



April 19, 2007

**USAID supports FAF and FRAM Associations in
Toamasina II and Vatomandry District Pilot Schools**

As part of ongoing efforts of the United States to help improve the education of the people of Madagascar, USAID Mission Director, Henderson Patrick, attended a signing ceremony for a grant on April 19, 2007 which will support FAF (Associations of Teachers) and FRAM (Associations of Parents of School Children) associations in Toamasina II and Vatomandry district pilot schools. The ceremony was led by the Regional Director of National Education, Atsinanana at the Tananambo public primary school – one of Toamasina II district pilot schools.

FAF and FRAM associations have been working with ATEC (Technological Support to Educators and Communities) program representatives and DREN and CISCO authorities since September 2006 to develop and implement school improvement plans as part of the scholastic attainments program contract or CPRS. The ATEC program is funded by the American people through USAID for an amount of \$2 million over a period of two years. This program is implemented by the international NGO, Education Development Center, and supports the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research (MENRS) in implementing their Education-for-All Program (EPT). The training provided to FAF and FRAM associations is part of the MENRS overall strategy to improve the quality of primary schools at the national level by encouraging the parents of school children and communities to play a more significant role in school management and governance.

Twenty-five pilot community schools in Toamasina II and Vatomandry districts have been provided a training series in school improvement program development through a participatory and appreciative approach. This is a three-year action plan for activities that community members commit to conducting to improve school status in three areas identified by MENRS as integral for quality school, including access to education, quality of teaching and learning, and good school governance. The activities include raising parents' awareness of the importance of schooling, particularly for girls, arranging sewing and cooking classes to help girls remain in school and providing them practical training, establishing a system to monitor daily attendance of students and teachers, introducing bonuses and incentives to encourage the children to complete their studies, and putting in place a transparent process for financial management and decision making.

A total amount of Ariary 10,000,000 was provided to Toamasina II and Vatomandry FAF and FRAM associations by the USAID Madagascar Mission Director to support them in implementing their plans. The pilot project will be extended to Haute Matsiatra and Atsimo Andrefana regions in the 2007 school term.