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MOZAMBIQUE

PHOTO & CAPTION

Local Co-ops Dive into Fish Farming



Photo: USAID/Suzanne Poland

A group of small farmers who operate a fish farm use a net to collect young tilapia. These fish will be used to help other farmers start fish farms that will help them diversify their sources of income.

Four of five Mozambicans live in rural areas. Since most survive by subsistence farming, agricultural extension has come to play a vital role in supporting rural communities.

As part of an effort to improve food security, since 1999, USAID has worked with the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture and other donors to help the ministry reform its central operations and improve the services it provides to small farmers. Ultimately, USAID and the ministry are helping small-scale farmers increase production and join the shift from subsistence to more commercial farming. Part of USAID's funding flows to the local

level where agriculture officials work with communities to plan how the funds can most effectively be used to grow more food and increase income.

In 2002, USAID worked with the Ministry of Agriculture locally to introduce fish farming to agriculture cooperatives in several districts of Nampula Province. Learning how to farm tilapia, a good source of protein, has helped small-scale farmers improve their diets and expand their income-generating activities. Once a group of farmers has established a successful operation, it then helps other groups by providing them with young tilapia to start their own fish ponds. This collaboration among farmers and local and national government is helping to progressively strengthen Mozambique's capacity for sustainable development of its agriculture.