

The Rainbow Garden

Growing colourful food to keep you healthy



A Children for Health book



REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE
GOVERNO DA PROVINCIA DE TETE

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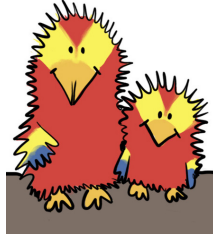


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Characters



ZuZu and ZaZa



Mama Ruth



Papa Geraldo



Mika



Christina



Baby Sylvia



Dona Matilde

New words list

10 words in the story that may be new

1	Micronutrients	Things that a living thing HAS to have for a healthy life but in very small amounts.
2	Encourage	Persuade someone to do something in a positive way.
3	Rotten	When something is becoming soft, dead and bad to eat or smell.
4	Decorations	Things used to make something look better.
5	Shiny	Bright and light.
6	Appear	Come into sight.
7	Feathery	Like a feather.
8	Precious	Has a high price for someone (not just in money).
9	Treasure	Rich things that have been collected together.
10	Valuable	Worth a high price (not just in money).

ZaZa and ZuZu were eating peppers in the bushes when they heard Mika and his little sister Christina coming along the path on their way home from school. The children were talking and did not notice the parrots.



'Our Mama is the best Mama in the world. When Mama has her birthday next summer, let's get her the best present in the world, Mika.'

'I wish we could,' said Mika. 'She always works so hard, cooking food for us every day. What would you like to give her as a present if you could?'

'I would give her jewels. I want to give her a necklace of jewels of all colours, a necklace for a queen!'

'I don't think we can get her jewels,' said Mika. 'Perhaps we can make her a special meal.'

'Yes,' said Christina. 'We will cook something for her. Perhaps we could even make a cake. And I am going to think of a way to get a beautiful jewel necklace for her.'

Christina wants to get a jewel necklace for her mother's birthday.

When the children got home they ran to play with baby Sylvia. It was always fun to be welcomed by her big smile. Sylvia was always so excited to see her big brother and sister coming back. But today Sylvia did not run out to see them. She was lying on a mat inside the house.

'She has been like this all day,' said Mama Ruth.

'Hurry up and get better, Sylvia,' whispered Christina. 'I am going to get a beautiful necklace for Mama's birthday, with red and green and yellow jewels. You will see.'



Baby Sylvia did not want to eat at suppertime.

'Why does baby Sylvia get so tired all the time?' said Christina as the rest of the family ate together.

Papa Geraldo looked worried. 'I do not know,' he said, 'but she is not a strong little girl and I do not think she is growing enough.'

'I think it is time to ask the health worker,' said Mama. 'We must take her to the clinic. It may be necessary to take her to the town when the doctor is there.'

'And I will ask my teacher at school,' said Mika. 'He tells us how to stay healthy.'

'Parrots get sick when they do not eat enough good things,' said ZaZa to ZuZu. 'Do you think I should get Sylvia some pretty flowers to eat from the forest?'

'Don't be silly,' said her big brother. 'People can't eat flowers. Let's go to school tomorrow and watch the teacher. I wonder if he will answer Mika's question.'

Everyone is worried because baby Sylvia is always tired and sick.

The next day the children went to school. The teacher called everyone to sit down together because he had some good news.

'Today,' said the teacher, 'we are going to learn about growing things. We are going to plant a special garden.'

Christina was excited, but Mika was worried. He put up his hand and asked, 'Will we have to come to school every Saturday to work in the maize field like we used to for the old teacher? On Saturday I like to play football in the village with my friends.'

'No, children, this will not be like the old maize field behind the school. We will use the new flower beds in front of the school, one bed for each class.' The teacher showed the children pictures of the things they were going to grow. He said that the colourful plants had tiny amounts of things in them called micronutrients that made children grow strong and glow with good health. 'We are going to grow a garden just like this. We will call our garden the "rainbow garden",' he said.



ZaZa hopped onto the windowsill to have a better look. 'I want to see the rainbows growing in the garden,' she said to ZuZu.

'You are funny!' said ZuZu. 'The teacher means they are going to grow a garden with fruits and vegetables with so many colours in it that it will look like a rainbow.'

The teacher tells the children they are going to plant a rainbow garden.

After the lesson, Mika and Christina told the teacher about little Sylvia. 'She does not play and she is tired all the time. What do you think is wrong with her?' she said.

'Let me ask you a question' said the teacher. 'What does little Sylvia like to eat?'

'She only likes chima. She does not like the green sauce Mama makes.'

