TRIP REPORT 2026.

Nosy Komba, Madagascar · 5 August – 7 September 2026



Contents

- **Purpose of the trip and the team** p. 3

01 **Arrival: departure and the first days on the island** p. 4

02 **School projects: refurbishing Banana School and building Banana High School** p. 8

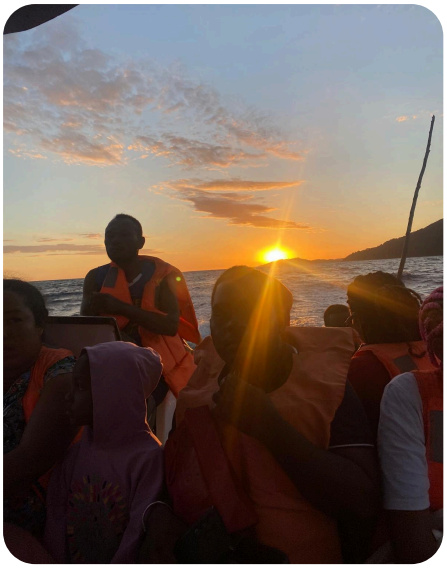
03 **Teacher selection and training** p. 15

04 **Beyond Antitorona: book delivery, Diego Suarez and the health centre** p. 21

Every year, a team of Sunshine volunteers returns to Nosy Komba to take care of Banana School and support its students. This report follows the 2026 field trip, from arrival to departure, highlighting the work done and the relationships built with the local population.

A report by Sunshine in Nosy Komba · 2026

Taking care of the school, year after year



Sunset on the water with the local team.

The annual trip to Nosy Komba is a reminder that maintaining the school is not a one-time effort but an ongoing responsibility. Each year, the team returns to ensure that the facilities remain safe, functional, and supportive of the students' daily life, informed also by feedback from the teachers who care for the school throughout the year.

This work covers every part of the school: repairing structures, checking equipment, updating inventories, and refurbishing spaces that need attention. Alongside this, the team continues to support sport for the children, bringing footballs, basketballs and other equipment used throughout the year thanks to multiple donations. Sport strengthens teamwork, confidence and physical wellbeing, and is something the children genuinely look forward to.

Going beyond the village of Antitorona, the volunteers also carried out projects in Antamotamo (the second health centre) and Anjiabe (book delivery), and visited the university students in Diego Suarez.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT

Tiago, Victoria, Gael, Antonio and Benedikt

This year's field team spent several weeks on the island throughout August.



CHAPTER 01

ARRIVAL

Departure and the first days on the island

A warm welcome, and straight to work



Children of Antitorona welcoming the team in front of Banana School.

Tiago and Victoria arrive in Nosy Komba to a warm welcome and fantastic scenery. Tired from the journey, they get straight to work checking the electricity system: power on the island runs on the solar panels Sunshine has installed over the years, and performance has dropped, so maintenance is needed. This year, the work focuses in particular on finishing Banana High School, completing the hygiene building donated by Imani4Children and installing the solar panels donated by IMS.

Transportation in Nosy Komba: traditional outrigger canoes remain the way to get around (see chapter opening).

No time to rest

Gael arrives in Nosy Komba and Antonio is on his way. The team is facing two intense weeks of work and celebrations ahead of the new school year, headlined by the opening of Banana High School in September.



Antonio, on his way to Nosy Komba.



Gael arrives on the island.



Antonio arrives, greeted on the boat.

Suitcases full of school material

Before departure, refurbished computers were generously donated by Tools4Change, picked up by Antonio and Aurelio to be carried to Nosy Komba by the volunteers.



Thanks Antonio, Aurelio & Tools4Change: computers ready for the trip.



Tiago and Victoria on the way to Nosy Komba.

Tiago and Victoria depart for Nosy Komba, taking suitcases full of materials that are hard to find on the island: books, refurbished computers and sports equipment for Banana School. They are soon joined by other Sunshine volunteers.

Computers from Holland



One of the refurbished computers in use in Antitorona.

The refurbished computers donated by Tools4Change, picked up in Holland by Antonio and Aurelio and carried to Nosy Komba by the volunteers, have found their home in Antitorona.

They have now been distributed and are already in use.

Work by day, music by night



An evening gathering with music and singing.



Benedikt on the way to Nosy Komba.

The first days are about catching up with all the projects: Banana School, the health care centres in Antitorona and Antamotamo, the support for young entrepreneurs, and more.

An evening with the community: music, guitar and singing bring people together after a day of work, one of the many small, warm moments that make up the trip.

