

SSFA ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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1. DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION



CHARLOTTE BAKER

Director and Founder, SSFA

Coming off the back of our wonderful 10th Anniversary celebrations in 2023, 2024 provided us with an opportunity to take stock on our progress, consolidate our programmes and start to etch out priorities for the coming years.

I remain particularly proud and grateful for the huge strides forward we've made with partners on our Access to Healthcare programme in recent years.

Thanks to the fantastic support of the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust, we were able to expand the programme in 2023/24, employing a second Community Health Worker (CHW), purchasing essential equipment and putting on dozens of Community Health Education sessions.

It is a testament to the hard work from Nurse Tina and the whole Ankizy Gasy team that the project has continued to go from strength to strength, providing much needed health support, education and advice for hundreds of people in the community of Ambohidratimo.

Of course, this work - and all our work with Ankizy Gasy - has been made even more impactful by the opening of their new mentoring centre, which was completed in late 2024 and formally opened in early 2025. We are so excited to see this purpose-built community hub evolve, and play host to initiatives supported by SSFA and other funding partners.

This year, we also celebrated academic success among many of our cohort of sponsored young people. We have record numbers attending higher and further education, aiming to pursue careers as accountants, teachers, mechanics, machinists and tour guides. It is truly incredible to see children we've supported for more than a decade reach their full potential, earning degrees and diplomas, and building sustainable futures.

2024 saw one of our star pupils - Therezia - graduate from her nursing degree, after many years of hard work. We couldn't be prouder of her, and are grateful to her sponsors for their long-term, dedicated support. We wish her every success as she looks for her first full-time job in the state healthcare system.

We were also pleased to cement our new partnership with Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo in 2024, now under the directorship of Hanta Randrianarimalala, former director at Akany Avoko Faravohitra. I'm continually impressed by the nurturing atmosphere she creates for all the young people in her care, as well the culture of academic excellence she fosters. Most of our supported young people at AAA are top of their class, regularly winning prizes. Given their often complex backgrounds, this is a feat particularly worthy of mention.

Finally, I'd just like to offer a word of thanks to our dedicated supporters, without whom we couldn't do any of this impactful work. We are a small charity, run almost exclusively by volunteers, and you choosing to donate to us, year after year, is truly humbling. We never take it for granted, as we strive to improve the lives of young people in Madagascar, one step at a time.

With best wishes,

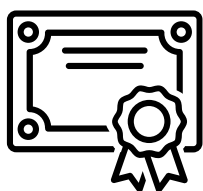
Charlotte

2. HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024



RECORD NO. OF STUDENTS SUPPORTED INTO FURTHER & HIGHER EDUCATION

12 students were supported by SSFA to take part in university or vocational training studies in 2024, undertaking Bachelors, Masters and Diploma courses.



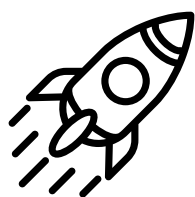
12 PUPILS RECEIVED FORMAL EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

12 pupils passed their CEPE, BEPC and Baccalaureate state exams.



COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMME STRENGTHENED

Our second Community Health Worker started work in 2024, and we expanded our health education programme, putting on over 30 sessions.



70% OF SUPPORTED PUPILS PASSED END-OF-YEAR EXAMS

The majority of children supported through our programmes with Ankizy Gasy and Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo progressed to the next school year.



NEW MENTORING CENTRE SUPPORTED

SSFA supported Ankizy Gasy's new mentoring centre, which opened in Autumn 2024, by kitting out the bespoke medical room.



3. ACCESS TO EDUCATION



OVERVIEW

Our aim is that the young people we support, together with our partners, have every opportunity to learn, thrive and gain skills that will lead to sustainable future employment.

As first communicated in the ‘Strategic Vision: 2023-2026’ outlined in our 2022 Annual Report, we are moving away from child sponsorship being the main vehicle for supporting children through education. For children currently enrolled, there is no change and we take great pride in their successes and achievements.

However, we will increasingly look to support access to education through targeted large-scale interventions and programmes, rather than supporting individual children. 2025/26 will be a key target for commencing this work, as we start to have fewer children enrolled in our programmes, and can divert resources towards devising tailored programmes.



IN 2023/4 WE
SUPPORTED **57**
YOUNG PEOPLE TO
ACCESS
EDUCATION

**MORE THAN 70% OF
THEM PASSED THEIR**
END OF YEAR
EXAMS AND
PROGRESSED TO
THE NEXT YEAR

**12 PUPILS RECEIVED
FORMAL STATE
QUALIFICATIONS -
CEPE, BEPC AND
BACCALAUREATE**

ACCESS TO EDUCATION: 2024 highlights



1. INCREASED PARTICIPATION IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

In 2024, we were particularly pleased to see an increasing number of young people supported by SSFA and Ankizy Gasy pursue vocational and practical training. We are immensely proud of the dozen or so university students we've supported in recent years - however, we recognise that university isn't the right option for everyone. In 2024, we supported 5 young people to pursue vocational training in machine sewing and car mechanics. This builds on previous support for hairdressing and chef training, offered through our partnership with AAA.

2. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AT AKANY AVOKO AMBOHIDRATIMO

Not only does Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo children's centre offer a safe haven for young people, it also fosters a culture of academic excellence. We have been delighted to note the successes of the young people we support there at all levels - from primary school, to successfully graduating university. In 2024, we were particularly pleased to see a young woman we've supported for 10 years find a full-time job that utilises her accountancy and finance degree and now live independently - demonstrating the tangible impact of our programmes.

3. BIKE PROJECT EXPANDS

A third bike was purchased during 2024 and allocated to a new student, who started using it in early 2025. This now means that three young people and their families who live in remote, rural areas around Ambohidratimo are benefiting from the increased connectivity to work, education and health opportunities, and the increased safety and convenience their bike offers.

4. SOCIAL WORKER SUPPORT CONTINUES - AND IS MORE VITAL THAN EVER

SSFA's Social Worker programme remains an integral part of our work to keep children safe, happy and able to get the most out of their education. In 2024, we supported one social worker at Ankizy Gasy, who works with the near 1000 children in their programmes, and one social worker at Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo, who supports the dozens of children who call the centre home.



4. ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



OVERVIEW

Access to healthcare is a fundamental need, and helps to keep the young people we support in good health and able to engage with their education. However, the health system in Madagascar is under strain, and often expensive for the families that need to access it, while the lack of access to affordable diagnostic testing means antibiotics are often prescribed without a firm diagnosis.

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

Following the success of this pilot (see 2023 Annual Report), we received funding from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust to expand the project, employing a second Community Health Worker and purchasing essential medical equipment. The first year of this project ran from October 2023 - September 2024 inclusive, with results detailed overleaf.

ACCESS TO HEALTH: 2024 highlights



STRONG DATA FOR IMPACT OF FIRST YEAR OF COMMUNITY HEALTHWORKER PROJECT

In 2024, we built on the successful Community Health Worker (CHW) pilot that we ran together with our partners Ankizy Gasy, and took it into its first full year (October 2023-September 2024 inclusive) with funding from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust.

The funding enabled us to:

- **Employ two qualified Community Healthworkers** - including a former student supported by our partners.
- They provided health advice, triage, first aid and support to **more than 1000 patients**.
- They also **delivered 32 health education sessions** in the community, covering topics including vaccination, first aid, contraception, drugs and healthy eating.
- Around **60% of young people** who **interacted** with our **CHWs required no further medical intervention**, saving them time and money, easing burden on local health services, and helping prevent unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions.
- With HKCT funding, we were also able to **purchase essential health equipment**, including an examination bed, scales, asthma and diabetes monitoring kits and first aid supplies.
- The completion of Ankizy Gasy's new mentoring centre provided the opportunity for the **provision of a bespoke medical room**, which has been kitted out with the equipment mentioned above, plus some additional items. In 2024, the benefit of these new facilities was just starting to be realised, with the hosting of a free blood pressure check for members of the community.



5. PRIORITIES IN 2024- HOW WE DID

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

We received funding from an individual donor to support the hiring of a part-time member of staff on a trial basis of six months, to support administrative functions at SSFA. This was a successful pilot, however unfortunately the administrative assistant fell ill and had to leave SSFA before the end of the trial period. Trustees agreed to best consider how to build on the successful pilot, and that there would be value in hiring another assistant in the future, should funding become available on a longer-term basis.

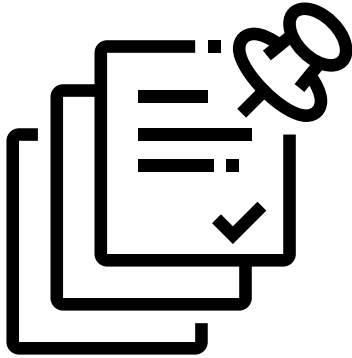
2 **Expand, refresh and diversify our trustee board**

We successfully recruited a new trustee, Matthew Short, in 2024. Matthew brings with him a wealth of experience running his own small business, and has now taken up the role of treasurer. In 2025, two members of the trustee board are due to roll off, and we will be seeking to replace them and add to the trustee board skill sets, namely in the fields of education, communications/marketing, and governance. We also initiated conversations with Malagasy partners in 2024 about the best way to represent Malagasy perspectives on the board.

3 **Continue transition towards programme based model**

The Community Health Worker programme continues to go from strength to strength, and was the focal point of our programme-based work in 2024 (see main report). We also continued to expand our Bike Project, maintained our Social Worker programme, and adjusted the support given to individual families in crisis, taking a holistic view of measures that would help improve school attendance, for instance, to good effect. In 2024, the child sponsorship programme took up the majority of limited administrative time for the SSFA Operations Director, administrative assistant and trustees. Until there are significantly fewer sponsored children on roster, SSFA will unlikely open new programmes, but instead focus on improving and expanding those mentioned above.

