



A Concept Note for

## **PROJECT RENITANTELY: PHASE II**

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**Improving the financial and environmental sustainability of  
beekeeping in the Anosy region**

February - 2024

## 1. Introduction

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SEED Madagascar (SEED) is currently seeking **£63,140** for Project Renitantly: Phase II, a *24-month phase* that aims *to improve the financial and environmental sustainability of existing beekeeping businesses* in the Anosy region, Madagascar.

SEED will build on the progress made in Phase I (2016-2019) and the Interim Phase (2019-2024) to improve beekeepers' productivity in managing apiaries and quality of beekeeping products, strengthen businesses through improved market access, entrepreneurial skills, and financial management capacity, and strengthen environmental sustainability of beekeeping in project communities through increased knowledge of natural resources.

Phase II will play a crucial role in supporting beekeepers to increase income generated from professional beekeeping businesses, whilst increasing resilience to environmental and financial shocks.

## 2. An Overview of Project Renitantly

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Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in the world, with 75% of the population surviving on less than US\$1.90 per day.<sup>1</sup> In the southeast Anosy region livelihood opportunities are limited, with over 98% of rural households engaging in small-scale farming, animal husbandry, and fishing.<sup>2</sup> There is an urgent need for the strengthening of alternative, sustainable livelihood strategies.

Beekeeping has the potential to generate vital household income and can complement traditional farming activities. It reduces pressure on dwindling natural resources, and actively supports biodiversity in a country where 75% of flora and fauna is dependent on insect pollination for survival. However, many beekeepers in the Anosy region are unable to capitalise on this opportunity. Rural communities are isolated from more lucrative markets, and strict criteria from formal international buyers require training and investment to adapt. Climate change and a growing population dependent on natural resources reduce the availability of bee forage. Beekeepers' lack of capital makes it difficult to maintain and expand apiaries and continue to fight invasive pests.

### 2.1 Previous Work in Project Renitantly

SEED aims to address these challenges by empowering beekeepers to manage beekeeping businesses that are both environmentally and financially sustainable.

Project Renitantly has supported beekeepers since 2016. Phase I of the project (September 2016 – August 2019) aimed to develop beekeeping as a sustainable livelihood, and built the capacity of 78 novice beekeepers in six communities by training technical beekeeping skills and providing equipment, leading to larger apiaries and increased honey yields.

To build upon the successes of Phase I, the project entered an Interim Phase (September 2019 – December 2023), focused on addressing challenges that limit the potential of beekeeping as a profitable and reliable livelihood. Due to COVID-19, this work took longer than anticipated.

Large differences in beekeepers' skill and motivation levels limited the project's impacts. At multiple points during the Interim Phase, after providing opportunities to improve, beekeepers were tested against minimum requirements, ensuring that only highly motivated beekeepers remained. Currently, the project works with 16 highly skilled and motivated beekeepers across three communities.

To address key challenges identified during Phase I, such as market access, the availability of bee forage, and pest management, solutions were identified and piloted. To increase supplier power and enable greater financial benefits from beekeeping, Beekeeping Associations were established, apiaries expanded, and businesses formalised. To enable professional honey extraction methods, a technique and equipment to make artisanal wax

sheets was developed, and hive models were upgraded. Fruit trees and crops were planted to supplement bee forage and beekeepers' incomes during COVID-19. Local natural pest management strategies were promoted.

With key solutions identified and tested, Project Renitantly: Phase II has been developed to turn these nascent beekeeping businesses into professional, profitable, and sustainable enterprises. SEED is currently implementing a Pre-Phase (January 2024 – June 2024), during which research is being conducted to inform the planned financial management and business skills training, essential to strengthening beekeepers' professional capacity in Phase II. The Pre-Phase seeks to engage beekeepers in three additional communities to ensure project impact and supplier power is increased in Phase II.

### **3. Proposed Project**

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To support an improvement in beekeeping efficiency, product yields and quality, Phase II will ensure beekeepers can sustain a profitable business. Training sessions in financial literacy and business skills, in combination with strengthening routes to market, will provide beekeepers with the knowledge and resources to build financial resilience and engage with market opportunities. Work to supplement bee forage will continue, with wider project communities also included to promote natural resource stewardship.

Initially, 53 beekeepers from six communities will be included in the project. This could increase to a total of 92 beekeepers by the end of Year One, if further beekeepers from these communities meet minimum requirements.

To improve the financial and environmental sustainability of beekeeping in the Anosy region, Project Renitantly: Phase II will work with, aiming to achieve the following outcomes:

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**Outcome 1: Beekeepers have improved productivity and product quality**

**Outcome 2: Beekeepers businesses are strengthened through improved market access, entrepreneurial skills, and financial management capacity**

**Outcome 3: Strengthened environmental sustainability of beekeeping in project communities**

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Training sessions and distribution of materials and equipment will lead to increased knowledge, growth of apiaries, and the adoption of more efficient beekeeping techniques. To ensure alignment with buyer expectations, all beekeepers will be supported to improve honey quality through the establishment and enforcement of honey quality standards.

By facilitating partnerships and formal agreements with existing and emerging buyers, and delivering training on the production of value-added products, SEED will support beekeepers to strengthen routes to market. Training in financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills, alongside the establishment of a saving scheme, will underpin an improved capacity for beekeepers to professionally manage their businesses and increase the financial resilience of beekeeping households.

SEED will collate and disseminate information on the efficacy and resilience of bee forage plants and plants used to manage pests, to improve the management and effective use of local natural resources. To involve beekeepers' wider communities in this effort, SEED will conduct video events on the importance of local biodiversity.

### **4. SEED's Capacity to Deliver**

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SEED is an award-winning, holistic international development charity which envisages communities and ecosystems thriving across Madagascar. Our central mission is to enhance the capacity of individuals, communities, organisations, and government in fulfilling sustainable environment, education, and development goals in southeast Madagascar.

With over 20 years of experience working with communities in this region, SEED's Rural Livelihoods Department is highly experienced, having implemented beekeeping projects since 2014. The project team consists of local beekeeping experts and international development professionals, enabling international best practice to be delivered through culturally appropriate approaches.

## 5. Summary Budget

Item	Total Budget (GBP)	
<b>Human Resources</b>	<b>33,322.97</b>	
<b>Equipment, materials, and resources</b>	Beekeeping skills and materials	5,768.87
	Business development	1,071.43
	Natural resources	1,202.45
	Monitoring and evaluation	612.24
<b>Activities</b>	Beekeeping skills and materials	657.14
	Business development	2,491.12
	Natural resources	790.62
<b>Travel and subsistence</b>	<b>7,250.41</b>	
<b>Communications</b>	<b>1,440.86</b>	
<b>Running costs</b>	<b>9,287.74</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,895.85</b>	

## 6. References

<sup>1</sup> The World Bank (2022). The World Bank in Madagascar: Overview.  
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/madagascar/overview>

<sup>2</sup> Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT) (2020). Troisieme Recensement General de la Population et de L'Habitation (RGPH-3)