Sports equipment from Europe

The team travelled with donated sports equipment, including footballs, a net and a pump for use at the school. Sports equipment is hard to come by on Nosy Komba, but everyone loves a ball to play with, and the children put the new footballs to use straight away.



Sports material Benedikt brought over from Europe.



The new footballs put straight to use.



A game against the wall with one of the new footballs.



CHAPTER 02

SCHOOL PROJECTS

Refurbishing Banana School and building Banana High School

A high school for Nosy Komba

The main project of this year was the completion of Banana High School, the first and only high school on Nosy Komba. Until now, children who wanted to keep studying after middle school had to leave the island, at a cost many families could not afford. Now they can continue their education at home.



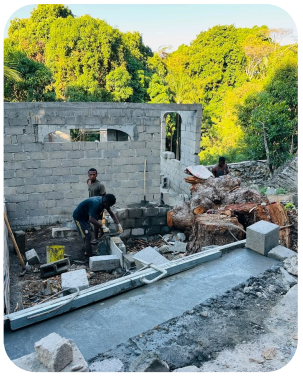
Students filling the windows of the new building.



Waving from the windows of the new high school.



Mixing cement for the building work.



Block walls going up during construction.



Two of the pioneer students with Antonio.

After almost a year and a half of construction, the building was ready just in time for the start of the school year, with desks, chairs and doors made from the Fanapunga wood. Remaining work includes finishing the hygiene annex: flooring, doors, windows and staircase protections.

With thanks to Imani4Children, IMS Space Consultancy, the ESA Humanitarian Relief Fund and the HE Space Children's Foundation for supporting the construction of Banana High School.

Wood from Nosy Be, desks for the high school

Trip to Nosy Be to buy slabs of Fanapunga wood, to be worked into desks, chairs and doors for Banana High School: part of the push to open the school in September and give the children of Nosy Komba the chance to keep studying on the island. The woodwork was done by Banana School's teachers and students, with the help of Antonio and Benedikt.



Cutting the Fanapunga wood into shape for the school's doors and furniture.



At the sawmill in Nosy Be: the wood will become chairs, doors and desks.



Finishing a hand-built door.

16 panels to power the whole campus



Fitting the panels in place.

A new solar panel system has been installed at the school. The panels, sponsored by IMS, will power the whole school campus, from kindergarten through high school, and will allow the high school to run technical classes and workshops. This marks a new phase of the project.

16 **solar panels of 600 W on the new high school**

2 **panels of 230 W: where Sunshine began**

With thanks to IMS Space Consultancy for sponsoring the new solar panels.

Refurbishing the dorms

Early starts become the norm as everyone gets busy preparing for the opening of Banana High School: dorms are being refurbished, and desks, chairs and doors are being built from the Fanapunga wood brought back from Nosy Be. Alongside the building work, there's a steady push on teacher selection and student applications. It's a lot, but the team is enjoying the collaborative atmosphere.

25 · 50 **Dormitory capacity confirmed.** The existing girls' dormitory has 25 beds for 50 girls.



The refurbished dorm: mattresses, mosquito nets and the upcycled jerrycans along the roofline.



Laying out the new mattresses in the dorm.

Victoria added the finishing touch in the dorms, fitting containers for the children's personal belongings, and the result speaks for itself.

Mattresses for every bed

Refurbishment of Banana School and preparations for the high school opening continue at pace. Next question: what do the dorms still need? Mattresses, so the team procured them and transported them back to the village, with everyone pitching in for a joyful group effort.



“What do you need for dorms?”



Mattresses arriving on the beach.



Kids helping build the stack of mattresses on the beach.

From old jerrycans to containers for the dorms

Old plastic jerrycans were upcycled and repainted by the children, then installed as a decorative and functional line to store the students' belongings.



One of the jerrycans, repainted by the children: “what is this for?”



Victoria with the boys and the finished jerrycan installation.

The whole village decorates

The whole village pitches in decorating for the big celebration, marking the students' successful exam results and scholarships, and the countdown to the new Banana High School.



Preparing the decorations for the big celebration.



Banana High School's entrance, decorated for the occasion.



Balloons along the building's hallway.

Celebration day

The whole village comes together to celebrate the children's success, with university students back on the island to support and encourage the next generation. Parents are visibly proud: Banana High School is the first and only high school on Nosy Komba, meaning families can now support their children's education without the high cost of sending them to study on another island. Proud parents take photos of their kids, while teachers share lunch together, discussing the year ahead and reflecting on how far the school has come.



Children running along the decorated path.



Proud parents taking pictures of the children in their new high school uniforms.



Teachers sharing lunch together, decorations still up.

A big celebration on the sports field



Traditional dance performance on the sports field.



Students performing on the sports field.

