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MADAGASCAR

SUCCESS STORY

LATRINE PROMOTION

Efforts of village leader and her students convince people of the importance of latrines



[Photo: C. Thompson/AED]

Above, Mr. Raymond and three of his children stand outside of their new latrine built with a SanPlat.

The USAID/Hygiene Improvement Project (HIP) promotes three improved water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) practices in Madagascar to reduce deadly childhood diarrhea: use of latrines, treating drinking water, and hand washing with soap. After learning about the importance of using latrines at a HIP/WASH training, members of Club Vintsy, a national environmental club in Madagascar, are now spreading the message and changing the lives of people in their village.

Madame Juliette is the coordinator of Club Vintsy in the city of Fianarantsoa and the leader of the village Ambatoharanana, about 40 miles outside the city. Her village had no previous hygiene improvement education and people defecated in open areas. She arranged for Club Vintsy students to promote the hygienic practices they learned from HIP in her community. During the months of May and June, the students made several trips and discussed sanitation with groups of people in Ambatoharanana, emphasizing building and using washable latrines. “We told people a latrine is very important for health and needed for development,” says Menja, a member of Club Vintsy.

The community of Ambatoharanana listened carefully to Club Vintsy and took their message seriously. Working with Madame Juliette, they hired a technician from the city to come out to the village to build *SanPlats*, washable latrine platforms. The community decided that all families would buy a SanPlat (about US\$9 each) to be installed near their homes. The 32 families used their own money to purchase SanPlats and built new latrines. As a result, they now have a cleaner community.

Members of the Ambatoharanana community said the education they received from Club Vintsy convinced them to build and start using latrines. “We want to be healthy,” says Mr. Jean Raymond, whose family of nine now has a new, cleaner latrine in their yard to use.

Club Vintsy and Madame Juliette hope to continue WASH education in Ambatoharanana and the surrounding villages.