

Chantal: A Community Changemaker Serving Ambodiaviavy

In the rural village (*fokontany*) of Ambodiaviavy, located in the commune of Ranomafana, Ifanadiana District, Ravaonirina Chantal Francia is much more than an ordinary resident. For nearly a decade, she has served as a Community Health Worker (CHW), dedicating her time and energy to improving the well-being of the people around her. Her journey is a powerful reminder that when local organisations invest in community leaders, they create lasting change that strengthens both people's health and the resilience of entire communities.

Training That Transformed Farming Practices

Chantal's journey toward becoming a local changemaker began with training provided by Ny Tanintsika, focusing on environmentally sustainable agriculture. She learned how to grow crops suited to local soils and cultivate a variety of seasonal vegetables using practices that protect natural resources while supporting healthier livelihoods.

For Chantal, environmental conservation and public health are deeply connected.

"Raha manaja ny tontolo iainana ny mponina ato anatin'ny fokontany, amin'ny zavatra ataony sy amboleny dia mihena ny tahan'aretina."

(If the people in our village respect the environment through the way they live and farm, the rate of disease decreases.)

She also recalls another lesson that has stayed with her:

"Eo koa ny fizarana zanak'hazo ambolena sy ny voa samihafa toy ny voatabia izay ao anatin'ny fanentanana ataonay hoe raha mamboly voatabia dia lavitra ny moka anopheles mahava ny tazomoka."

(They also distributed seedlings and different types of seeds, including tomatoes. We were taught that planting tomatoes helps keep away the Anopheles mosquitoes that spread malaria, and we now share this message with our community.)

Proud of what she has learned, Chantal now passes these messages on to families throughout her community, encouraging agricultural practices that benefit both people and nature.

A Key Role in Fighting Child Malnutrition



Alongside her agricultural work, Chantal has become a vital frontline advocate in the fight against child malnutrition.

With the support and training provided by Ny Tanintsika, she educates families about the importance of hygiene and balanced nutrition, encouraging mothers to prepare diverse, colorful meals that provide children with the nutrients they need to grow and thrive.

"Nampianatra zareo ny resaka fahadiovana, ny fandrahoana sakafo miovaova sy maroloko. Anay misahatra ny zaza latsaky ny 5 taona, dia izahay lasa nampianatra ny reny teto anivon'ny fokontany."

(They taught us about hygiene and how to prepare diverse and colorful meals. Since we care for children under five, we have in turn trained the mothers in our village using the knowledge we received.)

Chantal's expertise was further strengthened through specialized training from NGO Pivot, which equipped her to detect and manage cases of child malnutrition. Thanks to this complementary support, she can identify vulnerable children early, guide families through nutritional follow-up, and ensure that children receive the care they need to regain their health.

The Power of Collaboration

Chantal's story demonstrates the remarkable impact that collaboration among members of the Population-Health-Environment (PHE) Network can achieve.

The combined support from Ny Tanintsika and Pivot has equipped her with complementary skills that bridge sustainable agriculture, nutrition, and community health. Together, these interventions contribute not only to healthier families but also to greater food security and stronger community resilience.

Reflecting on the transformation she has witnessed, Chantal shares:

"Mifameno dia mifameno ny fanampiana omen'ny Pivot sy Ny Tanintsika satria mitondra fahasalamana aby. Tena hitanay hoe misy vokany tato amin'ny fokontaninay ny formation satria na ny reny bevohoka aza dia nampiharina ny fahalalanay azo tamin'izy ireo. Hita fa lasa tsy dia misy vehivavy bevohoka marofo be aty amin'ny fokontaninay, ary ny zaza koa dia tsy dia misy hoe tratry ny tsy fanjarian-tsakafo izany satria sady manentana mafy koa izahay, dia hitanay fa tena mihatra ato amin'ny mponina ny fanampian'izy ireo."

(The support provided by Pivot and Ny Tanintsika truly complements one another because both contribute to better health. We have seen real results in our village thanks to the training we received. Even pregnant women now apply the knowledge we have shared with them. We have noticed fewer high-risk pregnancies and fewer cases of child malnutrition. Through our awareness-raising activities, we can clearly see that the support these organisations provide is making a real difference in people's lives.)

Building a Healthier and More Sustainable Future

Today, Chantal is far more than a Community Health Worker. She has become a trusted leader and a driving force for change in Ambodiaviavy.

Her story shows that when organisations work together, coordinate their efforts, and place communities at the heart of their interventions, the results extend far beyond individual projects. They create healthier families, stronger food systems, and more resilient communities.

Looking back on the progress her village has made, Chantal says:

"Taloha maro be ny zaza voan'ny tsy fanjarian-tsakafo fa amin'izao anay manao VAD isa-zana-tanana dia sady mampianatra ny reny mahandro sakafo ara-pahasalamana."

(In the past, many children suffered from malnutrition. Today, through the home visits (VAD) we conduct in every village, we not only raise awareness but also teach mothers how to prepare healthy and balanced meals.)

For Chantal, every home visit, every training session, and every conversation with a mother represents another step toward a healthier future, one where people and nature thrive together.