



2023

SSFA ANNUAL REPORT

Director's Introduction

2023 marked a huge milestone for SSFA, as we celebrated our 10th anniversary! I reflect back on the last decade with huge pride of all that we've achieved with our amazing partners in Madagascar - transforming the lives of over 150 children and kicking off exciting new projects in recent years, including our Community Health Worker programme and Bike Project.

As many of you will know, the Small Steps for Africa story started back in 2013, when I spent time in Madagascar as part of my university studies, and resolved to guarantee one family I met in the town of Ambohidratimo the ability to go to school for as long as they wanted, no matter what. What started with an afternoon tea fundraiser in September 2013 has evolved into a registered charity that has invested over £100,000 into impactful projects alongside our partners in Madagascar over the past decade.



I'm grateful to all our supporters who joined us for our Anniversary Reception in London in June. It was wonderful to have a chance to reflect on all we've achieved together, and even more special to be joined by Ankizy Gasy country manager Ony Rakotoarivelo. I was also hugely privileged to celebrate our anniversary with some very important guests - our SSFA beneficiaries in Madagascar - at a special party organised by our wonderful partners at Ankizy Gasy in December. The SSFA 'family' of supported children gathered for a delicious two-course chicken supper with cake, music and presents. It was wonderful to see so many happy faces and be reminded of the impact of our work over a decade.

Away from anniversary celebrations, 2023 saw more progress, change and exciting developments. Our Community Health Worker project goes from strength to strength; in the first year of the project alone, Nurse Tina provided advice to over 500 patients, facilitated 19 community health education sessions and was able to help nearly 50% of patients without them requiring further intervention (read more detail in further down in this report). The success of this pilot led to SSFA receiving funding from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust in October 2023 to continue this project for two more years, and expand it, hiring another community health worker and purchasing vital equipment. We hope this will be the first of many exciting partnerships with grant-making organisations, who support the community-focused work we are doing in Madagascar.

During my time in Madagascar, I was also delighted to officially open a new canteen at Les Lauriers School. This project is particularly special to me and my husband Joshua, as the construction of the canteen was funded by donations from guests at our wedding in July 2023. The new canteen will be solar powered, and serve hundreds of children, who previously had to go to another school for their breakfast and lunch.

It was also a pleasure to catch up with Hanta and the team at Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo, the children's centre we support. The girls sponsored through SSFA are thriving, with two now attending university, and two more set to start in 2024. Hanta has such a clear vision for the progress she wants to see for the 200+ children in her care and we are grateful to work with her, supporting both individual young people and staff at AAA.

As outlined in our 2022 Annual Report, we are in a period of transition as an organisation, moving away from focusing on the sponsorship of individual children, towards a more strategic, holistic view of the working with communities to improve access to education and health. You can read more about progress towards that vision in this report.

One thing remains as clear to me as the day we founded SSFA back in 2013; we are incredibly lucky to have such wonderful partners and supporters, and the trustees and I are immensely grateful.

With best wishes,

Charlotte Baker

Operations Director and Founder, Small Steps for Africa



2023 ACHIEVEMENTS



COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROJECT EXPANDED

We concluded our Community Health Worker pilot year with Ankizy Gasy, and received **funding from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust to continue and expand** the project over two years.



MORE THAN 50 CHILDREN SUPPORTED THROUGH EDUCATION

Across our two partners, we directly supported **more than 50 children** through pre-school, primary and secondary education.



SIX UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SUPPORTED

We supported **six university students to study courses** ranging from finance to nursing, including one Masters student.



NEW CANTEEN OPENED AT LES LAURIERS SCHOOL

We opened a **new solar-powered canteen at Les Lauriers School**, so that pupils can now eat two meals per day on site.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION



Child Sponsorship and schools programmes

In 2023, we supported 51 children to attend school and 6 young people to attend university

For academic year 2022/23, we ran three child sponsorship programmes:

- 1) Supporting 45 vulnerable children and young people in the semi-rural commune of Ambohidratimo to access primary, secondary and university education, with our longstanding partner Ankizy Gasy.
- 2) Supporting six young people at Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo children's centre to access education, including two university students.
- 3) We supported five girls through our programme at Akany Avoko Faravohitra children's centre at the start of 2023; however, a change of leadership prompted an internal review of this partnership and trustees decided to discontinue our support of AAF from July 2023 onwards. All girls supported by SSFA either moved to the Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo centre and are still supported, or left the programme.