With thanks to the HE Space Children's Foundation for its long-term support of our scholarships.

A trip to the mountains

The day after the celebration, a trip to the mountains with all the students who came to help, to spend a good time together and strengthen the links between the team and the young people of Nosy Komba.



With the students on the trip to the mountains.



A selfie break along the way.



The view over the bay from the mountains.



CHAPTER 03

TEACHER SELECTION & TRAINING

Recruiting, developing and training the teachers behind Banana School

One of the keys to Banana School's success

Good teachers are one of the keys to the success of Banana School, so recruiting them, and helping them grow, gets as much attention as the training itself.







Teacher training sessions, open to teachers from across the island.

25 applications

12 interviews

4 new teachers

With the high school opening, this year's hiring round was relatively big: four new teachers, three for the high school and one for the primary school. Good candidates are not easy to find in the region, so the job offer had to be published several times and several rounds of interviews organised. The team is confident it has found very good people, who will fit in well with the rest of the staff.

A first for the scholarship programme

For the first time, one of the project's own scholarship students has been selected: she will become an English teacher.

How teachers grow at Banana School

Every teacher is first recruited for a two-year period, renewable twice. This gives the school's management time to see whether they reach the performance and behaviour the school expects, in teaching methods, in technical content and in their command of the teaching languages. Teachers who get there become permanent members of the school's staff.

2 **years per contract, renewable twice**

1 **project per teacher, outside teaching time**

Development doesn't stop at hiring. Teachers sit a set of exams at the end of each year, and this year, with a relatively large hiring round, the school introduced long written exams for both the new teachers and the existing ones. It was striking to see the level of the current team: able to write long, well-structured texts full of ideas and proposals for new projects. The library project grew out of exactly these proposals.

One project each

The evaluation process now includes more writing and more reflection, and every teacher and staff member is asked to drive at least one project at the school outside teaching time. One teacher, the school's go-to person for IT, is setting up new classes. Another built dozens of benches with the children over the summer, to equip classrooms that were filling up.

Learning that connects to real life

Teacher training started a few years ago and has become more structured over time, with a standard programme covering child psychology, different types of learners and different ways to structure a class. This year it was open not only to Banana School's own staff but to teachers from other schools on the island.

10 **training sessions, linked by one common thread**

That thread is the competency-based approach: making sure students don't just know things, but understand why they matter in their own lives and know how to use them, without ever giving up on the value of theory. This year, each trainer also received documentation to prepare their session, with some research to do and an invitation to reflect on their own teaching practice.

From seawater to a working battery

One concrete example: a very simple experiment, a battery made from seawater and scrap metal that lights an LED. More than the device itself, the value was in working with the teachers on exercises that tie directly into the introduction to oxidation and reduction in grade 8 in Madagascar, and its more detailed treatment in high school.



Teachers at work during one of the training sessions.

The same thinking ran through every subject. Language teachers reflected on how students will actually use what they learn: writing a flawless letter in French to an authority, or mastering English for a career in tourism.

Interactive, and led by teachers

Interactivity was the other main focus, both as a topic in the programme and in the way every session was run: teachers explaining to teachers, brainstorms, interaction sequences and, in the ethics session, case studies where participants debated how to apply the principles to real situations they meet during the year. The training was mostly delivered by Banana School's own teachers, senior and junior, together with a trainee and teachers invited from other schools, with around eight guests taking part in total.



Preparing materials for a training session.

The exchanges with the guests showed that standards are not the same in every school on the island, but one school in particular is also doing very well, and its teachers made for genuinely mutual learning. The training raised the level of our own trainers, gave recognition to our senior teachers, and benefited teachers from other schools at the same time.

Already in motion: the school library

Everyone left energised, with plans for closer follow-up through the year and ideas for new projects. One of them is to strengthen the school library and bring it to life, with literature contests and someone always there to lend and recommend books. It is already working: the library is open, children are going there, and the teachers are promoting reading.

HE Space children's foundation "...to raise up an astronaut"

With thanks to the HE Space Children's Foundation for supporting this year's teacher training.

Years of work paying off

Gael, in charge of teacher training and of preparing the student celebration, also led a meeting with parents and teachers. Banana School provides excellent teaching, but that takes constant support: selecting and training teachers, and supplying materials like books that simply aren't available on the island. Years of this work are now paying off: students are reaching university, graduating and starting local businesses that improve conditions in the village.



33 children passed the exams to enter high school, celebrating with their teachers.

100% **of our students passed the national exam to enter high school**

Every student at Banana School has passed the national exam to enter high school this year, a fantastic achievement made possible by the school's continuous effort to select and train good teachers. Most will join Banana High School. By comparison, the national pass rate for this exam (the BEPC) was 58.95% in 2025.



