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sustainable environment, education & development

A proposal for

Project Fatsaka – Phase II

Increasing long-term access to clean drinking water though community-led water source management in the Mahatalaky Rural Commune, southeast Madagascar

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1. Project Details

Project Objective: To increase access to clean drinking water by working alongside 28 rural communities to develop sustainable community management structures and build local community and regional official capacity to manage and maintain protected water sources

Location: Mahatalaky Rural Commune, Anosy Region, southeast Madagascar

Duration: 18 months **Project start:** 01 May 2017

Total Budget: £56,713

Executive Summary: Over 65% of Madagascar's rural population lacks access to safe drinking water. In the country's chronically impoverished and isolated Mahatalaky Rural Commune, a lack of clean drinking water, poor hygiene practices and a severely limited diet perpetuate extreme levels of waterborne disease and child mortality. While most communities have been provided with wells in the past, a lack of knowledge, technical maintenance skills and financial resources has resulted in many wells falling into a state of disrepair, rendering infrastructure provision useless.

In response, Project Fatsaka is piloting an innovative approach to well management, which builds the capacity of local communities, whilst challenging underlying hygiene behaviours. SEED has adopted the Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach to motivate communities to use their protected water sources and recognise the link between poor drinking water practices and negative health outcomes. Simultaneously, Fatsaka builds the local capacity of communities to manage and maintain wells independently without the continued need for external technical support or funding. Through technical and financial management training, tailored to individual community needs, SEED is helping communities gain the skills to manage and maintain their protected water sources independently in the future.

During the pilot phase, these activities resulted in the establishment of effective well management and maintenance systems in 13 motivated communities, which retrieved access to safe water sources. Moreover, the communities had the skills and structures in place to independently ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water in the future. Having successfully trialled this innovative method in 13 communities in a first phase, SEED has expanded Project Fatsaka to bring a long-term access to an improved water source to a further 15 communities, helping an estimated 10,072 impoverished people achieve their human right to safe water.

SEED will refine the project's sustainability by forging stronger ties with institutions and building the capacity of local authorities to improve local water source management and ensure compliance with national water legislation. Continuous monitoring and support of the initial 13 communities of Phase I will safeguard long-term access to improved water sources, whilst allowing the team to further develop and adapt its methodology to achieve even higher levels of motivation and effective management structures within Phase II communities. Research papers and resource dissemination will allow SEED to share knowledge and best practices with the wider international community, informing how the adoption of CLTS methodology can improve access to safe water sources.

2. Project Rational

Objectives of Project Fatsaka Phase II:

1. Reduce the risk of waterborne illnesses in the Mahatalaky Rural Commune by increasing community capacity and motivation to access safe water sources.
2. Build capacity of commune authorities to carry out water source management requirements as outlined in national and regional legislation.
3. To further develop and implement a scalable model that increases the use and community-led maintenance of wells.

Objective	Activities	Outcome	Outcome indicator
To increase access to clean drinking water by working alongside 28 rural communities to develop a sustainable community management structure and build local community and regional official capacity to manage and maintain protected water sources	Water source mapping and commune-level engagement	Increased motivation, ability and action amongst community members to use and maintain protected wells	80% of communities are monitoring their well without any external influence or intervention
	Fatsaka pilot community follow-up		70% of wells are repaired within 6 weeks of breaking
	Community identification and initial meetings		85% of committees are implementing a well management plan
	Community triggering and action planning	Improved water quality in all 15 community wells	75% reduction of faecal coliforms/100ml well water amongst 80% of communities
	Well assessment and repairs		
	Well committee establishment, training and support	Broader awareness of local well conditions and increased capacity of commune authorities to carry out water source management duties	Commune authorities aware of maintenance and management issues at 85% of wells
	IEC materials distributed and cross-community learning visits	Increased long-term sustainability of community wells leading to increased sanitation and reduction in illnesses	65% of communities require no well-related assistance
	WASH education in schools		15% reduction of cases of diarrhoeal disease across all communities

3. Project Activities

***Mapping and Commune engagement*:** To support Commune engagement, initial stages will include baseline mapping of the location, condition, use and management systems of wells commune-wide. Findings will be presented to the Commune and Mayor, ensuring authorities have a thorough, detailed understanding of the state of the wells, whilst sensitively reinforcing the Commune's water provision responsibilities.

***Pilot follow-up*:** Continued support of the initial 13 wells of the pilot phase will contribute to long-term community access to improved water sources. Follow-up visits will be conducted by Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) to monitor motivation and arising challenges, supporting continued access to safe water and informing the approach to well management in the additional 15 wells of Phase 2.

