

A Day in the Life in Madagascar through Camp Fihavanana:
Raising Courageous Leaders through a Youth Development Program

Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in
International Community Development to the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences of

Northwest University

By

Jessica Razanadrakoto

**** Author's Notes:**

Portions of this paper were written for the following classes: Practicum IV, Program Evaluation,
Social and Environmental Justice, Social Entrepreneurship, and Project Management.

1. Context: An Unspoken Humility

It is bedtime. I open my younger brother Jonathan's wooden bedroom door and behind it, in the wall chandeliers' dimmed light I spotted him tucked under his red velvet warm, fuzzy blanket on the floor snoring with his three friends. About four years ago he and his friends moved his wooden bed frame into the guest room, leaving his mattress on the floor to be on the "same level" as his friends sleeping over. Every morning he asks mom for two thousand ariary, an equivalent of eighty cents, to buy some deep fried dough balls for breakfast to share among his friends. Jonathan is an avid pétanque player, which is a sport played on an area called *terrain*, like raffa, bocce, and lawn bowling, also known as boules sports. He aspires to share his passion with others, so when he purchases new equipment, he often asks our parents for two sets. One night when we were sitting at the dinner table, mom said, "You know, purchasing two sets of everything adds up and becomes expensive in the long-run." Jonathan looked up from his plate, and I could tell by the look in his eyes he was trying to find an answer to this statement. Finally he replied, "I need an extra set of pétanque balls, so my friends can practice with them too. When they get really good, they can go abroad and compete. I know I can go abroad when I want." I silently compared Trevor Noah's fishing rod analogy to my brother's behavior. In his biography, Trevor Noah cites the Chinese proverb, "Give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he'll eat for a lifetime." In other words, teaching a man how to fish should come with a fishing rod (Noah 192). My brother knows he has opportunities that his friends do not. Since the lake is open to the public, all my brother wants is to provide his friends with fishing rods. He thrives when his friends flourish. I share this story because this is what inspires me in the community development world.

Jonathan and I get on our bikes to ride through the outskirts of the mountains of Moramanga our hometown. Some trails take us through eucalyptus forests and others challenge us with steep forty-five degree-angles. These “black diamond” trails tire our legs and sweat our bodies as our feet pump the pedals. We speed down the rugged hills riding high out of the saddle in a rush of adrenaline. The rocky ground bounces us in different directions and the mountain breeze cools us down. When we finally get to the bottom, Jonathan challenges me to a hands-free style. On smoother surfaces of the road, I did it. He then talks about his friends’ bike freestyle skills. “You know, Boco, no longer goes to school because he has to help his mom with work after his dad passed a year ago. And he is only fifteen.” I sensed his compassion for his friend, and unfortunately, millions of children face this reality throughout Madagascar. The Humanium organization, which advocates for Children’s Rights worldwide, has color-coded Madagascar in black, categorizing the country’s Children’s Rights as a “very serious situation.” Its website claims that “one in four Malagasy children aged 5 to 17 have to work in order to support their families” (Humanium). I hope to help break this cycle of unfortunate reality through the proposed youth development curriculum in Appendix C. My thesis includes both a curriculum and a context for the curriculum.

2. The Need: The Missing Pieces

2.1 Lack of Opportunity and Positive Community Support

Children need opportunity and community support to succeed. William Glasser, an American psychiatrist and author of *Reality Therapy*, argues that the most destructive of coercive behaviors is criticism, and he suggests that society must nurture warm and supportive relationships in order for students to succeed in school. He also identifies four basic needs young people require in order to succeed: the need to belong, the need for power, the need for freedom,

and the need for fun (Glasser). Many Malagasy youth, however, are unable to meet their needs in these areas. The Humanium reports, “Sometimes, families send their children – mainly their daughters – to work as servants in the city for richer families, who may promise to send them to school. 25% of these child laborers perform jobs that pose health risks.” In Madagascar, there is very little support for children’s rights and youth development. The government and surrounding communities lack the determination to make any change. Some people justify this failure by saying that youth development is too complex of an issue. As a result, Madagascar’s future generations are called the “lost generations.” Malagasy schools have low attendance and high dropout rates; 14.2% of children have never attended school and only 66% of children finish primary school (Humanium). Youth Policy, the leading global think-tank that focuses on youth, certifies that no online documentation can be found with regard to investing in Madagascar’s youth. Only the World Bank notes that Madagascar spent 2.72% of its GDP on education provision in 2012 (Youth Policy). Based on such statistics, one can conclude that there is a lack of opportunity and emphasis on youth development and little priority is given to programs and policies that promote it in Madagascar. The World Bank affirms that the reason why Madagascar does not invest in its youth is because “In Madagascar, political parties are influenced by elites to act as a nexus for political patronage networks geared toward the maintenance of power... controlling the legislature” (World Bank xi). This control of power is rooted in selfishness and finding no values or benefit in educating youth.

It takes a village to raise our children. The community in which children grow bears the primary responsibility to educate youth, who thrive in a community where they feel safe, supported, recognized, and accepted for who they are. Communities in Madagascar lack responsible stakeholders and a place where children are encouraged to be creative and

productive, to be risk-takers, and to trust one another. In their text *Social Entrepreneurship*, David Bornstein and Susan Davis state, “To encourage more people to be change makers, schools should help students to believe (1) that their ideas are valuable; (2) that it is good to ask questions and take initiatives; (3) that it is fun to collaborate with others; and (4) that it is far better to make mistakes than not to try at all” (84). In a conversation with a Kenyan high school senior, Babra Ndiritu shared what she does with the YMCA (Y)’s Youth and Government program. She identifies an issue that needs to be changed in her community, then she writes and presents a bill to the senators and legislators in Olympia, WA. in hopes for approval. She said:

“If you want to change something in your community that you don’t like, this is an opportunity to do that. I advocated for the addition of accounting classes to the high school curriculum because that is a real life skill high school students need. Nobody teaches us how to file our taxes or how to save money after college although we are expected to know that.” (Babra)

The YMCA exemplifies this transformational model program that allows participants to freely advocate for what they believe needs to be changed. Opportunity of programs like the Youth and Government program where youth are trusted and encouraged to take initiative and where their ideas are valued is what is missing in Madagascar. We believe these types of programs empower youth to make the difference they want to see in their community. That is why Sophie Connot, Laura Patterson, and I have launched a leadership program called Camp Fihavanana (Camp Fi). It is a program modeled from the United States and tailored to the Malagasy culture. This kind of project is a new developmental concept for Madagascar, designed for youth between 13 to 18 years old. Every year, Camp Fihavanana provides an opportunity for thirty Malagasy youth to attend the program and become *courageous* leaders through a supportive community.

2.2 Lack of Quality Leaders

In the summer of 2011 when Madagascar was under a high transitional authority because of a *Coup d'Etat*, my mom and I were riding in a taxi in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo, shortened to Tana, when the phone rang. When her face turned pale, I knew something was wrong. As soon as she hung up the phone, she turned to me and said, "The police brought a search warrant to the house and took dad with them." No further explanation. She took me to the bus station, put me on a bus to go home to be with my siblings, and kissed me goodbye. The bus pulled out of the parking lot and left her behind to wait for my dad and the police officers to get to Tana. The bus drove for an hour through the winding mountain roads, and along the way it passed a green military Jeep. When I glanced over for a moment, I could see my dad in the back handcuffed and squished between two gendarmes. I pressed against the window seat trying to wave, but he did not see me. Days later, I was told this whole incident occurred because someone from the bank shared private information about my parents withdrawing a large amount of money – money by the way which they needed to purchase rice with in the countryside to sell wholesale in the city. Our country's broken system forces people to carry large amounts of cash with them because banks are located only in larger cities. Most farmers live in the vicinity of their farm fields and do not have bank accounts. A current Madagascar Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) Stephan Laboy affirms, "I think about this literally every day, how there is no access to micro credit or larger loans in the *ambanivolo* (country side). Or how if [farmers] somehow try to get credit in the city, how hard it would be for someone who doesn't speak French or is just plain illiterate and has no collateral."

