

***via*** PATHWAYS  
*to* WORK

# Success Story: Heliodonda and Camila

Life Skills Training Inspires Young Women Entrepreneurs

March 2019



## **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:

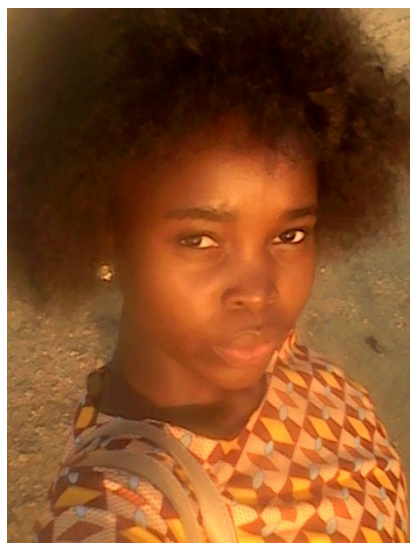
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## Life Skills Training Inspires Young Women Entrepreneurs

Lack of employment is no longer a barrier for Heliodonda, 25, and Camila, 21, in Mozambique, because both young women have created their own opportunities.

Heliodonda pursued a secretarial course and graduated from the Vocational Training Center in Inhambane (CFP Inhambane). Camila pursued a sewing course and graduated from the Vocational Training Center in Tete (CFP Tete). These courses, which incorporate the International Youth Foundation's (IYF's) Passport to Success® (PTS) life skills curriculum, are offered through the Alberto Cassimo Institute of Vocational Training and Labor Studies (IFPELAC). IYF implements Via in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation.

Shortly after graduating, Heliodonda and Camila faced the harsh reality that may job seekers in Mozambique face: there are not enough formal jobs to go around.



So, they decided to create their own paths and utilize knowledge they gained from the vocational centers, including the Passport to Success® (PTS) life skills courses, to start their small businesses. “I was taught marketing, so I used these skills and started buying goods to resale. I now have something to live on,” Camila says. Her mother loaned her two thousand Meticals (approximately 34 USD) for Camila to start her business. She used this money to buy cosmetics, shoes, and handbags for resale. Since starting her business in May 2017, Camila has made approximately 24,000 Meticals (approximately 400 USD) in sales. “The communication skills I acquired from my PTS classes are useful for the relationship I have with my clients,” she adds. However, as in many informal businesses, Camila notes that the only downside is when customers fail to pay off their debts. Many customers take her products with a promise to pay at the end of the month but very few pay her back on time as promised.

Meanwhile, Heliodonda had been the one supporting her family. Before enrolling in the secretarial course at CFP Inhambane, Heliodonda had worked for the Mozambique Institute of Statistics for a year. “With the money I saved from my salary, I helped repair my parents’ house and paid for my sister’s university fees for a year,” Heliodonda notes. She also used her saving to start her own chicken breeding business. She has noticed many positive differences in the way she interacts with her clients after completing the PTS life skills lessons in conflict resolution, communication, and managing emotions. Although her chicken breeding business is doing well, she says she would like to venture into the restaurant business. “Some of my friends own restaurants, but I do not think they are running them well. They do not have the knowledge I gained from PTS; so, I can see that there is a huge gap that needs to be filled,” Heliodonda says. She also mentioned that Inhambane is rich in tourism, which makes owning a restaurant a very good business venture.