



Hope Through Health

Mozambique’s Efforts to Improve Health Care and Tackle HIV/AIDS Are Paying Off

As a health care trainer in the rural district of Massinga on Mozambique’s southern coast, Cipriano Dyeja finds himself on the leading edge of the battle to transform the country’s medical system.

At the Massinga Centre for Continuing Education in Health, Cipriano and other staff are working double time training students for jobs as health-care specialists in rural communities that are desperately underserved by the formal health system. Cipriano sees the need for their services all around him in Massinga, which has just one doctor for a population of more than 250,000 and has among the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the country.

Cipriano’s training and outreach work at the Massinga Centre, part of the Ministry of Health, which is supported by the Government of Canada through a cooperative partnership with the University of Saskatchewan, has increasingly focused on HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, counseling, and the treatment of opportunistic illnesses associated with the disease. Now he has begun working at the district hospital across from the



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The Government of Mozambique’s plan to reduce poverty is advancing efforts to improve access to health care.

centre in a new program to provide antiretroviral therapy to infected people, offering hope to patients, families, and a nation striving to reverse the high prevalence of the disease.

One of the poorest countries in the world, Mozambique has made remarkable gains in the past 15 years since the end of a devastating civil war, with a stable government and a growth rate that is among the highest in the world. Yet progress has been thwarted by the HIV/AIDS pandemic with one sixth of the population infected. As is the case throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the HIV/AIDS rate is especially high among women. Women aged 15 to 24 are three times as likely as men to contract the disease. There is consensus that discrimination, violence, and unequal access to information can often explain the higher prevalence rates among women and lower access to care and treatment. In Mozambique, less than half of the population has access to basic health care.

But the Government of Mozambique’s plan to reduce poverty is advancing efforts to improve access, including training health-care providers. Canada, with other donors, is helping put this plan in action. Mozambique’s health initiatives are focused on improving the availability and access of health services, especially in remote areas, and on responding to HIV/AIDS through a comprehensive approach to prevention, care, treatment, and support.

Partners of Choice

To date, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has partnered with, or supported the work of, more than 400 Canadian not-for-profit non-governmental organizations, universities, and colleges in sub-Saharan Africa. The University of Saskatchewan’s work with the Massinga Centre and the Ministry of Health in Mozambique is just one example.

Canadians have a long history of partnership with Africans for development. CIDA’s work in Africa dates to the beginning of its mandate some forty years ago, and many churches and religious organizations have relationships on that continent stretching much further back. Canada has close ties to almost half of the 54 countries

of Africa through La Francophonie, while relations with 18 others are rooted in the Commonwealth.

Today, in addition to its work with Canadian partners, CIDA is also working more closely with other donors; African institutions and civil society; multilateral institutions and initiatives; and a number of African governments, such as Mozambique's, in order to reduce red tape and duplication, cover gaps, and scale up small successes to regional and national levels. In short, strategic choices and better coordination with a range of partners are helping to ensure that aid reaches the people in need, that development is sustainable, and that Canadian development assistance is getting the best results possible.

With individuals such as Cipriano Dyeja, innovative partners such as the Massinga Centre and the University of Saskatchewan, committed national governments such as Mozambique, and international donors, efforts are paying off.

The Government of Canada, in cooperation with other increase access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) in Mozambique. The number of:

- sites offering ART expanded from 12 to 34;
- people on ART tripled, from 6,500 to 19,726;
- children on ART increased from 500 to more than 1,000;
- health facilities with pediatric treatment services increased from 1 to 10.



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