With little or no law enforcement, government and military officials abuse their power over simple citizens and become corrupt. Author Robert Klitgaard states, "Government officials

have a *motive* for corruption when they cannot live on what they are paid. Payoffs for being corrupt are large, and the chances of their being caught and punished are small” (89). When the police bribed my dad \$20,000 against his freedom, he refused because he was innocent. When he refused to pay, the police searched for other means to extort money from him. The news reported my dad had planned to use hunting guns to kill the transitional president, and this false accusation against my dad remained on the news for nearly two weeks. Through three weeks of madness, my mom negotiated down with the policemen and came up with \$2,000 to pay the ransom. On the same day the ransom was paid, my dad became a free man. Although poverty is a reality, government officials do not have the right to abuse their power on other citizens. This story is just one example of the social injustice, lack of law enforcement and the low quality of leadership that exists in Madagascar today. Because of this kind of corrupt leadership, the main goal of Camp Fihavanana is to raise courageous Malagasy young leaders to become more justice-oriented and be the difference in the country.

3. Project: Camp Fihavanana Development

Camp Fihavanana is an eight-day leadership program that takes place in Moramanga, Madagascar. The program is designed to raise courageous young Malagasy leaders. A starting place for development, Camp Fihavanana is trying to demonstrate Bryant Myers’ statement in *Engaging Globalization* that today’s globalization is about engaging with other cultures to enrich our lives and to make us more fully human (50). Although the literal translation is difficult to render in English, “fihavanana” embraces the concept of kinship, friendship, and community. Program co-founders adapted this summer program idea from the United States to create opportunities, build character, and develop leadership skills in Malagasy youth and to bring back the meaning of Fihavanana into US communities. It emphasizes the value of community. Co-

founders emphasize that, “Camp Fihavanana works to incorporate the warmth of *fihavanana* in every activity, communication and interaction we have” (Camp Fihavanana). Our program was pilot-tested in 2017 and 2018 and in each year the curriculum became more sensitive to the Malagasy culture by addressing social needs based on campers’ survey responses, conversations, and observations. The curriculum’s content is comprised of the following five elements:

(1) Social Justice, (2) Individual Leadership, (3) Group Leadership, (4) Communication, and (5) Problem Solving.

3.1 Social Justice

My neighbors work where they live. When I leave my house for my morning run, my neighbors open their wooden doors and windows and lay out used clothes and shoes for sale. The farther I go, I notice wooden bed frames next to the rice-grinding and blacksmith machines inside people’s homes. Reaching the outskirts of town, I see people living next to, and even living off of, garbage dumps. Madagascar’s largest dump, known as *Ralalitra*, is located in the capital and is also one of Africa’s largest rubbish sites. It is ironic that a dumpster turns out to be one’s zip code or is used as a landmark to refer to one’s home. A Guardian article reports, “People who work on the dump site collect metals, coal and plastic from among the chaotic mess of needles, rats, feces and aborted babies” (Maguire). Not only do these people search for reusable metals to sell, but they also look for left-over scraps of food to eat – a social and environmental injustice that occurs throughout the country. It is a human right to have social security and dignity. Camp Fihavanana is a beginning place not only to raise awareness of social justice, but also to provide tools and guidance to take action.

Camp Fihavanana’s first pillar of social justice addresses economic justice. Every year I lead a reflective conversation with camp participants to raise awareness as to why resources in

Madagascar are exploited by foreigners. This conversation often revolves around colonization. Participants have stated a few reasons for such exploitation – laziness for not taking responsibility of the country’s resources, lack of technology to learn what resources are available, and the government’s selfishness (Razanadrakoto Fieldnotes 2018). Author and Professor of Theological and Social Ethics Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda writes, “Different economic structures have long-term consequences for human and ecological well-being” (202). Helping campers find their voice and letting them know their opinions matter is one way to positively influence Madagascar’s long-term sustainable economic democracy. Camp Fihavanana’s activities teach participants to think for themselves and to be creative. Such creativity relates to the importance of the campers’ active participation in the economy of Madagascar because as Malagasy citizens, they need to be the driving economic force of the country. Malagasy people need to build economic capacity for their own local goods through social entrepreneurship for better paying jobs. Moe-Lobeda emphasizes, “Believing that change is possible is the crucial first step toward realizing it” (202). Camp Fihavanana is only a tool to awaken participants to believe change is possible. Every individual needs to take part to secure economic justice.

Our social justice pillar also addresses the Malagasy youth identity. The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, “Youth should be given a chance to take an active part in the decision-making of local, national and global levels” (qtd. in Merrick et al. 2). This statement pushes for responsible and civic-minded engaged youth. As a former French colony, it is important for Malagasy youth to reflect on Madagascar’s decolonization and define what independence means to them. Lynette Tillery, an African American PCV in Madagascar, argues in her reflection that colonization created white supremacy, which in turn resulted in the disproportional social oppression faced by people of color in Madagascar. White and light-

skinned people often own an undeserving authority over dark-skinned people. Lynette says that “many Malagasy people associate *vazaha* (foreigners), especially white *vazaha*, with being rich or better educated, and therefore hold them in high esteem. On the flip side, there is some hostility toward foreigners due to the residual effects of colonization in Madagascar” (Tillery). Our social justice pillar challenges participants to understand what it means to be a Malagasy, regardless of whether they are light or dark skinned.

Finally, the social justice pillar intends for participants to think about systemic issues and resource distribution – money, land, jobs, and business opportunities – within the country. This piece of social justice is set forth in the activity called “Issues Web” in which we discuss the problems Madagascar is facing today. Although we predicted responses concerning systemic issues like poverty, unemployment, corruption, and insecurity, many of our participants unexpectedly called out other more personal issues like jealousy, hypocrisy, gossip, disrespect, and unfaithfulness between married couple. It was tempting to raise issues that campers did not think about deeply enough, like the social justice issues the activity was originally geared toward. However, according to Hofstede et al., in collectivist societies “the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual” (91). Since Madagascar is a highly collectivist country, we discovered that it is a Malagasy cultural norm to pinpoint social versus systemic issues they experience in their community first. Only after addressing social concerns and defining respect, peace, and harmony within the community were campers able to focus on the more systemic change. Once campers have a well-rounded understanding of social justice, they are introduced to individual leadership.

3.2 Individual Leadership

When I was one-year-old, my dad took me to my first swim lesson. He stood close to the

edge of the pool with arms open, ready to pick me up soon after I jumped in the water. Once he saw the genuine confidence I had getting into the water, he started moving backwards as I jumped in, letting me develop my own swimming skills as I moved toward him. I cried when he moved away from the edge of the pool, yet I continued jumping in the water. I cried not because I did not trust my dad – in fact, I trust him with my life – but because I was afraid something bad could happen. However, had I let fear stop me from swimming, I would not have learned an important lesson about facing one's fears. In an interview with Sam Lamott from "Hello Humans," Social Work research professor Brené Brown states, "Be afraid and do it anyway ... It's like you learn to swim by swimming. You learn courage by couraging." I am thankful for the genuine courage my dad instilled in me, not just by jumping into the pool over and over again, but for his believing in my talents and my abilities to do whatever I set my mind to. Similarly, Camp Fihavanana provides a safe space for campers to learn courage by "couraging" as they build trust and self-confidence in themselves and in their individual leadership skills.

