



U.S. MISSION TO MOZAMBIQUE



Estamos Juntos



<http://maputo.usembassy.gov>

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2010

FEBRUARY IS AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

This year's theme recognizes the enterprise and entrepreneurship of African Americans, both past and present, that helped strengthen and invigorate the nation.



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U.S. Navy Ships Visited Maputo

Two U.S. Navy Ships, the HSV-2 Swift and the U.S.S. Nicholas, docked at the Maputo port from February 9-13, as part of the "African Partnership Station (APS)." This is the third U.S. Navy ship visit to Mozambique.

The objective of APS is to establish strong partnerships with African nations to promote maritime protection and other security initiatives. Officials from the navies of Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique, Mauritius, and Brazil were part of the APS staff.

During the ship visit, U.S. sailors participated in a variety of activities, including providing training to 88 Mozambican sailors, on topics such as small vessel maintenance, combat first aid, military leadership, and train-the-trainer.

45 U.S. sailors participated in a community service project at an orphanage, as a gesture of goodwill to the people of Mozambique. They also took part in sports exchanges, a blood donation, and additional official

activities.

The purpose of the visit, in addition to exchange of knowledge and experience, was to strengthen relations and cooperation with the



The two American ships at the Maputo Port

Mozambican armed forces, as well as to show the multilateral cooperation with other African nations embodied by the APS.

The military band "Top Brass," composed of six instruments and with a specialized repertoire from traditional marches to classical music to New Orleans-style jazz, also was a major part of

the visit. Top Brass has already performed for more than seventy million people in Europe and Africa. The band conducted workshops with students from the Music School of Maputo, the School of Communication and Arts, a jam session with the Association of Musicians of Maputo, concerts at the Arco Iris orphanage and the Secondary School of Matola, and a public concert at the CCCFM.

Message from the Ambassador



Leslie V. Rowe

"It is a great honor and privilege to be here in Mozambique to represent the United States of America and the American people. What a pleasure it is for me and my husband Ted Dieffenbacher to finally arrive

is better not just for Mozambique, and not just for the United States but for the region and the world. As we know, we are all connected in this complicated world. As President Obama said in a speech in Africa last July, "This is the simple truth of a time when the boundaries between people are overwhelmed by our connections."

after many months of eager anticipation, and we look forward to a wonderful three years getting to know the people and culture of Mozambique.

This is our work, to build and sustain those connections. I hope that "Estamos Juntos" will continue to give you a taste of many of the things that are being done by the U.S. Embassy and many of our partners to keep those links strong and vibrant."

The United States is a committed partner to Mozambique, and we believe that a strong, prosperous, capable Mozambique

Leslie Rowe

Plant for Life

Angelo Vicente works for Gorongosa National Park and is determined to provide a better life for his wife, Cacilda and his 9-month old son, Jerson. With the help of the Mountain Restoration Project supported by USAID, he is slowing the rate of deforestation on the mountain while securing a brighter future for his family.

Mount Gorongosa covers 600 square kilometers and is home to hundreds of bird and plant species, some of which can be found nowhere else in the world. Its rivers sustain the ecosystem of the park and are essential to the livelihoods of thousands of local people. However, the mountain and its flora and fauna are under an increasing threat of being destroyed by slash and burn agricultural practices of the burgeoning population nearby.

With U.S. government assistance provided by USAID, Angelo and his team have undertaken a massive reforestation effort over the past year. They have doubled the number of tree nurseries on the mountain from eight to 16 and have replanted trees on 50 hectares of land on the mountain. During this period, the forestry team met with more than 8,000 locals to discuss the importance of reforestation and protecting Mount Gorongosa's natural resources.

Along the way, Angelo developed innovative ideas to improve the sustainability of the forestry project. To reduce material costs, he found a sugar company that was willing to provide recycled bags, which are used to plant tree saplings, at no charge. Angelo's team also identified steep areas of the mountain that are susceptible to erosion and created grass-covered terraces to maintain soil humidity and prevent further erosion. Park staff found that these terraces were as effective in reducing erosion as similar bamboo nurseries, yet required less time and money to develop.

