

In rural areas of Madagascar, only 36% of households utilize improved water facilities (Unicef, 2019)



Water+: Annual WASH Systems Award

*In commemoration of **World Water Day 2020**, CARE's Water+ team would like to present its annual WASH Systems Award to the CARE Madagascar and RANO-WASH teams, to recognize their outstanding work in systems strengthening to deliver sustainable WASH services to rural communities in Madagascar.*

Quick Snapshot

CARE in Madagascar: CARE has over 25 years of experience managing development and humanitarian assistance projects in Madagascar, including water, sanitation and hygiene promotion projects in both urban and rural settings.

Team: The RANO-WASH team is led by Sebastien Fesneau as Chief of Party and Avo Rataorijoana as Deputy Chief of Party, with 80 staff across six regions. Leandre Ramanarivo, Assistant Country Director of CARE Madagascar, also provides leadership for the project.

RANO-WASH: The project's approach is to strengthen governance and monitoring at the national, sub-national and local levels, promote private sector engagement, and increase demand for WASH services and products to provide sustainable solutions in rural Madagascar.

Project Spotlight

Name: RANO-WASH

Dates: 2017-2022

Project Areas: Alaotra Mangoro, Amoron'i Mania, Atsinanana, Haute Matsiara, Vakinankaratra and Vatovavy Fitovinany

Donor: USAID

Budget: \$33 million

Partners: Catholic Relief Services, WaterAid, Bushproof and Sandandrano

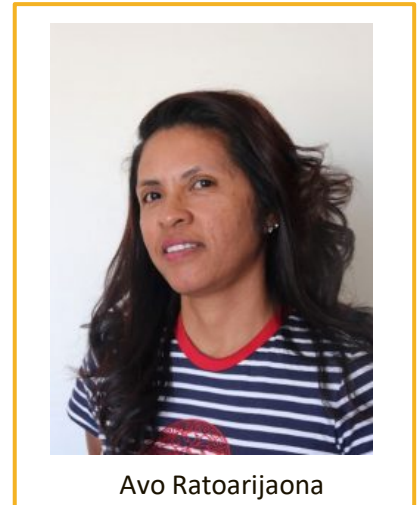
Targets: 300,000 people gain access to safe water and 375,000 gain access to safe sanitation

Interview: Avo Ratoarijoana

Avo has worked in CARE Madagascar since 2009 on livelihoods, food security, health and WASH programs, and most recently as the Deputy Chief of Party for USAID project RANO-WASH. **RANO-WASH is a flagship project** for CARE's Water+ program and was designed with the Sanitation and Water for All's (SWA) Collaborative Behaviors¹ in mind to strengthen the building blocks for sustainable WASH services in Madagascar.

Despite years of investment in infrastructure, why do many water supply services suffer from low reliability, low quality and fragmented delivery?

There are various parameters to consider when we invest in infrastructure. In Madagascar, the responsibility for water services has devolved from the national to the local level and this requires additional investment in the institutional capacity and professionalization of service authorities and service providers at the local level. Thus, there is a real need for capacity building and professional support to increase technical, oversight, and managerial skills not only of commune governments, but also of water user associations (WUA), and private and community managers, so that they can carry out their functions to keep infrastructure functioning and make needed repairs and expansion of services. Despite existing legal frameworks that designate the commune government as the duty bearer for WASH, commune governments are not always involved in planning or executing water projects, and oftentimes political will to fulfill this role is low.



Avo Ratoarijoana

“The leadership of local government— mayors and their staff—throughout the whole process of planning, budgeting, contracting, and monitoring, is essential in allowing them to fulfill their role as ‘maitres d’ouvrage’ (service authority) for water service delivery. This ensures quality and sustainability”

– **Avo Ratoarijoana**

Community-based management of standpipes continues to be the main model to deliver water in Madagascar, but in addition to capacity gaps, cost recovery is weak; and WUAs are linked to the fokontany administrative level, rather than the service authority which limits the commune and Ministry's ability to provide oversight. Finally, there is also a need for more transparent and varied sources of financing for infrastructure, rehabilitation and maintenance costs that doesn't rely exclusively on donors and includes a mix of public and private funds. At the same time, we also need to increase awareness among the private sector of business opportunities in WASH. Service delivery models will thus need to adapt to mixed financing, integrate professional support for all local actors, and link to a strong civil society to ensure quality, reliability and consistency of piped and self-supply water services.