Individual leadership, the second pillar of our program, aims for participants' self-discovery. Many of our activities are intentionally created to help campers discover their natural gifts, talents, and character through self-reflection and storytelling. One of our guest speakers facilitated an example of a reflective activity in which campers shared their "River of Life" story. This exercise encourages vulnerability for in the Malagasy culture, vulnerability is frowned upon. However, Brown upholds that "Vulnerability is the birthplace of many of the fulfilling experiences we long for – love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, creativity, trust, to name a few ... It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path" (xviii). As a result, introducing vulnerability in the Malagasy culture means challenging the status quo. In

addition to vulnerability, soul-searching is another tool for leadership development. Clifton et al., discuss the importance of self-discovery being part of an individual's leadership development because it helps each person realize his gifts and talents. He emphasizes that discovering "a strength is the ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity. This ability is a powerful, productive combination of talent, skill, and knowledge" (Clifton et al. 7) and that "strength development is the lifelong maximization of an infinite resource" (Clifton et al. 15). When campers experience self-awareness, they are also learning leadership skills, which can lead them to a desire to make a difference.

Our individual leadership pillar also challenges campers to make hard decisions and challenge the status quo to build character. One of the modules that challenges participants is called "Challenge Zone." This activity is comprised of three different categories: Comfort Zone, Challenge Zone, and Panic Zone, to enable campers to have a better understanding of themselves. Counselors provide a variety of scenarios and ask the campers to physically move to whichever zone they feel they belong. 80% of campers moved to the comfort zone when scenarios such as entering a room where no one speaks the same language as they do or giving a presentation in front of their class were called out. By contrast, when scenarios such as trying a strange, new food or going skydiving was announced, over half of the campers moved to the Panic Zone (Razanadrakoto Fieldnotes 2018). Based on my observations and debrief discussions with my counterparts, we became aware that Malagasy youth feel relatively comfortable when they encounter an ambiguous social experience, but they are more careful when it comes to their physical well-being. In *Let Your Life Speak*, Parker Palmer states, "Another clue to finding true self and vocation ... [is to] acknowledge and embrace our own liabilities and limits" (9). When campers are put in difficult situations, they have to make decisions that in the long-run builds

character. After defining social justice and experiencing individual leadership, campers learn the next aspect that comes with leadership - teamwork.

3.3 Group Leadership

It is 6:20a.m. and thirty degrees Fahrenheit outside. When my alarm goes off, I turn to the glass window. It is pitch black outside. “Five more minutes,” I tell myself. Moments later, when the shrill alarm rings again, I feel like those five minutes passed in just few seconds. I get a text from my fellow ICD colleague, Elba. “Are we walking today?” she asks. I step out of bed, freezing, and try to find an excuse to skip our morning walk. “I think we should not go today,” I message her. She replies, “Since we are not going tomorrow, we should go today. That would make us feel better.” On days when I felt like skipping our walk to sleep in, she encouraged me to get up and go, and vice versa. Elba’s friendship exemplifies “copowerment” and collaboration that are set forth in the ICD program. The ICD program emphasizes the belief that in community development, at least two parties are involved; therefore, empowerment must work both ways. So in lieu of using the word empowerment, the program has adopted the invented word “copowerment” to best convey community development. It is defined as “a dynamic of mutual exchange through which both sides of a social equation are made stronger and more effective by the other” (MAICD). Not only did my friend and I copower each other to go on our early glacial walks, but we also collaborated toward three mutually established goals, which were self-care, keeping healthy, and personal accountability for writing our theses. Copowerment and collaboration are emphasized through group leadership at Camp Fihavanana.

Group leadership, the program’s third pillar, seeks to help campers understand various types of leadership styles and recognize their own style in order to work together better. We move toward this objective when we facilitate a module called “Leadership Compass” that was

developed based on *The Personality Compass* by Diane Turner and Thelma Greco. In this module, facilitators read scenarios and campers move to whichever cardinal directions (North, South, East, or West) they think best fits them. For instance, your best friend's birthday is about a week away, and you are getting excited. What do you do? (North) You throw them a surprise party – excited to get the energy levels high and party. (South) You message all of their friends and organize a group dinner at their favorite restaurant – you get a card, and make sure everyone signs it. (East) You make them something special – whether it is a mix CD or a piece of art, you create something original you think embodies your friendship. (West) You ask them what they want, and you get them exactly that, no more questions asked – you wrap it up on their birthday to 'surprise' them with it. The cardinal direction to which each camper goes to the most is what presents his or her leadership and work styles best.

Learning their leadership approaches invites campers to uncover their strengths and weaknesses to achieve teamwork and copowerment. Known as the "Get it Done" group, the North campers are the courageous, persuasive, and perseverant ones. They are motivators and risk-takers who enjoy new ideas and challenges. On the other hand, they often have difficulties sharing tasks with team members. Campers in the South compass are known to be collaborators, team players, friendly, trusting, and loyal. They are best at giving support to others, hence they are the "Nurturers." However, they also excessively worry about what everyone thinks and take too much in order to be seen as good people. The East point represents creativity, innovation, and intuitiveness. Campers' in this group have a "Visionary" mindset, which is driven by their focus on future thoughts. They know what they want and they go after it. Unfortunately, these big ideas fall through the cracks when the details are overlooked. Lastly, the West point distinguishes characteristics like analytical, methodical, and thoughtfulness. This group of

‘Analyst’ campers tend to analyze problems from different angles before taking action.

Although, these positive characteristics are challenged by the fact that campers are too critical.

This criticist nature results in difficulty when making decisions. Once campers have deeper understanding of their leadership style, they can work better together. For instance, campers in the North who act quick and express a sense of urgency work well with campers in the West as the West campers weigh all sides of an issue before providing planning to keep things balanced.

The South and East campers also copower each other. South campers value East campers’ innovative and creative ideas while East campers nurture their trusting and long-lasting working relationships with South campers. Founder of Innovation Leadership Forum (ILF) and Think & Do Tank, Bettina von Stamm, states that collective leadership “enables people from very different backgrounds, perspectives, and beliefs to come together, meet as equals, and develop common ground and solutions beyond what each could have achieved individually” (qtd. in Kuenkel Kindle Locations 34). This group leadership pillar teaches campers to have a deeper understanding and appreciation for each other’s work styles and approaches. This awareness allows them to work as a team toward a common goal.

The group leadership pillar also teaches campers to set SMART goals. Campers practice tangible and realistic team goal-setting together. Author Marshall Wallace explains in the principle of “Do No Harm,” that it is crucial to develop a framework to help people providing assistance to think through the issues so they could take more control of their impacts (15). Once campers have identified injustices that fire them up from the social justice pillar “Issues Web” module, “The Quadrant” module is a plan-of-action piece designed to tackle the issues previously identified. In the Quadrant, each square represents a category -- the timeline, the resources and allies, the roles and responsibilities, and the roadblocks and solutions. Writing

down a timeline lays out the steps to campers' action plans, which they can later revisit and use to measure the value of their work. Brainstorming possible resources and allies, such as educators, community leaders, media, local politicians is essential to a successful partnership plan. Outlining and assigning roles and responsibilities, such as secretary, media liaison, etc. helps campers be accountable to accomplish their action in a timely manner. Finally, identifying roadblocks to finding solutions minimizes the impediments to getting the work done. The ICD program examines the definition of collaboration, "frank acknowledgement of organizational limitations, the affirmation of another group's capacities, and the joining of abilities and resources in pursuit of mutually established goals" (MAICD). This group leadership pillar requires campers to collaborate in setting team goals to build their community through a team effort, which of course requires communication skills.

