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Sandrakely Primary School Project (FF 689)



Final report

February 2025

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Introduction

Sandrakely Primary School has a long history of serving its community despite numerous challenges. First established on the 15th May 1973, and officially inaugurated on the 10th December 1976, it faced a significant setback in 1994 when Cyclone Geralda caused extensive damage. However, thanks to the efforts of Feedback Madagascar (FBM), the school was rebuilt and reopened in 1996. Over the years, the school has seen a steady increase in student enrolment, which has outgrown the original infrastructure, leaving pupils to share classrooms and sit on the floor due to a lack of desks.

The growing demand for education, coupled with the need for proper sanitation facilities, has put a strain on the school and highlighted the urgent need for further development. In response to these needs, a new construction project was undertaken in Sandrakely, made possible through the partnership between Feedback Madagascar and the Eagle Foundation. This project, formalised via the agreement signed on the 9th December 2023, with a total budget of 35,901 GBP (MGA 202,727,130.38 received), aims to improve both the educational and sanitary infrastructure in the village.

The project comprised three fully furnished classrooms, a sanitation block (integrating toilets, urinals and showers), a rainwater catchment system connected to a hand-washing unit, two gazebos and a tree nursery. These are critical to addressing the overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions currently faced by pupils, leading to different school years sharing classrooms or sitting on the floor due to the lack of resources. While the local community had previously made efforts to build basic toilets, they did not meet required standards. The addition of these facilities provides pupils with a more conducive learning environment and contributes to improving hygiene and health outcomes in the community.

Furthermore, the community itself is grappling with issues such as subsistence farming on difficult terrain, limited access to land, and health problems like malaria and diarrhoeal disease, which are exacerbated by financial barriers to healthcare and reliance on traditional healers. Poverty, coupled with health risks, remains a pressing challenge.

The project is part of a broader initiative to raise education standards, increase exam performance, and reduce the incidence of preventable diseases through improved hygiene and sanitation facilities. The ultimate goal is to create a sustainable and supportive environment for future generations, contributing to the long-term development of the region and helping to alleviate poverty.

Project location

Sandrakely Primary School is located in Sandrakely village, in the Tsaratanana rural municipality of the Ifanadiana district of Vatovavy region, in southeastern Madagascar, Africa. The journey from Fianarantsoa to Sandrakely village involves a 115 kilometre trip; first a 90-kilometre drive along the tarmac road RN25 to Ifanadiana. From there, it is a further 25 kilometres along a secondary track accessible on motorbike, by truck and 4WD vehicle, passing through Tsaratanana centre to the picturesque locality of Sandrakely.

However, since the bridge south of Tsaratanana broke, only motorbikes or bicycles can pass on the narrow makeshift bridge built since then, or tractors can drive through the river if the water level is low. Otherwise the trip involves a transfer of the load from one vehicle to another.

GPS coordinates:

- Latitude 21° 7'33.96"S
- Longitude 47°38'34.06"E



Figure 1 Tsaratanana in relation to the capital city Antananarivo and the regional town of Fianarantsoa (where FBM-NT's office is located), and the district centre of Ifanadiana.



Figure 2 Tsaratanana in relation to Ifanadiana and Fianarantsoa, and the rainforest 'corridor' including Ranomafana National Park, part of which is in Tsaratanana municipality.

