

## Dr. RALAIVAO Josoa Samson, Madagascar

“SOFIHI is the engine for improving public health across Madagascar,” says Dr. Josoa. As the Community Health Nurse (CHN) Program Director for SEFAM, the Lutheran Nursing School in Madagascar, Josoa has brought deep experience and wisdom to developing and implementing this post-graduate certificate program. A Doctor of Medicine with a Master in Public Health degree, as well as courses at the PhD level, Josoa has also brought professional relationships with Malagasy colleagues that strengthen the program at SEFAM. Graduates of the program are helping build the capacity of rural health clinics in remote areas, and enabling communities to be involved in integrated village development that addresses the root causes of poor health. Begun in response to persistent, heartbreakingly high maternal and infant mortality rates, and recognizing the capacity of congregations to reach into communities through their members, SOFIHI collaborates with REMAFI, a family planning organization, and the church to encourage families to utilize their local clinic and learn from the CHNs to impact public health.

Whether advocating for a working motorcycle to transport patients for emergency care, teaching, or treating patients himself, Josoa is a model for the CHN students in how to live out their faith as they respond to and work alongside the communities they serve.

*Nominated by: Carol Berg*