3.4 Communication

Participants are asked to split up into three color teams. A facilitator places a hula-hoop on the ground for each team and five to six team players surround the sides of the hula-hoop. At the direction of the facilitator, campers slip both their index and middle fingers under the hula-hoop, lift the hula-hoop up, and bring it over to the other side of the room without a single team member's finger losing physical contact with the hoop. If anyone's finger comes off the hula-hoop, the team must start again. Campers' voices rise excitedly, often talking over each other while giving directions. To make it more challenging, we ask team members to stop talking as we rotate them. Campers' faces show frustration toward fellow team members because they want to communicate an idea, but they cannot talk. Upon reflection, team members shared what they felt during the activity with frustration being the most common feeling mentioned, especially

when the silent rule was applied (Razanadrakoto Fieldnotes 2018). This module reflects the combination of listening, verbal and non-verbal communication, and public speaking skills.

The fourth pillar, communication, teaches campers when to voice their own opinions as well as when to step back to listen to each other. Campers learn the difference between passive and active listening and learn to understand the value of active listening in creating connections and working with others. Researchers Rogers et al. stress, “Communication is a vital aspect of collaboration to build community resilience” (80). At camp, we emphasize listening and verbal and non-verbal communication, so that campers learn the value of speaking up. They also practice public speaking, share their ideas with large groups, and learn storytelling techniques that engage and motivate a group. Patterson said, “Campers gain a greater understanding of the power their body language has and the role nonverbal communication plays in interactions with others. They also practice teamwork through drills and games while giving and receiving support as they identify their own support systems.” In addition to sports, we also facilitate communication through a series of physical exercises, such as hiking; mental challenges, such as team problem-solving; and social skill development, such as making friends from different backgrounds. This pillar demonstrates ways for campers to support each other while at camp as well as beyond the camp’s borders.

Communication, “a subset of teamwork, is a particularly fundamental skill learned through sports that helps forge success in many other aspects of life *beyond* sports” (Jacobson). This idea supports the reason why we teach sports such as soccer, basketball, and lacrosse at camp. Camp Fihavanana introduces communication skills through sports because “Sports have the potential to transform a child’s life and significantly change the way young people think about themselves and the world” (Wicks et al. 108). Other objectives this pillar addresses are that

campers learn to communicate with authoritative figures through team work. Camp participants learn to share and assert their ideas and to speak their minds with those in positions of authority while defending themselves in a courteous way. African Language Specialist and associate professor, Sam Mchombo writes, “The use of sports is a means to encourage the youth to focus on education for self-empowerment, as well as their physical and mental development; and, to promote discipline and heighten a sense of responsibility among the youth” (325). Campers experience assertiveness in their communication through sports. This pillar has broadened campers’ perspectives and group-level trust. It has also allowed youngsters to develop parameters about their group-level communication, and interpersonal and decision-making skills.

3.5 Problem Solving

The yellow Bluebird school bus pulls into the parking lot at 7a.m. sharp. Campers arrive in waves and check-in with one of our staff members. The designated DJ of the day cranks the music up so loudly that my mom calls to remind us we are located within the hotel vicinity; therefore, we need to be mindful of guests. Another staff leads the egg, chicken, dinosaur modified version of rock, paper, scissor ice breaker. Other staff members gather trash bags and sandwiches for the day. At 7:45a.m., campers get two sandwiches as they board the bus, which will take them to *Andriamamoka* waterfall. After an hour’s drive outside of Moramanga, we begin the hike by walking through the morning market since the bus cannot manage the small village streets to get to the trail head. The trail takes us through a ginger and corn plantation, a view of green rice terraces, multiple small villages, and Madagascar’s well-known rain forest. We hear the roaring rapids sound as we get closer to the rocky raging river. The sound grows louder as we approach the spectacular waterfall. Two hours into the hike and almost out of breath, the spray of the waterfall refreshes and cools us down. Everybody takes pictures. In the

village vicinity we passed by, piles of trash were scattered, which campers had originally pinpointed from the “Issues Web” module, and which led them to make a plan of action through “The Quadrant” module. The purpose of this sequence is to show participants how change must start from individuals. So this hike is the application of that theory and is intentionally framed to experience problem-solving first-hand.

Lastly, the problem-solving fifth pillar strives for a sustainable environment and aims to discover innovative ways to challenge the status quo. One of the 2019 Malagasy staff applicants writes in her application,

“People these days tend to shrink from responsibilities. We have forgotten that change comes from everyone. [If] I want to live in a clean and healthy planet, I must set an example by cleaning up in my yard, my neighborhood... We have to stop waiting for the government or someone else. The change of the world begins with the individual. (Staff Applicant 2019)

The waterfall hike is one of camp’s most pivotal activities. As we hike down the trail, campers are encouraged to pick up the trash along the way. In partnership with EcoBricks, campers pick up plastics to make Ecobricks, which are plastic bottles packed tightly with clean and dry, non-biodegradable waste. These EcoBricks are then used as building materials to create insulated structures and colorful furniture. The purpose is to “enable us to take personal responsibility for our plastic” (EcoBricks). Today, people around the world use EcoBricks to build indoor furniture and create gardens and parks in new and innovative ways. This problem-solving pillar pushes campers themselves to model the change they want to see in their community, and we hold them accountable to create such systemic changes.

The problem-solving pillar is also geared toward shaping future social entrepreneurs. Madagascar has multiple informal job sectors where people make an average of forty dollars a month. In a series of short documentaries titled “Jobs in Madagascar’s Informal Sector,” the first episode features a blacksmith named Rakotonihary working in Tana. Currently fifty-one years old, Rakotonihary started this job when he got married at age eighteen and is now supporting a wife and ten children. Because they live about fifty miles south of Tana, Rakotonihary rents a room for seventeen dollars a month, split between eight to ten blacksmiths. He tries to go home every two weeks to a month where he stays for two weeks before going back to work. During work season, Rakotonihary goes into town every day at sunrise to find work, walking a minimum of four miles. He explains, “We work alone usually. We rarely work in groups. Sometimes we work together, depending on the work. If there is a big job, we may go out in groups of 2 or 3” (2:05-2:23). The difficulty of his job depends on the items that need to be fixed. For instance, he explains that it is harder to fix a cooking pot, a gutter, a chimney, or a roof compared to plastic buckets. Rakotonihary details his income depending on the job, “sharpening a knife earns 200-300 ariary (7 or 8 cents), fixing a plastic tub, 500 to 1,000 ariary (15-30 cents). When everything is good, I can make 150,000 ariary (\$50) per month, but during the low season [low demand and jobs are scarce] I only make 100,000 ariary (\$35) per month” (2:36-3:27). Unfortunately, this reality is only one of the many informal job sectors in Madagascar. These hard working people do not have a social security system nor do they have insurance when they need to go to the doctor, making it impossible to obtain an appropriate health care.

