

ANNEX I: SUCCESS STORIES



LOCAL CONSULTATIONS: THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS VISIBLE ACTIONS

RANO-WASH supported communities to set up Local Structures for Consultation¹ as mechanisms for community dialogue to create accountability between communities, WASH service providers and local government.

When the Mayor of Ranomafana-East called a meeting of SLC, Ahadiza Mizay saw an opportunity.

"There are many water, sanitation and hygiene problems in the Commune of Ranomafana. Water is frequently cut during the day, so we cannot access water when we need it. Public places like the market are dirty. Drainage systems do not exist; wastewater is thrown anywhere. Local restaurants and eateries do not respect good hygiene practices."

With her fellow members of the SLC, she took advantage of this meeting to raise awareness about waterborne diseases and develop a strategy for promoting sustainable WASH infrastructure.

As a result of this consultation, the SLC and the commune of Ranomafana-East were able to mobilize the community and other stakeholders like the health center, primary school officials and food vendors to organize a cleanup of public places throughout the commune.

This mobilization in October is only the first step in a series of challenges that the SLC has set for itself.

For Ms. Mizay, the decision to take charge on the WASH project was a simple one. *"I told myself that it was another opportunity for me to be able to participate in the development of my community,"* she explains.

¹ in French, "Structure Locale de Concertation," or SLC

"I am a Red Cross volunteer and for me, volunteering is a way of life. I love to serve my community; I love Ranomafana." She has also worked to ensure that female voices are heard by the local governing structure.

Drawing on networks created by the VOAMAMI village savings and loan associations (VSLAs), Ms. Mizay and her colleagues formed a group of female representatives who support each other to lead change in their communities.

INVESTING IN WATER, HYGIENE AND SANITATION MEANS INVESTING IN HEALTH

To increase the adoption of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) behaviors and services in rural Madagascar, the RANO-WASH project partnered with local Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) called VOAMAMI groups. These groups not only helped promote good sanitation and hygiene behaviors, but also enhanced social cohesion and generated demand for WASH products and services.



Marthine Baozoma is a member of a VOAMAMI group in Mahasoia, in Andovoranto Commune. Thanks to the VOAMAMI, she and her family now have the means and opportunity to improve their access to WASH services. With the money she has earned with the group, Marthine was able to invest in improving her toilet, building a shower and setting up a handwashing station in her home.

"We have had the fortune to be among those trained by the RANO-WASH project last year. Through the project, we learned about the importance of WASH for both our health and our finances. That is why it's an investment for us in the long run," she explains.

"It is our duty to be role models and to inspire our community"

In August 2018, the RANO-WASH project identified and trained local masons to build sanitation platform slabs and construct basic and ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines. With the support of community agents, the local mason in Marthine's commune offered his services to members of her VOAMAMI group. At the same time, CARE representatives and community agents led WASH trainings with VOAMAMI members in order to facilitate the adoption of key WASH behaviors.

Before this intervention, the other members of Marthine's group thought that improved latrines were too expensive. They did not see any added value to improved latrines and so saw no reason to pay more. However, the WASH trainings made the members change their minds. Today, 75 percent of VOAMAMI members have upgraded their latrines. The group has developed an action plan to ensure that all members have access to WASH services and products that includes promoting messages on the importance of improved latrines, handwashing and menstrual hygiene management. Now, Marthine and her fellow members actively promote these healthy behaviors and are called "VOAMAMI Mpitarika" or "VOAMAMI Leaders."

"Investing in water, hygiene and sanitation means investing in health," says Marthine. "We spend so much money when we or our children are sick; but we can avoid these costs by investing in hygiene and sanitation. To be 'VOAMAMI Mpitarka' it is our duty to be role models and to inspire our community."

Thanks to the collaboration with VOAMAMI groups like Marthine's, this initiative will be replicated throughout the commune of Andovoranto so that other families can benefit from the adoption of good hygiene behaviors and the use of WASH products and services.