

Empowerment for the Aged



I am healthier than I used to be, Hawa, 85.

Is it possible to live a healthy and more fulfilling life in one's old age? Meet Hawa Kamulon, an 85-year-old resident of Sumbo Village, Traditional Authority Chamba, in Machinga District.

Hawa, a single elderly woman, once grappled with various health issues, attributing them solely to the inevitable march of time. Little did she know that her eating habits were contributing significantly to her health struggles.

In 2021, a beacon of hope entered Hawa's life through Eagles Relief's Nutritional Program, generously funded by the Financial Access for Rural Markets, Smallholders, and Enterprises Program (FARMSE). The question arises: Can a nutritional program truly make a difference in the life of someone so advanced in age?

Hawa's age and health made it challenging for her to attend the program's training sessions. But her daughter, Christina Msosa, saw an opportunity for change. Armed with a determination to enhance her mother's well-being, Christina attended every training session on behalf of her elderly parent.

"I wanted to make sure my mother gets the best care possible," Christina remarks.

Through the program, Christina learned to prepare diverse and nutritious meals, such as cassava futali, cakes, porridge, and nyama Nkhobwe, ensuring her mother received all essential nutrients. "Now, my mother's health has improved remarkably," Christina proudly declares.

The program didn't stop at education; it sowed the seeds of self-sustainability. The family received vegetable seeds—thelere, bonongwe, luni, chisoso—and now cultivates them in their household garden. Hawa, overwhelmed with gratitude, notes,

"I cannot buy vegetables now, but I can sell vegetables and buy other relishes of my choice and other household needs."

Christina, too, received invaluable lessons on sanitation, hygiene, and 10 chickens through a pass-on program. "The chickens provide us with eggs and meat, contributing to our nutrition and income," Christina shares.

But the transformation goes beyond the kitchen. The family learned to prepare organic manure, enhancing their harvests. Proper farming practices, post-harvest handling and management training resulted in a significant increase in their yields last year.

The project extended beyond agriculture. Business management training, financial literacy, and budgeting empowered Christina, fostering a newfound saving attitude at the village bank. The ripple effect was transformative.

As it stands today, Hawa is not merely surviving; she is thriving. "I am healthier than I used to be, and my life has transformed significantly with food security and higher income," Hawa joyfully asserts.

The FARMSE Nutrition and Social Inclusion Specialist, Joseph Maulana expresses gratitude, noting the positive impact on the lives of the elderly, exemplified by Hawa.

"We appreciate the dedication of the implementing partner, Eagles Relief, for their commendable work," the Project Officer states.

This success story is a testament to the transformative power of nutritional empowerment, proving that age should never be a barrier to a better, healthier life.