What is so innovative about the service delivery models that CARE Madagascar has implemented to bring sustainable water services to rural populations in Madagascar?

To address challenges in institutional capacity, professionalization, and financing, CARE has been working to increase the engagement of the domestic private sector in Madagascar, to generate greater investment in improving water services through public-private partnerships (PPP) in projects like RANO-HP and RANO-WASH. In 2010, RANO-HP introduced some of the first PPP models through a lease contract model, where private operators constructed the water system and kept all revenue while ensuring operation and maintenance. The project provided capacity building to private operators on technical skills —infrastructure quality, preventive and corrective maintenance, water quality monitoring—and managerial skills —customer services and financial and human resources. We learned from RANO-HP that when private operators provide a portion of the

¹ Sanitation and Water for All. 2020. <https://www.sanitationandwaterforall.org/about/our-work/priority-areas/collaborative-behaviours>



investment for construction there is a greater incentive to deliver quality services and practice cost recovery. We also learned that strengthening the capacity of private operators requires an equal investment in the public sector as well as formalized community engagement through civil society. In 2018, RANO-WASH built on these learnings and promoted a lease contract model where private operators provide a portion of investment costs. At the same time, we facilitated the development of financial products specifically for WASH. This enabled private operators to gain access to capital and provide 7-20% in co-investment. The project also designed in a stronger partnership with the Malagasy government through a national, sub-national and local level approach that goes beyond service provision and provides capacity

building and resources to 1) technical services and commune governments to ensure effective governance, oversight, and service delivery at the local level, and 2) at the national and sub-national levels to support sector-wide planning and monitoring. The commune government and technical services are involved throughout the process, ensuring buy-in and understanding on PPPs and what makes them equitable, sustainable and profitable. RANO-WASH also works with communities, especially vulnerable populations, to strengthen civil society and create formal spaces to demand the right to WASH services.

RANO-WASH works hand in hand with the Malagasy government to influence policy and practice of the WASH system in Madagascar. Here's an example.

PPPs delegate water service delivery from the public to the private sector. This is done through contracts awarded to an individual or local firm to manage one or several piped water schemes. **RANO WASH jointly developed a contract model for PPPs with the Ministry of WASH that is now widely adopted by the Malagasy government and used by implementing partners.** This was the result of collaboration with the government to assess and improve the process and tools, including the delegated contract model. This exercise clarified roles and responsibilities, legal mandate and asset ownership – all key in improving understanding of the PPP model. The Malagasy government views RANO-WASH as its main strategic and resource partner for PPPs.

How can organizations make sure that everyone, including women, men, girls, boys and other vulnerable populations participate in decision-making around the delivery of sustainable WASH services?

We recognize that in focusing on strengthening the role of the private sector, there is an inherent challenge in ensuring that services reach the poorest and most vulnerable. Private sector enterprises, while key stakeholders, depend on profit generation for financial viability. However, it is critical that services remain affordable and accessible for the poorest and most marginalized. That is why RANO-WASH works with the government, private operators and communities to strengthen accountability mechanisms between these stakeholders, improve the effectiveness and organizational skills of civil society, and promotes flexible models for service provision, pricing and payment for water supply. Our community engagement and gender approaches ensure that all citizens not only benefit from improved access and services, but are empowered to demand their rights to WASH, and can participate meaningfully in the decision-making processes for WASH in their communities.

Congratulations to the CARE Madagascar and RANO-WASH teams!

To read more about RANO-WASH (in French), please visit <https://care.mg/ranowash/>

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