

CHIMOIO SERVICE CENTRE, MOZAMBIQUE

A PROFILE OF OUR WORK IN 2019

THE CONTEXT

After independence from Portugal in 1975, Mozambique suffered a 16 year civil war. The war ended in a peace deal in 1992 when a communist government took control. The HIV/AIDS pandemic then crippled the country, especially in rural areas where many people in the labour force died, leaving the elderly and vulnerable children to fend for themselves. Every year, entire communities in Mozambique face a season of hunger when their food supply runs out. 43% of children in Mozambique are stunted due to malnutrition. Limited progress has been achieved in improving water and sanitation and alleviating hunger and malnutrition. Malaria remains the most common cause of death in Mozambique, responsible for 35% of child mortality. Women and girls are especially vulnerable in Mozambique. In the Beira corridor between land-locked Zimbabwe and the Mozambique coast, prostitution is rife, continuing the spread of HIV.



THE TEAM

Audrey – Coordinator
Ramos – Bookkeeper
Sandra – Field Coordinator
Kara – Service Centre Support

DEVELOPING THE SERVICE CENTRE TEAM

Though small in number, the Chimoio Service Centre (SC) team have shown incredible tenacity and courage as they faced significant crisis situations in 2019. When Cyclone Idai hit Mozambique in mid-March and left masses of local people in desperate need, Audrey and her team were on the front line; working in the midst of devastation and standing in solidarity with those most affected. The story of Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the walls in Jerusalem became both an encouragement, and a source of direction for the Chimoio team. When George Snyman visited at the time of the cyclone, he reminded the team of both the physical and spiritual work they were called to. Beginning each day in prayer has become part of Chimoio SCs daily rhythm and the team continue to meet each week to share and discuss scripture with one another.

In 2019, several training opportunities were given to the Chimoio SC team. Beginning in January, they travelled to neighbouring Zimbabwe to spend time with other SC teams in their region to hear the Hands at Work Watchword. This guiding scripture was then revisited every week during Watchword study times which have now been translated into the local language of Portuguese. In September, coordinator Audrey travelled to Zambia where she attended a training with a diverse group of African leaders, with a variety of 'Hands' topics discussed, including discipleship, kingdom culture and how we care for the most vulnerable. In October, Audrey and Sandra were also part of the annual gathering of leaders in Zambia where 2019 was reviewed and celebrated, and plans for 2020 made.

Audrey and her team have also grown in their technical and skills capacity in 2019. Audrey has undertaken motorbike lessons and gained a license to enable easier access to visit communities. Sandra has taken English lessons which has greatly enhanced her ability to communicate with the Regional Support Team (RST) as well as visiting teams and partners. Through the challenges of Cyclone Idai, Audrey has also grown in her understanding and ability to develop community gardens as a means towards food security at the most local level.

DEVELOPING LIFE CENTRES

400 CHILDREN
CARED FOR
IN 2018



425
CHILDREN
CARED FOR
IN 2019



4
COMMUNITY BASED
ORGANISATIONS



Key areas of Life Centre growth for the Chimoio SC in 2019:

Care Worker Support: Relational and spiritual investment is given by the Chimoio SC who visit every CBO weekly. Additionally, community gardens have been established in all four CBOs.

3ES: Support for health care included home repairs and the complete rebuilding of 15 homes in 2019. A health officer has been identified and now visits Macadeira Community frequently.

Basic Facilities: All four communities operate out of local churches and all have toilet facilities and a cooking shelter. Matsinho also have their own well. A fence will be constructed in Chigodole by the end of 2019.



Non-negotiables of Providing Food Security

A key focus for Hands at Work in 2019 was caring for the holistic healthcare needs amongst the children. Hands at Work recognised that due to the dysfunction in the communities, together with generational cultural norms, even fundamental principles of health and hygiene were not always being followed.

Successes in 2019:

The Chimoio SC have invested intentionally in their four communities so that there is now a high level of accountability for food storage with Care Workers regularly checking store rooms and working together to count stock. Storage keys are kept with a trusted leader in the community for accountability. This consistent investment also means that each community never runs out of food. Within the four communities being served, all have access to clean, safe drinking water from a well or borehole. Additionally, all communities are using their rubbish pit well and consistently.

Focus areas for 2020:

Due to a lack of understanding amongst Care Workers, hand-washing or dish-washing in hot, soapy water is not being done currently. The Chimoio SC are working on providing hand-washing stations for all communities. Although toilets are present in every community, the SC have recognised that they are not consistently clean and will continue to focus on this with the Care Workers.

The Chimoio SC have been advised that they are not allowed to deworm children because the government run a country-wide initiative. Deworming is very irregular however, and the Chimoio SC are working with the government to address this. Lastly, although daily meals are well balanced – including unrefined sadza (maize) and vitamin powder being used regularly - vegetables are consistently overcooked which the Chimoio SC is aiming to address with Care Workers.

Making it Personal in 2019

Across Hands at Work, reaching the most vulnerable children must be a deeply personal commitment for each leader. Inspiring highlights from 2019 included:

Adopting Children as Our Own: Baba Novella and Mama Maria adopted Farias (from Matsinho B community) – a severely malnourished baby boy – when his own mentally unwell mother was unable to care for him herself. They have taken him into their home and are caring for him as well as their own children.

Sacrificing Our Own Needs: The Chimoio SC team pushes hard! They stay late at work most days, give of their time, of themselves, and are heavily involved both practically and emotionally with the local communities they support. They join the Care Workers in weekly HHV to all the children, and in these visits they share empathetically in the pain and struggles of the most vulnerable.

Fighting for the Lost One: After Cyclone Idai, the Chimoio SC worked with the Care Workers to follow up and find all 425 of the children being cared for, to ensure they had food and shelter.



ENGAGING AND EQUIPPING THE CHURCH

The Local Church: The Chimoio SC work hard to mobilise the local churches within the four communities being served. Church leaders have key involvement with the CBOs and their running and they know children by name. The Chimoio SC also encourage the church leaders to counsel, pray and support the Care Workers through many issues. Practically, church leaders are involved in buying and packing food, provide accountability on spending and on food storage. In the aftermath of the cyclone in mid-March, local pastors provided emergency shelter, helped to repair homes and supported community gardens. Several pastors' wives have also stepped up to become Care Workers and these couples are often used to mediate challenges, as seen in Chigodole in 2019.

The Church on the Hill: There has been little engagement with the churches on the hill in Chimoio, which will be a key focus for the Chimoio SC in 2020. Pascal, a translator from Sandra's church, came to assist an NFA team in Mozambique in 2019, which was a huge success.

The International Church: In 2019, the Chimoio SC hosted 3 partner teams from Canada and Australia, as well as visitors from Germany and Canada. They also hosted their very first Nurses for Africa team who provided health care to the community of Macadeira. The impact of the International Church was felt so strongly by the Chimoio SC team in 2019. The Saskatoon Care Workers brought deep spiritual investment to the Care Workers in Matsinho, praying and worshipping together. The Hands Australia team were able to visit many homes of those badly affected by Cyclone Idai as well as learn the names of children and Care Workers to be able to pray intentionally. Chigodole's partner from Germany was also able to visit and brought encouragement, as well as providing funding for a new fence which is desperately needed. Finally, the PACC team brought life and colour to the Macadeira kitchen and eating areas which were brightly painted and decorated!