

Let Us Learn Madagascar

Empowering Girls Through Education

Reporting Period: October 2018-January 2021



Zonta International’s investment has enabled UNICEF to expand this important education initiative that addresses the major issues facing Madagascar’s most disadvantaged children, particularly girls. Because of Zonta’s support, thousands of Malagasy children have already been able to realize their right to an education.



1 in 4 children aged 6-10 in Madagascar does not attend primary school



1 in 3 children aged 11-14 in Madagascar does not attend secondary school

Flexible support from Zonta International allowed UNICEF to rapidly respond to the COVID-19 crisis and adopt mitigation efforts so that damage would not be long-lasting. Initial research on COVID-19 school closures has shown that Let Us Learn initiatives, including alternative learning models like the catch-up classes, will increase in demand as many of the poorest children have fallen behind during school closures.

Despite unprecedented challenges over the past two years, UNICEF made notable progress forging strong collaborations with implementing partners, enhancing learning environments, training teachers and building networks of parents and communities. In this context of a crippling learning crisis, Let Us Learn

has been a vehicle for achieving equitable, quality education for Madagascar’s most vulnerable children.

Let Us Learn interventions support children and their families, helping them enroll in school, stay in school and access the skills they will need for future success. The program’s innovative approach engages several sectors—education, social protection, child protection, communication for development, and water, sanitation, and hygiene—to address the broader challenges faced by adolescents.

Through this program, UNICEF works with communities, governments and partners to remove barriers to girls’ education and promote gender equality in education in the country’s most challenging regions. Because investing in girls’ secondary education is one of

the most transformative development strategies, UNICEF prioritizes efforts that enable all girls to complete their education.

Zonta’s contributions have been used to support program implementation in the regions of Androy and Atsimo Andrefana. When COVID-19 impacted schooling in Madagascar, UNICEF utilized a portion of Zonta’s contribution for the national emergency education response. This support ensured that children would continue to learn throughout the remainder of COVID-19 school closures and in the aftermath of the outbreak. All funds were utilized for activities that align with Let Us Learn’s key program outcomes around learning access and quality. With Zonta’s support, UNICEF was able to scale up its response to reach children in all 22 regions of Madagascar.

Challenges

- Activities were slowed down by the frequent turnover of ministers and directors at the Ministry of Education.
- At the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in Madagascar, all program activities except for emergency response activities were paused.
- COVID-19 reduced the time available for conducting catch-up classes from the standard two months to two weeks.
- Due to travel restrictions and other priorities at the start of the 2020-21 school year in the COVID-19 context, the

planned training on pedagogical supervision for school directors was not possible. This challenge also impacted planned child protection activities, in addition to security issues in certain districts vulnerable to violent attacks by cattle thieves.



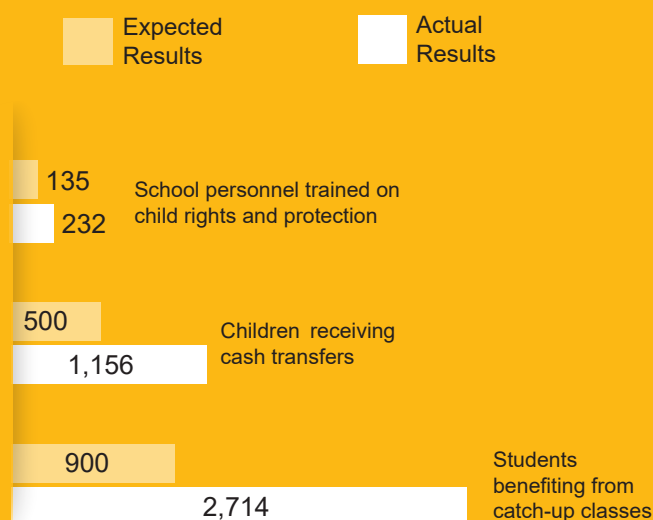
for every child



Results

- Construction projects were completed at Marolinta Lower Secondary School, including the construction of two classrooms, two latrine blocks and a sports field.
- **1,156 children (59% girls)** benefited from eight cash transfer payments.
- **2,714 out-of-school children (55% girls)** benefited from catch-up classes.
- **232 school personnel (130 principals and 102 teachers)** were trained on child protection.
- **97 children clubs** were established to improve community understanding of child rights and protection. A total of **1,226 children (50% girls)** are participating in children's clubs.
- **430 children** who experienced violence (342 girls and 88 boys) received care and support services.
- **88 people** have been trained to mobilize their communities to practice essential family practices, including sending children to school.
- **45,000 students (52% girls)** and **2,471 teachers (39% women)** in all public lower secondary schools in Androy and Atsimo Andrefana received bilingual Malagasy-French dictionaries.
- More than **140,000 students** in 16 regions affected by school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic received self-directed learning booklets to support their learning at home.
- By the end of Phase II, more girls and boys had access to post-primary education and the capacity of the education system to offer better-quality teaching and learning was improved.

Exceeding Expectations



Next Steps

From 2020-2022, Zonta International will continue to support the Let Us Learn Madagascar program with an additional US\$500,000. In this period, a total of **45,214 children (52% girls)** will benefit from the program.

Goal:

Address education and gender inequity in Madagascar through approaches targeted toward adolescent girls.

Specific objectives:

- Ensure that more children, particularly girls (who drop out at higher levels in the post-primary level) have access to post-primary education and stay in school.
- Ensure that Madagascar's education system has the capacity to offer quality teaching for enhanced learning outcomes.