***Community identification and initial meetings*:** An additional 15 wells requiring repair and management will be identified through collaboration with regional authorities. An initial meeting will be facilitated with each village's community leader as well as with influential community members and elders, to establish causes of well disrepair, alongside gathering momentum and advice for the project.

***Community triggering and planning*:** CLTS-inspired triggering techniques will structure village meetings, where communities will be encouraged to consider their sanitation behaviours. Through triggering, CLOs will guide communities to draw connections between open defecation, water sources and diarrhoeal illnesses. Participants will map the area and conduct transect walks between water sources, open defecation sites and wells, highlighting the movement of faecal matter and the dubious quality of water from unprotected sources. CLOs will facilitate the creation of an 'action plan', which will include cleaning in and around the well site, creating a *dina* (local rules and procedures for well use) and establishing financial systems for any required repairs.

Left: Community members map their water sources
Right: A CLO (right) passes a glass of clean water to a participant during a CLTS triggering

Well assessment and repairs: SEED's construction team will work with community members to carry out essential well repairs. This will serve the dual purpose of providing clean water and key practical experience to community members as they develop their well maintenance and repair skills.

***Well committee establishment, training and support*:** Additional facilitation visits will be held after the first triggering events to facilitate the development of management structures through well committees, and to clarify their roles in well maintenance. CLOs will suggest suitable committee roles and encourage the participation of women, such as in the form of a women's monitoring subcommittee. Following triggerings, CLOs and technical agents will conduct monthly monitoring visits to support and advise committees on how to overcome challenges as they implement their action plans. A technical agent trained by SEED staff will provide financial, management and maintenance

training to communities. While responsibility for well management and maintenance will remain with the committee and at the community level, the Commune authorities will be encouraged to receive regular reports from committees.

WASH lessons within schools: CLOs will deliver classes at schools of participating communities, providing information on adequate sanitation and hygiene practices, and highlighting links to disease reduction and achievement of good health. Teachers will be actively involved in lesson planning and delivery, building their capacity to ultimately run classes without CLO supervision.

***Information Education and Communication [IEC] materials distributed and cross-community learning*:** To ensure that the impact of triggering and training is sustained after project completion, SEED will distribute IEC materials as visual learning tools and points of reference. Cross-community learning visits will be carried out after the well management structures and committees have been set-up and trialled. As communities face individual challenges, SEED will match communities best suited for cross-learning partnerships and showcase communities who have responded with especially effective or innovative strategies for well management.

Community members clean the area around the Maravato well in a collective effort.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

Utilising learning from the initial pilot phase, SEED has developed a rigorous MEL framework that will ensure the project remains responsive to emerging challenges and community needs. Data collection includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods to assess project indicators including:

- Focus group discussions with community members and Commune authorities
- Surveys with community leaders
- Water source mapping
- On-going well committee discussions
- Continuous well site observations
- Ethnographic observations
- Monthly visits and reports by SEED's Community Liaison Officers to monitor successes as well as arising challenges
- Water quality testing to verify levels of faecal contamination
- Baseline and endline household surveys

Evaluating the project against an extensive range of output and outcome indicators will assist in providing a strong evidence base for future project development within SEED's wider WASH portfolio, whilst also informing the dissemination of project learnings to external partners and networks.

5. Project Sustainability

Phase II has been designed to ensure Project Fatsaka provides a sustainable solution to addressing the management and maintenance issues currently hampering communities' long-term access to safe drinking water. SEED wishes to highlight the following features, which seek to improve the use and availability of safe water sources within the 28 target communities, whilst concurrently providing a robust framework for informing future project scale-up and/or external replication:

- Ongoing support and monitoring of the original 13 pilot phase communities, applying findings to adapt methodologies and approaches within an additional 15 communities.
- Rigorous MEL in all target communities will subsequently provide the evidence base for refining SEED's model for community-based water management.
- Emphasis on a participatory approach, ensuring communities take responsibility for developing action plans, and establishing maintenance and financial structures from project start. Technical training sessions and cross-site visits will enhance community capacity to independently repair, manage and maintain wells.

- Active engagement and institutional capacity building of Commune authorities, facilitating their collaboration with and ability to support communities with well management structures in the future.
- Significant attention to sharing project learning and best practices with external partners and networks. SEED's extensive WASH portfolio has facilitated strong working relationships with local NGOs, Ministries of Health, Water and Education, as well as memberships within national networks including Diarano WASH and Madagascar's PHE Network. The second phase intends to strengthen SEED's partnerships and presence within the larger WASH sector through knowledge sharing, research papers and resource dissemination.