'Children need to eat colourful food every day. Your body needs the tiny little bits of special micronutrients that are in colourful food so that it can grow strong.' The teacher went to his house by the school and came back with a mango and a papaya.

'The yellow and orange colours in these fruits might help baby Sylvia. Encourage her to eat these, even a little bit each day. A colourful diet might help her get stronger.'

'It's a rainbow diet she needs,' said Christina with a shy smile.

'That's right,' said the teacher, 'a rainbow garden and a rainbow diet.'

Christina and Mika took the fruit to Mama. 'Our teacher said that this mango and papaya can help Sylvia,' said Mika. 'Teacher says she must eat some colourful food every day.'

Papa Geraldo was not sure. 'As long as she has her chima too,' he said. 'Chima makes you feel full and gives you energy to work. Fruit does not fill you up so much.'

But Mama Ruth had been listening to what the teacher had told the children. 'We will try it,' she said. Baby Sylvia ate some of the mashed up mango and then some chima and gave a little smile.



The teacher gives the children some colourful fruit for baby Sylvia and says she needs to eat some colourful food every day to get strong.

The next day, Papa Geraldo, Mama Ruth and some other parents came to the school.

'Look,' said ZaZa. 'Are the fathers and mothers now coming to learn maths and reading as well?'

The teacher had invited the parents to school. He showed them the pictures of the rainbow garden. 'The children are making a special garden to help them grow nutritious food. Many of you know about growing plants. Will you help us to start the garden and then help us take care of the garden? We need help with seeds and hoes.'

'I don't know if we have time to help the teacher,' said Papa Geraldo to Mama on the way home. 'I have a lot of work to do in my field.'

'I think we should help the teacher,' said Mama Ruth. 'You are good at growing things, Papa Geraldo. The teacher will be very happy if you help the children learn about good food.'

A few days later, Papa Geraldo came to the school with a small paper packet. He gave it to the teacher. Other fathers did the same. Some stayed back to talk with the teacher about the best ways to look after the different plants.

'Thank you,' said the teacher. 'Look children, the fathers have brought us some seeds. Now we can plant the rainbow garden.'

In front of the classrooms were empty beds. 'This is a good place,' said the teacher, 'because it is level and it has enough shade and enough sun.'

The children came out and began to dig the soil. They added rotten vegetables and compost to make the soil rich and fertile. Then the teacher and the children planted the seeds.



The teacher tells the parents about the rainbow garden. Papa Geraldo and the other fathers help the children begin the garden.

Every day the children watered the seeds. They put thorn bushes over the soil to stop birds eating the seeds. They made sure that chickens and dogs did not come near. Everyone in the village helped to look after the garden. Soon small green plants began to grow. Papa Geraldo showed the children how to spray the plants with soapy water to make insects go away. The children picked off slugs and snails, and gave them to the chickens. They grew marigolds to keep insects away. They made shiny decorations from bottle tops to scare the birds away. The teacher showed them how to carefully pull the weeds out and leave more room for the fruit and vegetable plants to grow.

'Do you think someone will take the fruits and vegetables when they begin to grow?' Mika asked Papa.

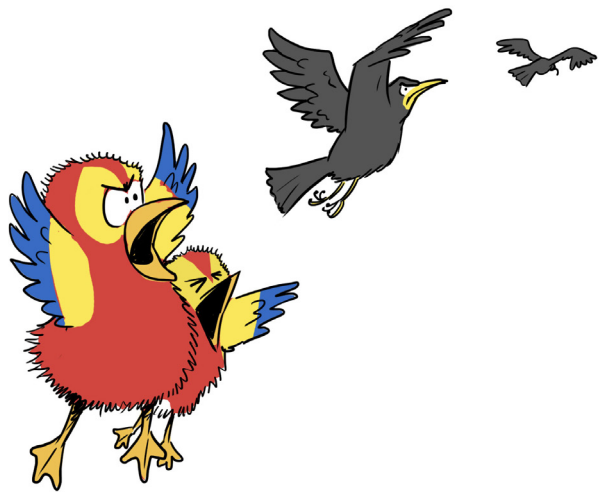
'Everybody in the village knows about the rainbow garden and will be keeping an eye on it. But you might need to put up a fence to stop chickens eating things. I will help you.'

'Look at those crows,' said ZuZu to ZaZa. 'They are walking around waiting to eat the plants.'

So the parrots squawked and shouted at the crows. 'There's nothing for you here, greedy crows! This is the school's rainbow garden!' The crows flew away.

'I think we should come and scare away those greedy crows every day,' said ZuZu.