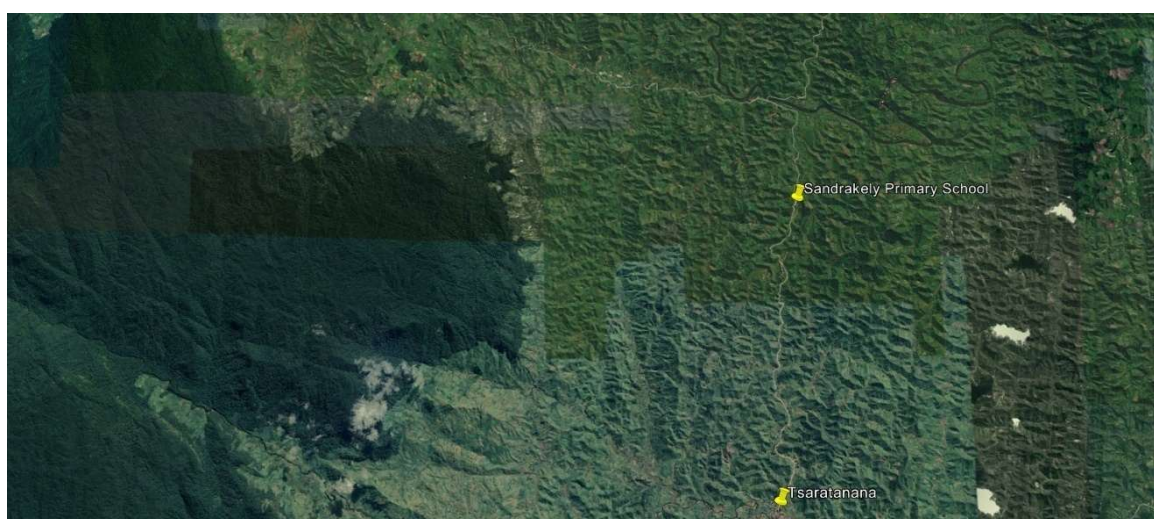


Figure 3 Sandrakely Primary school in relation to the centre of Tsaratanana municipality.



Figure 4 Sandrakely Primary School and village.

Calendar of achievements

Activities	2024												2025	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Project coordination meetings	X													
Letter sent to local authorities and partners involved in the project	X													
First meetings with beneficiaries in Sandrakely, to identify and train the members of the local committees to supervise and control the work ('COST'), identify the stores/accommodation for the team, draw up an action plan concerning local materials, the transport of materials and the start of work	X													
Signing the agreement defining the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the project					X									
Land clearing		X												
Levelling and clearing work		X	X	X	X	X								
Recruitment storekeeper and project supervisor				X										
Procurement of materials and equipment required for the project			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Delivery of materials and equipment for the project.							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Making cement breezeblocks								X						
Stone-breaking & gravel-making work							X	X						
Regular monitoring of community contributions and support for community organisation		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Progress report									X					
Contracting of builders for the project, planning meeting and preparation for the start of the builders' work									X					
Builder team sets up on site									X					
Foundation laying									X					
School's wall building									X					
Project monitoring visits by Fianarantsoa office staff		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

Activities	2024												2025	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Fitting the gable and formwork										X				
Installation of purlins and roofing for the schools										X				
Construction of a toilet block and installation of a rainwater collection system (impluvium)											X			
Interior and exterior rendering work, installation of doors and windows												X	X	
Painting and finishing touches													X	
Site clean-up and completion													X	
Technical acceptance of work													X	
Assembly of the school desks and furniture on site														X
Training for members of the school's maintenance and repair committee (CER), & provision of a tool kit														X
Site withdrawal														X

Key

	PREVISION
X	COMPLETION

Details on the project

1. Site preparation

The project began with land clearing in February 2024, followed by extensive levelling and terracing work. By March, 25% of the terracing work had been completed, reaching 90% by April and which was finalised in June 2024. This milestone ensured that the land was ready for construction.

Additionally, a hedge was planted around the boundaries of the school grounds in February. However, many plants did not take root, requiring replanting efforts.



Figure 5 Terracing work

2. Procurement and preparation of materials

The procurement of construction materials began in April 2024, with materials ordered and paid for in phases. Transportation of sand, sourced from a site 5 kilometres away from the school, was an ongoing challenge. By July 2024, 24 m³ of coarse sand had been prepared, with 21.5 m³ transported to the site. Medium and fine sand were yet to be delivered, though 8 m³ of medium sand and 28 m³ of fine sand were ready.

Stone-crushing work was completed in July 2024, with the production of stone blocks, other stones and gravel at the quarry, ready for transport. By the end of July, 1,001 of the 5,870 stone blocks (20x20x20 cm) had been delivered to the building site.

Concrete block production was carried out in August 2024; 3,945 concrete blocks (40x20x15 cm) in addition to 60 cement blocks with aeration, exceeding the initial projection of 54.

3. Construction work

By September 2024, contractual agreements with the builders were finalised, and they were deployed to the project site. The foundations were laid in the same month, followed by wall construction in October. In November, the gables and formwork were completed, while roofing components were achieved in December.

