

## Life in Rural Madagascar Improves with SEIKATSU KAIZEN

Andry Randriantsoa joined the JICA Madagascar Office in 2012 as a Technical Advisor. Starting in the field of rural development for rice and aquaculture, his work soon gave him an appreciation of JICA's approach to helping farmers to become autonomous. Andry puts it simply, "Using a range of technical support, we encourage ordinary farmers to become 'thinking farmers' who are responsible for their own development." He highlights the Life Improvement Approach (Seikatsu Kaizen) implemented in four regions of Madagascar for achieving good results, changing behaviors, and helping farmers to become autonomous when dealing with daily problems. Since 2016, Andry's involvement has extended to the field of nutrition. After some initial difficulties, he has helped linking dietary diversification and technical improvement with nutrition enhancement and behavioral changes in local communities. This experience has been highly rewarding, motivating him to learn even more about the field of nutrition.

In fiscal year 2019, the Madagascar office implemented a small-scale pilot program introducing the Seikatsu Kaizen approach into school canteens. Its overall goal was set to introduce a model of sustainably operating school canteens that are managed by the school and the students' parents. The project simultaneously involves the education, agriculture, and nutrition sectors, and increases cohesion between



Discussing with farmers and advising them on how to access technical support for improving their small-scale farming.

different sectors. Moreover, it is a holistic scheme for nation-wide rural development. Andry is proud of the achievements thus far, and hopes that in the near future the approach will be adopted by the private sector and other international development agencies so that it can be expanded to other public schools.

In the longer term, Andry has high hopes for the rural development sector, and great confidence in the range of support being disseminated. "I hope the government of Madagascar will be aware of the efficiency of these initiatives and introduce them nation-wide so marginalized farmers can have access to existing support." He is confident that combining rural and social development will lead to tangible improvements in the nutritional status of all children in Madagascar.



Showing how a *Kamado* (improved stove) is made to government officers during a training session.

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