Mama brought some colourful food back from the market each day. Sylvia ate spinach and kale, oranges and red peppers. Sylvia got better. She laughed and played outside the house with Christina, and smiled at Mama.



'The colourful food is helping Sylvia, but it is expensive,' said Papa, 'because we have to buy it from the market.'

'Don't worry Papa,' said Christina. 'We are learning how to grow colourful food at school. Let's grow some at home as well. We can use the old tyres to make flower beds.' Papa smiled at their ideas and their happiness.

The rainbow garden begins to grow and the children learn how to water it, and protect the plants from insects and birds. Sylvia begins to feel better.

Christina and Mika liked helping to weed and water the plants. They watched them grow taller and taller. Soon, little flowers began to appear. The flowers began to turn into green beans, yellow peppers, red tomatoes and purple radishes. The feathery carrot plants grew thick, and under the soil the carrots were getting bigger and fatter.



But the growing plants also reminded Christina that Mama Ruth's birthday was getting nearer and they still did not have a present for her.

'Why are you looking so sad?' Dona Matilde asked Christina one day.

'I want to get Mama a necklace of jewels for her birthday,' said Christina.

Dona Matilde laughed. 'You will never have a necklace of jewels for your Mama, Christina. Do you think your Mama is a queen?'

But Christina looked even sadder.

Dona Matilde said, 'I can help you make a cake for your Mama. She will like a cake.'

The rainbow garden is full of beautiful fruits and vegetables. But Christina is sad because she does not have a beautiful necklace for Mama Ruth.

On Mama's birthday, the children went to school. They still had nothing for her birthday.

The rainbow garden was looking beautiful. The peppers, beans, tomatoes and onions looked so colourful in front of the school. It really was a rainbow garden.

The teacher said that some of the fruit and vegetables were ready to eat. The children picked the tomatoes and peppers and beans. They dug up the carrots and the sweet potatoes. There were lots of delicious-looking things to eat.

The teacher gave all the children some fruit and vegetables to take home.

'Look,' said Mika. 'We do have a present to give to Mama for her birthday. We have the pretty vegetables that we have grown.'



Christina was not sure if they were a good present. She still wanted a necklace for Mama, but she smiled and said 'Yes, we have a good present.'

On Mama Ruth's birthday it is time to pick the vegetables in the rainbow garden.

The children took a few of the colourful vegetables home and gave them to Mama.

'Happy birthday,' said Christina. 'I am sorry it is just vegetables. I wish I could get a necklace of jewels for you, like a queen wears.'

Mama clapped her hands. 'This is a wonderful birthday present,' she said. 'What beautiful vegetables!'

She picked up the tomatoes, carrots and onions and sniffed them. 'And I know just what to make with them,' she said.

Mama began to chop and cook the colourful vegetables. Soon there was a delicious smell of red and green peppers, orange carrots, garlic, red tomatoes and beans with a little bit of red chilli.

Papa Geraldo was smiling.

'The rainbow garden has given us some good food,' he said. 'I can't wait to eat this stew. Mmm, onions, garlic and tomatoes and peppers! It smells like a piri piri stew I once ate in a café in the town.'



Dona Matilde came to join them. She brought a pan with a lid on and put it near her. Papa asked Christina to get another plate. Dona Matilde smiled like she had a good secret, but she did not open her pan.

Mama came out from the hut carrying the delicious smelling stew. Everyone sat down together to share the meal on the new plates that Papa Geraldo had just bought for his family. (See the story *Everyone Counts* to read all about this.)

'Mama I wanted to get you a beautiful necklace of jewels, but I couldn't,' said Christina sadly.

'But you did get me jewels,' said Mama. 'Wait. I will go and put my jewel necklace on. You will see.'

Mama went back inside. Everyone was very puzzled. What did Mama mean?

The children give the rainbow vegetables to Mama Ruth for her birthday. Christina says she wishes she had a necklace of colourful jewels to give Mama for her birthday.

A little while later Mama came out again. She was wearing a beautiful necklace of red and green and yellow. She had the rest of the vegetables, the peppers and carrots and little tomatoes on a string around her neck like big jewels.

'Look at my wonderful jewels,' she said. 'Look how beautiful I am!'

'Mama, that is not a jewel necklace. They are just vegetables,' said Christina, laughing.

But Mama had been listening to the children talking about what Mika and Christina had learnt at school. She knew that the vegetables took micronutrients from the soil and stored them as beautiful colours.



'These vegetables really are precious treasure. They bring up the goodness from the soil, the minerals and nutrients and vitamins that are just as valuable as any jewels. When we eat these things all of us will grow and glow and be strong and beautiful. My real treasures are you, my children. Since these vegetables make you strong and healthy, then the rainbow vegetables are very precious.'