6. PRIORITIES IN 2025



REVIEW & EXPAND HEALTH-RELATED INVESTMENTS

Thanks to funding from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust, 2025 will see the third anniversary of our Community Healthworker Project, including the 2022/23 pilot year. This provides an excellent opportunity to consider the impact of the programme, and strategically decide how to best maximise the impact of SSFA's health-related work in 2026 and beyond.



CONTINUE GOVERNANCE REFORM & UPDATES

Building on the successful addition of our new trustee and treasurer in 2024, we will look to advertise for two new trustees, update our trustees' training, and complete a governance 'health check'.

EXPAND FUNDING & CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

In 2025, we will look to build on the strong relationship we've developed with the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust to consider other funding routes, both from grant-making organisations and corporations, via corporate-social responsibility and employee projects.

7. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
SMALL STEPS FOR AFRICA

No (if any)
1181553

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from
01/01/2024

Period start date
01/01/2024

To

Period end date
30/12/2024

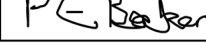
Section A Receipts and payments

	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
Ankizy Gasy: Education Fund	-	6 111	-	6 111	5 975
Ankizy Gasy: Social Fund	-	650	-	650	600
Ankizy Gasy: Bike Project	-	250	-	250	500
Akany Avoko Faravohitra	-	-	-	-	1 371
Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo	-	3 872	-	3 872	2 504
Josh and Charlotte Wedding Fund 2023	-	-	-	-	3 355
Events & Handicrafts	3 235	-	-	3 235	780
Unrestricted Donations	3 788	-	-	3 788	5 592
Event Deposit Return	-	-	-	-	175
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	7 023	10 883	-	17 906	27 052
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	7 023	10 883	-	17 906	27 052
A3 Payments					
Akany Avoko Faravohitra	-	-	-	-	3 000
Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo	-	4 270	-	4 270	3 165
Expenses	3 453	-	-	3 453	1 124
Ankizy Gasy	-	21 100	-	21 100	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	3 453	25 370	-	28 823	7 289
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	3 453	25 370	-	28 823	7 289
Net of receipts/(payments)	3 570	- 14 487	-	- 10 917	19 763
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	9 202	14 515	-	23 717	3 954
Cash funds this year end	12 772	28	-	12 800	23 717

Section B 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		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		12 772	28	-
	Total cash funds	12 772	28	-
	(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		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities				
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Matthew Short	15/10/2025
	P E Baker	15/10/2025

8. TREASURERS REPORT

* OVERVIEW

SSFA had a strong year in terms of programme delivery and meeting key objectives, however income in 2024 was reduced compared to the previous year - and indeed compared to most years since the COVID-19 pandemic.

In common with many other small charities, SSFA saw a decrease in the number of regular supporters. The cost-of-living-crisis is clearly having an impact on the disposable income of many people, and we saw several long-term supporters decide to stop sending regular donations, which has had an impact on our income, particularly towards the Ankizy Gasy education programme.

Another key point of financial context is that 2024 is only the second year since 2019 that we haven't run a one-off fundraising campaign - in previous years, these have covered emergencies (COVID-19 and the landslide appeal at AAF), and also individual fundraising efforts e.g. the donations given for Charlotte and Joshua's wedding in 2023, which contributed towards the canteen at Les Lauriers School. These one-off efforts have typically boosted funds in any given years by several thousand pounds.

Finally, as set out in our Strategic Plan, we are moving away from a child sponsorship model - this means that as children graduate from our sponsorship programme, they are not replaced. Many sponsors have kindly switched their donations from that programme to 'unrestricted funds', but a number of others decide at that moment to finish supporting SSFA all together.

* OTHER MATTERS OF NOTE



Due to payment processing delays associated with Christmas bank holidays, the annual 2023 grant payment to Ankizy Gasy of £21,100 left the SSFA account on 02/01/2024, so appears in these 2024 accounts. This spend mostly covers 2023 activities with Ankizy Gasy, including the payment of school fees for academic year 2023/24. The lateness of the transfer overall was associated with delays in confirming university enrolment and fees, which come later in the year than school.



As outlined in the 2023 report, SSFA ceased supporting Akany Avoko Faravohitra in 2023, so payments to AAF no longer appear on the accounts in 2024. Several children in the care of AAF transferred to Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo in late 2023/early 2024, which accounts for the increased contribution to AAA.



It is worth noting that the Community Healthworker grant from the Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust was paid in one amount in 2023, but disbursed over the course of two financial years. So the impact of that project has been felt over multiple years, but shows up somewhat unevenly in the accounting process.

9. 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 and Akany Avoko Ambohidratimo - 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 an experienced business owner and compiles the SSFA accounts in full compliance with Charity Commission regulations. Accounts are always available for inspection on request.

10. OFFICIAL INFORMATION: TRUSTEES + CONTACT

This report was prepared by the SSFA Board of Trustees:

- Prue Baker (Chair of Trustees)
- Charlotte Baker (Operations Director)
- Matthew Short (Treasurer)
- Rory Dilworth (Secretary)
- Helen Pye
- Tracey Baker



REGISTERED ADDRESS

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Lymington
HAMPSHIRE
SO41 3PJ