To date, USAID has helped restore and protect approximately 400,000 hectares of land in Gorongosa National Park. Through hard work and dedication, Angelo was promoted to technical supervisor and saved enough money to build a new house and pay for his wife's education to become a secondary school teacher. "After I finish building my house, the next thing I want to do is open a bank account for my son," says Angelo.

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Angelo looks at a newly planted terrace in Mount Gorongosa

Peace Corps Volunteers Make a Difference for Hundreds of Mozambican Youth

REDES – Girls in Development Education and Health

In addition to their primary assignments, Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) in Mozambique working with the support of PEPFAR and the Public Affairs Office have started many youth initiatives that have turned into national projects.

The REDES Project was formed by a group of Volunteers in 2005 with the objective of empowering young women and address the problem of gender inequality in our communities that translates in higher HIV-infection rates for our female students.

Throughout the year, the groups conduct activities in four areas: technology and career preparation; culture, art, and sports; income generation projects; and community action and volunteerism. 31 REDES groups currently operate in 8 provinces, typically comprised of 15-20 high school girls, a Mozambican professor, and a Peace Corps Volunteer. Erin Freml, a Volunteer who teaches science at the local secondary school, began teaching her REDES group about women's health. "These girls are smart and motivated, but . . . the information they were lacking about how their own bodies work was staggering. The small group environment turned out to be the perfect setting for them to learn and feel like they could ask any question . . . Many of them noted that no one had ever taken the time to answer (sometimes embarrassing) questions so thoroughly. This unit also brought our girls closer together because we were talking together about really personal stuff that has a large impact on their lives such as

HIV, pregnancy, and relationships."

In addition, the REDES Project also organizes regional conferences each April where every group is allowed to send a couple of student representatives, a professor, and the Peace Corps Volunteer. The conferences create a space for these young women to think critically about gender issues, learn about health topics, build self-esteem, and prepare to be peer-educators and role models in their communities.

Gracey Uffman, National Coordinator of the REDES Project, reflects on seeing young Mozambican women shine at a national conference, "I see bright futures for these young girls who participated in the REDES Conference. They fearlessly asked questions on women's health and reproductive systems, gaining so much knowledge over the week. They stood up eloquently sharing their

dreams and goals to be lawyers, business owners, and singers... They were full of energy and enthusiasm. Not only did they sing an anthem of hope all week literally about how they would make something of themselves, but they became an anthem of hope to me promising to be a ray of light for Mozambique, for Africa, for this world."



Two young girls from the REDES project

Ariel Camp for Children Living with HIV

André, 8, is a boy full of energy who barely manages to stay quiet. Like many children in his age, he is full of appetite caused, partially, by the anti-retroviral medicines that he must take every day since he got HIV from his mother.

He is one of the 30 children living with HIV/AIDS who attended the Ariel Camp, organized by Elisabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF), a PEPFAR partner, from 17 to 20 of November.

The Camp happened at Pequenos Libombos, a tourist resort located about 45 minutes from Maputo. For most kids, it was their first time in such a place. Each two kids were placed at a bungalow under the charge of a facilitator who also made sure they took their daily medicines.

After having been installed at the bungalows, they received new t-shirts, shorts and shoes for girls. They were very happy, showing their new clothes. The T-

shirts had the following message on the back: "Get tested – your child deserves it". Then the children played a game in which they had to introduce themselves.



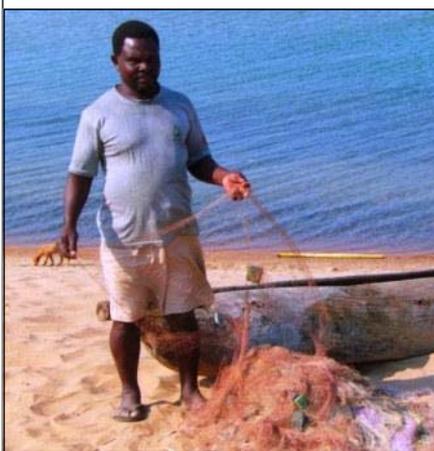
Some of the children that attended the Ariel Camp in Pequenos Libombos

According to Catarina Ferrão, Pediatric Psycho Social Support Officer it allowed the children to "meet other children who are in the same condition...it helps them a lot." EGPAF plans to stage a similar camp this year in Cabo Delgado and Nampula, north of Mozambique. The idea, said EGPAF program officer Denise, "is to organize this kind of event once a year in the sites where EGPAF is working"

Participation in the Camp helped to boost the children's self-esteem, helped them to see that despite being HIV positive, they can also do al-

most everything that other children can do – play, sing, dance, etc. It was also an opportunity for them to learn life skills and reinforce the need to continue with their treatment.