'And they taste so good,' said Papa Geraldo. 'Children, we are going to start growing some of these colourful vegetables in our garden. Then we will not have to buy them from the market. I'd like you to help me!'

'What is in Dona Matilde's pan?' said Papa Geraldo. 'We forgot to eat it.'

'That is my surprise,' said Dona Matilde.

She took off the lid. Inside was a golden cake made with eggs and flour and oil, and with sweet carrots from the rainbow garden.

'Christina and I helped to make it and cook it in Dona Matilde's oven,' said Mika.

Mama makes the colourful vegetables into a beautiful necklace and says they are better than jewels because they contain precious nutrients from the soil to make her children grow strong.

Papa Geraldo was proud of his clever children and all the beautiful fruit and vegetables they had grown at school.

'I did not think these colourful vegetables were as important as chima because they do not fill you up as well as chima does. But now I know that they have tiny nutrients from the soil that help us grow and glow,' he said.

All the men in the village got together to buy seeds, or exchange ones they had grown. They began to grow colourful fruit and vegetables in their fields. They also went to school to help the children with their rainbow garden.

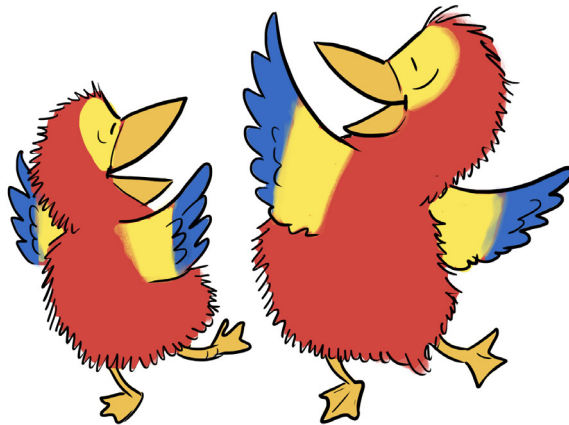
They had enough food to make a colourful soup for the children to eat at school every day. It made the children feel stronger and they could concentrate and learn more in their lessons.

'ZuZu,' said his little sister, 'When it is my birthday tomorrow, I would like a necklace of rainbow jewels.'

'But ZaZa, you don't need a necklace. You are as bright as a rainbow already.'

'Yes,' said ZaZa, 'It is true. I am already beautiful.'

She did a little dance.



'Then I would like some colourful fruit to eat because it makes me glow and because it tastes so good.'

The men in the village begin to grow more colourful vegetables for their families to eat. The vegetables from the rainbow garden made a good soup for the children at school.

Activities

The story *The Rainbow Garden* is for children aged 10–14 depending on their reading ability. They can also read it to younger children. Its focus is on creative thinking, problem solving and nutrition.

Ideas for using the story book

1. Ask the children to look at the cover. Ask them to guess what the story is about.
2. Read the story with them.
3. Ask the children to read the story to each other or to someone at home.
4. Ask the children to share or act out the story with younger brothers, sisters or friends.

Talking about the book

Get the children into pairs or groups, ask the questions and then ask the children to discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Discuss the questions as a whole group at the end.

Ideas for questions

Response to the story questions

1. Did you like the story?
2. Which bit did you like the best? Why?
3. Do the pictures help to tell the story? How?

Reading between the lines questions

1. Why does Christina want to get a wonderful present for her mother?
2. Why does the teacher want the children to grow a rainbow garden?
3. Do you think the parents like helping with the rainbow garden? Why?
4. What can help baby Sylvia to feel better?
5. Do you think Christina and Mika are a good brother and sister for baby Sylvia? Why?
6. Why does Mama Ruth think her necklace of vegetables is so good?
7. Why does Papa Geraldo want to grow more colourful vegetables?

Suppose you were questions

1. Suppose you were the teacher. What would you tell the children about the new rainbow garden? What would you say to parents of children at the school?
2. Suppose you were Mika. What would you say to your father to ask him to help with the rainbow garden?
3. Suppose you were Mama Ruth. Tell us why you like your necklace of rainbow vegetables. Explain why the vegetables are better than jewels.

Linking the story to real life questions

1. Do you think it is important to eat colourful food? Why?
2. What happens if children do not have any colourful food?
3. Where can you get colourful food?
4. Where do micronutrients come from?
5. What are the differences between children working on a school maize field and working on a rainbow garden?
6. If you don't have a garden, where can you get colourful food?
7. How much would it cost a family of four to eat colourful food every day if they had to buy their food at your local shop or market? With your teacher to help you, create a meal plan and a budget for one week.
8. Do your parents go to your school? Do you think it is a good idea they are sometimes invited to school?

