Change (OTOC) and programme strategies for Community Health, Educational Infrastructure, Livelihoods and Conservation
- Run multi-year projects in order to have the greatest sustainable impact
- Maximise use of technology to improve and streamline monitoring and evaluation of projects
- Maximise the impact of learning and advocacy on government policy and non-governmental organisation learning and practice
- Maximise community engagement with all projects Organisational capacity
- Strengthen systems for capturing organisational knowledge across management, functional departments and project activity both in the UK and Madagascar
- Develop a protocol that underpins our projects to ensure all projects are developed in-country according to local need and through partnership with communities, partner organisations, local government and International staff

### **3.3. Partners**

SEED will identify and support partners who share our values in delivering projects or programmes in Madagascar

- Work with passionate and committed partners who share our Values
- Build and engage with networks to foster mutual support and sharing across the country to maximise charitable impact
- Build capacity of national partners to achieve sustainable development goals
- Further develop partnership governance, management guidelines and robust MOUs to underpin the development of the partnership base
- Create strong research partners from universities or zoos to enhance our work
- Leverage partnerships to help open the American donation market
- Throughout projects, seek passionate and committed stakeholders who we can partner in new collaborations, working alongside them in achieving our charitable aims
- Strengthen our own networks with international NGOs, whilst ensuring that our support is only given to those with local partners
- Develop an assessment and audit system for partners to ensure the quality of their interventions
- Identify research partners from universities or zoos to enhance our work
- Develop robust MOUs to underpin the development of partnership base

### **3.4. Volunteering**

SEED will ensure our range of volunteering programmes are aligned to and enhance our vision and mission

- SEED's conservation research will engage volunteers, researchers and the local community in scientific study and practical conservation efforts and results will be disseminated nationally and internationally
- Volunteering content and activities will support both an individual's personal and professional development
- Post placement engagement will be reviewed and a framework developed enabling SEED to build on initial relationship
- Additional partnerships and marketing techniques will be explored in order to increasing volunteer numbers attending all programmes therefore maximising in-country labour resources and income Partners
- Maximise research potential and knowledge dissemination of Malagasy biodiversity gained through SCRP by identifying collaborations with universities, colleges and zoos whilst building the capacity of Malagasy and International researchers through placement provision
- Ensure that all volunteering programmes provide a self-funding mechanism

### **3.5. Fundraising**

SEED will diversify and increase income streams building organisational resilience and providing resources to fulfil our strategic aims

- Increase Trust and Foundation programme restricted income through establishing a more systematic research and donor mapping and developing multi-year proposals for larger donors (£30k per year or more)
- Develop a corporate funding stream
- Increase other non-restricted income through development of a plan to increase standing orders, maximising GIFT AID and SEED-led events
- Increase programme volunteer numbers leading to increased income Volunteering

### **3.6. Finance**

SEED will remain financially robust in order to ensure the strategy's success

- Ensure Reserves Policy is appropriate and resilient
- Establish a robust annual budget process and approach to ensure funds are allocated effectively for maximising efficiency and project delivery
- Expenditure follows value for money guidelines and prioritises strategic development of the organisation
- Financial stability achieved by, where possible, funding operating costs through more predictable incomes
- Create and implement an exchange rate protocol for best practice execution and transparency
- Determine responsibilities in UK for financial activity in Madagascar in line with best practice
- Implement an internationally recognised accountancy package and a system of internal audit to ensure donor confidence
- Research, and if applicable, establish mechanism for tracking and mitigating risk from currency fluctuations
- Establish mechanisms to track accurate core cost contributions from projects
- Reassess annually grants to partner organisations in order to ensure that grant is appropriate to the size of the partnership
- Continue to access and expand multi-year grant funding streams, thus stabilising sustainability and financial security
- Complete financial procedures for the London office, including procurement protocols

### **3.7. Marketing and Communications**

SEED will effectively position itself to reflect our priorities, develop our target audience, build key partnerships, enhanced communication channels and market our reputation

