



seed **madagascar**

sustainable environment, education & development

WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH) PROGRAMME STRATEGY



January 2021

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: projects@seedmadagascar.org

Web: madagascar.co.uk

UK Charity No. 1079121, Company No. 3796669

WASH Programme Strategy

Introduction

Madagascar has the third worst water, sanitation and hygiene conditions in the world¹. Only 53% of people have access to safe drinking water and just 12% have access to basic sanitation². There is a severe lack of handwashing facilities, particularly in rural areas where only 20% of households have access to a basic facility³. The absence of safe and convenient WASH facilities make it hard – if not impossible – to practice healthy behaviours such as latrine use and handwashing with soap, and 42% of the population practice open defecation (OD)³.

Compounded by the high poverty rate (71%), the lack of WASH facilities promotes the spread of enteric infections such as diarrhoea, the country's third leading cause of death, causing 18,600 deaths per year⁴. WASH-related diseases also contribute to poor child development and survival, stunted growth, chronic under-nutrition and higher under-five mortality. Beyond the health impacts, an estimated 3.5 million school days are lost per year due to diarrhoea and other preventable waterborne diseases⁵. Lack of WASH facilities also increases the burden of WASH-related work. Poor WASH facilities disproportionately impacts women, who are typically responsible for collecting water and assisting children, the sick and the elderly with their sanitation needs as well as caring for those suffering from WASH-related diseases. Furthermore, lack of menstrual hygiene management (MHM) services in schools and workplaces present additional challenges for women and girls. A recent needs assessment conducted by SEED revealed that girls often do not attend school when menstruating because of the limited access to sanitation facilities, perpetuating gender related barriers to education. Without private sex-segregated latrines and MHM facilities, girls are ill-equipped to adopt health-promoting behaviours, exacerbating school absenteeism.

SEED Madagascar has been working for the past 20 years to improve water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in both rural and urban areas of the Anosy region in south east Madagascar. During this time, SEED has identified major obstacles to the development of WASH services. These include a lack of investment, weak alignment of the sector with national policies and strategies, lack of decentralised capacity for the provision and monitoring of WASH services beyond regional structures, and large inequities between urban and rural areas. As part of Madagascar's 2015 National Development Plan, a WASH service delivery strategy was developed with costed plans for all regions, with investment priorities established to address inequities and assure sustainability. However progress on extending access to safe water and sanitation has been slow.

SEED works with government, households, communities, schools and health centres, with initiatives addressing access to safe water, provision of improved sanitation facilities, and hygiene education. We use community-led, participatory approaches such as Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) to encourage people to improve their own WASH conditions and eliminate open defecation. This is complemented by support for local businesses and tradespeople to enable them to meet increased demand for WASH products and services. To enable a supportive environment for WASH services, SEED works with regional, town and village government structures to build understanding and management capacity. SEED also sits on the Regional WASH Cluster to ensure work compliments that of local WASH partners and supports local government to deliver against regional plans.

This WASH programme strategy outlines five key Strategic Areas that will guide the organisation's WASH work over the next 5 years. These have been developed following consultation with local stakeholders and are informed by SEED's considerable experience in delivering a range of WASH

initiatives in both rural and urban areas, with a view to ensuring future WASH initiatives are owned, managed and sustained by communities with government support.

SEED's WASH Vision:

People lead healthy and dignified lives through safe water, sanitation, and hygiene for everyone in Madagascar.

SEEDs WASH Mission:

To improve access to and usage of safe water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, resources, and knowledge for urban and rural communities in southeast Madagascar through infrastructure-provision, education, and capacity-building.

Key Strategic Areas:

To achieve the vision and mission, SEED will work on five strategic areas over the next 5 years:

1. Rural Safe Water Provision
2. Urban Safe Water Provision
3. Rural Sanitation
4. Urban Sanitation
5. Hygiene Education, Promotion, and Behaviour Change

1. Rural Safe Water Provision

Strategic Outcome:

All people in targeted communities are drinking safe water.

Use of unprotected water sources such as rivers, lakes and open wells is high in rural areas of Anosy. Provision and promotion of safe water in rural communities therefore remains a priority focus for the WASH programme, due to its potential to reduce rates of sickness and boost productivity. Based on learning from previous projects, SEED will raise awareness and generate demand for use of clean drinking water sources in rural communities, schools, and health facilities.

Further research and discussions with rural communities and institutions will be undertaken concerning appropriate options for rural WASH infrastructure, including wells and rain water harvesting (RWH) systems. The viability of water system payment methods will be further assessed based on Willingness to Pay and Ability to Pay metrics.

Capacity building across a wide range of groups to facilitate more sustainable management of rural water systems is a key component of the strategy for rural safe water provision. Such groups include households, community water source management committees, school and health centre management committees, private water providers and vendors, masons and local authorities at the village, commune and regional levels.

Conducting advocacy with local leaders and administrators and developing partnerships with relevant government officials and other stakeholders at both local and national levels will be essential to the success of projects and securing provision of safe water in rural areas.

2. Urban Safe Water Provision

Strategic Outcome:

Feasible models for safe water provision in Fort Dauphin have been identified and tested.

Water in Fort Dauphin – the main urban centre in Anosy – is provided from a protected source located in the mountain range that overlooks the town. When water is scarce, Madagascar’s state-owned utility services company, Jirama, pumps additional water from Lake Lanirano. However, the supply is increasingly inadequate to provide for the needs of the town’s growing population. With the recognition of the growing demands and unmet need for safe water in Fort Dauphin, a new strategic area is the drawing together of partnerships, advocacy and identification of safe water models in the urban centre of Fort Dauphin.

