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Leading by example: transforming nutrition in Nampula

Amélia José knew the importance of a healthy diet for herself and her children. What the young mother in Mecuburi was missing were some of the tools and basic nutritional facts that could help her consistently provide nutritious foods for them all. That changed when she was paired with a nutrition mentor from the USAID Transform Nutrition project. Amelia, who was pregnant at the time, and her mentor discussed the cultural food taboos surrounding pregnant and nursing women with her mentor. "I learned that some foods I grew up thinking were not healthy to eat during pregnancy - such as eggs and cassava leaves - were actually parts of a balanced diet for me and my baby," Amélia said.

Working with her nutrition mentor, Amélia also learned how important a diverse diet was to get all the necessary vitamins and nutrients for her children to thrive and grow. Over the 5 months they worked together, Amélia created a vegetable garden and a pantry at her home. She chose to plant cabbage, tomato, sweet potato, pepper, onion, and cassava - all plants that provide critical nutrients and vitamins for early development. Amélia proudly recounts how her children happily fill up on food straight from her garden. "Now I have more control over the foods I give my family and don't have to rely only on the vegetables available in the market." Amelia plans to take even more control over her nutrition, by raising chickens to add protein to her family's diet.

According to the project, many others in the community have seen Amelia's success and started changing their habits as well. "Improving nutrition led by those within a community is exactly what USAID Transform Nutrition aims to do," says USAID Transform Nutrition district supervisor Rainha Bonde, "The mentors just start the process. Role models like Amelia do the real work that will last."



1. Amelia's new garden provides nutritious foods for her family and has also started her children's understanding of healthy eating.



2. Amelia works in her garden

USAID Transform Nutrition improves nutritional health by increasing knowledge and skills related to good nutrition and expanding access to affordable nutritious foods. Activities include creating community-based nutrition groups and girls' clubs; helping families creating home vegetable gardens and other sources of nutritious foods; training and mobilizing community nutrition and hygiene and developing community radio and video programs advocating better nutrition and hygiene practices. It also provides technical support and grants to the government of Mozambique and local organizations to better implement the government's nutrition strategies and policies and respond to food shocks from natural disasters.

Over five years, the project will improve the nutritional health of approximately 550,000 pregnant women, adolescent girls and children under 2 in the Nampula province. The project is implemented by [ADPP](#) and other partners including [h2n Association](#), Lúrio University ([UniLúrio](#)), Viamo, and the [Global Alliance for Nutrition Improvement \(GAIN\)](#).



3. Amelia harvesting the first yield of tomatoes from her garden



4. Transform Nutrition staff provide training to community nutrition mentors and develop community radio and video programming to improve nutrition and hygiene practices.

****Update...Amelia and her family welcomed its newest member in late in 2020 with the birth of a healthy new son named Leonil.****

Photo credits: ADPP