80%

of children in SSFA programmes passed their end of year exams and moved up a year

This included 5 young people passing formal state primary and secondary leaving examinations.

STRATEGIC VISION UPDATE

As laid out in the long-term plan set out in 2022's Annual Report, we will be gradually transitioning away from a child sponsorship model, in favour of a more holistic development of programmes that impact more people, such as our Community Health Worker and Social Worker programmes.

This was communicated to sponsors in 2023, who were reassured that all current children will remain in the programme for as long as they wish to pursue education, however we will not be accepting new children into the programme.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION



Social Worker Fund

In 2023, we supported the employment of 5 full-time social workers across our three projects

A key aspect of SSFA's education objectives is providing holistic support to the young people we support in Madagascar. Given the background of poverty in many communities, we know that many of the young people in our programmes have exceptionally challenging home situations, and need more than just time in the classroom to succeed.

For this reason, we have been supporting the employment of qualified social workers with our partners for 8 years.

Ankizy Gasy programme

Our funding contributes towards the salary of a full-time social worker, who provides vital outreach to the 1000 children supported by Ankizy Gasy and their families. This comprises everything from home visits to assess living situations and needs, to discussing academic progress and explaining the education system to parents who may never have had formal education themselves.

Across 2023, these interventions resulted in dozens of children staying in education who would have otherwise dropped out, and provided crucial context to inform wider interventions, including school holiday food support and referral to other services, including medical care.

Children's centres programmes: AAF and AAA

We have supported the employment of three qualified social workers at Akany Avoko Faravohitra since the centre reopened in 2016, providing vital psycho-social support to the girls who have been referred to the centre by the family courts.

Following the trustees decision to discontinue our support of AAF in June 2023, we initiated support for one social worker at Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo, and have been delighted to see the impact they are having on the boys and girls who live there.

ACCESS TO EDUCATION



The Bike Project

Following a successful pilot in 2022, we received extra funding in 2023 to expand The Bike Project, and acquired the project's second bike in Q4 2023.

BACKGROUND

In 2022, we set up the SSFA Bike Project, in response to a clear need from young people in our programmes who were living in isolated, rural parts of the commune. Many of them were encountering 1 hour + walks to school or the bus stop, an exhausting and often unsafe routine that was impacting their educational attainment and wellbeing.

The loan of a bike to our first recipient had a life-changing impact on her and her family. Prior to receiving a bike in summer 2022, university student Faniry was having to walk from her village for an hour each way to the main road, where she catches 2 buses to university. This long journey on foot is tiring and dangerous, often done in the dark. Her 4 year old sister Rova was being walked to school, an hour each way, by her mother.

Now Faniry's brother cycles Faniry to the main road to catch her bus, before taking little Rova to school, and collects them later on, working during the day. This saves time for everyone, gives Faniry and Rova more energy for their studies and keeps them safer, as well as allowing their mother to stay at home on the farm.

2023 PROGRESS

The project encountered some challenges in expanding in 2023. The second-hand bike market in Madagascar is still quite limited, meaning that bikes are relatively expensive (£100-200 each) and difficult to obtain.

We received additional funding to support this project in the first half of 2023, and our partners Ankizy Gasy were successful in obtaining a second bike in Q4. A recipient was selected in December 2023, with plans to facilitate the loan of the bike in Q1 2024.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Community Health Worker Project



Following a successful pilot year that finished in September 2023, we received funding from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust to expand the programme.

BACKGROUND

Many children and their families who are supported by SSFA and partners Ankizy Gasy present with a range of health conditions on a regular basis. The lack of medical expertise within the team at Ankizy Gasy prior to this pilot meant that nearly all children and parents were sent to the local equivalent of the GP, located at the local Centre de Santé de Base.

