

Ikognane, Madagascar

This is Ikognane. She lives on the tropical island of Madagascar.

Ikognane is the vice president of a group of kitchen gardeners in Mohairiry village. There are 15 gardeners in all, growing many varieties of fruit and vegetables.

In Madagascar people grow mangos, grapes, pineapples, avocados, lichee nuts, tomatoes, bananas, turnips and vanilla beans – a favourite in local dishes.

But life wasn't always so good in Mohairiry. Here, Ikognane tells us about what things were like before WaterAid helped the community install a well in the village. >>



Q&A

Hello Ikognane. What was life like before the well?

“Before the well we had no kitchen garden. There wasn’t anything you could eat on this bit of land. There just wasn’t enough rain to make things grow. We still don’t have the rain, but now at least we can water the plants ourselves.”

How have things changed?

“The great thing is that, now we have a garden, we are able to eat a much greater variety of vegetables than before, rather than just manioc. We are eating a more varied diet.

“It is much healthier than before – we know our families will be healthier. We also sell some of our vegetables so we make some money in that way.”



↑ Watering the crops. Fresh vegetables are full of vitamins, which means fewer people are getting ill in Mohairiry.



↑ Inspecting the water well.



Madagascar

Madagascar is the fourth biggest island in the world. Most people live in the countryside and very few of them (just 14%) enjoy clean water.

A healthy recipe with ingredients from Madagascar
Fruit compote with lychee nuts (serves eight)

Mix these ingredients together in a large bowl:

- 1 cup fresh pineapple in 2cm pieces
- 1 cup cantaloupe in small pieces
- 1 cup oranges, peeled and thinly sliced
- ½ cup sliced strawberries

Pour ½ cup of canned lychees over the fruit.

Then, to make a syrup, combine the following ingredients in a small saucepan:

- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

Bring to a boil and boil hard for one minute. Remove from the heat.

Add two tablespoons of vanilla extract to the syrup. Pour the hot syrup over the fruit and chill in the refrigerator for one hour.

To serve, bring the compote to the table along with a small bottle of pure vanilla extract. Spoon the compote into small glass dishes and sprinkle with additional vanilla.



↑ Madagascar is well known for its unique wildlife including baobab trees (pictured above) and lemurs.

WaterAid/Jeremy Horner