

PROFILE: MOZAMBIQUE



Mozambique, on the eastern coast of southern Africa, gained independence from Portugal in 1975. A 16-year civil war ensued, destroying lives, livelihoods and infrastructure. Since the signing of the 1992 Peace Agreement, Mozambique has been viewed as one of Africa's most successful stories of post-war reconstruction and economic recovery.

Yet a complex mix of recurrent droughts, floods and HIV keeps Mozambique near the bottom of the world's development tables. Infrastructure has been slow to develop following the destruction of the war, especially roads to reach the rural areas. Poor infrastructure makes goals to improve basic needs, such as water and sanitation and health education, difficult to achieve.

Major floods, such as the widespread disasters of 2000 and 2008, tend to be concentrated in the central and southern regions of the country. Meanwhile, pockets of droughts are found in the provinces of Gaza and Tete. Mozambique is also vulnerable to natural hazards such as cyclones or bush fires, which destroy homes and livelihoods.

Other causes of poverty in Mozambique include gender inequality and high rates of illiteracy, because people have limited access to education and a historical lack of appreciation of its worth. Many church leaders are poor themselves, and have never learnt to read or write. One researcher described the church in Mozambique as a 'dry canal', meaning that as much as the church wants to help others, it also needs help itself.

TEARFUND'S WORK IN MOZAMBIQUE

Tearfund began working in Mozambique in 1987, before the 16-year civil war ended in 1992. Today we work with eight partners, including groups of churches, students and Christian networks.

As part of Tearfund's ten-year vision, we aim to unlock the potential of 1,760 churches in Mozambique, which we hope will result in the transformation of the lives of some 84,000 people. Our partner, Rede Crista, is running a chicken-rearing project as an inspiring model for churches to show how they can transform their communities.

Preventing the spread of HIV is critical in Mozambique. Aims of our partners' work include breaking down the stigma surrounding HIV, especially among church leaders who are living with the virus, and preventing the spread of HIV among young people. Tearfund is motivating churches in Mozambique to welcome people living with HIV and to reach out to their communities. One partner, Shingirirai, trains activists in a provincial prison and has provided access to anti-retroviral drugs for more than 100 inmates.

Other areas of Tearfund's work in Mozambique include providing clean water and sanitation and helping churches and communities to prepare for natural disasters such as droughts and floods. During the drought of 2008, partner CEDES provided clean water to more than 500 households.

- **Pray for people living in poverty in Mozambique.**
- **Please pray for our partners as they seek to help others.**
- **And pray for the country of Mozambique, for justice, peace, good health and hope for everyone.**