By contrast, employees working in Madagascar’s formal job sectors abuse and take their position for granted. A friend of mine, Yannick Ranaivoarisoa, who works for Madagascar’s customs, shared details about her work environment. She explained that at the office, employees

only have access to Facebook before 8a.m. and from between noon to 2p.m., so people do not spend their day on social media. Although this web filtration is one solution for people not to be distracted by social media, there are still other things they do to avoid working. Ranaivoarisoa shared a common habit some of her coworkers have. She said, “some people get to work at 8a.m., sit down and turn on their computer to play games until noon then they go out and have lunch. They come back at 2p.m., turn their computer back on and play some more games until 4p.m. then shut everything off and go home” (Ranaivoarisoa). These office workers, however, have social security and have access to free health care, including blood tests. Ranaivoarisoa reiterated, “it is not fair that the hardest-working population are the ones who cannot afford going to the doctor and who do not have easy access to health care. However, those who can afford paying for an adequate health care out of pocket are just sitting around in the office.” Campers undertake these difficult conversations. They are also challenged to find solutions to bring justice to the Malagasy workforce and to find solutions to these unproductivity problems.

The inner gifts and talents campers discover through individual leadership come into play when they design projects that tackle issues they feel passionate about. One of our guest speakers is from the Youth Civic Center and is also a Mandela Washington Fellow. She inspires youth to use their love language based on Dr. Gary Chapman’s *Five Love Languages* to make a difference. For instance, if quality time is one’s love language, how can that love language be used to volunteer to spend time with others? One of our 2018 campers offers an example. Gifted in drawing and connecting with people, this camper proposed to hold a weekly drawing class to teach other youth in the community to do art with purpose. In the long run, this art project may become entrepreneurial. Not only does it stimulate creativity, but it also keeps the youth occupied and out of trouble. Additionally, the art pieces may be sold for income (Razanadrakoto

Fieldnotes 2018). Bornstein and Davis state that today's, "Entrepreneurs and investors are learning how to combine the full spectrum of financing instruments, which include grants, equity, soft loans, and commercial debt, to maximize social impact" (55). This art project is one of the many social entrepreneurial ideas campers presented. Overall, the problem-solving pillar urges campers to think critically about social issues they feel strongly about, combined with their gifts and talents to solve a problem. In the end, this pillar invites social entrepreneurs to take various approaches to create change.

Overall, Camp Fihavanana's five pillars of social justice, individual leadership, group leadership, communication, and problem-solving raise participants' awareness of justice issues and encourage them to seek solutions to problems they have identified. These pillars are also designed to prepare campers to acquire the tools they need to do the work. Finally, the pillars are blueprints formulated to prompt camp participants into becoming courageous leaders, who will take action when needed.

4. Evaluation: Camp Fihavanana Impacts Lives

In co-founder Laura Patterson's words, "The transformation before and after for the [campers] was massive. And it was one of those moments where I had read, and seen, and heard over and over again – that the presence of role models of people like you [Malagasy], matters, and then to literally watch the light switch go on in thirty young brains, once we showed them a role model who was like themselves and came from the same place they came from and who was doing great things, oh they were like oh - I can do that too?" In addition to inspiring the campers, Patterson's words echoed the empowerment the staff gained as well. Camp programming includes teamwork activities, college and institution visits, sports, and a waterfall hike, followed by debrief and reflection sessions. We design our survey to ask various questions to parents,

campers, and camp counselors to measure the youth's growth. Parents, camp staff, and campers reported significant growth in self-esteem, leadership, values and decisions, social comfort, friendship and communication skills, goal setting, and environmental awareness. We measure the construct of Self-Esteem using a series of questions that evaluated campers' self-image, sense of worth, and optimism. Sample responses included:

Table 1 Camper Survey Sample Statements Measuring Self-Esteem & Sense of Worth

Q1. I believe that I can be a successful leader
 Q1. I feel more confident to face my future
 Q1. I am not as shy as I used to be
 Q1. I became more social
 Q3. I respect and listen to others

See Appendix A for the full camper survey.

Table 2 Parent Survey Sample Statements Measuring Camper's Self-Esteem & Sense of Worth

Q2. My child has shown more brevity and courage
 Q2. My child has the ability to share their thoughts and ideas
 Q2. My child embodies *fihavanana*
 Q3. My child is now thinking about his/her future seriously
 Q3. My child gained new knowledge and wisdom

See Appendix B for full parent survey.

Results of follow-up surveys conducted a year later at the annual Alumni reception suggested that this increase in self-esteem had been maintained. In the "Youth Development Outcomes of the Camp Experience," researchers Mark Burkhardt et al. state that "leadership, like self-esteem, is not bestowed but earned. Camps can play a critical role in fostering leadership by giving young people responsibilities unavailable in other settings" (8). At Camp Fihavanana, campers are responsible for loading, unloading, and gathering athletic equipment every day after

our morning sport sessions. They make sure that camp stays neat and clean, especially after lunch breaks.

Camp counselors also observe campers' decision-making as "it is the *behavior* – and not possessions – that determines whether others view them as leaders or not" (Burkhardt et al. 8). Therefore, we measure the construct of Leadership with a series of situations that display campers' initiative, social respect, and self-concept as a leader. Sample statements include:

Table 3 Camper Survey Sample Statements Measuring Initiative Taking & Leadership

Q2. I believe we can accomplish and follow through our project implementation
 Q2. I am not afraid to share my ideas and opinions
 Q2. I can now take on a debate
 Q3. I can take responsibility within my community
 Q3. I can take initiative to prevent youth from doing drugs and drinking alcohol in my community
 Q3. I can be the role model

See Appendix A for the full camper survey.

Table 4 Parent Survey Sample Statements Measuring Campers' Initiative Taking & Leadership

Q2. Their boldness to take responsibility
 Q2. My child is encouraging and motivating others to love cleanliness and fight violence
 Q2. Improved social skills
 Q2. My child has been taking initiatives in daily chores
 Q2. The importance of cleanliness
 Q3. The readiness of youth to make a difference in Madagascar
 Q3. The knowledge they gained to start a social venture project
 Q3. The campers' creative problem solving and conflict resolution
 Q3. Leadership staff's ability to smoothly teach life lessons and leadership values to campers
 Q3. The boldness of my child giving his/her opinion

See Appendix B for full parent survey.

Both parents and campers reported a statistically significant increase in leadership. Four months after Camp 2018 ended, half of the campers volunteered with the Lions Club

International for their environmental awareness day, planting trees for the purpose of environmental conservation initiatives. Additionally, five of thirty campers every year for the past two years have decided to enroll in English courses to improve their language skills, hoping to become camp counselors in the future. Each year, 95% percent of seniors have attended college the next year after attending camp (Follow Up Survey). Taking such initiative proven by the statistics and level of participation demonstrate courageous leadership and civic engagement we sought to instill in our campers.

Informing parents of the benefits of sending their children to camp is crucial. Merrick et al. write, “To provide a comprehensive and complete picture regarding the effectiveness of the project, several evaluation strategies, including objective outcome evaluation, subjective outcome evaluation, qualitative evaluation based on focus groups, student diaries and in-depth interviews, process evaluation, and interim evaluation are employed” (Merrick et al. 19). We communicate with parents about youth development through a parent orientation session and at the closing ceremony. As a result, over 80% of parents asked for the camp to continue over a longer period of time, so that relationships the campers have built may remain and keep growing. Both parents and camp counselors hoped that the youth would be exposed to others with positive values when they joined camp, and many parents said later that they saw a greater level of maturity in their child at the end of camp. In “Youth Development Outcomes of the Camp Experience: Evidence of Multidimensional Growth,” Christopher Thurber et al. report children finish camp with an additional growth six months in maturity upon completion (241). We measured camp’s impact in the community by asking campers and parents thoughtful questions; such as, what is one thing you would want to see differently at camp. Sample responses to this question included:

Table 5 Camper Survey Sample Statements of Things to Be Differently at Camp

Q5. Stronger marketing about camp
 Q5. More staff in leadership team
 Q5. There should be a place where everyone can meet, so we can continue working on these projects even after camp

See Appendix A for the full camper survey.

