

via PATHWAYS
to WORK

Success Story: Gelito

The Plumber with a Positive Attitude

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Introduction

What follows is a series of success stories about young people who received Passport to Success® life skills training as part of their courses in the Mozambican Professional Institute and Labor Studies Alberto Cassimo (IFPELAC). They received this training thanks to the Via: Pathways to Work (aka Via: Rotas para o Trabalho) program, a partnership between International Youth Foundation (IYF) and Mastercard Foundation. The stories share the transformations experienced by the young people in their work as well as their engagement with their families and communities in their daily lives. The interviews and success stories were conducted and produced by Alfredo Jochoma, a Mandela Washington Fellow under the Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI) during his professional development experience at IYF.

Via: Rotas para o Trabalho

Via: Pathways to Work (or Via: Rotas para o Trabalho) applies a systems approach to improve economic opportunities for underserved youth in Mozambique. By focusing on program outcomes, Via's goal is to influence the collective behaviors of TVET system actors (government, employers, civil society, and youth), so that they are more responsive to the needs of young people and industry. As such, Via facilitates sustainable changes and refinements in the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and entrepreneurship systems. IYF works closely with IFPELAC and the Mozambican National Institute of Professional Employment (INEP) in Mozambique to strengthen training and services young people receive, so they are more prepared to succeed in the world of work. Specifically, Via is integrating life skills programming and career support services, clearly identified workforce and industry gaps, into technical offerings. The Via legacy will be in the systemic changes made at institutional levels and across an array of youth training and support services stakeholders, leading to significant numbers of youth benefiting from these advances over time. Via is also implemented in Tanzania.

Passport to Success®

A significant component under Via is working with IFPELAC and associated stakeholders to sustainably integrate PTS into IFPELAC's offerings. Educators, employers, and policymakers increasingly emphasize the development of life and employability skills as a way to prepare young people for success in today's rapidly changing world. IYF's experience has been that offering combined life and employability skills programming results in young people who are self-motivated, reliable, productive, resilient, and confident decision-makers. Superior quality content and service delivery distinguish PTS, strengthening teachers' pedagogy to be more activity-based and student-centered. Developed and defined over the course of a decade, the curriculum adheres to best practice standards experts agree are critical to effective life skills programming. Among these standards is a focus on a core group of widely endorsed life skills—including self-confidence, responsibility, and respect—that responds to the needs of youth, employers, youth-serving organizations, and others.

Conclusion

These stories are just a sample of young people who have benefited from PTS. The Via program's goal is to ensure that many more young Mozambicans can receive this training over the years through Mozambique's training institutions. For more information on the Via program and PTS curriculum, please contact:

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Gelito, the Plumber with a Positive Attitude

Gelito, 21, is an orphan and is currently living with his uncle in Machava, Mozambique. Growing up, Gelito dreamed of becoming a plumber.

In his free time, Gelito likes to perform theater, especially religious theater. Recently, someone at his church offered to pay the school fees associated with enrolling in a technical course. With this support, Gelito graduated from a plumbing course offered by the Vocational Training Center in Machava (CFP Machava). This course was offered through the Alberto Cassimo Institute of Vocational Training and Labor (IFPELAC) under Via: Pathways to Work initiative. In partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) implements the Via initiative.



As part of the plumbing course, Gelito also learned soft skills through IYF's Passport to Success® (PTS) curriculum. He says he benefitted most from the conflict resolution lessons. Before participating in the course, he often got into fights with friends when challenges or disagreements arose. However, after completing the course, he now feels equipped to resolve any conflict that comes his way. "PTS came to change the mentality of Mozambican youth," Gelito says. His shift in behavior and attitude has also inspired his friends to enroll in PTS courses.

Gelito is not currently employed, but he is very enthusiastic and motivated because he knows of many colleagues who have secured jobs in the plumbing field. He also mentioned that CFP Machava gave three other students plumbing toolkits to start their business.

It is costly and difficult to buy all the plumbing tools needed upfront before securing a work contract; therefore, Gelito plans to partner with seasoned plumbers to rent their tools or sub-contract under them. This strategy will allow him to save enough money to eventually buy his own tools.

The competition among older and new plumbers is also a big challenge for Gelito. Customers tend to contract the older and more experienced plumbers, which leaves the new and less experienced plumbers with few clients. However, Gelito has a positive attitude. "The new will become old one day as well," he says.

Gelito's relatives are proud of him for being the youngest member to complete a technical training course and the only plumber in his family. Gelito is proud of his training and happy that he and his colleagues have been given this opportunity to gain valuable skills for the betterment of their communities and country.