CHAPTER 04

BEYOND ANTITORONA

Book delivery, university students in Diego Suarez and the health centre

Anjiabe and the book project

Banana School's support extends beyond its own campus: it collaborates with other schools on Nosy Komba to raise standards island-wide, including editing books that are then distributed to primary schools. At Anjiabe, the school director reflects on the improvements in pupil outcomes achieved so far, thanks the team, and sets out what's still needed to keep that positive momentum going.



The representative of Anjiabe's parents' association, thanking the team for the book project.

A suitcase of science books

Benedikt brought a suitcase over from home for this very purpose, packed full of science textbooks for Anjiabe's students, unpacked in the classroom and handed out to teachers on the spot.



Handing over the suitcase to the Anjiabe teachers.



The team with Anjiabe's teachers and the new textbooks.

Books for Ampasinahombe

Books were also delivered to the primary school of Ampasinahombe, where the teachers welcomed the new books for their pupils.



Teachers welcoming the new books.



Teachers with the new books.



Handing out the books in the classroom.



The team with the teachers of Ampasinahombe.

With thanks to Kermesse francophone Den Haag for supporting the school books.

A strong, dream-driven team

20 of 40 **of the project's university students study in Diego Suarez**

This year the team visited the students in Diego for the first time. Some live in rented accommodation, others on the campus itself. The team visited the students' rented residence and shared a meal together, highlighting the students' strong sense of union, solidarity and energy.



Sharing a meal with the students in Diego.



With the students at the Orange Digital Center in Antsiranana (Diego Suarez).

Life in Diego Suarez

The students support themselves, and life on campus is hard: parts of it are like a shanty town, half burned, with water only once every three days. The students even did the electrical installations themselves, and classes are overcrowded. This is why Sunshine's help with housing matters, and despite everything, the students continue to show themselves as a strong, dream-driven team.



The campus in Diego.



Campus buildings in Diego.



Between classes on campus.



The students in front of a campus mural.



A street in Diego Suarez.

The maternity in Antamotamo

The existing maternity in Antamotamo continues to see strong demand, with 3 to 4 babies born there each month.

The electricity check carried out on arrival in early August confirmed that the existing solar system needed more than routine maintenance: performance had dropped enough to put the maternity at real risk of running without power. That diagnosis fed directly into the repairs carried out later in the trip.

3–4 **babies born at the Antamotamo maternity each month**



The maternity of Antamotamo.



The beach at Antamotamo.

An agreement, and a baby boy



Signing the collaboration agreement with FOKONTANY.

The team formally presents the plan to expand the medical centre and maternity, adding a treatment room for patients who need to stay under observation, to the population of Antamotamo. The meeting is organised by FOKONTANY, the local village authority, and the community responds with real openness and enthusiasm. An agreement is signed the same day to guarantee long-term collaboration.



Right after signing the agreement at the home of the chef FOKONTANY, the team learns that he had welcomed a baby boy three weeks earlier: **Ermanot**, born healthy in the very maternity the project is working to expand.

Work begins on the new room

Chef FOKONTANY formally agrees to hand over a new room at the maternity for the planned extension.

With demand at the Antamotamo maternity continuing to grow, work begins in the new room, repairing the electricity and water systems and installing doors and windows. Benedikt and Nuno carry the work forward from here.



Arriving at Antamotamo by boat with tools and materials.



Fitting a door hinge on site.



Installing a water filter as part of the water system repair.



Sharing a meal with the local family after the day's work.



A cool-off in the water with the team.

The best way to get from village to village on Nosy Komba? By boat. On the way back from Antamotamo, where he'd been surveying the maternity building ahead of its extension and refurbishment, Gael even got in some rowing. The scenery was fantastic; the water, apparently, was warm enough too.

See you soon, Nosy Komba

Looking ahead to the new school year, Banana School's high school students will take on a summer internship at the school, helping with maintenance and day-to-day running, all in support of the excellent education Banana School provides to the children of Nosy Komba. Two students will also help Joelline at the chocolaterie.



The university students taking part in the summer internship.



Time to say goodbye: the team with the local staff before departure.

The team says “see you soon” to their favourite island and heads back to the Netherlands after an amazing field trip full of beautiful moments and major achievements. Hearts full of emotion, new friendships, and pride in everything accomplished.

Thank you.

Thanks to our sponsors for supporting this year's progress, and to every donor, volunteer and local partner who made it possible.

Want to sponsor a student through education?

Visit the website to find out more: **www.sunshineinnosykomba.org**

SUNSHINE IN NOSY KOMBA

A sun that shines on everyone