Table 6 Parent Survey Sample Statements of Things to Be Differently at Camp

Q4. Fully register camp as a Malagasy organization
 Q4. Have non-Malagasy staff stay with Malagasy host families for part of camp
 Q4. Extend camp time period to maximize knowledge, skills and lessons taught to youth
 Q4. Follow-up with the campers on project implementation and accountabilities
 Q4. Reach out to government and local authorities for government funding for camp to continue every year
 Q4. Request for an increase in camp capacity in terms of camp participants and camp counselors with more strategic activities
 Q4. Camp expansion into the rural community and throughout Madagascar

See Appendix B for full parent survey.

Average responses from parents suggested that they would like camp to continue growing in both time and scale. “Camp Fihavanana offers a safe space for our children to dream and a supportive environment for them to follow through and succeed” (Parent Survey). They also stated appreciation for accepting their children no matter what background they come from (Razanadrakoto Fieldnotes 2018). I believe that by developing a youth center curriculum to be facilitated all-year-around would fulfill these requests for an even greater impact in the Moramanga community.

5. Next Steps: Camp Fihavanana in the Future – Growth and Evaluation

5.1 A Youth Center

In the US, my Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday mornings are dedicated to kickboxing. This is self-care for me. I get in my car, start driving, and arrive at the Bellevue YMCA in ten

short minutes. About twenty kickboxers, mostly women ranging between their thirties to mid-forties, roll out the EVERLAST power core freestanding heavy black punching bags and put their gloves on. The instructor pumps up the music loud enough that we can still hear her without a mic over the music as she leads warm up with jabs, crosses, hooks, and uppercuts with jumping jack intervals. Once warmed up, we do combos that include side and front kicks interrelated with squats. When the room gets hot and sweaty, we turn on the four corner fans. We conclude the workout with wall sits, abs exercises, and stretches as the instructor facilitates a reflection on why we do kickboxing. I do kickboxing because I love how it makes me sweat and is a great outlet to funnel my energy and frustrations while increasing my body strength and resistance.

Comparing my YMCA experience with my training in Moramanga, attending the local kickboxing workout was a culture shock. In Moramanga, practice takes place in a dark old movie theater built in the 1930s called *Cine Avotra*, located five minutes from my house by foot. I get there right at noon when I think I am late for practice, but everyone else shows up fifteen to thirty minutes after me. We call this the “Malagasy time.” I breathe in dust as I walk in the theater. The entrance lobby is dark enough that even a rat would pass unnoticed. The dimmed minimal lighting comes from the three glassless small windows with very little air circulation. A size of a basketball court, the building’s yellow ceiling is covered with black mold. The trainees change into their work out clothes only when they get there. They take their time wrapping their hands with bandage because not everyone can afford gloves. Someone asked if I was changing into different clothes because I seemed overdressed in the simple black yoga pants and shirt I had on. For the first time in a while, I experienced what it feels like to be uncomfortable in my own skin because of my possessions, so I decided not to wear my gloves during work out. Warm ups finally started an hour later, running back and forth to each end of the building. I was challenged

by my Malagasy culture of “no sense of urgency.” I had only been training with a punching bag for the six years of doing kickboxing. So being paired up to train for an actual fight was foreign to me. The lack of gears, such as gloves and punching bags required the coach to be creative and it is this lack of assets that inspires me to provide more resources to my community.

People at the Y do kickboxing for leisure, social gathering, and physical wellness. They incorporate exercises in their daily schedule, which becomes a way of spending time with others. As a result, this kickboxing class is predominantly participated by non-working women. These women find community where they exercise, and kickboxing is one of many fun activities the Y offers. My experience attending kickboxing in Moramanga, however, confirms Madagascar’s masculine society where “men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede 140). This reason explains my predominantly fellow male kickboxers in Moramanga, which comes with discipline and show off of the toughness and strength men are expected to portray. This training has shifted my focus from sweating and staying fit to becoming a stronger and more skilled kickboxer. Kickboxing has become a self-defense and not only a means of being in community. I am thankful for the equal opportunity for men and women in the US, as for in Madagascar, I am often viewed as the elephant in the room. I am beyond thankful for a dad who raised me to be fierce, yet gentle, and who also empowered me to break through the status quo of what society expects me to be or do.

From my US experience, I believe that offering a diverse range of activities and services will increase community impact and participation. In her book titled *Theories and Practices of Development*, Katie Willis affirms, “NGO’s can provide services that are much more appropriate to local communities. This is because they work with populations at the grassroots to find out

what facilities are required” (108). As a full-time nonprofit organization with its own space, Camp Fihavanana could better support the community’s needs and serve more people. With the right resources, Camp Fihavanana could provide a safe and thriving environment to local youth. A former US Embassy of Madagascar’s employee, Lanto Hariveloniaina, affirms, “Here [in the US], people have all the sports infrastructure at their fingertips and they can afford it. Not only in terms of money, but they can manage their time effectively to allow for practicing sports safely.” Contrarily, in Madagascar, “only few people can really afford to practice sports with the appropriate equipment, infrastructure in a safe environment . . . Sports are not given priority by the Malagasy government. However, Malagasy athletes are good in some disciplines which need more support and encouragement” (Hariveloniaina). Through a youth center, we plan to offer a safe environment with diverse activities for youth to thrive. These activities are based on campers’ and parents’ interests from previous surveys and conversations, which may include:

Table 7 Future Camp Fihavanana Modules and Activities

Intellectual	Physical	Art and Drama	Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Books - Computer access - University Guides - Workshops - Trivia - Games - Languages - Talent competition - Talk and debate - Moral, values, and justice driven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kickboxing - Basketball - Karate - Lacrosse - Soccer - Pétanque - Hiking - Sport competition - Swimming lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theater - Poetry (slam) - Painting - Drawing - Recycling - Chess - Scrabble - Talent competition - Music - Diversity Monologue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social entrepreneurship - Volunteer opportunities - Social ventures - Mentorship - SexEd classes - Spirituality - Youth & Government - College and Career readiness

Some of these activities were drawn from camper and parent surveys, conversations, and community resources.

We believe that a youth center can be a place to enhance our positive impact on the Malagasy youth. Thurber et al. quote researcher Reed Larson, “[Camps] are intrinsically

motivating, ‘structured voluntary activities’ with ample opportunity to take initiative, take risks, and develop mastery” (243). We hope that through a youth center, Camp Fihavanana will be able to reach out to more youth both in town and in rural communities and offer a broader variety of activities, which will involve more people, impact more lives, and increase the number of social change makers. The Camp Fihavanana Youth Center will extend its reach to support the overall development of the Moramanga community.