- Develop communication/marketing plan to optimise channels for target audience and KPIs/returns
- Develop an in-house marketing/communications function in the London office; to develop, manage and coordinate activity for communications channels (as per 1 above)
- Develop an Influencer programme i.e. PR and bloggers for increasing awareness
- Develop a robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database/tool, strategy and communication plan for supporter retention, value and loyalty
- Build a communication strategy for in-country positioning
- Review and resource communication strategy in Madagascar and the UK to include local stakeholders and develop a coherent national footprint, not only further building our reputation but aligning us with key guidance bodies
- Identify research partners across programmes and develop a range of methods for funding and supporting research dissemination
- Review and redevelop how we position SEED as a learning organisation including transparency through all of our communication mediums
- Refine our website communication to reflect the successes, challenges and learnings from our programmes more effectively
- Increase the web footprint of the organisation including visibility of key staff and projects
- Increase local and national communication in Madagascar through targeted reports to Ministries and NGOs
- Develop a plan for the activities that SEED will conduct to raise awareness of Madagascar, that aligns and furthers our strategic aims and supports across all key areas of programme implementation, capacity building and volunteering

### **3.8. Governance**

SEED's leadership team will enhance its governance structure in line with best practice to ensure successful implementation of strategy

- Continue to develop Governance Handbook as a framework for the Board of Trustees to ensure the Board is performing effectively and in line with legal and charity responsibilities, accountability and fiscal oversight
- Agree size, skill and diversity of Trustee Board; adjust and recruit accordingly with regular review, at least annually
- Review the technology and resilience of all systems to ensure meet appropriate standards, including cyber-attacks and Data Protection
- Align to our Values, with particular reference to; acceptability of funders, suitability of local / global partners and as a point of reference for staff and volunteers
- Embrace a culture to allow for challenge and sound decision-making
- Perform service provider due diligence (part of Risk and Audit Committee); rigorous overview, in particular, accountants and auditors to ensure financial policies and procedures

and resulting accounts for both internal and external use are fully understood and transparent

- Review Trustee appointments and recruitment to ensure a Board of 7-9 Trustees, with the mix of skills and experiences to support the strategy
- Review the Charitable objectives to reflect SEED's vision and mission

### **3.9. Risk and Audit**

SEED will effectively manage and mitigate risk through policy, procedure and independent review

- Develop the SEED Risk Management Framework which establishes principle risks faced by organisation, policies to address those risks as well as procedures for the implementation of policy in practice
- Conduct a review of existing policies and procedures to ensure they are aligned with the newly developed Framework
- Develop an organisational risk register for ongoing maintenance to effectively manage and respond to risks as they arise
- Review insurance programme to ensure adequate transfer of risk when needed
- Review Terms of Reference for the newly established Audit and Risk Committee which clearly sets out the oversight responsibilities of the Committee
- Develop and establish an internal audit rotation plan, including a mechanism for annually performing a risk assessment of key areas in which to focus testing
- Develop a consistent manner of reporting of the results and findings of internal audit fieldwork, as well as a process for any follow up actions
- Make provision for additional themed audits for specific matters of focus

## Appendix 1

### Vision, Mission and Articles of Association

The new strategy presents an opportunity to review the vision and mission of SEED Madagascar (SEED), and ensure that these accurately capture the essence of the world we wish to see and define SEED's role in effecting the changes necessary to achieve this vision.

#### Our Vision

On the website our vision is currently stated as:

*A resilient network of thriving communities, organisations and eco-systems across Madagascar*

Within the new strategy, a revised draft vision is proposed as:

*Madagascar is served by robust, equipped and culturally-literate local and international NGOs who together are capable of sustainably reversing poverty'*

The amendment to the vision more wholly reflects our values and commitment to collaboration through partnerships, in addition to the implementation of programmes. The revised vision will need to evolve through discussions within the NGO staff, volunteers and trustees.