Given the strain the health system in Madagascar is under, patients can wait all day to see a doctor, meaning they miss out on work or education. Doctors know that patients can rarely afford blood tests, so diagnosis can be speculative and many patients are prescribed antibiotics 'just in case' for common viruses, leading to issues with antimicrobial resistance. Finally, many ailments are relatively minor, do not actually require the attention of a doctor, and can be dealt with by receiving advice from a trained nurse.

To ensure better access to healthcare for the young people and their families supported by our programmes with Ankizy Gasy, we initiated a pilot project in September 2022, employing a qualified nurse to work full time as a community health worker (CHW), with five main objectives:

- (1) to triage patients and assess who really needs to attend the doctor**
- (2) provide basic medical advice on matters like colds, flus and first aid**
- (3) support those who need to attend hospital by accompanying them, advocating for them and helping explain what's happening to families who have often not previously interacted with secondary/tertiary healthcare**
- (4) support the management of long-term health conditions e.g. diabetes, asthma**
- (5) provide community health education sessions to help improve health literacy and awareness in Ambohidratimo**

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



PILOT RESULTS (Oct 2022-Sept 2023)

- Nearly 500 children were seen, some multiple times.
- 45% of patients received advice or first aid from the CHW, needing no further medical intervention.
- 30% referred to primary care, 9% to hospital, 6% to other services, and 1 patient to traditional medicine.
- Common conditions: cold/flu (35%), gastro-intestinal (10%), dental complaints (9%), general injuries (9%).
- CHW hosted 19 health education sessions on contraception, dental hygiene, nutrition, immunisation, child health, and first aid.

NEXT STEPS

Following the mid-year review of this pilot in Spring 2023, SSFA applied to the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust for a grant to support the full implementation of this project with Ankizy Gasy over two years.

The application was successful, and SSFA received a grant to support the wages of two community health workers for two years, as well as the purchase of essential medical equipment, including a patient examination bed, baby scales, diabetes monitoring kit and more.

The second CHW was hired in December 2023 following a robust recruitment process, and started work in January 2024.

This grant is enabling the project to reach even more families, with the extra community health worker able to focus on outreach activities, including a full health education programme, accompanying patients to health appointments and working together with social worker colleagues on the intersections of health, housing, nutrition and employment.

SSFA is grateful to HKCT for the support, and to Ankizy Gasy for their hard work and partnership, particularly Nurse Tina, through this first phase, and looks forward to future success and milestones.

2023 PRIORITIES: HOW WE DID

Overall, we had a strong year in delivering on our key priorities, with **progress across all three areas.**

01

Start transition towards a programme-oriented work mode, away from a child sponsorship model



2023/24 was the first school year in which we did not enrol new children into our sponsorship programmes and we communicated this policy change to all sponsors. As detailed in this report, we also made excellent progress in our programme-based work, expanding our Community Health Worker and Bike Projects, and continuing our Social Worker Project

02

Continue to build on our healthcare programmes



Our Community Health Worker programme has now expanded to include a second CHW and the purchase of essential equipment, thanks to support from the Hayden Kirkwood Charitable Trust. SSFA is grateful to HKCT for the support, and to Ankizy Gasy for their hard work and partnership.

03

Increase communications and donor/partner engagement, espec. around SSFA's 10th Anniversary



We hosted two 10th Anniversary events in 2023, to engage with supporters, partners and beneficiaries in London and Madagascar. We also sent out a special anniversary edition of our newsletter and maintained a strong social media presence. We also initiated a recruitment process for part-time administrative support, to meet the growing needs of SSFA in this area.

2024 PRIORITIES

In 2024, the focus will be on building capacity and strengthening the trustee board, through SSFA's ongoing transition

01

Build capacity and resilience as SSFA expands, by hiring part-time administrative support



As Small Steps for Africa has expanded, so have the administrative needs, particularly with regards to ensuring that supporters have regular communications on how their donations are being spent. With this in mind, we are looking to hire some part-time administrative support in 2024, initially for half a day per week.

