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**MADAGASCAR**

# CASE STUDY

## Parents Step Up to Improve Schools

**PTAs have been key in encouraging parents to take leadership role**



Parents in Ambarimilambana are becoming more engaged with officials and community members to improve their school.

***“We are realizing there are things we can do to improve education... We are proud of what our community has done,” said principal Albert Taso.***

Telling Our Story  
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### Challenge

One of the keys to achieving the goal of universal, quality elementary education for all is encouraging parent-teacher associations (PTAs) to take leadership in the improvement and governance of local elementary schools. For communities like Ambarimilambana, that means identifying what they can do collectively, with the resources they have available locally, to improve their children's education.

### Initiative

USAID is providing the local parent-teacher associations with the skills necessary to develop and implement three-year school improvement plans. PTA members work with educators to set aspirations for their school and identify the human, material and financial assets available locally to realize these aspirations. In Ambarimilambana, parents recognized that low enrollment and attendance rates (particularly among girls), and the decaying condition of the school and teacher residences were preventing children from reaching their potential. They also realized that their community already possessed strengths and resources to address the situation. The initial discussions led to the development of a three-year school improvement plan between the community and local government officials.

### Results

The process has been a resounding success. Grade 1 enrollment has increased by 81% (77% for girls), and average attendance is now 98%. The improvements are the result of a number of initiatives. To increase enrollment, the mayor held meetings with parents to stress the importance of education, and PTA members began monitoring attendance. Now, if a child is absent, parents must provide a reason, which is documented in the child's file. Students in difficulty are identified and enrolled in PTA-sponsored tutorial classes. To increase girls' attendance and provide them with vocational skills, classes on crafts and culinary skills have been instituted. School infrastructure has improved. The community also has refurbished a classroom and two teacher residences, thanks to free labor and materials members provided.