#### Our Mission

On the website our mission is currently stated as:

*To enhance the capacity of individuals, communities, organisations and governmental bodies in fulfilling sustainable development and conservation goals in south-east Madagascar*

Within the new strategy, a revised draft mission is proposed as:

*To implement community-focused projects and programmes in Madagascar, and support the capacity of others to do the same, through the provision of funding, technical support and mentoring in pursuit of successful and sustainable development where learning influences best practice both in-country and on the international stage*

This more accurately reflects our central commitment to building capacity through partnerships and the different approaches that will enable this, as well as our commitment to learning and research dissemination both in Madagascar and internationally. As with the vision, the mission will need to be discussed and amended by the broader SEED team.

## Articles of Association

The new organisational strategy and potential refinement of our vision and mission will need to be reflected in an update of our Articles of Association. Currently these are stated as:

- (1) To advance education amongst:
  - (a) The inhabitants of Madagascar; and
  - (b) the general public about the culture and biodiversity of Madagascar;
- (2) To relieve poverty amongst the inhabitants of Madagascar;
- (3) To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by:
  - (a) the preservation, conservation and the protection and the prudent use of resources in Madagascar including by increasing international understanding of the challenges faced by communities and biodiversity in Madagascar;
  - (b) the relief of poverty and the improvement of the conditions of life in socially and economically disadvantaged communities in Madagascar; and
- (4) To develop the capacity of disadvantaged communities in such a way that they are better able to identify, and meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society including by implementing programmes across Madagascar.

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## Appendix 2

### SWOT Analysis

#### 1. What are SEED Madagascar's strengths today

*Implementation* – SEED has a good track record of implementing innovative pilot projects and larger multiyear programmes

*Reputation* – SEED is starting to gain recognition for its work both nationally and internationally and this has led to closer working relations with partners such as Blue Ventures and others approaching for collaboration and assistance

*Independence* – SEED has an Accord allowing it to legally operate in its own name in-country and take charge of its own visas

*Underpinning policy* – for an organisation of its size, SEED's remit is underpinned by good policies and procedures and can therefore attract larger donors as evidenced through the Amplify Change audit

*Financial stability* – Free reserves in excess of £100,000

*Donor base* – wide and varied and with a history of successful projects supported by bigger donors such as Big Lottery, Comic Relief and EU

*Efficient (good value)* – SEED is able to have a larger work capacity than it can financially afford through volunteer support; most notably being the Project Development Department

*Key staff commitment* – many key staff and trustees have been involved in excess of a decade leading to a good organisational memory

*Research* – SEED has a good learning culture and is beginning to start to disseminate this more widely through in-country networks and international hubs

*Passion* – SEED has an organisational culture that is both very passionate and committed and key people in place to be able to take forward changes

*Adaptive* – SEED is able to address emerging problems within projects and find solutions with little bureaucracy

*Don't follow the money* – core programmes are developed and then aspects of these are adapted for various funders

*Cultural approach* – SEED has an in-depth knowledge of the communities in which it works and Anosy culture and what works and doesn't work here. This is continually built on through the close working relationship with its in-country staff

*Integrated approach* – a combination of health, sustainable livelihoods, education and conservation ensure an integrated approach and also good quality projects that can be supported before becoming sustainable or independent



*Marketing & communication* – have developed a solid website and social media presence

*Independence* – good relationships built and maintained with all partners ensure that whilst organisational independence was not in question, SEED's reputation enabled messages based on research and experience, ensuring that communities concerns were heard

## 2. What are SEED Madagascar's weakness's today

*Lack of independent Administration functions in-country* – heavily rely on current partner's admin, HR and accountancy functions to fulfil grant requirements

*Organisational knowledge drain* – with many key PD Officer roles still voluntary, key knowledge is lost on annual basis when volunteers are unable to extend into a second year, thus affecting capacity. In addition, organisational knowledge isn't recorded at a management level, posing a risk if either of the long-standing Directors were to go