In December 2024 and January 2025, additional infrastructure was developed, including the construction of the sanitation block and installation of the rainwater collection system (impluvium). These features are crucial for ensuring proper sanitation and sustainable water management.



Figure 6 Implementation ceremony



Figure 7 Launch of works (digging and laying the foundations)

4. Finishing touches

Interior and exterior rendering, as well as the installation of doors and windows, were completed in January 2025. Painting and final finishing touches took place in February 2025, followed by site clean-up and a technical acceptance inspection at the end of the month to verify compliance with quality standards.

5. Furnishings and training

In February 2025, school bench tables were assembled on-site. Members of the school's maintenance and repairs committee (CER) received training to ensure proper upkeep of the school infrastructure, and a tool kit was provided to support maintenance efforts.

6. Project conclusion and hand-over

In February 2025, the project successfully concluded with an official site withdrawal, marking the completion of Sandrakely Primary School. The newly constructed facilities are expected to provide long-term benefits to students and the surrounding community, reinforcing educational opportunities and local engagement.



Figure 8 Inside the classrooms before desks were installed.



Challenges

During the implementation of this project, several challenges arose, leading to significant delays in its commencement and progress. Below are the key difficulties encountered and their impact on the project timeline:

1. Limited engagement and participation of beneficiaries

One of the primary challenges faced was the insufficient involvement of beneficiaries due to poor local leadership. A key reason for this is that recent projects in the area, particularly post-cyclone response work by other organisations, involved cash distribution and so communities are now used to getting paid for work they undertake, making voluntary contributions to projects more challenging. Their lack of active participation resulted in reduced momentum, slowing down project activities and causing multiple delays.

2. Adverse weather conditions

The project's preparatory phase coincided with the rainy season, which posed major obstacles to its execution. After prolonged periods of rain, the ground required additional preparation to ensure suitable working conditions. The transportation of sand was 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.

3. Transportation and logistical issues

- **Challenges in sand transportation:** Rising river levels due to the rainy season complicated the transportation of sand, a key construction material. Flooded areas obstructed access to quarries, causing further disruptions in the supply chain.
- **Poor road conditions:** The deteriorated state of roads, particularly between Ifanadiana and Sandrakely, further exacerbated delays.

4. Political climate and administrative barriers

The electoral period before and after the mayoral elections in December 2024 created an unfavourable environment for the project's smooth execution. Local authorities, being preoccupied with elections, were less involved in facilitating community engagement. Moreover, any form of intervention from their side was viewed as a political move, making it difficult to rally public participation. In an attempt to maintain public favour, authorities refrained from actively raising awareness amongst beneficiaries about their contributions to the project.

5. Economic vulnerability of beneficiaries

The socio-economic conditions of target beneficiaries also presented a significant challenge. Many of them face daily struggles to secure basic necessities, prioritising immediate sustenance over long-term development projects. Given their hand-to-mouth existence, it was difficult for them to allocate time to participate in project activities without compromising their livelihoods, further contributing to delays.

Solutions adopted

To address these challenges, several proactive measures were taken to mitigate delays and ensure the smooth progress of the project:

- **Direct management of sand transportation:** A tractor was mobilised to facilitate the transport of sand, reducing the burden of community contributions to the project and expediting the process.
- **Continuous community awareness-raising:** Efforts were intensified to raise awareness among beneficiaries about the importance of their participation, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the project.
- **Provision of daily meals for workers:** To alleviate economic constraints and encourage active involvement, daily meals were provided to labourers, ensuring their participation without compromising their basic needs.
- **Engagement of local authorities post-election:** After the electoral period, local authorities were re-engaged to support and promote the project, facilitating better coordination and beneficiary participation. In addition, significant engagement was made with the local village elders, known as “Tangalamena”, who still play a central role in village life in this area.

By implementing these measures, the project was able to overcome many of the initial setbacks and progress towards its objectives more effectively.

Features of the new school building

The construction project comprises a school building featuring three classrooms, in accordance with the standard school building model developed by FBM-NT. The building stands on sturdy stone foundations with cement breezeblock walls reinforced by a concrete structure. Both the interior and exterior walls have been coated with cement rendering, featuring a breezeblock-style pointing design on the upper half of the external walls.



