

A YEAR IN MOZAMBIQUE

SUMMARY REPORT 2011

Plan is improving access to health services
and anti-retroviral drugs



About Mozambique

Although Mozambique's economy has been growing in recent years, more than half of all Mozambicans live below the poverty line.

Plan has been running projects in Mozambique since 2006. We work in partnership with the government, NGOs, children's and youth groups, as well as community organisations.

Problems affecting the children of Mozambique

- Poor standards of education, healthcare and sanitation
- Children are vulnerable to neglect and abuse
- High levels of HIV and AIDS
- Frequent natural disasters



Volunteers registering people.

PLAN'S PRIORITIES IN MOZAMBIQUE

1 Working towards a healthy environment

- Promoting communities' involvement in managing water and sanitation projects
- Working with children on peer-to-peer health awareness campaigns

2 Improving access to education

- Constructing schools and providing learning materials
- Training teachers and improving curriculums

3 Giving children a greater voice and protecting them

- Raising awareness on child trafficking
- Protecting girls from abuse and helping them complete their education
- Promoting birth registration campaigns

4 Reducing the harsh effects of HIV and AIDS

- Improving access to health services and anti-retroviral drugs
- Increasing awareness of the risks of HIV and AIDS

5 Improving household economic security

- Developing awareness and training on child savings
- Empowering people with new skills for business ventures and farming methods
- Working with communities to lower the effects of natural disasters

By being a child sponsor, you have directly supported projects like the ones below. Your ongoing support sustains our long-term development work which impacts the lives of children, their families and communities for generations to come.

Together we are making an invaluable difference to the lives of people in Mozambique.

To learn more about Plan's work in Mozambique visit:

www.plan.org.au/ourwork/southernafrika/mozambique



Recently built latrine from local material.

CASE STUDY: PROTECTING GIRLS

Sexual violence is a major problem in rural Mozambique. Not only is it horrific in itself, but it also prevents girls from going to school and getting the education they need to improve their lives. And frequently, it is an occurrence which goes unpunished. This is something that Plan is trying to stop, in Mozambique and many other countries around the world.

Jangamo, one of the 12 districts that make up the Inhambane province in south-east Mozambique, is considered to be the poorest in the region. Many families struggle to survive and don't have the money to provide a safe environment for their children. Fifteen-year-old Esperanca is typical of many teenagers in the area.

Last year, with her poverty-stricken parents away working in South Africa, she was living with her grandmother and walking seven miles each day to reach the nearest secondary school. Even if her family could have afforded to pay for the school dormitory so she didn't have to do this walk, it would have been difficult to get a place because the dorm was so crowded.

In Mozambique, education provides a crucial means for girls to enhance their social and economic standing, but for girls like Esperanca it comes with a risk. Those families who have to send their daughters to faraway schools worry about the distance due to increasing violence against girls.

An unlucky way home

One night last year, Esperanca and her best friend Ivone started walking home when classes finished at nine in the evening. That night they walked alone, without the male classmates who usually accompanied them. The boys were in the habit of making lewd jokes and comments and this evening Ivone and Esperanca were happy to enjoy the peace and quiet.

However, the calm they felt was shattered a mile into their journey when they were approached by a group of men smelling strongly of beer and marijuana. Instinctively they felt the men were dangerous and Ivone, panicking, started to shake uncontrollably.

What followed was every girl's worst fear. They threw Esperanca into a bush and raped her. Meanwhile Ivone was threatened and cruelly beaten.

No justice

The girls survived the nightmare but the social and psychological effects persist. It is common for women who have been the victims of sexual abuse to have the suffering compounded by a feeling of cultural stigma and shame that surrounds the crime.

Unfortunately, legal proceedings against perpetrators of sexual violence are rarely enforced in the Jangamo district. "The case was taken to the police but so far nobody has been arrested or identified," says Esperanca's grandmother. "The case was dismissed due to lack of evidence."

Building a better future

Since this incident occurred, Plan has been working with the secondary school in Jangamo to construct a new dormitory building exclusively for girls. And we're making sure it will be free.

The new building will help to tackle an important aspect of the threat of sexual violence by providing accommodation for up to 160 vulnerable girls attending the school.

More widely, we are working on initiatives to make sure more perpetrators are brought to justice – raising awareness, strengthening the referral system and training the police.

Esperanca did not become infected with HIV or fall pregnant as a result of the rape. But she did drop out of school. We hope that with support, she will re-enter school next year, lodge in the dormitory and continue her education – and hopefully find a way to put her horrific experience behind her.

Some names have been changed for child protection and privacy reasons.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2010

- Trained 95 community workers to give psycho-social support to 1,000 children infected and affected by HIV and AIDS
- Equipped communities with the skills to build sanitation projects resulting in 520 families who built their own latrines using local materials
- Expanded access to clean drinking water for 790 families living in communities with acute water shortages



Children holding onto school materials including books, pens and rulers distributed by Plan Mozambique.