*IT Capacity* – national broadband restrictions in Madagascar results impact on the ability to share information and use databases

*Transition period* – currently too much reliance on one organisation as an implementing partner and due to history rather than current capacity, too much financial resource going to one organisation

*Relationship with the Azafady* – taking up too much time from key staff in SEED and Heads of Department, and damaging SEEDs reputation

*SEED name change* – still very new and confusion in some people's minds still means Azafady are given credit and SEED is unknown

*Limited alternative partners* – few alternative NGO partners to Azafady with adequate capacity, reliability and integrity

*International partners* – need local partners for cultural appropriateness, local ownership and attractiveness to funders

*Fort Dauphin representation* – SEED do not have a Malagasy representative in Fort Dauphin, which leaves its message prone to misunderstanding or misinformation, thereby increasing organisational vulnerability

*Tana representation* – SEED does not have a strong presence in Tana in terms of networking

*Administration* – Malagasy administration and politics are difficult to negotiate and ever changing

*Advice* – professional advice – particularly legal and auditing advice – is extremely limited and often inconsistent and unreliable

*Currency* – fluctuations in currency rates are difficult to navigate, especially with an increase in funding in euros and dollars

*Accord* – reliant on an Accord de Siege that needs to be renewed every two years

*Governance* – decisions in matters of governance can be slower than required due to the meeting schedule, chain of command and lack of clarity on decision making protocols

*Key personnel* – key personal in London and Madagascar are stretched, leaving SEED vulnerable in terms of cover or succession planning

### 3. *What are the opportunities for SEED Madagascar in the future*

*Implementation* – Under the Accord SEED can fund and implement projects that are pilot, have high MEL input, carry risk or that need gradual withdrawal of support until they can be handed over to local partners

*Potential for partnership* – with an increase in focus and resources, this is an area that could be explored more fully

*Research and dissemination* – finding collaborations with national and internationally based universities would strengthen SEED's work and inform international best practice

*Collaborations* – SEED could work with a range of organisations or individuals with a range of capacity building or funding initiatives and increase the reach of their knowledge and expertise

*Potential for Conservation change* – levels of endemism now being found in Ste Luce have the potential to drastically change policy in the area

*Geographical reach* – by working in a different way, SEED could extend its partnership base into other areas of Madagascar either in terms of implementation or building the capacity of others

*Representation* – with good representation, both locally and nationally, SEED could gain reputation and support quickly

*Improved national financial potential* – as political fears subside bringing new funds in terms of EU

*Structure* – SEED has the ability to change organisational structures to support changes in direction

*Proactive networking* – with an growing reputation SEED could better position itself to network more effectively in securing grants or disseminating information to policy makers

### 4. *What are the threats to SEED Madagascar in the future*

*Loss of experienced staff* – with the close history between SEED and Azafady, as SEED moves forward it could lose experienced staff who are currently working with Azafady

*High turnover of voluntary staff* – there is a need to address the capacity issues and retention issues seen within key posts and teams

*Poor feedback or organisational culture* – with a reliance on social media, reviews or poor experiences from volunteers and staff or from individuals outside of the organisation can adversely affect SEED's reputation quickly

*Unpredictable politics* – national politics are always delicate and can change to limit operations

*Corruption* – expensive, slows down all aspects of operations

*Finding good collaborations* – it may be difficult to find good organisations with which to work, and especially to ensure good governance when these may be remote from SEED's main site

*Ministry support* – as SEED moves through these changes, Ministry support may not be forthcoming (predisposition to fear of outsider)

*Funding* – changes in where SEED uses its general funding may need to take place and this may not be possible if funding is short

*Large funding bodies* – provide poorly thought-out funding thus damaging projects in areas SEED are also working in

*Independence from Azafady* – both financial and reputational risks are inherent in this move

*Changing plans from the private sector* – with mining operations decreasing for Rio Tinto but increasing in the area, new companies' plans could lead to conflict and compromise