Figure 9 The completed school and sanitation block.

The roofing, built to withstand cyclones, is constructed from durable tin. The building is equipped with double metal doors, complete with hooks for securing them in an open position from the outside. Each classroom is furnished with three glass-paned windows, opening inwards, and protected by grills on the outside. The structure incorporates front and back guttering seamlessly into its design. The interior boasts a two-tone colour scheme, with oil-based paint at the base for protection against dirt and water-based paint higher up. The classrooms and veranda feature cement ceilings painted with oil-based paint. Inside the classrooms, concrete blackboards and chalkboards are complemented by a raised stage for the teacher and their desk. There is concrete flooring and each classroom features in-built shelving made of cement breezeblocks, complete with lockable wooden doors (measuring 0.55m x 1.70m) for storing books, materials or supplies.

Furthermore, the project included the provision of 48 school desks, each with integrated benches. These were distributed as 16 sets in each new classroom, along with three tables and three chairs for the teachers. The sanitation facilities comprise a sanitation block measuring 4.82m x 3.60m x 2.40m, composed of three 'fly-proof' latrine compartments, two shower cubicles, and boys' and girls' urinals. A hand-washing unit has been installed between the latrines and the school to promote proper hand hygiene at crucial moments. Water is supplied through a rainwater catchment system connected to the school's guttering, with an 8m³ tank situated adjacent to the building, connected to three taps. The system includes measures to prevent the initial rains, which may carry debris from the roof, from entering the tank. The tank is equipped with a manhole cover on top and accessible steps connecting it to the school building, allowing for easy refilling during dry spells. The project also encompassed hygiene education.



Figure 10 Tree nursery and handwashing unit with the impluvium rainwater catchment tank.

In addition to the building, the project involved the construction of two gazebos to provide shaded areas for children to play and relax within the school grounds. A tree nursery was established to support ongoing tree planting initiatives.

Project beneficiaries

Based on data from December 2024, the following table provides data on project beneficiaries.

Grade	Gender	Number	Total
Nursery	Boys	21	39
	Girls	18	
Grade 1	Boys	42	88
	Girls	46	
Grade 2	Boys	28	47
	Girls	29	
Grade 3	Boys	24	55
	Girls	31	
Grade 4	Boys	13	21
	Girls	8	
Grade 5	Boys	5	9
	Girls	4	

In total there are currently 269 pupils (133 boys and 136 girls).

This in addition to 6 teachers (4 men and 2 women). Of these teachers, 4 are supported by the association of parents of pupils, 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.



Figure 11: Pupils at Sandrakely Primary School eating their meal at the canteen in a refectory built by the local community.

Current situation

	Pre-project	Expected situation post-project	Real situation post-project
Number of existing classrooms	5 (3 original building built by FBM, 2 community-built)	6 classrooms functional (3 improved/renovated existing classrooms and 3 new classrooms)	6 classrooms functional as expected.
Number of classrooms borrowed	None.	The 2 community-built classrooms will be destined for teacher accommodation.	As expected, these 2 rooms will be converted to teacher housing soon.
WASH (Water – Sanitation – Hygiene)	The school had a basic hand-washing facility, a recent borehole installation, and toilets that do not meet the standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One sanitation block composed of 3 'fly-proof' latrine compartments, 2 shower cubicles and girls/boys urinals. - Hand-washing unit between the latrines and the school - Rainwater catchment system - Functional borehole and hand-pump 	
Others		Two gazebos as shaded areas for children to play and sit in the school grounds, and tree nursery established in the school grounds.	