Finding partnerships is essential to the success of this project. Camp Fihavanana would not have been possible without the volunteers and donors who have invested their time and resources at camp. A piece of advice I received from David Toledo, the former Program Director of the Kirkland Teen Union Building (KTUB), was to find partnerships. David explained that the majority of their funding comes from the City of Kirkland and the Kirkland Kiwanis. He said:

“We offer all the programs free to the kids, but we have no source of income. So that’s a decision you need to make. If your program is going to be free, how are you going to support it? You need those partnerships. Otherwise, you have to offer programs at discounted rates or the classes would need to be paid in order to keep your lights on. See if you can get large businesses to buy in, like Google, Coca Cola...” (David)

Camp Fihavanana invests in both the local economy and the human capital. We plan to continue our local sourcing when we purchase camp furniture and equipment. As we practice community development, we value the economic support and the increase in skill sets in the overall community. Willis states, “Meeting the needs of the poor would not only help reduce poverty levels, but would also improve the education and skill levels of the population, with the concomitant potential for contributing to greater economic growth” (105). This quote aligns with camp’s mission and the purpose of my pursuit of a Master of Arts in International Community

Development. I believe that with inspired individuals and opportunities, there will be more educated people, who will build up the skill levels of the Malagasy population. That will in turn boost economic growth of the country, which will ultimately find its way out of poverty. Camp Fihavanana's contribution and commitment to creating social change must require, however, support from local and worldwide stakeholders. In *Walking with The Poor*, Bryant Myers writes, "There are agents of transformation within and outside the community whose gifts and skills should be sought out and encouraged. Everyone has a contribution to make, Christian or not" (223). Our partnership with the Resolution Project has given us enough momentum to launch our pilot project. Today, we plan to partner with, but are not limited to, the following organizations:

Table 8 List of Potential Partnership Organizations

<p style="text-align: center;"> The Minister of Education in Madagascar FANALAMANGA S.A. Company Launch Leadership USAID and the US Embassy UN Agencies: UNFPA and UNICEF Marie Stops Madagascar (MSM) Ministry of Youth (MoY) Population Services International (PSI) Volunteer for Change World Vision International Peace Corps Madagascar Kiwanis International Rotary International Lions Club International HigherEd Institutions such as Whitworth University for study abroad credits Northwest University partnership with the MAICD program for future fieldwork location </p>

This list of partnerships represents only a sample of the organizations we hope to partner with.

We have begun reaching out to some of these stakeholders for partnerships and will hold a twelve-month fundraising activity with a goal of raising \$80,000 to fully fund the project. We are also currently in the process of researching grant applications. Here, we have outlined

necessities for co-founders to jumpstart the center and to operate as a full-time organization.

Table 9 List of Necessities for Future Project Implementation

Human Capital	Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board of Directors - Program Director - Mentors - Role models/ speakers - Language teachers - Art teachers - Sports coaches - Security - Custodians - Volunteers - Graphic/ Website designer - Storyteller or blogger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Property location - Books - Computers - Internet network - Tables and chairs - Smart boards & Projectors - Lacrosse equipment (sticks, balls, helmets) - Pétanque balls - Office supplies - Drums, guitar, etc. - Boards games (Chess, Scrabble, Puzzle, etc.) - Painting equipment (paints, brushes, etc.)

5.2 Project Stakeholders

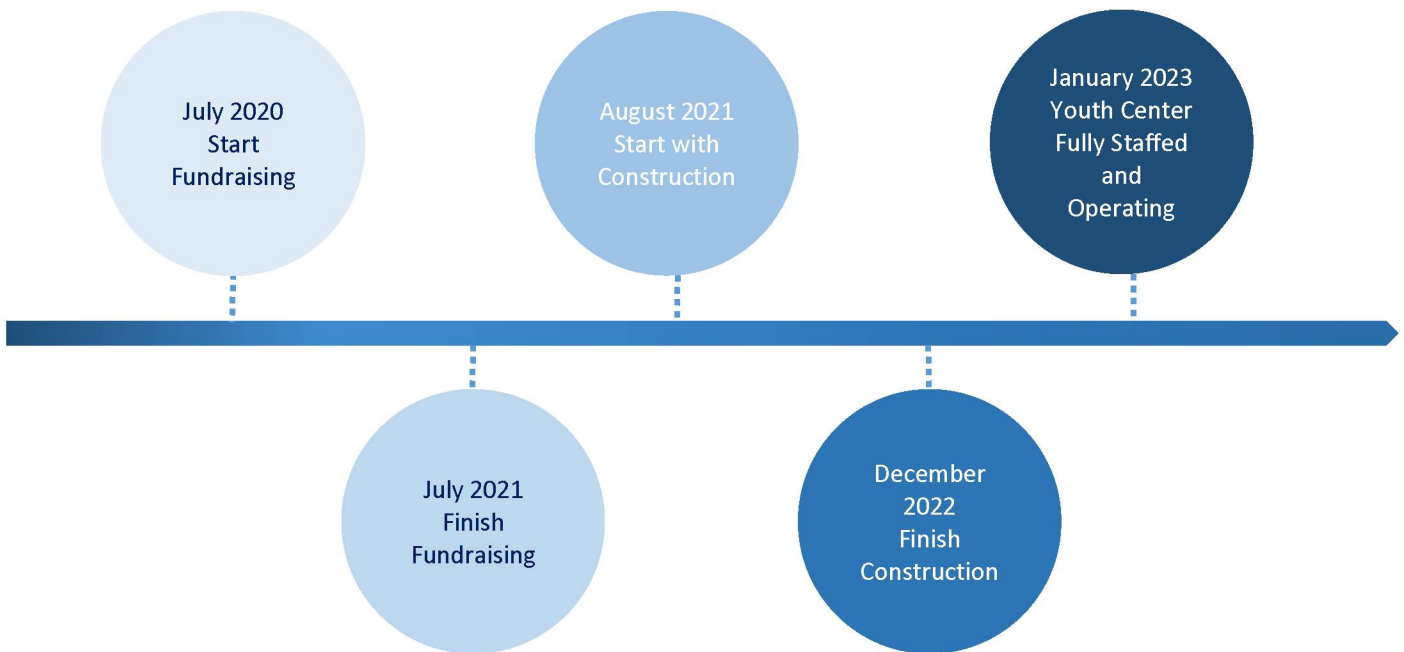
Social entrepreneurship means finding meaning and purpose behind one's work. Camp Fihavanana is a creative way for me to find my purpose in life while doing the work I believe I am called to do. Bornstein and Davis emphasize, "Rather than implement present policies through bureaucracies in a top-down fashion, [social entrepreneurs] *grow* solutions from the bottom in a process characterized by trial and error, continuous iteration, and a sharp focus on results" (17). Using these principles, co-founders Laura, Sophie, and I, along with Mbola Razafitrimo, a Malagasy stakeholder with over twenty years of youth development experience, are preparing the steps necessary to create a greater impact. We will act as heads of the enterprise -- leading ventures, spearheading developments, and brainstorming new ideas to improve the initiative in the first few years of operation. Along with overseeing the responsibilities of managing the enterprise, we will also act as facilitators at the center, working virtually every role from teaching sports skills to leading group discussions. We are currently growing role models

and leaders and bringing in different guest speakers so youths can see people like themselves thriving in a career with integrity.

We will need staff and volunteers to help manage and run our program and center. Hence, a partnership with Peace Corps Madagascar will allow the center to become a PCV site with a low turnover rate from two-year committed volunteers. Should volunteers wish to stay for a third year, we plan to give them opportunities to grow as trainers with more experience. Together with a PCV, we will recruit some of our alumni to oversee volunteer management, do community outreach, teach English, manage the college and career readiness program, and serve as mentors and role models for the youth. In *No-Nonsense Advice for Successful Project*, Neal Whitten writes, “Mentors often give you a different perspective, fresh eyes, new ideas; they enable you to see the forest, not just the knots in the trees” (17). This concept of guidance and mentorship is the backbone of Camp Fihavanana’s design and goals for creating relationships between youths and volunteers.

5.3 Project Timeline and Evaluation

Timelines, goals and objectives are necessary to measure project progress. Camp Fihavanana’s five year-plan is to open this center and bring long-term sustainability to the program. Our goals will be to reach out to the broader community, serve a minimum of two hundred teenagers, build confidence and ambition in youths, and foster volunteers to aspire to civic engagement and social responsibility. These hopes and goals will later be evaluated at our semi-annual and end-of-the-year review and survey. Our review will measure the effectiveness of the curriculum we have created, which combines modules, sports, and volunteerism. We are committed to the following timeline:

Figure 1 Five-Year Timeline of Camp Fihavanana’s Growth

Timeline representing Camp Fihavanana’s five-year-plan growth.