Community Fisheries Net Bigger Catches



João Mtambo after a work day in Lake Niassa

António João Cecílio Mtambo is a fisherman from the community of Chuanga in Lake Niassa who used to depend on fine-meshed fishing nets that provided little sustenance for his family. "I used to struggle to provide for my family. The situation here was so bad that one could stand for

hours in the lake and find nothing," said Mtambo.

Lake Niassa is the world's ninth largest lake and widely recognized as the most biologically important lake in the world. It is home to over 1,000 fish species—95 percent of them endemic to the lake—including tilapia, lake salmon, and hundreds of species of cichlids. Yet, fishing communities live well below the official poverty line and the lake's fisheries are under threat from overfishing.

One of the biggest problems facing Lake Niassa communi-

ties was the use of donated mosquito nets, intended to protect against malaria but used for fishing instead. Mosquito net fishing is harmful because it removes all sizes of fish, fry, and even eggs from the lake. The nets also destroy the algae, a vital part of the lake's food chain, and further damage fish stocks.

Since 2006, USAID and the World Wildlife Fund have been working to establish the Lake Niassa Reserve and have helped create 11 community fishing councils who now control all fishing activities in the lake. Mtambo belongs to a group of patrol officers who enforce the recommended fishing net sizes and prevent the lake's resources from being depleted. With the councils in place, these communities have decided to ban all mosquito net fishing to preserve the fish in Lake Niassa.

As a result, communities around Lake Niassa are beginning to prosper, and the size and quality of catch has increased considerably. With fine-meshed nets, fishermen caught fish with an average size of three to five inches. Now, they regularly reel in fish that are up to 12 inches long.

Mtambo now provides enough for his family, and he brings in enough fish to sell in the nearby Lichinga market. He says "It's like magic has happened. We catch fish big enough for ourselves and to sell in big markets. This year, I managed to buy three new nets with money generated from the fish."

LESLIE V. ROWE United States Ambassador to Mozambique

Ambassador Leslie V. Rowe arrived in Mozambique on January 28, 2010, and was accredited by the Government of Mozambique in a ceremony with President Guebuza on Wednesday, February 10.



Leslie V. Rowe was nominated by the President on September 12, 2009 to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Mozambique. She most recently served as the U.S. Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu from September, 2006 until August, 2009. Her previous posting was as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, the largest U.S. Embassy in Sub-Saharan Africa.

the U.S. Consulate in Recife, Brazil. She has also served in San Jose, Costa Rica and in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Ms. Rowe comes from the State of Washington. She received a B.A. from Washington State University, an M.A. from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and an M.Ed. from Northeastern University. She also holds a certificate from the Sorbonne in Paris, France, and was a Fulbright scholar in Germany. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Ms. Rowe served as Director of the International Office at Tufts University. She has also taught foreign languages at the secondary school level.

Ms. Rowe joined the Foreign Service in 1983 and is a member of the Senior Foreign Service. Previous assignments include: Consul General in Bangkok, Thailand; Consul General in Lisbon, Portugal; Director of the Office of Children's Issues at the Department of State; country desk officer for Chile; and Principal Officer at

Ms. Rowe speaks French, Portuguese, and Spanish. She is married to Theodore Dieffenbacher, and they have three children.

Plant for Life

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When asked about the impact of the reforestation efforts, Angelo admits that it will take time to change the minds and attitudes of locals. However, people are gradually warming to the idea. When the project began, farmers on the mountain would plant their agricultural plots too close to the river, increasing damage caused by erosion. Now, Angelo notices some locals are beginning to leave adequate space and follow better agricultural conservation practices to limit the erosion of streams and rivers.

Angelo remains passionate about the future of Mount Gorongosa and believes that its health will have a great impact on people in Sofala province and the rest of Mozambique. In the meantime, he will continue to pursue his job and his family, and encourages his fellow community members to follow his example and protect the majestic beauty of the mountain.

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