Expenditure summary

Budget line	Budget (£)	Budget (MGA)	Funds received (MGA)	Expenditure (MGA)	Difference with amount received (MGA)	Explanation for difference
Building materials	19,559	103,662,100	110,446,504	88,803,700	21,642,804	Good price deals were obtained on certain materials including cement.
Transport of building materials and furniture	3,491	18,500,000	19,713,111	21,518,938	-1,805,826	Transport costs were higher due to transfer of materials at the broken bridge. Additional tractor trips were required to transport sand. Food costs for local labour were included in this budget line.
Labour	8,066	42,750,000	45,547,395	50,799,499	-5,252,103	Expenditure exceeded budget due to longer period of project due to delays, hence additional staff costs (storekeeper, supervisor, etc.).
Furniture, 2 gazebos & tree nursery	1,066	5,650,000	6,019,529	5,086,000	933,529	
Monitoring & evaluation	1,266	6,711,000	7,148,897	4,371,300	2,777,597	Lower expenditure due to use of motorbikes rather than car because of broken bridge & terrible state of the road.
Project management	2,453	13,001,332	13,851,694	13,001,332	850,362	
Total	35,901	190,274,432	202,727,130	183,580,768	19,146,363	

	MGA	GBP
Budget	190,274,432	35,901
Funds received	202,727,130	35,901
Expenditure	183,580,768	34,638
Variance in relation to budget	6,693,664	1,263
Variance in relation to funds received	19,146,363	1,263

Conclusion

Despite the numerous challenges faced during its implementation, notably the extended project period (it was due to be completed July 2024), this project has succeeded in improving infrastructure and educational conditions in Sandrakely. Through strategic interventions, including active beneficiary engagement, logistical adaptations, and collaboration with local authorities, the project overcame obstacles that initially delayed progress.

The newly constructed facilities will have a lasting impact on the community by providing a more conducive learning environment, improving hygiene standards, and fostering local development. This initiative highlights the importance of resilience and adaptability in development projects, ensuring that long-term benefits outweigh short-term difficulties. Moving forward, continued community involvement and periodic evaluations will be crucial in sustaining these achievements and addressing any emerging challenges.

THANK YOU, EAGLE FOUNDATION, FOR FUNDING THIS PROJECT!