Collecting quality raw data matters for in-depth research study. In *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, Sharan B. Merriam and Elizabeth J. Tisdell state, “There are intangible things such as feelings, intentions and thoughts that can never be quantitatively measured or observed. This calls for a careful observation and interviews of people to find out things we cannot directly observe” (108). While written surveys with limited questions would make it easier to record answers, learning through qualitative research from storytelling of campers would give the staff a greater understanding of the impact of Camp Fihavanana has had in their lives. As useful as surveys can be, questions may be misinterpreted. Camp facilitators may also expect pre-conceived answers from campers that are deceiving when the intended reply fails the expectation. To the contrary, Merriam and Tisdell stress that qualitative research can be used to “understand how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and

what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (14). Since qualitative methods lean towards being more natural, qualitative inquiry can best measure and interpret these abstract things, such as feelings, intentions, and thoughts.

Project evaluation is crucial for measuring project success. Qualitative researchers Kalinowski et al. summarize, “A mixed-methods approach makes our research more complete and worthwhile. Qualitative research without a quantitative component can be insightful but vague; quantitative research without a qualitative component can be precise but may be wrong-headed, misdirected, and contrived” (33). Therefore, the Camp Fihavanana staff will also evaluate the effectiveness of our activities in reaching our goals through periodic interviews, reflections, surveys, ethnography, member assessments, and observation field notes. Whitten states, “We consistently get better in designated key areas by deliberately analyzing, measuring, and improving our performance” (106). An interview Laura Patterson reiterated Whitten’s point, “Without reflection, we are likely to do things the same way again, when we have the opportunity to do it differently, improve upon it, or try something entirely new” (Patterson). We are constantly prototyping through trial and error to see how we can put together the most transformative experience possible for our members.

High attendance and volunteer numbers are other ways to find success in our endeavors. However, we do not believe success is strictly defined by high attendance or participation. In contrast, success can be measured by the impact we have on individuals. If we are able to positively influence and empower just one person, we will consider our endeavor a success. Bornstein and Davis put it this way, “Social entrepreneurs are most effective when they demonstrate ideas that inspire others to go out and create their own social change” (36). Our semi-annual evaluations will give us the information to bring long-term sustainability.

6. Limitations: A Way Around the Malagasy Culture

We believe that we have built a strong curriculum to help raise a generation of courageous leaders. Nevertheless, reality works against our endeavors. We currently do not have a program that caters to school dropout youth. School dropout youth face greater challenges to commit to an eight-day programming because they have to work to help support their families. Additionally, the Malagasy culture dictates that only more affluent individuals can become community leaders. That said, even those equipped with leadership skills, and yet poor, society prevents those people to lead in the community. For society to take a leader seriously, the individual also needs to have some sort of education. However, not everyone can afford or has the opportunity to receive an education. The cycle of poverty in the local culture has become a systemic vicious cycle. A response to this ongoing cycle, developing a part-time technical program where school dropout youth gain both soft and hard skills is a solution. A part-time program will allow them to attend the program on the side, and yet, support their families at the same time. These hard skills include making woven baskets that may become a source of income, so that once the youth financially flourish, they can prove to be leaders in their community. Through a youth center, we will provide space to facilitate this program.

7. Conclusion

I hope this transformational curriculum model can be taken anywhere in the world and be adapted to the local cultures to tackle worldwide issues. It is the Camp Fihavanana co-founders' plan to expand in order to better serve the Malagasy communities. Every child should have the opportunity to perform at his or her highest potential to achieve his or her dreams. This power should not be limited by the lack of support, encouragement, trust, and confidence to succeed. Unfortunately, Madagascar does not have a support system for at-risk youth with very limited to

no youth development programs. As a result, youths are discouraged, endure low self-esteem and lack confidence, so they miss opportunities to follow their dreams. For this reason, Sophie, Laura, and I decided to create Camp Fihavanana to awaken leadership and social responsibility within the Malagasy youth. Parents and camp staff have reported growth and positive behavioral change in campers. Parents and campers also suggested that a long-term program would bring a greater impact in the community. As co-founders, we also believe that we need sustainability in our endeavors. Hence, our five-year-plan includes an opportunity to grow to better serve the needs of the community. We measure our impact through assessments and reviews and we believe our work is transforming lives as we reach Madagascar's overall development.

Knowledge of the local culture leads to successful endeavors and helps people understand why a problem is being addressed. After analyzing Madagascar's culture, we determined it is a high-collectivist and masculine society. This finding allowed us to tailor our camp modules and activities accordingly. After experiencing camp, youth have deeper self-awareness and potentially discover a vocation to build a better and stronger community. Author and Social Work researcher Jeffrey M. Jenson states, "Social work scholars and investigators may also need to address broader issues as part of an effort to increase the number of studies aimed at informing the public good" (196). As a community developer, I plan to investigate and explore more of this new knowledge of catering to the needs of Malagasy youth beyond a leadership program through a youth center. My ongoing research will allow my audience to better grasp the problems I am addressing and the solutions I propose in forms of social entrepreneurship. Our program becomes a live data source to discover how various resources, opportunities, and emotional support affect youth social responsibility and leadership. The life of this project itself requires collaborative leadership and engagement to make this challenging "impossible" project possible.

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Appendix A: Camper Survey

Part I: Improvement (The first part of the survey is conducted on the fifth day of camp)

- Being an active and performing member of a team
- Setting and pursuing goals
- Decision-making
- Effective communication
- Recognizing others and their skills and abilities
- Understanding, connecting, and building relationships with others
- Awareness of diversity and differences existing between us and others
- Awareness (Knowledge) of values and their importance
- Understanding your own qualities, traits, and values
- Self-awareness, esteem, and confidence
- Overcoming challenges, stress, and obstacles
- Creative problem solving by dealing with and resolving conflict

Part II: Impact

1. What was the best part of Camp Fihavanana for you this year?
2. What was an uninteresting camp activity for you this year?
3. What skills did you learn from camp that helped you become a more effective leader?
4. Will you tell your friends about Camp Fihavanana? Explain your answer.

Yes Maybe No

Part III: Values

Number from 1 (1 being the lowest) to 5 (5 being the highest) the order of importance of the values you learned from Camp Fihavanana:

- Meeting other students and making new friends
- Gaining knowledge in leadership skills
- Brainstorming innovative ideas that can be used outside of camp
- Gaining self-confidence and self-esteem in action taking
- Having fun
- Understanding your values and how to apply them

Choose 3 of those values and explain why they are important to you.

Other Comments:

1. What surprised you at Camp Fi that changed how you view yourself? Give 3 situations.
2. How have your interactions with others changed after participating at camp? Give 3 examples.
3. How will you instill the lessons you learned at camp:
 - a) On a personal level
 - b) In your home and with family
 - c) In your neighborhood, with classmates, and with others around you
4. List:
 - a) Your gifts and talents that you believe you can use to make a difference in your community
 - b) Explain how you can utilize your gifts and talents to make a difference you want to see in your community
5. If you were a leader at Camp Fihavanana, give at least one thing that you have acquired to invite others to be part of the program.



CAMPER SURVEY

PARENT SURVEY

Appendix C: Camp Fihavanana Curriculum (See Separate Attachment)

Appendix D: Camp Photos