Given its success in rural areas, models incorporating RWH will be tested in Fort Dauphin, alongside the identification and testing of other models. SEED will use the learnings provided by the success of provision of RWH systems to schools in rural areas and extend this to public schools in Fort Dauphin in partnership with relevant local stakeholders. Household level RWH systems will also be explored as an option in the future of urban water provision and SEED will establish clear and transparent criteria to identify the households with the greatest need to support.

SEED will support advocacy efforts to develop a network of interested stakeholders which would work collaboratively to find solutions to water supply and sustainable water treatment issues in the long term.

3. Rural Sanitation

Strategic Outcome:

Targeted communities are open defecation free.

Open defecation is the norm in most of the communities where SEED works. Promotion of improved sanitation practices in rural communities – including in households, schools and health centres – will therefore continue to be a core component of SEED’s WASH programme.

Through the SEED’s WASH in Schools programme, SEED manages WASH sensitisation activities and the construction of latrines, handwashing stations, and MHM facilities in schools to foster positive WASH behaviours from a young age. To ensure the long term sustainability of these, we will also continue work to reinforce the capacity of school committees to improve management and maintenance of these facilities.

SEED will also explore the provision of latrines and other WASH services at rural healthcare clinics, as work across Anosy has shown that rural healthcare clinics lack water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, leaving staff and patients unable to practice handwashing or disinfection.

To maximise impact, it is important that open defecation is eliminated in the wider community beyond schools and health centres. SEED will therefore also work with households to consolidate progress. The programme will seek opportunities to support sanitation solutions at the household level. As well as building demand for improved sanitation and hygiene among community members, this component of the WASH programme will include capacity building and support for new businesses to supply the necessary sanitation products and services, fostering long term sustainability. The programme will be implemented in partnership with local, regional and national level stakeholders to ensure on-going ownership and investment at all levels following the end of SEED's inputs.

4. Urban Sanitation

Strategic Outcome:

All people in Fort Dauphin are using safely managed sanitation facilities.

The growing population of Fort Dauphin and dire shortage of both household and public latrines make latrine provision, sustainable faecal sludge management (FSM), and reducing OD key priorities. Supporting urban sanitation is therefore an essential component of the WASH programme.

Learning from past projects, SEED has identified that fostering community commitment to and ownership of improved sanitation will be a key component within this Strategic Area. The WASH programme will continue to work with communities and other stakeholders using approaches rooted in CLTS adapted for urban contexts to facilitate the construction of improved latrines, for both household and public use. We will work with stakeholders to secure sustainable latrine management and maintenance systems and will carry out research activities to assess the viability and effectiveness of latrine subsidies and other support mechanisms. As in rural areas, sanitation provision at schools and health centres will also be included as part of SEED's holistic approach to addressing community needs.

A variety of capacity building initiatives will underpin all work to support urban sanitation provision. This will include skills training for masons, public latrine operators, and latrine emptiers, as well as supporting management systems run through associations or committees and supporting businesses involved in providing WASH services. These activities will be conducted in partnership with key officials to ensure a supportive enabling environment.

5. Hygiene Education, Promotion and Behaviour Change

Strategic Outcome:

All people in targeted communities have adopted safe hygiene practices.

Regular practice of hygiene behaviours – such as hand washing with soap and safe storage of water – are key to consolidating the potential health benefits of improved water and sanitation. The WASH programme will place a high priority on hygiene education and behaviour change activities, in recognition of the critical role that these have on the success of the programme. SEED will adopt an adapted CLTS approach and use behavioural insights identified through formative research conducted with target communities to encourage and enable the adoption of positive hygiene practices among households, communities, schools, and health centres.

Infrastructure to support improved hygiene, such as handwashing stations in households and institutions, as well as MHM facilities at schools and health centres, will play a key role in this component of the WASH programme. On the basis of research into hygiene needs and practices in Anosy, SEED will also train local masons, craftspeople, and vendors in skills that will help communities to fill gaps in the supply chains for hygiene materials.

References:

1. UNICEF Madagascar (2018). *Challenges and Opportunities for Children in Madagascar*. Available from: [https://www.unicef.org/madagascar/media/1246/file/Defis%20et%20opportunit%C3%A9s%20des%20enfants%20%C3%A0%20Madagascar%20\(EN\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/madagascar/media/1246/file/Defis%20et%20opportunit%C3%A9s%20des%20enfants%20%C3%A0%20Madagascar%20(EN).pdf) [Accessed 24th September 2021]
2. JMP UNICEF/WHO. *Washdata.org*. Available from: <https://washdata.org/data/household#!/dashboard/new> [Accessed 24th September 2021]
3. The World Bank. *People practicing open defecation (% of population) – Madagascar*. Available from: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.ODFC.ZS?locations=MG> [Accessed 24th September 2021]
4. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation. *Global Burden of Disease Compare*. Available from: <https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/> [Accessed 24th September 2021]
5. Gaskin-Reyes C (ed.). *Water Planet: the culture, politics, economics and sustainability of water on Earth*. Santa Barbra, California: ABC-CLIO, LLC; 2016. Available from: https://books.google.lu/books?id=1sIDQAAQBAJ&pg=PA369&lpg=PA369&dq=diarrhea+loss+of+school+days+madagascar&source=bl&ots=D02xtDTqHE&sig=ACfU3U1inPk0zq3v-oRo11-OGKE-O_R_eA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj_9tHx-ZfzAhULgf0HHdmvAysQ6AF6BAgTEAM#v=onepage&q=diarrhea%20loss%20of%20school%20days%20madagascar&f=false [Accessed 24th September 2021]