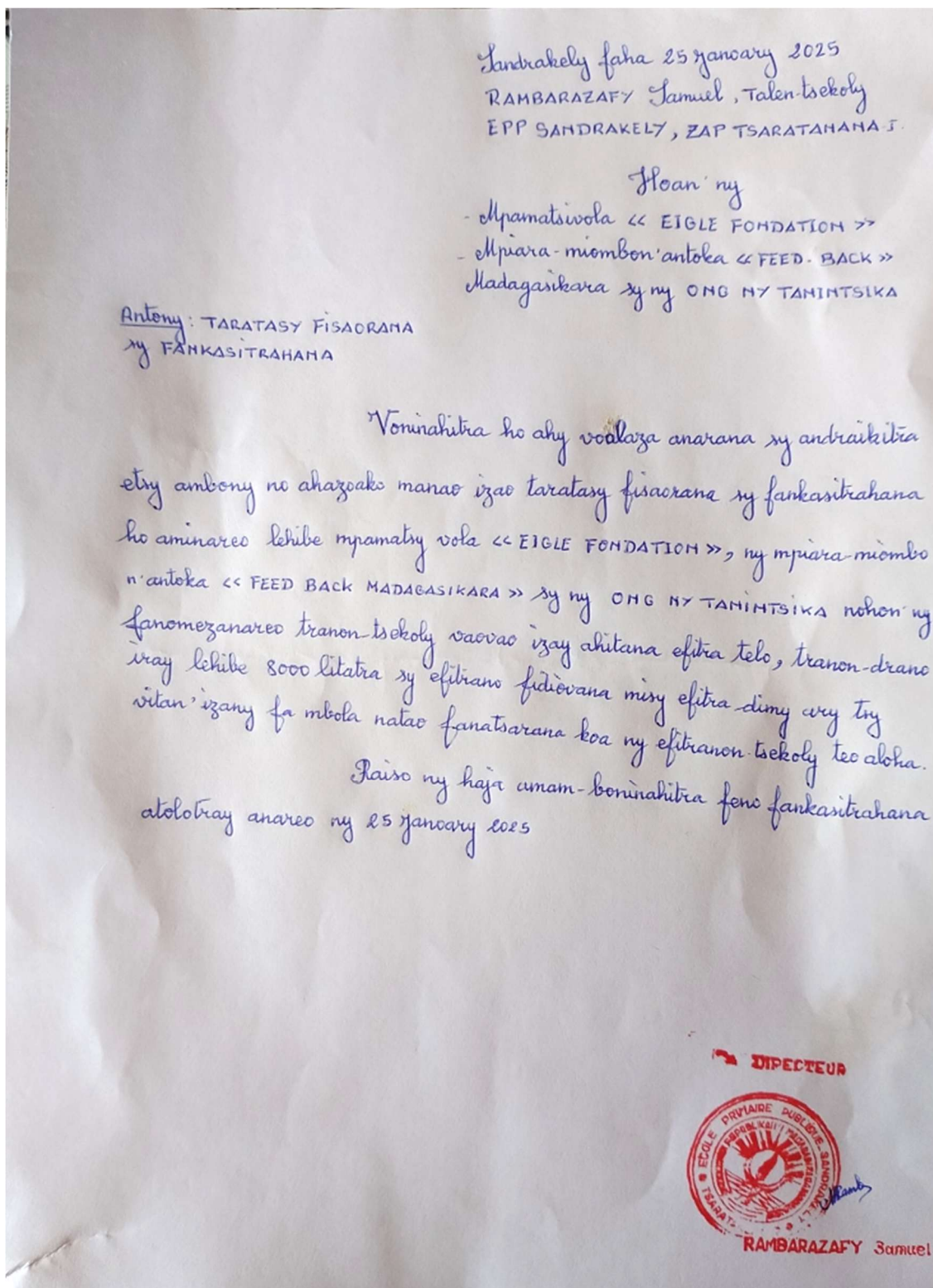
Figure 12 Sandrakely school layout



Figure 13 Final picture of the new school building and the existing one renovated.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Thank-you letter from Sandrakely Primary School.



Translation: "It is an honour for me, head teacher, representing all the school, to write this letter to thank all the project partners Eagle Foundation, Feedback Madagascar and Ny Tanintsika, for giving us a new school with 3 classrooms, water tank and 5-compartment sanitation block, as well as the renovation of our existing school building. Please accept our sincere gratitude and respects."

Appendix 2: Thank-you letter from the municipality education authorities.

Esaratanana faha 25 janyary 2025

TOVO Razafimanpenarivo Beatrice
Juliana,
dihiten'ny Saripitantanan-draharaha
na-pedagogika, ISARATANANA-I


Ilo an'

-ny Mpamatsiroka "Eagle Foundation"
-ny Mpiaramiombon' antoka "Feedback
Madagascar sy ny ONG NY TANINTSIKA

Antony: Faratsy fisaorana
Tompoko,

Voninahitra ho ahy izay voalaza
anarana sy andraikitra ety ambony no manao
izao faratsy izao ho fisaorana ny fankasitrahana feno
maho ny fanomezana ny tranon-tsekoly vaovao izay
mirefy 22m 50 ny lavany 8m ny sakany ka
ahitana eftrano telo (03) sy miben-drono izay miaty:
8000l sy tranon fihivana dimy (05) efitra; fialokalofana
roa (02), mbola misy ihany koa ny fanatsoarana ny
tranon-tsekoly izay efa vita tso taloha izany rehetra
voatanisa izany dia nitrahan'ny EPP Sandrakely
ZAP ISARATANANA-I. ka natolotra anay anio faha
25 janyary 2025 avy tamin'ny mpamatsiroka sy ny
mpiamamombon' antoka izay voatanina eo ambony.

Ioa rairo Tompoko ny fisaorana
feno voninahitra atolotra anim-pakasitrahana atolotra
anareo maho ny hafalian-po betsaka avy aty aminay


LE CHIEF DE ZONE ADMINISTRATIVE
ET PEDAGOGIQUE
TOVO Razafimanpenarivo
Beatrice Juliana

Translation: "It is my pleasure to send you this thank-you letter for giving us a new school building for Sandrakely Primary School measuring 22.5m by 8m, with 3 classrooms and an 800litre water tank, as well as 5-compartment sanitation block, 2 gazebos, and the improvements to the existing school building. This infrastructure has been handed over to us today 25th January, and was given by the partners Eagle Foundation, Feedback Madagascar and Ny Tanintsika. So please accept our deepest thanks from our hearts full of happiness and gratitude."