Ten comprehension questions

1. What would Christina like to give Mama Ruth for her birthday?
2. Why does Mika feel afraid when the teacher tells them about the plan to plant a garden?
3. Where is the rainbow garden going to be planted?
4. What does the teacher give Mika and Christina to help baby Sylvia?
5. Why do the parents come to the school?
6. What do they need to do every day?
7. What plants can you grow in a rainbow garden?
8. What does Mama Ruth do to surprise everyone?
9. Why are vegetables like jewels?
10. How do micronutrients help children?

Activities to do in class or a club

1. In pairs, small groups or a whole-class group, children learn a message about the rainbow garden. Here is the PCAAN message about the rainbow garden:
Eating from a rainbow garden helps to protect our health. Let's grow a rainbow garden.
2. Children create actions to go with the rainbow garden message.
3. Children share the message with friends and family.
4. In small groups children create a role play in which children learn the rainbow garden message at school, share it with friends and family, and then return to school to report on what they have done.
5. In pairs, children create a dialogue between a person who knows the rainbow garden message and a friend who does not (for example two mothers). They meet each other and the person who knows the message shares it with their friend. The person who does not know the message gives reasons why they think message is wrong or difficult for them to follow. The other person gives reasons why the message must be followed.
6. Children think about one or two good questions they can ask their friends or family to start a discussion about how to follow the message. For example: What are the reasons people do not eat much colourful food? How can we help to make this change?
7. Using the new words (see the list at the start of the story), children make new sentences using one or two of the words in the sentence. This can be done in pairs.

At community events children can show their rainbow garden and nutrition dramas, dialogues and debates, and sing nutrition songs. Community leaders and children can discuss together the answers to children's questions.

Eight nutrition topics and messages

1. Hygiene
2. Balanced diet
3. Rainbow garden
4. Micronutrients
5. Sharing food fairly
6. Breastfeeding
7. Malnutrition
8. Growth monitoring

1. To wash hands properly use water and a little soap. Rub for 10 seconds, rinse and air-dry or dry with a clean cloth/paper, not on dirty clothes.
2. Energetic foods (Go) and body-building foods (Grow) and protecting foods (Glow) are good foods that keep your body and mind strong.
3. Eating from a rainbow garden helps to protect our health. Let's grow a rainbow garden.
4. Fruits and vegetables, red, yellow and green, are full of micronutrients, too small to see, but which make a strong, healthy body and mind.
5. Small children, boys and girls, pregnant and breastfeeding women, the elderly and children with special needs ALL need the right amounts of good food.
6. Breast milk is the only food and drink that a baby needs from birth to 6 months. It contains all the nutrients that a baby needs to go, grow and glow. It is always fresh and clean.
7. Malnutrition means 'bad nutrition'. This happens if we eat too little or if we eat too much junk food. Sharing the right amount of good food during meals avoids malnutrition.
8. From birth until 5 years old children must be weighed regularly at a health clinic to check they are growing well.

PCAAAN is a programme in Mozambique. PCAAAN stands for Children's Participation in Learning and Action for Nutrition. It has two aims: 1. that all children know these eight messages before they leave primary school; 2. that children have the skills and confidence to learn, share and discuss the meaning of these messages with other children.

About this book

This book was co-created with teachers and children from 15 schools in Tete Province, Mozambique between January 2014 and December 2015. The schools are all part of a government pilot programme managed by the government's multisectoral team for addressing chronic under-nutrition in the under 5s (SETSAN). This programme is called Children's Participation in Learning and Action for Nutrition (PCAAN in Portuguese). It is an approach to nutrition education using pre-existing structures and systems. It seeks to mobilise primary school-aged children as advocates for good nutrition in their families. The PCAAN programme is one of the education sector's initiatives and it is supported by the Danish Government agency, DANIDA. This is one of four story books that have been created and there is also a children's recipe book, co-created by teachers and local cooks.

1. *The Rainbow Garden*: Growing colourful food to keep you healthy
2. *Everyone Counts*: How to share your food so everyone gets enough to eat
3. *The Puzzle*: How to keep clean and why it is important
4. *How to be Good at Football*: Why small things are important: A story about micronutrients

There are eight nutrition messages at the end of the book and these messages form the basic structure of the PCAAN programme. They are linked to learning priorities in the existing primary school curriculum of Mozambique.



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