02

Expand, refresh and diversify our trustee board



Many of SSFA's trustees have been with the charity for almost two terms, so 2024/5 will be a period of turnover and an opportunity to recruit new trustees with a variety of skillsets. We will take this opportunity to enhance the diversity of the board and will consider how best to represent Malagasy perspectives on the board.

03

Continue transition towards more programme-based model



Building on the success in 2023 of our Community Health Worker and Bike Projects, we will look to consolidate and improve our existing programmes. A trustee away day is planned in 2024/5 to enable trustees to consider the strategic direction of programmes in the coming years.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The full accounts and external examiner's report are attached to this annual report. Here we set out a brief Treasurer's report on key financial matters pertaining to SSFA in 2023, and feature the main overview from the SSFA accounts.

Section A Receipts and payments				
	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £
A1 Receipts				
Grant: Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust	-	6,200	-	6,200
Ankizy Gasy: education fund	-	5,975	-	5,975
Ankizy Gasy: social fund	-	600	-	600
Ankizy Gasy: bike project	-	500	-	500
Akany Avoko Faravohitra	-	1,371	-	1,371
Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo	-	2,504	-	2,504
Josh and Charlotte Wedding Fund (2023 only)	-	3,355	-	3,355
Events & handicrafts	780	-	-	780
Unrestricted donations	5,592	-	-	5,592
(Event deposit return)	-	175	-	175
Landslide Appeal (2022 only)	-	-	-	-
Restricted donations (2022 only)	-	-	-	-
Ankizy Gasy straight through (2022 only)	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	6,372	20,680	-	27,052
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).				
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	6,372	20,680	-	27,052
A3 Payments				
Akany Avoko Faravohitra	-	3,000	-	3,000
Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo	-	3,165	-	3,165
Expenses	1,124	-	-	1,124
Ankizy Gasy	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,124	6,165	-	7,289
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)				
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-
Total payments	1,124	6,165	-	7,289
Net of receipts/(payments)	5,248	14,515	-	19,763
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	3,954	-	-	3,954
Cash funds this year end	9,202	14,515	-	23,717

Treasurer's report and summary

The most significant financial matter of note in 2023 is that Small Steps for Africa received income of more than £25,000 for the first time.

This means SSFA is now subject to external examination, as per Charity Commission regulations. Alison Jordan, who has experience running financial controls for a medium-sized business, was appointed as External Examiner by trustees.

Other matters of note include:

- Due to payment processing delays associated with Christmas bank holidays, the annual grant payment to Ankizy Gasy of £21,100 only left the SSFA account only on 02/01/2024, so will appear in the 2024 accounts. This spend mostly covers our 2023 activities with Ankizy Gasy, including the payment of school fees for academic year 2023/24.
- SSFA received its first grant from an external organisation in 2023, namely the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust, to fund our joint Community Health Worker programme with Ankizy Gasy. Disbursement of these funds has been in agreement with HKCT and is subject to a yearly formal reporting process and regular informal reports.
- Funds raised on the occasion of Charlotte Baker and Joshua Morgan's wedding were allocated to the construction of a new canteen at Les Lauriers School, via Ankizy Gasy.
- Receipts and payments for Akany Avoko Faravohitra are considerably lower than in 2022, due to the trustees decision to discontinue our partnership with AAF from July 2023. This is set out in more detail elsewhere in this report.
- The expansion of our partnership with Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo results in payments to AAA increasing considerably in 2023.
- Expenses in 2023 were mostly related to the costs associated with SSFA's 10th Anniversary Reception in June 2023 and annual Quiz Night in November 2023.

SSFA'S MISSION

OUR AIMS

Small Steps for Africa was founded in 2013 with the aim of supporting communities in Sub-Saharan Africa, with the first decade of our work focusing in Madagascar, particularly in communities in and around the capital Antananarivo, who struggle to access education and healthcare.

We work with partners to:

- **Advance education in order to enable young people to gain skills that lead to employment opportunities.**
- **Promote health for the public benefit of those in Madagascar.**

HOW WE WORK

We work together with three local NGOs based in Madagascar - Ankizy Gasy, Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo and Akany Avoko Faravohitra - to implement programmes to support education and health promotion in the Faravohitra district of Antananarivo, and the commune of Ambohidratimo, around 20km from the centre of Antananarivo.

Our partner organisations are run and staffed by experienced, skilled professionals who understand the local context and needs of the population, and work hard to co-create appropriate programmes with SSFA.

SSFA trustees visit Madagascar at least every 18 months to see progress for themselves, and have regular virtual meetings with partners to discuss progress, as well as more formal reporting mechanisms, including inspection of accounts and annual reports, as well as progress updates on individual projects.

HOW WE RAISE FUNDS

We raise funds in the UK from direct monthly donations, support for individual children via our child sponsorship programmes, and fundraising events such as quiz nights. We are fortunate to have a very loyal supporter base of dedicated individuals and businesses, who have given tremendous support to our work over the years.

Our treasurer is a qualified accountant and compiles the SSFA accounts for external inspection, in full compliance with Charity Commission regulations. Accounts are always available for inspection on request.

Trustee details and official information

This report was prepared by SSFA trustees.

The trustees who prepared and approved this report are:

- Prue Baker (Chair of Trustees)
- Charlotte Baker (Operations Director)
- Adam Brunt (Treasurer) - in post to September 2024
- Matthew Short - in post from April 2024
- Rory Dilworth (Secretary)
- Helen Pye
- Tracey Baker

Registered address

1 Ravenscourt Road
Lymington
HAMPSHIRE
SO41 3PJ

Charity Commission Registration Number: 1181553



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Small Steps for Africa

No (if any)
1181553

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/01/2023

To

31/12/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grant: Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust	-	6,200	-	6,200	N/A
Ankizy Gasy: education fund	-	5,975	-	5,975	6,209
Ankizy Gasy: social worker fund	-	600	-	600	N/A
Ankizy Gasy: bike project	-	500	-	500	N/A
Akany Avoko Faravohitra	-	1,371	-	1,371	5,495
Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo	-	2,504	-	2,504	N/A
Josh and Charlotte Wedding Fund (2023 only)	-	3,355	-	3,355	N/A
Events & handicrafts	780	-	-	780	1,210
Unrestricted donations	5,592	-	-	5,592	3,802
(Event deposit return)	-	175	-	175	-
Landslide Appeal (2022 only)	-	-	-	-	1,530
Restricted donations (2022 only)	-	-	-	-	2,860
Ankizy Gasy straight through (2022 only)	-	-	-	-	1,257
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	6,372	20,680	-	27,052	22,363
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	6,372	20,680	-	27,052	22,363
A3 Payments					
Akany Avoko Faravohitra	-	3,000	-	3,000	6,390
Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo	-	3,165	-	3,165	800
Expenses	1,124	-	-	1,124	421
Ankizy Gasy	-	-	-	-	13,900
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,124	6,165	-	7,289	21,511
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	1,124	6,165	-	7,289	21,511
Net of receipts/(payments)	5,248	14,515	-	19,763	852
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	3,954	-	-	3,954	-
Cash funds this year end	9,202	14,515	-	23,717	852

Section 2 Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories

Details

Unrestricted funds
to nearest £

Restricted funds
to nearest £

Endowment funds
to nearest £

B1 Cash funds

Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust grant	-	3,150	-
Restricted		11365	-
Unrestricted	9,202	-	-
Total cash funds	9,202	14,515	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

OK

OK

OK

Unrestricted funds
to nearest £

Restricted funds
to nearest £

Endowment funds
to nearest £

B2 Other monetary assets

Details

	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details

Fund to which asset belongs

Cost (optional)

Current value (optional)

		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details

Fund to which asset belongs

Cost (optional)

Current value (optional)

		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details

Fund to which liability relates

Amount due (optional)

When due (optional)

		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval

Matthew Short
Rory Dilworth

MATTHEW SHORT
RORY DILWORTH

15/10/2024
17/10/2024



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

Small Steps for Africa

On accounts for the year
ended

31st December 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1181553

Set out on pages

1 & 2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st December 2023

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. *Delete [] if not applicable.*

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

21.10.2024

Name:

Alison Jordan

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

N/A

(if any):

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Address:

Marlwood House, Silver Street, Lymington, Hants SO41 6DG

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Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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